

a radical voice from Palestine

recent documents from
the Popular Front For The
Liberation of Palestine



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Arm The Spirit

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- recent documents from the
Popular Front For The Liberation of Palestine

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Abraham Guillen Press (distributor)
C.P. 48164
Montréal, QC
H2V 4S8
Canada
email: abrahamguillenpress@yahoo.com

Arm The Spirit
P.O. Box 6326, Strn. A
Toronto, ON
M5W 1P7
Canada
email: ats@etext.org
website: <http://burn.ucsd.edu/~ats>

Terrorist disclaimer: this publication was put together from public documents on the internet and from translations by a supporter for the most recent articles. We do not have a direct link to the PFLP in Palestine or elsewhere. Our intention is to provide an important left perspective to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by those actually fighting on the ground in Palestine, instead of the regular academic commentators. In this time of intensified imperialist assault international solidarity becomes even more important as the U.S. criminalizes and calls "terrorist" the entire Palestinian resistance movement. We say put the real terrorists in prison - Bush and Sharon! End the occupation!

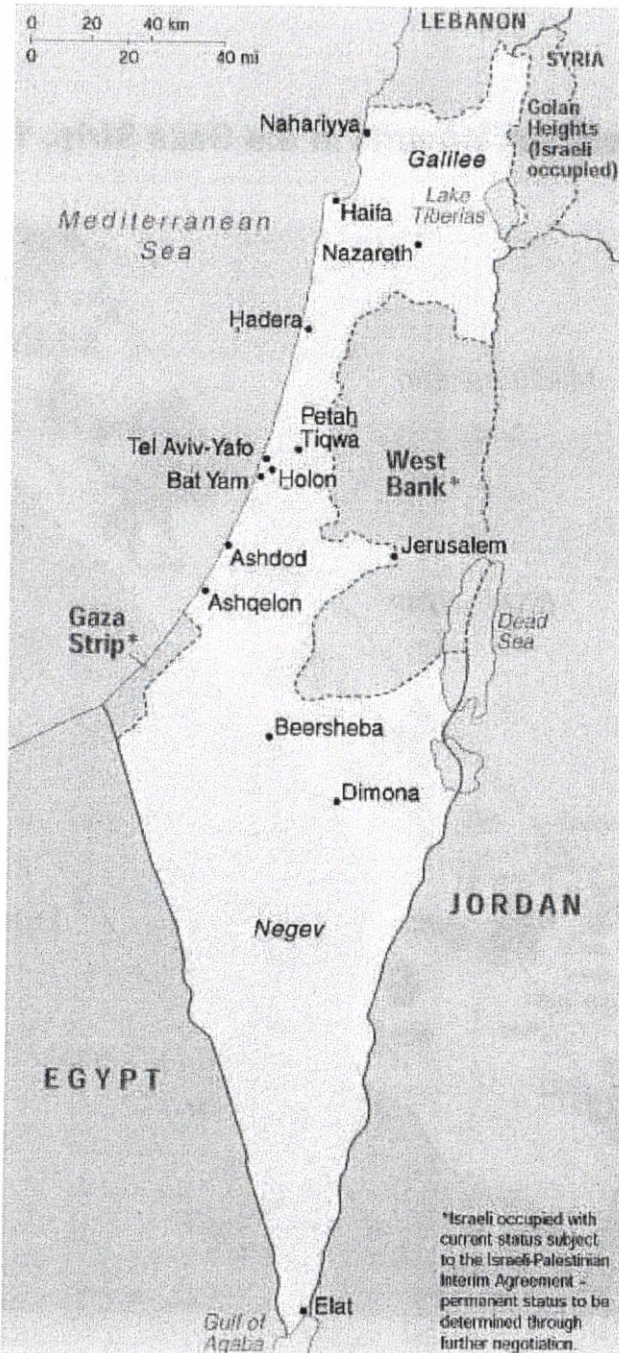
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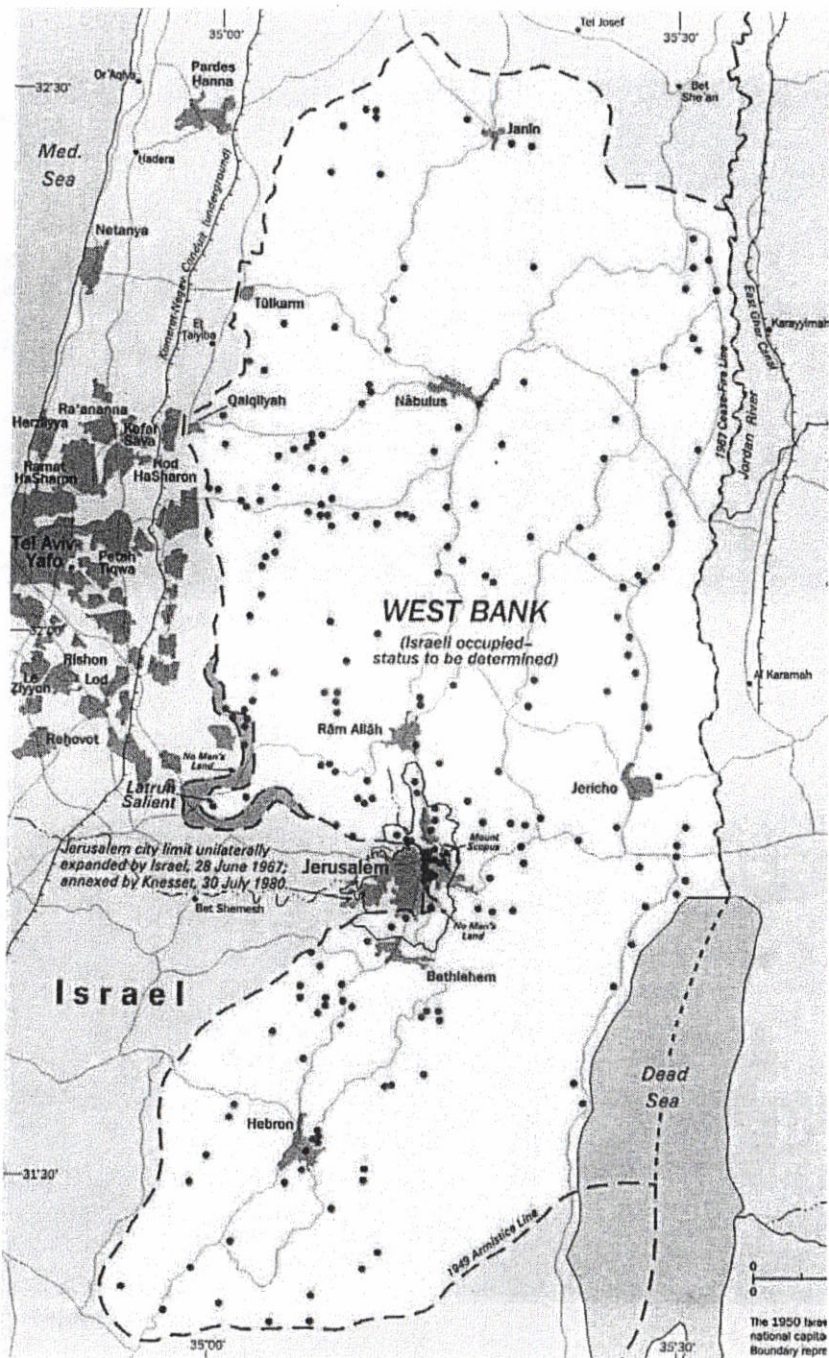


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Palestine / Israel



Israeli settlements in the West Bank, 1993





Burj el-Shemali refugee camp, early 1950s



Nahr el-Barad refugee camp, Lebanon 1951

Introduction to the PFLP

Who are we?

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) is a political party that is founded on a progressive vision of the common good. The PFLP's vision for creating a more just society, free from all forms of exploitation, is guided by the following:

- a. Marxist interpretation and dialectical materialism in its understanding and analysis of social reality;
- b. Progressive and democratic values in the culture, civilization, and heritage of the Palestinian people and the Arab Nation
- c. Progressive and democratic values in world civilizations

The PFLP is a political party working toward regaining the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people (the right to self-determination, the right to a sovereign Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital, the right of refugees to return). Regaining these rights is a first step in establishing a democratic state on the land of historic Palestine where all peoples can live as equal citizens, entitled to basic human rights, regardless of race, religion, color, or sex.

The PFLP is convinced that a democratic, pluralist, non-sexist society that guarantees the full protection of the rights of all people is the desired wish of the vast majority of the Palestinian people.

The PFLP believes that the major obstacle to peace in the Middle East is the Israeli occupation — its ideology and its practices (political, economic, military-security) — which are the means used to deny the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

Background

The roots of the PFLP go back to the Arab National Movement (ANM), a political movement established after the 1948 Palestinian nakbe (catastrophe). It was founded as a response to the defeat of the Arab regimes in the war with Israel which led to the loss of Palestine. The ANM, originally set up at the American University of Beirut in Lebanon, quickly spread throughout the Arab World. Dr. George Habash became the general secretary of the Movement.

Before the defeat of June 1967, there was a strong alliance between the ANM and Gamal Abdul-Nasser in Egypt. Similar views on the Arab revolution in general, and the liberation of Palestine in particular, as well as tactics used to achieve these goals, were held by both the ANM and Abdul-Nasser, though differences of opinion existed on less substantive issues. After the defeat of 1967, the ANM reached the conclusion that the program of Nasser had failed, due to its inability to realize any of the aims of the Arab revolution, namely, freedom, unity, socialism, and the liberation of Palestine. Contributing factors in this situation

were the failure to unify Egypt and Syria, as well as the fact that local ANM groups in individual countries were preoccupied by their own national agendas.

This reality led to the desire on the part of the ANM to work toward constructing a new arena within which to address Arab national issues, with different leadership and a revised political program.

Consequently, in 1967, the Palestinian branch of the ANM established the PFLP. Dr. George Habash was elected its first general secretary and Abu Ali Mustafa, the deputy general secretary. Since that time, the PFLP has conducted six national conferences, the first in August 1967, and the last in July 2000.

Political Strategy

The strategic vision of the PFLP is based on the following:

1. liberation from Israeli occupation
2. construction of a democratic society
3. recognition that the Palestinian people are an integral part of the Arab Nation
4. recognition that the Palestinian struggle is part of the international democratic struggle toward liberation, progress, democracy, and social justice

In light of the continuous Israeli occupation of Palestine, the PFLP believes that resistance to the occupation through any means is a legitimate right as understood by international convention.

The PFLP believes that the goals of the Palestinian people (the right to self-determination, the right to an independent and sovereign Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, and the right of refugees to return), are to be understood as transitional measures on the way to establishing a democratic state in historic Palestine, where all peoples can live as equal citizens, entitled to basic human rights, regardless of race, religion, color, or sex. The PFLP works toward these goals through fostering cooperative efforts among Palestinians, the Arab Nation, and all international progressive forces.

The PFLP strives toward enhancing its international relations and alliances with states and organizations that work to foster social justice, freedom, and peace, as well as with those who stand in solidarity with the Palestinian cause. The PFLP believes that in order to create a world free of exploitation, oppression, and injustice, it is necessary to confront not only Zionism, but all imperialist aggressive policies.

Based on this, PFLP strategy includes the following:

1. liberation from occupation:
 - a. self-determination for the Palestinian people
 - b. right of refugees to return
 - c. sovereign Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital
 - d. dismantling of Israeli settlements

2. construction of a democratic society, where all peoples can live as equal citizens, entitled to basic human rights, regardless of race, religion, color, or sex:

- a. commitment to democratic values throughout all public arenas (political, social, and economic)
 - b. formulation of civil law
 - c. the recognition and safeguarding of women's rights
 - d. the recognition and safeguarding of children's rights
 - e. formulation of just election methods and legislation
 - f. separation of judicial, executive, and legislative authorities
 - g. enforcement of public respect for the law and the concept that all people are subject to the law
 - h. introduction of a more adequate national educational system based on the right of all to education
 - i. introduction of an adequate health care system accessible to all
 - j. the restructuring of agricultural production and general industry based on community needs
 - k. increased efforts to fight poverty
 - l. increased efforts to ensure freedom of speech and media
 - m. protection of organizations committed to building a civil society
 - n. redistribution of national income based on social justice standards, taking into consideration marginalized sectors of society
 - o. introduction of a social welfare and social security system
 - p. formulation of a plan for economic development
3. recognition that the Palestinian people are an integral part of the Arab Nation
4. recognition that the Palestinian struggle is part of the international, democratic struggle toward liberation, progress, democracy, and social justice



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Al-Aqsa Intifada: The Refusal to Surrender

The present Intifada is based on a number of political realities that form a framework within which we can understand more fully the events of the past four weeks in the Palestinian occupied territories.

Before beginning an analysis of these realities, however, it must be clearly stated that the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza is the sole entity responsible for the Aqsa Intifada. The same occupation has been implementing a policy of terror for years toward the Palestinian people including arrests, deportations, killings, and robbery of the national economy, in addition to the confiscation of lands and building of settlements. This same occupying force still refuses to acknowledge the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, namely, the right for self-determination, the creation of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital, and the right for all refugees to return.

The spark that ignited this Intifada, moreover, was the provocative visit of Ariel Sharon, accompanied by hundreds of Israeli soldiers, to Al Haram A-Sharif. Any attempt to minimize this fact, or to explain the events in any other way would be a deception.

A Refusal to Surrender

There has been an increasing loss of confidence in the peace process designed according to the American-Israeli vision, which implies the exclusive implementation of Israeli terms. These terms include:

a. the separation of the geographic and demographic unity of the Palestinian people by dividing their land into cantons A, B, and C, in addition to the creation of bypass roads that have consumed thousands of dunums of Palestinian lands; b. the building and expansion of new settlements; c. the continuing siege over Palestinian cities, villages, and camps; d. the policy of house demolitions; e. the rejection of Palestinian basic human rights as well as national rights; f. the use of Palestinian prisoners as a bargaining chip for more concessions.

In addition, Israel continually refuses to comply with international resolutions (United Nations and UN Security Council) and has replaced these international terms of reference with its own force, and the creation of "facts on the ground." Israel depends exclusively on the completely biased American position which supports and whitewashes Israel's practices against the Palestinian people. The United States, moreover, continues to threaten to use its veto power against any attempt to condemn Israeli crimes.

The recent events, as well as the results of seven years of the Oslo Agreement fiasco and all the subsequent "agreements," are nothing but tools to eliminate the rights of the Palestinian people. None of these agreements have been effective means to achieve a just peace in the region. The extreme violence used by Israel against the Palestinian uprising is nothing but another attempt to coerce the world into buying into its understanding of "peace," namely, a peace based on surrender.

Israel's Intransigence

Although Israel presents itself as a party willing to make compromises, in reality, the "facts on the ground" illustrate clearly its complete intransigence with respect to any and all negotiations. Barak went to Camp David (the beginning of the final status negotiations) and brought with him the following conditions on the Israeli agenda:

- a. No withdrawal to the borders of 6 June 1967 (this contradicts UN resolutions 242 and 338);
- b. The insistence that the settlements should remain and be annexed to Israel (this also contradicts all UN and UN Security Council resolutions which consider all settlements on the West Bank and in Gaza illegal);
- c. The denial of the rights of Palestinian people in East Jerusalem and dealing with Jerusalem in toto as the eternal capital of Israel;
- d. The refusal to allow Palestinians to return to the homes from which they have been expelled since 1948 (contradiction of UN Resolution 194);
- e. Israel's refusal to have a "foreign" army west of the Jordan River. This implies that if Israel ever accepts the creation of a Palestinian state (constrained, of course, by the conditions previously mentioned), it must necessarily be a state without an army.

It is important to understand the significance of some of these conditions for Palestinians. The settlements are an Israeli political project aimed at crushing Palestinian aspirations for freedom and independence. Any realistic discourse focused on the creation of a Palestinian state with the coexistence of the settlements and bypass roads would imply a state without sovereignty. This has always been one of the main reasons for conflict and confrontation. Israel's vision of annexing the already-existing settlements translates into annexation of an additional 15% of Palestinian lands. At present, there are approximately 200,000 settlers in 140 settlements throughout the West Bank, Gaza and Jerusalem. In Hebron, for example, 400 Jewish settlers live in the midst of 140,000 Palestinians, and control 20% of the city.

Israel's expansionist, colonialist policy is a rejection of all decisions of the international community that state unequivocally that all settlements in the West Bank and Gaza are illegal and as such must be dismantled.

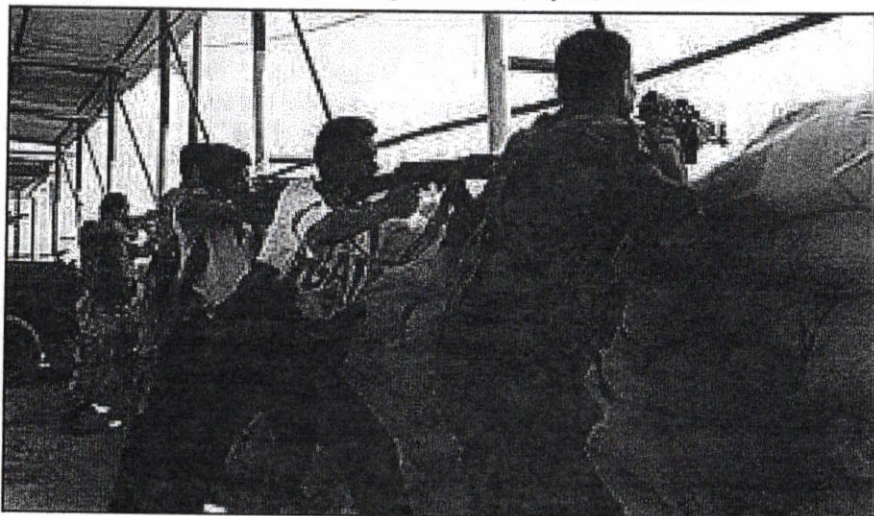
The refugee problem is another basic issue at the heart of the Palestinian cause. Refugees were created as a direct result of the Zionist project in Palestine. Seventy-eight percent of Palestine was occupied in 1948 and as a result, approximately one million Palestinians were made refugees. During the 1967 War, another half a million refugees were added to this number. Today there are approximately 4 million refugees living in Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan, as well as in Palestine itself.

These are the facts and the foundation upon which the present Intifada was built. The only conclusion to be drawn from all this is that, although Israel speaks eloquently about peace, it acts as a brutal occupying force on the ground that will stop at nothing to maintain its power. Oslo aided the Israeli occupation army in tightening its grip on each and every Palestinian city and village. In addition, the plans for redeployment as articulated in Oslo have only served to improve Israel's

strategic military positions rather than precipitate its withdrawal, as some people erroneously imagined. The recent summit at Sharm a-Sheikh on 17 October, with Clinton, Mubarak, Annan, Solana, Arafat, and Barak was yet another step in perpetuating the deception that has dominated all attempts to deal rationally with the conflict. The Summit described the Palestinian resistance as simple rioting rather than as the profound expression of the aspirations of an entire population for freedom and independence. The Sharm-a Sheikh Summit and its results were clearly controlled by the U.S. vision for "peace" in the region — a vision that would crush the Palestinian Intifada, block the Arabic national movement, and hinder the broadening of solidarity movements in Europe and elsewhere in the world. One of the most dangerous consequences of the Summit is the equalization of the victim and the victimizer and the effort to ignore the liberation movement's political dimension underlying the action of the Palestinian people. In addition, Sharm a-Sheikh was an attempt to transform the reality of Israeli brute force into political "achievement" in order to dictate Israel's political conditions in any future agreements.

Al-Aqsa Intifada: Unprecedented Palestinian Unity

The present Intifada is distinguished by a unique unanimity of intent and motivation among all sectors of Palestinian society. Palestinians on the streets of Gaza, Jerusalem, and the West Bank are using similar slogans to express their state of despair and their loss of confidence in the peace process. Since 1993, the Palestinians have experienced first-hand the fact that the present political settlement is nothing but a dictation of Israeli terms, namely, a continuation of the occupation with settlement expansion, a "state" comprised of bantustans, and no right to return. Palestinians have united, not only in the West Bank and Gaza, but also (and for the first time), with the Palestinians living inside the Green Line as well as with those living in refugee camps in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon.



Theses on Globalisation and the Palestinian Resistance

Nassar Ibrahim and Majed Nassar

1. 1] There can be little doubt that the anti-globalisation movement has been garnering increasing public support over the last decade. This support has often erupted publicly and very explosively, most famously in Seattle in 1999 but also with remarkable ferocity in Washington, Genoa and Los Angeles etc. Largely in response to this outpouring of frustration, the discourse of globalisation is increasingly establishing itself as an important analytic concept within a broad range of economic and cultural dimensions as the social and political analysts attempt to play 'catch-up' with the popular movement against globalisation.

1. 2] Together, the popular support for anti-globalisation and the development of an analytical framework to serve this movement represents the creation of an organisational framework challenging the dynamics of a world market controlled by multinational corporations. The anti-globalisation movement is a principled struggle against worldwide policies of the multinational corporations that serve to increase the social contradictions within countries, between countries and between the north and the south. Globalisation policies threaten the environment and increase the rate of poverty and ignorance; they create conditions for the eruption of cultural and religious conflicts.

1. 3] Globalisation is a product of the information and communication revolution and impacts on the realms of economics, politics and culture. This process is exploited by capital in developed countries to promote the global rule of multinational corporations. At the same time, the material and ideological motivations of the western developed countries are still responding to imperialist practices which attempt to impose the western social and cultural model that is regarded by the Western powers to be the ultimate 'point of destination' for all cultures and nations.

1. 4] The combined domination of the multinational corporations and Western imperialism entails the control of other States as the western States seek to repress variety in the world populations and subsume other national, cultural and social characteristics to their own. At the same time, the politics of domination create within victim nations and cultures the conditions for destructive violence and conflict leading the world into a circle of war and self-destruction.

1.5] The framework of the globalisation debate allows for an examination of the role of imperialism in relation to modern economic forces in general, and multinational corporations specifically. In this regard, while globalisation is often portrayed as States acquiescing to the demands of multinational corporations, the

framework of globalisation/anti-globalisation provides the conceptual framework to posit the relationship between commercial interests and imperial ambitions that operate on a more mutually serving basis.

1. 6] In this regard, we can see that the goals of one are inseparable from the other. The commercial interests of the multinationals and the imperialist ambitions of the western powers are coterminous and mutually supporting. This may be clearly witnessed through the daily application of unequal forces within the sphere of international relations. We can see it in the GATT agreements, or in the various wars led by the US. We see it in international conferences such as the conference against racism and the environment. We see it in the stalling and obstructive practices of the US at the United Nations.

1. 7] There is an urgent necessity to socially, morally and culturally resist this process in order to protect the richness of humanity. Such resistance does not necessitate the rejection of scientific and technological developments. These can, and should, serve all nations, nationalities, social categories and classes. Such advances must not be allowed to belong to a specific nation, culture or group of corporations that are devoted to profits at the expense of the misery and poverty of billions of people.

1. 8] The Palestinian issue is one of the most tragic instances of the globalisation process in its imperial manifestation.

The Palestinian tragedy and the Israeli role in global oppression

2. 1] At the end of the First World War, Great Britain undertook, through the 1917 Balfour Declaration, to establish a national homeland in Palestine for the Jews. Throughout the British mandate, Great Britain sponsored the Zionist movement, an ethnocentric and racist colonial project. By imposing its mandate in Palestine in accordance with the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement, Great Britain protected the Zionist movement and supported it politically, economically and militarily. By the end of World War II, Great Britain had already prepared the ground for the Zionists to take over Palestine, after it had conspired to brutally suppress the Palestinian resistance for thirty years.

2. 2] With the end of World War II and the rise of the United States as leader of the capitalist regimes, the sponsorship of the Zionist project passed into the hands of the US. Armed Zionist gangs started a war against unarmed Palestinians in 1947/1948, succeeding in establishing the state of Israel on 78% of the land of Palestine. 19 years later, in June 1967, Israel attacked the Arab countries and occupied the whole of Palestine, the Egyptian Sinai and the Syrian Golan Heights.

2. 3] As a result of these wars, over one million Palestinians were forced out of their homes and lands and became refugees living in camps in neighbouring Arab countries (Jordan, Syria, Lebanon). The refugee population today numbers

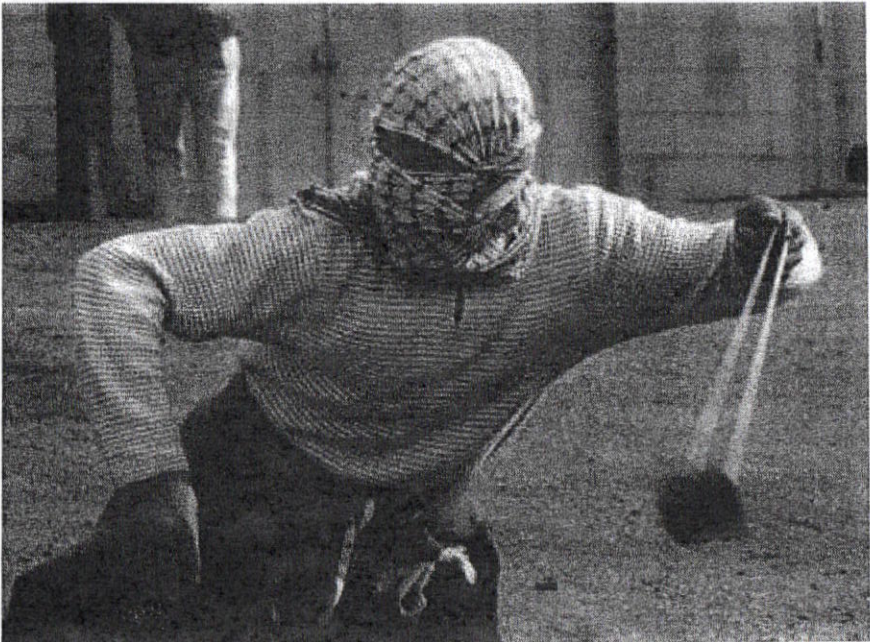
about 4 million people, to whom Israel denies the right to return to their homeland in violation of international law established by the United Nations Security Council.

2. 4] Though these colonial acts were legitimised in terms of securing the well being of the Jewish people, the actions of the western powers were performed at a crucial stage in the formation of global power relationships and served to establish a bridge across which the western powers could protect the interests of global capitalism in the Middle East.

2. 5] As such, Israel was established as part of an imperial project in the region, making use of the Jewish tragedy to legitimate its own goals. In this way, the majority of the Jewish people are also victims of the colonial project in the Middle East. The interests of the Jews do not lie in gaining the hostility of the Arab nations and expelling the Palestinians; the Jewish tragedy in Europe does not justify the making the Palestinian people victims of the western colonial ambitions.

2. 6] In the global division of labour, the State of Israel became the Border Police of imperialism and as such, had three tasks to fulfil: to control Arab resources and especially oil, to act as a bulwark against any revolutionary rise from within the Arab nations and to face the Communist progression in the Middle East, represented at that time by the Soviet Union.

2. 7] The Palestinian tragedy is the consequence of the imperial globalisation policy that is based on oppression, occupation and unlimited support for Israel in



its regional aggression. The Palestinians are the victims of this process, and Israel is the tool to control the region through the denial of human rights, through occupation and through unfettered military aggression.

2. 8] The Zionist conception combines the view of Israel as an exclusive Jewish State and the vision of Israel as an expression of the western cultural and demographic model. As an exclusive State, Israel is the permanent negation of the existence of the Palestinians as a nation.

2. 9] Consequently, the recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people represents a threat to the colonial existence of Israel. As an expression of the western model, Israel 'forces' the capitalist countries to recognise Israel's policies and practices as defensive and protective of western values and lifestyles which provide a line of resistance to the 'barbarian East' and 'Arab terrorism'. The unconditional political and material support that the United States, and other capitalist countries, provide to Israel supports a strategy based on strengthening their own global control.

2. 10] The negative roll of Israel is not limited to the occupation of Palestine and the denial of the Palestinian rights, but also encompasses Israel's regional and even global role: Israel serves as the regional spearhead of imperial forces of globalisation, reflecting through its practices and policies the nastiest and most violent faces of the globalisation process. This can be evidenced by Israel's continuous aggression against the Arab nations and in its relations with the world's bloodiest dictatorial and racist regimes, such as the apartheid regime in South Africa, the fascist dictatorships in Latin America and the warlords in Africa.

2. 11] In sum, the alliance between Israel and imperialism is not accidental, neither does it have emotional or religious motivations, nor is it a response to the tragedy of the Jews in Europe. On the contrary, the alliance between Israel and the West expresses the interests that Israel protects in respect to the political, economic, and military ambitions of US global policy. In this regard Israel reinforces the United States' continuous rejection of the rights of the Palestinian people and assists in keeping the nations of the Middle East under western military and political domination.

The Negation of the Palestinian People

3. 1] The negation of Palestinian existence is achieved through Israel's colonial strategies of ethnic cleansing, systematic segregation, the denial of basic civil and human rights and the erasing of Palestinians from history. The Israeli story of the colonisation process is rooted in a religious mythology that justifies the invasion and occupation of Palestine and at the same time rejects historical facts such as the continuous ethnic cleansing of Palestine in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

3. 2] Currently, all forms of Palestinian political or military resistance to the

Israeli occupation is described as 'terror' that should be ended by any means, thereby negating the present validity of Palestinians as humans and who would therefore be entitled to the rights of humans.

3. 3] For the western media, Israeli aggression, wars and massacres are described as 'the right to self-defence' by 'democratic Israel'. In this representation, Israel confronts violent Arabs and Palestinians who do not understand democracy. Israel represents a symbol of civilisation and democracy with the right to set standards of justice and punishment and to have authority over those who do not conform to its will.

3. 4] At the same time, the western media creates a distorted image of the Arabs and Palestinians in the western imagination. The media creates stereotypes that encourage hatred and rancour. This construction degrades Arab religious and cultural beliefs, and creates the conditions for a 'confrontation of cultures'.

3. 5] In sum, the Israeli negation of the Palestinian people is packaged with the western distortion of the Arabs in the globalised media. Both aspects embody a racist dimension that denies the particularities of the 'other', denies their human rights, denies their cultural characteristics and denies their human experience. Israel appears as a superior entity with the right to bring other nations to justice.

The peace process and globalisation

4. 1] Based on its military power, the support of the USA and a perception of the Arab world as primitive, Israel's vision of attaining peace is to be realised through a process in which it has the sole right to dictate the conditions of that peace. This includes the scope, if any, of the realisation of the human rights of the Palestinian people.

4. 2] This scope is based on a list of 'no's': no to the right of return, no to the admission of the historical and political rights to the Palestinians in Jerusalem, no to the removal of the settlements, no to a sovereign Palestinian State.

4. 3] In order to dictate this version of peace, Israel is fully prepared to degrade the lives of Palestinians by limiting their movement and transportation, assassinations, detention, sieges, the destruction of homes and agricultural stock.

4. 4] Israel is not seeking peace, but to impose surrender.

4. 5] The peace process that began in the Madrid conference at the beginning of the 90s, was set in the framework of the US-Israel alliance, and moved on due to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the results of the Gulf war. In this process, the US vision of the post-soviet era as a "New World Order," matched the Israeli wish for a "New Middle East."

4. 6] The Madrid process was followed by a number of economic conferences: Casablanca, Doha, Amman and Cairo that attempted to restructure the Middle Eastern and North African economic makeup giving the region the last push from national regimes, already in crisis, into to liberalized economies in the global market. The goal of those conferences was to end the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, by dictating US and Israeli political and economic interests.

4. 7] This was a double dictate: the political acceptance of the State of Israel without forcing Israel to accept any of the Palestinians' demands, while also imposing the socio-economical liberalisation of the Arab states.

4. 8] The cancellation of the Arab direct and indirect boycotts on Israel is the major economic symbol of this process.

4. 9] The culmination of the Oslo process, in which the defeated Palestinian leadership in exile accepted conditions rejected by the Palestinian people in Palestine, was coterminous with the opening of the markets of the Middle East, Central and South Asia and the Far East to Israel. This process also exposed the Palestinians to a future as cheap workers in Israel-US led free-trade-zones to be built in the Occupied Territories.

4. 10] The second Palestinian Intifada reflects the will and spirit of resistance, and the rejection of this project.

4. 11] The Palestinian people propose peace as a strategic choice based on the United Nations resolutions, which call for the complete withdrawal of Israel to the borders of June 4, 1967, establishing a real independent Palestinian State beside the State of Israel and the implementation of the rights of the Palestinians to repatriation.

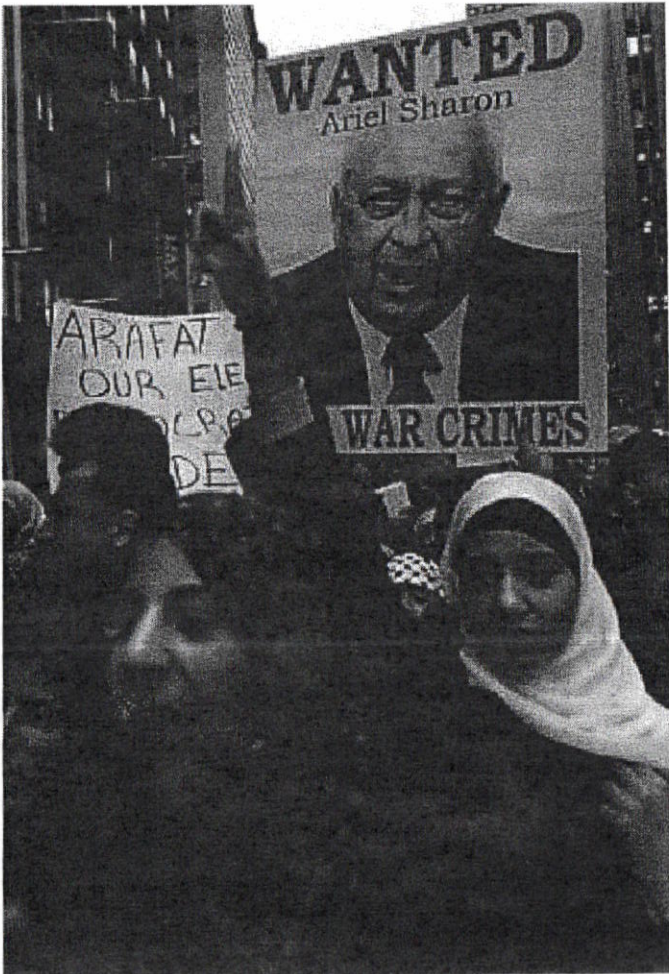
The Palestinians and the movement against globalisation

5. 1] Along with the liberalisation of the national economies, the implementation of Structural Adjustment Programmes, and the dictates of peace with Israel as political surrender all the internal contradictions of the globalisation process are violently realised in the Middle East. These realisations include the rise of radical Islam, the eruption of cultural and religious conflicts, the intervention of imperialist military forces and the growing popular discontentment in all Arab countries.

5. 2] The heroic resistance of the Palestinian patriotic forces to the imperial project is at the core of the resistance to these processes. However, the Palestinians find themselves tragically alone confronting the assassination of political leaders, the demolition of houses, the destruction of lands, and the destruction of the Palestinian infrastructure.

5. 3] The pathetic efforts of the leaders of the Arab countries and the European mediators provide a bitter irony in their attempt to make the Palestinians accept a settlement that negates their sovereignty and independence.

5. 4] The role of the anti-globalisation movement is not a matter of wishing success to the Palestinian struggle, but to share in the struggle and to help it to victory. It is a duty for the anti-globalisation movement all over the world to raise the flag of defence of Palestinian rights, freedom and independence. It is an expression of faithfulness and commitment to an alternative to the neo-liberal globalisation.



“The Social Question has been Neglected” Interview with Nassar Ibrahim

Nassar Ibrahim is chief editor of the West Bank “Al Hadaf”, newspaper of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). Interviewed 21 February 1998.

QUESTION: Your organization played a major role in the Palestinian resistance movement in the 1970s and 80s. Why do we hear so little about the PFLP these days?

IBRAHIM: The Palestinian left is in a very difficult situation right now. On the one hand, we were strongly affected by the global crisis on the left after 1989. The collapse of the Soviet Union had a very negative effect on us, because for a long time we wrongly depended on a foreign model of revolution which was not right for the Palestinian situation. Now we are paying the price for that uncritical approach.

But there are also domestic political reasons for our crisis. The central focus of our politics was always the struggle of the Palestinian people for national liberation and against the occupation policies of Israel. We treated the Palestinian people as a unit, thereby failing to pay attention to the contradictions which exist within Palestinian society. The social question hardly played a role in our thinking. For the past few years, however, we have been trying to correct such mistakes and mark out our own revolutionary path. We are also in a dialogue with the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), who are also affected by the crisis, with the aim of creating a long-term unity in order to strengthen the weight of the Palestinian left.

QUESTION: Haven't the Oslo Agreement and the creation of the Palestinian Authority by Arafat caught your organization by surprise and made the crisis even more deep?

IBRAHIM: I think the Oslo Agreement is only very little to blame for the crisis on the left. Of course we have to orient ourselves to this new situation. The crisis is more affected by our relationship to the new Palestinian autonomy officials. There are two tendencies within the Palestinian left concerning this issue. One faction is for taking part in the Palestinian Authority, with the aim of changing it from the inside. That is the position of the Communist Party of Palestine, which was present with delegates during the peace negotiations. The other faction strictly rejects participation in the Palestinian Authority. The PFLP and the DFLP are part of this tendency. We rejected participation in the peace process from the beginning, because to us it was clear that the global balance of power was not in our favor. Peace talks at this time can only have negative results for us.

QUESTION: Is your organization really united behind such a position?

IBRAHIM: Of course we have a variety of opinions within the PFLP. But we think that's positive. Parties which refuse to allow differing opinions become stagnant. The important thing is to stay unified, despite having different opinions. We have adopted a new approach to democratic centralism. We have struck a balance so that the democracy does not end in chaos and the centralism does not become authoritarian.

QUESTION: How does this balance look with respect to the question of the autonomy authorities?

IBRAHIM: There are PFLP members who work with the Palestinian Authority. Members of our organization are not banned from working with this authority. PFLP members work in civil, health, and cultural associations. We were active in those areas even before the Oslo Agreement was signed. These associations only became part of the Palestinian Authority afterwards. Our members will stay active within them. But PFLP members are prohibited from taking part in the political offices, forces of repression, or negotiating committees of the Palestinian Authority.

QUESTION: In the past few months, Arafat has been waving the issue of a national dialogue with all Palestinian groups like a fist in the face of the Israeli government. Is the PFLP being pressured to take part in such a process?

IBRAHIM: We have always stated that we support a dialogue between different Palestinian forces. But we don't want a dialogue just for the sake of talking, nor do we want to take part in a process which is just a front for the Palestinian Authority's policies.

There have been pseudo-conferences under the motto of "National Dialogue" before, but the Palestinian Authority has never been willing to change its course. Because the differences among Palestinian groups with respect to the Oslo Agreement are so vast, there is no basis right now for a dialogue.

QUESTION: Do you have any dialogue with the Israeli left?

IBRAHIM: The Israeli left is very weak. With the few forces that are willing, we do have contacts at all levels and we organize joint protests and informational meetings. We hope that the leftist forces in Israel will gain in importance. The PFLP has no problems with the citizens of Israel. We want to live together with them in equality.

QUESTION: Do leftist organizations like the PFLP see any danger in the rise of Islamic groups like Hamas?

IBRAHIM: In many parts of the world, religious forces have gained in strength since the decline of the left. In Palestine, the Islamists have decades of tradition

and they can't be compared to Islamic groups in Iran or Algeria. At the moment, the Palestinian people are in a phase of national liberation, and for us as leftists, the main issue is the Israeli occupation. On this issue, we are united with the Islamic groups, in so far as they are also fighting against the occupation. But in almost all other areas, we have large differences with the Islamists, especially in social questions, the status of women in the society, and so on.

QUESTION: You have stated that one mistake of the Palestinian left in the past was to focus the struggle on the Israeli occupation while forgetting the social question, but your organization still considers the Israeli occupation to be its most important issue. How have your politics in fact changed?

IBRAHIM: The main contradiction in the society, the Israeli occupation, became clearer during the Intifada and continues to this day. The Oslo Agreement did not change this. On the contrary: the situation of the Palestinian people has become worse. So for us, the struggle against Israeli occupation has taken on an even greater significance. But we are just as determined to struggle within Palestinian society itself. We work against the policies of the bourgeoisie, assembled in the Palestinian Authority. We are seeking to activate the social work of women, children, youths, and neighborhood committees. Another important issue is freedom for the ca. 3,500 Palestinian prisoners still being held by Israel, and the return of Palestinian refugees in exile.

QUESTION: Has the human rights situation changed at all since the signing of the Oslo Agreement and Arafat coming to power?

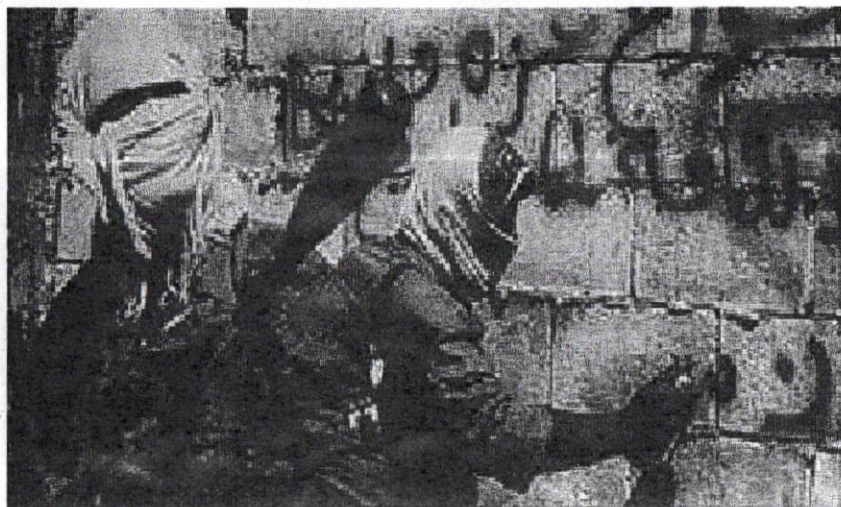


IBRAHIM: Unfortunately, not much has changed. Despite the Oslo Agreement, the occupation continues. The land and the people, except for a few cities, are still controlled by Israel, and they continue to suffer. So human rights violations continue. Some examples: the comprehensive blockades by Israel, which prevent Palestinians from going to work. That results in great financial and psychological strain for people. Then there are the arbitrary arrests at Israeli checkpoints in Palestinian areas, usually without reason. Houses belonging to Palestinian families are destroyed because they supposedly had no building permits. But at the same time, Israel continues to build settlements on Palestinian land. And the torture of Palestinian prisoners is still allowed under Israeli law.

QUESTION: What is the situation of political prisoners in Palestine?

IBRAHIM: The number of Palestinian and Arab political prisoners in Israel is about 3,500. People can be held without charge for 6 months. This time period can be extended, so it's possible for people to be held for more than 6 years without being convicted of anything. 150 political prisoners are under the age of 18. The prisoners are dispersed between 12 different prisons, some of which are just tent camps in the desert. The conditions for prisoners are very hard, especially as far as their health is concerned, which is why 500 or so are very ill. Visits are only occasionally allowed. At the present time, we have launched a campaign for Mohammad Raja Nerat, alias Abou Rafea. He was born in 1929 and has been in prison for more than 25 years. Although he is very ill, he has no chance for release, because he is serving a life sentence, which for Palestinians means they will die in prison. Recently he sent a very personal letter to Palestinian and international organizations. He knows that he doesn't have long to live, but in his letter, he asks people not to forget him. We feel his case is exemplary of the situation of political prisoners in Palestine.

Interviewed by Peter Nowak for 'Sozialistische Zeitung' No 1 1998. Translated by Arm The Spirit



Interview with Jamil Majdalawi

Jamil Majdalawi is a politburo member of the Popular Front for the Liberation Of Palestine (PFLP)

Gaza, January 2001

QUESTION: What is your opinion of the peace process?

MAJDALAWI: It's not possible to say that there is a peace process in the Middle East at the moment. Rather there is an American-Israeli project aimed at liquidating the Palestinian Question. Israel continues to refuse to recognize any Palestinian rights, most importantly our right to self-determination, a Palestinian state, and the right-to-return for refugees. Israel also continues to reject any Palestinian autonomy or rights in Jerusalem. Instead, Israel continues to build new settlements. As long as the rights of the Palestinian people are ignored, we cannot speak of peace.

QUESTION: How strong is the Palestinian left these days?

MAJDALAWI: Historically, the Palestinian left has always been a considerable force. But there have been various tendencies. Alongside the traditional left of the Communist Party there was also the fighting left, characterized by the PFLP (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) and the DFLP (Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine). The latter have always been a considerable presence, sometimes stronger and sometimes weaker. At present, the fighting left is the third strongest force behind Fatah and the Islamists. The Palestinian left was seriously affected by the collapse of the Soviet Union. We in the PFLP took a close look at our history after that to learn from our mistakes. But we do not want to abandon our leftist principles. We are on a path to make the left more effective. Especially now, at a time when the Palestinian bourgeoisie has failed, it is necessary to develop and carry out a social and political program to create a democratic alternative for the Palestinian people.

QUESTION: What mistakes were made in the past?

MAJDALAWI: One mistake was the fact that we did not struggle at all levels against imperialism and Zionism in the region. We thought that just one form of struggle could solve the conflict. We did not clearly see the historical differences between the Zionist project in the region and the Palestinian liberation project. Now we see the conflict in a more comprehensive way. Not just at the level of struggle, but also in an economic, social, cultural, and historical sense. We no longer see armed struggle as the only path to liberation. Rather there are other forms of struggle as well: political, social, cultural, and economic. Another mistake was our failure to recognize the differences between the various communities,

meaning the different national conditions faced by Palestinians in the countries where they live. We did not place enough emphasis on social and democratic struggle. For us today, national liberation also means social liberation. With respect to internationalism, we still view the line of internationalism as an important strategic line. The mistakes we made with respect to internationalism were related to our failure to criticize the practices of the Soviet Union. Today we believe that strategic alliances with allies and friends must be accompanied by criticisms. Because criticism is necessary to stay on the correct path.

This is a very complex issue. The failure of the PLO in the late 1980s gave a great boost to the Islamists. Then came the collapse of the Soviet Union, the crisis of the leftist ideology, and the failure of the Palestinian left (including the PFLP) to create an alternative. The Islamist organizations have a long history as well, one which can roughly be broken down into two phases: the phase before the first Intifada, and the phase after this Intifada. Before, they viewed the left as their main opposition and there were frequent bloody clashes. The Islamists had this approach: first eliminate the left, then take on the Israeli occupation forces. So they were tolerated by Israel at that time and were able to create a vast infrastructure in Palestinian society. At that same time, the leftist forces were being bitterly attacked by Israel. By the time the Intifada began, the left was already bleeding and the Islamists were gaining in strength. But they had to make a choice: continue with their old ways, or struggle together in the Intifada. They chose the latter. Any other choice would have alienated them within Palestinian society, so this created a dynamic whereby the Islamists became a problem for Israel. This situation also altered the reality for the left. It's important to stress that the main contradiction in the view of the left has always been the occupation. That's because this occupation is aimed at liquidating the Palestinian people. So the left cooperates with the Islamists in the struggle against the occupation. This is literally a question of survival. Of course there are contradictions involved in this. There are ideological differences, differences in terms of social viewpoints, and differences with respect to the questions of women, the family, education, democracy, personal freedoms, and so on.

QUESTION: Did the Palestinian left emerge from the first Intifada in a weakened position? If yes, why?

MAJDALAWI: The entire Palestinian liberation movement and all Palestinian organizations emerged from the first Intifada in a weakened condition. The Intifada itself was by no means weak, but its political culmination, the Oslo Accords, was a wasted effort which left all groups worse off than they were before the uprising.

QUESTION: How did the cooperation between the leftist people's committees and the religious forces work?

MAJDALAWI: The Islamist forces were not part of the united national leadership at that time. The national leadership consisted of Fatah, the PFLP, the DFLP, and the People's Party. Nor were the Islamists politically or organizationally active in

the people's committees. Only at the level of individual participation in the committees in some neighborhoods were they involved.

QUESTION: What lessons were learned from that experience?

MAJDALAWI: The Islamists, at that time, did not want to participate in the national leadership. It would have been better for all forces if they had participated. This would have prevented many of the mistakes which weakened the resistance to the occupation. The Islamists carried out their activities parallel to, not together with, the actions of other forces. So there were many protest actions which were isolated from each other. There were also problems during joint demonstrations, because the Islamist marchers took their orders from other leaders than the rest of the participants. But it's essential during demonstrations and other activities to have unity during the action, otherwise it's easy for the Israelis to defeat them. That is one very important lesson from the first Intifada.

QUESTION: What was the PFLP's position during the Gulf War?

MAJDALAWI: The Gulf War had two phases. The first phase was the arrival of the U.S. troops in the Gulf. During this very short phase, the PFLP was opposed to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. We felt that Arab unity should not be achieved through force and that the Iraqi troops should withdraw from Kuwait. Then there should be an Arab solution to the problem. With this in mind, George Habash [PFLP leader] visited various Arab states and sought an Arab initiative to solve this crisis. Two principles were to be central to this initiative: The withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait, and the right to self-determination for the Kuwaiti people. The second phase of the Gulf War was the advance of U.S. and other Western troops into the Gulf region. During this phase, the PFLP placed a priority on the struggle against the imperialist troops. We felt there could not be a solution which sought to strengthen the imperialist domination over the region.

QUESTION: Is it true that the PFLP allied itself with Baghdad for opportunistic reasons?

MAJDALAWI: The relationship between the PFLP and any Arab state is based on the idea that Palestinians and Arabs have common interests. During the Iran-Iraq War, the PFLP's position was against Iraq. This led the Iraqi government to close all PFLP offices in the country and to expel PFLP members. From 1980 to 1989, there were no contacts at all between the PFLP and Iraq. The presence of the PFLP in Iraq was clandestine. In the 1990s, the PFLP did not receive any benefits from a relationship with Iraq. Iraq is in no position to support other forces. Rather Iraq itself needs support against the imperialist powers.

QUESTION: What effect did the Oslo dynamic have on the Palestinian left?

MAJDALAWI: The left did all it could at all levels to resist. At the level of armed

struggle, the left has always been active in Palestine and South Lebanon. At the popular level, the left did what it could to expose the failings of the Oslo Accords. We tried to convince the people not to be led astray by the Palestinian bourgeoisie, the Israelis, and the Americans. At the pan-Arab level, the PFLP was very active, particularly among the Arab masses in other countries, to convince the various independent Arab parties, trade unions, and popular initiatives of the dangers of the Oslo Accords. We wanted to see the creation of an Arabic popular front against the normalization with Zionism, with Israel, and with imperialism. At the inner-Palestinian level, the left fought for democracy and against corruption within the Palestinian Authority. The PFLP also organized protests and supported the struggles by political prisoners in Israeli and Palestinian jails. In the schools and universities, the PFLP organized resistance to the Oslo Accords and its after effects. Israel and the CIA, by means of the Wye River Accord in 1999, tried to exert influence over Palestinian schoolchildren. They wanted the Palestinian Authority to rewrite all textbooks and insert more neutral positions to create an atmosphere friendly towards that USA and Israel. It was only by means of intensive efforts that these plans were foiled. The left did a lot of base work and explaining among the population, and this led to a broad front in resistance to the new pro-imperialist educational curriculum. These are some examples of the daily tasks which the left undertook since 1993 to resist the Oslo Accords.

The left also started to reach out in new directions. The left has been able in recent years to send its political cadre to neighboring countries and the occupied Palestinian territories in order to directly support the struggle of the people against the occupation. Our comrades are at the front lines of the protests in the new Intifada. The greatest achievement of left in its struggle against the Oslo dynamic is the fact that its political work has been well-received by the Palestinian public, to the point that a Palestinian red line has now been drawn which the official Palestinian leadership may not step over. This red line stands for the fundamental rights of the Palestinian people which no representative may violate, namely: self-determination, a Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as the capital, the right-to-return for millions of Palestinian refugees, an end to the occupation, and the dismantling of Israeli settlements.

QUESTION: What relevance does the left have in the new Intifada?

MAJDALAWI: The left, by means of its work of political explanation over the past few years, has strengthened the political atmosphere for the Intifada. At present, the left is involved in all activities of the new Intifada. The left is present on the streets, in the upper coordinating committees, as well as in the people's committees, and is involved in tasks such as caring for poor families, creating political committees, supporting political prisoners, and so on. The left is also involved in the armed struggle as well.

QUESTION: How does the Palestinian left now view the perspective for liberation?

MAJDALAWI: The left views the liberation process as a double-faced process:

social liberation without ending the occupation is just as impossible as ending the occupation without achieving social liberation. In the advance of the social liberation, it is possible to mobilize the people against the occupation. At the same time, defeating the occupation also creates conditions for social liberation. The main task of the Palestinian left is to protect the lives of the Palestinian people and to defend them until conditions have changed fundamentally. To make this defense possible, the left accepts the "two state solution" as a temporary solution. This, of course, is only accepted on the condition that the Palestinian people received their basic rights and the lives of the Palestinian people are protected. From the historical point of view, however, the problem of Zionism remains. So the struggle against Zionism has a strategic dimension. The Zionist-imperialist alliance is an enemy to all people in the region. So the only strategic solution can be a democratic state for all the people who live there, free from Zionism and imperialism. For this struggle to be successful, we need to have the support of the left from all over the world. Therefore international solidarity is a central part of the work of the Palestinian left.

QUESTION: What is the Palestinian left's opinion of the Israeli left?

MAJDALAWI: The Palestinian left only has contacts with anti-Zionist leftist Israeli groups, which are unfortunately very small. We hope that these groups will grow in size and come into a position where they can challenge Zionist ideology within the Israeli society. That's not only in the interest of the Palestinian people, it's also in the interest of the Israeli people. Our contacts with Israeli groups are based on the condition that they be anti-Zionist, that they be opposed to the occupation, and that they recognize the basic rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and the right-to-return for the millions of refugees in the diaspora.

QUESTION: What's the main difference between the first Intifada in 1987 and the present uprising?

MAJDALAWI: First of all, the Palestinian Authority did not exist yet in 1987. The Intifada was an uprising by the people against the occupation. At that time there were only two authorities: The Israeli occupation powers were confronted with the Palestinian people's movement, the only popular authority which the Palestinians had. Today, in addition to the Intifada there is also the Palestinian Authority which has made agreements with the Israeli occupation powers. So they are in a relationship with the occupation powers. This gives them little to maneuver in opposition to the occupation. This means that sometimes the Palestinian Authority is confronted with the emotions of the people and must oppose the tactic of the national leadership and the Intifada. The people expect the Palestinian Authority to fulfill their aspirations with respect to economic and security questions within Palestinian society.

Secondly, the use of force and weapons by the Israelis against the Palestinians during this new Intifada is much more intense and heavier than it was during the

first Intifada. This is evident in the high number of Palestinian casualties.

Thirdly, the national leadership of the Intifada is much better organized than it was before. So it has been in a position to organize the activities of the Intifada while at the same time maintaining civil activities such as schools, businesses, etc. An attempt has been made to accommodate both of these aspects.

Fourthly, this new Intifada has a great deal of solidarity in various Arab countries. The massive solidarity demonstrations on Arab streets have been supported by several regimes.

QUESTION: What are the most significant political tendencies in the Palestinian resistance movement according to the PFLP?

MAJDALAWI: In general, we can identify the following tendencies: The tendency of the national bourgeoisie, mainly represented by Fatah. This line is led politically, socially, and ideologically by the bourgeoisie. The movement's base, however, is represented by the poor masses of the Palestinian society, for example the youths in the refugees camps. Then there is the Islamist tendency, whose leadership comes mainly from the middle classes. It's base is rather mixed. This tendency benefits from the fact that Palestinian society is traditionally a religious society. Then there is the leftist tendency. This tendency is represented by the PFLP and the DFLP. The activists of this tendency come from the Palestinian proletariat. This tendency also includes other organizations, such as the People's Party (formerly the Communist Party), the FIDA group, the Front of People's Struggle, and many individual persons. This tendency encompasses all progressive, secular, and democratic forces. These forces are all based more or less around Marxism.

QUESTION: How would you describe the present situation of the Palestinian left and what is your political position towards the uprising?

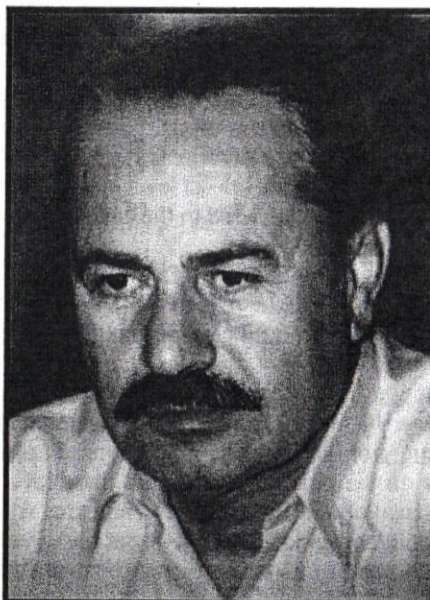
MAJDALAWI: In the past few years, the Palestinian left has been able to spread its roots in Palestinian society. Previously, the Palestinian left was weakened by two main factors: the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc and the general crisis of the left around the globe. But it's possible to say that the retreat by the Palestinian left was less than that suffered by the left in Europe and elsewhere in the world. The PFLP enjoys a special form of credibility among the Palestinian people. By its various forms of struggle and its correct social and political analyses, the PFLP has credibility. The leftist positions with respect to uprisings are united with the goals of the Intifada. The goals are: an end to the Israeli occupation, the creation of Palestinian state with real sovereignty and Jerusalem as its capital, and a guaranteed right-to-return for Palestinian refugees. There is unity around all of these points. So we are all convinced that the Intifada must not end until these goals have been reached. One point where there is disagreement is to what degree the left should participate in the Palestinian Authority. The PFLP and the DFLP are opposed to participation in the Palestinian Authority. There is also disagreement as to what forms of struggle should be used against the occupation. Some people say that it would be better to avoid violence, for example.

QUESTION: What are the immediate and strategic goals of the PFLP with respect to the Palestinian Question?

MAJDALAWI: The immediate goal of the PFLP is the realization of the project of national liberation. The goals of this project are: self-determination, a state with Jerusalem as the capital, and the right-to-return for refugees. The strategic, long-term goals with respect to Palestine concern the creation of a just and peaceful region as a whole. Such a solution can only be realized through the creation of a democratic, secular state which can be home to all the peoples of the region, irrespective of their skin color, religion, or ethnicity. Such a solution would spare the region from the suffering which has been unleashed by the racist ideology of Zionism. This solution would also be an alternative to the creation of two religious states, a Jewish religious state and a religious Palestinian state.

At present, we are united with all national forces who are fighting to end the Israeli occupation. We believe that this is the main contradiction in the present phase of our national liberation. This unity is necessary because we are confronted with such brutality and massive force on the part of the occupation forces. But this does not mean that we ignore the inherent contradictions involved in such a unity. Nor do we overlook the social contradictions. At present, it is in the interest of all the forces of the Palestinian people to struggle against the occupation. The contradictions between the various elements of Palestinian society will then become clearer once we have achieved independence.

Translated by Arm The Spirit from 'So Oder So Online' February 2001



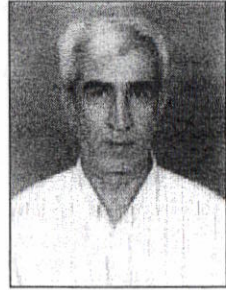
Abu Ali Mustafa

**PFLP General Secretary
assassinated by Israel
August 27th, 2001**



Interview with Ahmad Saadat

Ahmad Saadat was elected General Secretary of the PFLP after the assassination of Abu Ali Mustafa, August 27, 2001. Saadat was arrested by the Palestinian Authority on January 15th, 2002 because of pressure by the Israelis and Americans for the assassination, in November 2001, of the Zionist minister Rehebam Ze'evi by the PFLP's military wing. The action was a retaliation for the Israeli assassination of PFLP leader Abu Ali Mustafa. This interview with the PFLP newspaper Al-Hadaf took place sometime from late November 2001 to early January 2002.



AL-HADAF: A lot has been said about the existence of different trends within the Front, one moderate and the other extremist. How do you respond to that? Is the Front free from internal differences or different orientations? What are the mechanisms for internal dialogue within the Popular Front on the different levels of its hierarchy? Is there any concern about the Front's unity?

SAADAT: It is not strange or wrong for there to be struggle over politics and ideas inside the Front. In fact, that is the natural logic of internal life for any democratic left-wing party. Stormy debate over ideas, policies, and organizational matters gives life and liveliness to any party that strives to renew itself and to follow the new developments in reality. It is unnatural and inappropriate for there to be personal struggles always tied to private interests of individuals that are expressed most of the time in primitive, tribalistic ways, in the form of unprincipled coteries that practice sabotage inside and outside the party, tossing aside the organizational rules that govern relations of the members of the party with its bodies, and the relations of the party bodies inside the hierarchy and structure of the party. These bring the subject of struggles down to the lowest level and prevent their development and elevation to a level where they respond to the concerns and needs of the people and their national and democratic cause.

An end was put to this personal form of struggle in the life of the Popular Front more than two decades ago, although features of it reappear in times of stagnation and crisis. But these are only secondary and marginal manifestations that do not affect the course of the Party.

The essential issue that we must emphasize is that the Popular Front is the most inclined of any of the organizations in the Palestinian national movement to muster the courage to address its situation, problems, and contradictions. This is not only internally, but also realistically on the political and public mass level. People who refer to the documents from the Popular Front's past congresses will see the depth and responsibility of the political review that the Front has given itself at every stage. They will see the courage in its self-criticism of mistaken points of view. The documents of the Sixth National Congress in their various political and organizational aspects did not depart from this basis. In the basic

political document, presented in a programmatic form, diverse points of view were discussed on the subjects, details, and principle areas of difference inside the Front. The convening of the Sixth National Congress resolved in general the basic details of the Front's viewpoint and working program for the coming period. Everyone, cadres, leaders, and members came together on the basis of respect for the Congress's resolutions. At the same time, they practice their right to have distinct viewpoints and to maintain dialogue and struggle over different ideas on the basis of commitment to these resolutions.

Finally I would like to say that we have not yet reached the level of a model Party. I would say, however, and with conviction, that we are proceeding after the Sixth National Congress on the path that will lead us towards fulfilling this ambition, and to achieving qualitative changes in our development, although we may never be able to attain an absolutely ideal situation. The sea of life is always renewing itself and whoever wants to swim in that sea must renew himself at every instant. What is ideal today will be backward and lifeless tomorrow.

AL-HADAF: Some people believe that your own personal situation, as a man wanted by the occupation authorities, will prevent you from fulfilling your new role and mission. How can you overcome that?

SAADAT: I am surprised that this question is raised. Is it necessary that there be one model or arrangement for work in the leadership, for playing the role of top official that must apply to every Palestinian organization? Has not the history of world revolutionary movements presented examples of leading bodies in parties, all of whom were fugitives, outlaws, being pursued by the authorities? In spite of that, they were able to lead their people towards victory. If the general secretary of any party can only work in easy conditions that enable him to hold meetings, to communicate, to use modern technology, and to move freely wherever his work takes him, that would mean either that this leader would be out of the country, or that he be on the alert against doing anything that would anger the Israelis. He would have to declare the peaceful coexistence of his party with the occupation. In such a situation, the enemy would facilitate his mission, and he might become even more famous in the information media that have become adept at manufacturing leaders in our contemporary world.

In the end, the natural condition of a General Secretary of the Popular Front and of its leading bodies is to be wanted people, fugitives of the occupation authorities, inasmuch as we adhere to the Front's program of collision with the occupation. At the same time, necessity dictates that the leaders of the Front must contrive forms for working arrangements that allow them to fulfill their national role and not lag behind in carrying out their obligations to our people and their national and democratic cause. Just as every disease has its cure, the revolutionary knowledge and abundant experience of the Front are a guarantee that we will overcome all the challenges that the reality of struggle with our Zionist enemy places before us.

AL-HADAF: The Martyrdom of Comrade Abu Ali Mustafa has motivated many

members of the Front who have been hanging back or who had left the Front to come back to its ranks. The stage that followed Oslo and before the Intifada, on the other hand, witnessed a decline in the role and activity of the Front. Do you have a plan to bring back the role and place of the Popular Front, and what are its features?

SAADAT: What I can say and what reflects reality is that the Front has correct guidelines in this area, guidelines it has adopted at three stages: the stage of holding the Sixth National Congress, the stage of the Intifada, and the latest and most outstanding stage when the crime of murdering Abu Ali Mustafa inflamed the feelings of comrades and friends and of all Palestinian patriots. It motivated them to return and join the ranks out of loyalty to their leader, to their party, and to their people. I say with optimism that our comrades, men and women, who were officially outside the organizational ranks were never for one day outside of general patriotic activity. Many of them did not wait for initiatives or plans to be issued by the Party. Rather, they signed on and merged themselves and their activity with party work, with the party program. Some of them are cadres who possess gifts and a valuable stock of experience and who have the ability also to participate in drawing up the arrangements and programs to win back those who remain officially outside the ranks of the Party, and also to attract those among the masses who are ready to join the activity of the Party, its institutions, or its associated committees. In the framework of a thorough evaluation and despite my optimism that is derived from my knowing the strength of character and spirit of responsibility that the members of the Party and its cadres possess, their legacy, and militant history, I say that until now the arrangements and programs that have been drawn up do not respond to what is demanded and necessary to integrate the army of the Party into an actual organization and to translate into reality its militant, patriotic, and democratic program. This requires a serious examination by all levels of the general cadres in the Popular Front.

AL-HADAF: The Palestinian Patriotic Democratic Current remains divided despite the efforts that have been made to bring it together and unite it in the course of the past year. These efforts have had no reverberation in the streets. What is your position on that? When will we hear of a Union of Palestinian democrats?

SAADAT: Before uniting the democratic patriotic current there first must be unanimity on what it means, what its ideological identity is, on its political and social program, in order to define the motivating forces of this current and those who support its multifaceted program. This concept is necessarily fluid, yet it provides the bases for leading our people's democratic and patriotic struggle. As we see it in the Popular Front, for this union to be patriotic and democratic in word and deed, it can only be leftist and radically and seriously opposed to the program of the Palestinian Authority. Therefore, it cannot be a part of a coalition within the Authority's government. This is because of the essential opposition of the interests of the popular classes that a democratic union would represent, to the private interests of the class coalition that leads the Palestine Authority. Here

I am not just using empty words. I am talking about a vision based on a reading of the program of the Palestinian bourgeoisie that exercises hegemony over the leadership in the Palestine Authority and the Palestine Liberation Organization in the spheres of national struggle and social construction.

The Palestinian bourgeoisie has chosen the path of negotiations and conciliation with the Zionist entity keeping the struggle as a tactical option that it uses to improve its position every time its negotiations with Israel reach an impasse that aggravates its internal contradictions. Regardless of their intentions, the strategic path that they have chosen for settling the struggle of the Palestinian people with the Zionist enemy and for attempting to attain the components of the national establishment this chosen path, in light of the real balance of forces on the ground locally, regionally, and internationally, leads objectively to frittering away the national rights of our people. If, as a supposition, this choice in the beginning was by way of an erroneous analysis, today after the emergence of the Authority and the concentration of ruling class coalition interests it represents, the chosen path has come to express a vital and strategic interest in remaining in power. Abandoning the path of conciliation would threaten to destroy the agreements that brought the bourgeoisie outside and inside the homeland to the pinnacle of the self-rule government.

Based on this, a position on the Oslo Agreements and on the negotiations on the basis of Oslo, a position on participation in the Palestine Authority, and a clear vision of the importance of the Intifada and resistance struggle and their tasks in the Palestinian National program of struggle, and of the forms and methods of struggle. In general all of these are issues over which unity should be achieved for us to talk about the birth of a new framework for the unity of patriotic and democratic forces and organizations.

To put it briefly and concisely, we can say that what we have just mentioned has not prevented the formation of a circle for dialogue between the Palestinian democratic forces and individuals and social organizations. It has gone a reasonable distance and arrived at a draft that still reflects the continued differences and distinct positions on articulated political questions such as those on our attitude toward the negotiations and on participating in the Authority. The viewpoints of the different participating political forces on these issues have been recorded, and every group has been permitted to bring out the points on which it differs from what is articulated in the draft. In the very near future this draft will be distributed and a call issued to attend an enlarged meeting that we hope will embrace all those interested in the birth of this new organization.

Although the ongoing discussion has not reached a solution to the essential differences between the participants in the preparatory committee, the orientation charted by the preparatory committee is bringing it to the widest possible social circles for participation in correcting the views and programs. This approach should be considered a qualitative move towards activating dialogue to the furthest extent possible. This in itself also reflects a real and serious beginning of the democracy of dialogue that can lead to the birth of an appropriate form for Palestinian democratic work.

AL-HADAF: The Intifada still is in need of active leadership in the field, not to mention its need for a political program and collective political leadership. This situation has opened the door to the initiatives of individuals and the spread of certain negative phenomena in its performance, leading to fears that it may be undermined. How will the Popular Front work to provide political protection for the Intifada and to strengthen its leadership in the field?

SAADAT: Since the Palestinian people's Intifada broke out, fed and strengthened by heroic attacks by resistance fighters, it has carried within itself the possibility of rising and developing and moving on to more advanced things further along the path of attaining the direct national goals of our people at this stage. It also carried within itself the opposite possibility: that it would spin its wheels without moving forward, that it would fail, or take up a position as a tool for clearing away obstacles that hinder negotiations between the Palestine Authority and Israel. To put it more broadly and precisely, it carried within itself a contradiction between two parallel political programs that dovetail to the extent that the programs shared interests.

The first program is the one that sees the path of negotiations as having yielded the maximum possible during at the time of Camp David. This maximum does not reflect the limit that is nationally acceptable in attaining our people's national goals within the framework delimited by the "ceiling" of what United Nations resolutions permit. These national goals are the right of Palestinians to return, to achieve self-determination, and to establish an independent state in the borders of the land occupied in 1967, with Jerusalem as its capital. This program sees that persisting in the negotiations will lead objectively to lowering that "ceiling," that nationally acceptable minimum limit, regardless of what anyone intends or desires. Therefore, this program sees the Intifada and resistance struggle as the alternative dictated by circumstances and by the arrival of the Oslo negotiations at their destined dead end.

The other program, represented by the Palestine Authority, regards the strategic path of the plan for attaining our people's national goals to be negotiations. It sees the Intifada as a tactical means to improve the "ceiling" of what the Israeli side proposes for a peace settlement.

In the framework of this contradiction, the Intifada has continued and the resistance struggle has escalated. Phases of negotiations have also continued in Paris, Washington, Sharm al-Shaykh, and Taba. In addition it was in the framework of this reality that there took place the acceptance of the Mitchell report although it was incapable of giving any practical form to a peace settlement and also the Tenet document on a cease-fire.

Without resolving this contradiction also, we will proceed talking about a duality of political rhetoric, about the need to raise our unity in the field to the level of national political unity, about concern that the Intifada might be overwhelmed by some crippled agreement emerging at a phase of the negotiations, or a lack of symmetry between the Authority's institutional structure and the Intifada's need to develop.

To put it more clearly and exactly and using revolutionary scientific language

far removed from improvisation, we say that a key to the solution of this problem, which keeps dark clouds covering the sky over the Intifada and threatens to cause the loss of its achievements, a key to this solution lies with the Palestine Authority and the actual leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization. They have a key to unity and to elevating the level of unity, a key to organizing the Intifada and building its institutions, a key to protecting it.

This demands that they answer the following question: can the Authority allow the Intifada to be transformed into an open clash with the occupation even if that leads to the legal status of the Authority being taken away by America and the occupation regime? The answer to this determines everything that is required politically: breaking the ties to Oslo, ending the stage of self-rule and moving on to the stage of establishing a state and extending its sovereignty in the framework of a program of struggle that centers on the Intifada and resistance, building a national government or emergency leadership that reflects the unity of our people on the inside [Palestine] and outside, and preparation for rebuilding the Palestine Liberation Organization in accordance with a democratic mechanism and by way of direct popular elections.

The other key lies with the opposition in its two parts, the patriotic and democratic and the Islamic. What are the outlines of its vision of the Intifada and the resistance and, given their positions, which side will they choose in case things come down to a question of continuing the Intifada and resistance or continuing the existence of the Palestine Authority. If the Intifada is their choice, then how will the opposition manage its contradiction as causes for struggle, or causes for dialogue, while there is no dialogue inside the institutions of the PLO and the framework of the patriotic and Islamic forces?

Along those lines, the new international circumstances have deepened the fears of the Palestine Authority, fears that have been with them and never left them, that the continuation of the Intifada and the resistance, and their exceeding the bounds acceptable to Israel, will give the Sharon government an opportunity really to threaten the existence of the Authority and to raise a sharp contradiction between the interests of those associated with the Authority, on the one hand, and the continuation of the Intifada and resistance, on the other.

The killing of the racist Zionist Ze'evi and the Sharon government's large-scale offensive that followed it set off urgent warning alarms in the salons and parlors of the Palestine Authority, which moved immediately and undertook what the masses consider, and what they themselves used to consider, inappropriate or unacceptable, particularly after the land of Palestine had been dyed red by the blood of more than seven hundred martyrs and tens of thousands of wounded.

The question comes back to pose itself once again, "What is to be done?" It finds only one answer: whoever sees in the Intifada a way to the deliverance of the people must struggle first against himself. Secondly, he must struggle to get the Authority to choose the option that is in line with the program of the people, without excluding any democratic means of struggle. Thirdly, he must struggle against the occupation with all the power and resolve he has. The opportunities that are given to peoples in each era are few and they might wait for dozens of years if they do not reach out and grasp them with strength.

AL-HADAF: How do you see the possibilities and paths to participation in Palestinian national political decision making? Will it be through the Palestine Authority's monopolization of decision making even in the framework of a government of National Unity, or will it be through the Palestine Liberation Organization? And what will be the form and content of the national emergency leadership for which you are calling?

SAADAT: I answered part of this question in the course of my answer to the previous question. On that basis, I would say in summary that the leading institution that represents the unity of our people and embodies the content of the aims of its national program is the Palestine Liberation Organization. It is the PLO that must constitute the means for Palestinian decision making. On this basis the first requirement for achieving the participation of all groups and parties and the people in political decision making begins with rebuilding the Palestine Liberation Organization. This must begin with the Palestinian National Council, which still has the composition it was formed with in 1968. Today the "legality of the struggle" is no longer sufficient to confer legitimacy on the PLO as the representative of our people. It has come to require the support of popular legality through the direct, popular election of representatives of the Palestinian guerrilla organizations and institutions to the National Council insofar as that is possible. And that is possible in most concentrations of the masses of our population. This would also conform to the Basic Organization of the Palestine Liberation Organization, second section, paragraph five.

By relying on the PLO as our authority in decision making, we will have met the first of our conditions for an agreement on the outlines of a political program for the period of the Intifada, since it would mean the end of the institutions of the self-rule authority, as expressed groups, for this period. It would mean the transfer of authority to the PLO for a transitional stage until elections for the institutions of the PLO are ready. This is what we called for in the last session of the Central Council. It also formed the basis for our resumption of participation in the Executive Committee. With the launch and continuation of the Intifada the need increased for these steps and for building the institutions of the Palestinian people to provide a conditional cohesiveness for supporting the development of the Intifada and developing it. At the time when the Intifada came to push things in this direction, it also threw down a number of complications besides, providing a permit for the birth of a transitional form that prepares the way to the implementation of these requirements.

On that basis, the proposal tabled by the Popular Front in November sought the transfer of authority to the Palestine Liberation Organization and a declaration of the end of the stage of administrative self-rule. We saw in the Executive Committee, after it was expanded to include all the political forces of our people, and all the popular and social organizations, a model for a temporary national emergency leadership. Its formation would be preceded by a comprehensive national dialogue in which all the political and social representative groups of our people would participate in laying out the political program of this leadership. It would be a program that would focus on setting up the Palestinian state and

extending its sovereignty and on supporting the Intifada and the resistance as the basis for regaining sovereignty in the remainder of the occupied territories. It would also focus on the sort of economic development that would respond to the needs of developing the Intifada and resistance and that center on building an economy of steadfastness and resistance, and radiating democracy in its various forms. As regards the negotiations, it would declare its refusal to negotiate on the basis of the Oslo Agreement and demand to take the file of the Palestinian cause to the United Nations as a legal authority that focuses on the resolutions of international law and as a framework that can force Israel to implement United Nations resolutions that give our people their right to return, self determination, and to their independent state.

Despite the fact that these outlines were ignored, they still represent what is needed and constitute the bridge over which our people will cross from a narrow passage out to the open road of securing the achievements that will take them towards attaining their national program. At the same time there remain subjects requiring popular discussion or struggle for their attainment. Dialogue by itself changes these visions into rhetorical expressions in a well with no walls. What can transform them into reality is the combination of responsible dialogue and mass struggle that presses for the creation of the equations that it throws out as working problems.

AL-HADAF: The popular character of the Intifada is still limited. What are the mechanisms for activating it, and what is the role of the institutions of civil society in that?

SAADAT: The popular character of the Intifada cannot be activated by a bureaucratic political decree from above, issued by the Patriotic and Islamic leadership. Rather, the institutions that represent the different sectors of our people must undertake to draw up their programs and activities so as to bring about the participation of all those sectors of our people. But the Palestinian mentality has developed according to the principle "either black or white." I say this because some might believe that the escalation of the resistance constitutes a substitute for or an obstacle to that participation. This needs to be corrected. For popular resistance in the broad sense of the term implies both armed resistance and popular activities at the same time. Popular activities spur the escalation of the resistance, and the reverse is also true and logical. Therefore, it is necessary that the leadership of the political forces out of which branch the leaderships of the popular institutions that represent all social sectors push for the activation of our popular institutions. This can produce the necessary integration between the work of the vanguard (undertaken by the formations of the resistance) and the various, indeed unlimited, forms of popular struggle. In this way our struggle can take on the form and content of a comprehensive popular revolution.

AL-HADAF: How do you see the relationship between the political parties and the organizations of civil society including non-governmental organizations? What is the mechanism for linking them together?

SAADAT: That mechanism requires a basis of productivity and professionalism rather than membership in one of the political organizations or in extended families, or patronage. The popular institutions aside from the aspects which could be criticized, such as their sources of funding, or the role of this or that particular institution with their general orientation on the network's activity and actions, serve to complement the role of the political parties in supporting the Intifada and resistance struggle. This is in addition to their nominal roles in responding to the needs of the poor among the people, whether that be in the area of health care, or agriculture, or human rights, or family care, or help with household finance, or training for qualifications, or other fields of endeavor. This role has become prominent in the area of energizing the struggle for the right of return, and energizing Europeans around the slogans for international and popular protection, whereby groups of volunteers take up positions in areas of confrontation. In addition, there was the outstanding role played by the network of such groups in the Durban Conference and the level of pressure and influence they exerted in cooperation with the Arab popular institutions and friendly international institutions. To sum up, we view with satisfaction the role of the popular institutions and the maturation of their leaderships, but we should not stop at just "being satisfied." We must reinforce the role of these institutions by energizing the complementary, democratic relationship between them and the political parties, and by impelling their leaders to advanced positions in national decision making and in leading bodies of the Intifada, including their positions in the parties' centers of political decision making, in order to bring about a situation where there is mutual influence between their role and the role of the political parties, and in order to bring about the necessary development of the networks and channels of political activity in Palestinian society.

AL-HADAF: The Popular Front made a name for itself by its innovation of popular strategic slogans. But these slogans have stopped short of being translated into detailed practical slogans, whether nationally or democratically and socially. Is there a plan to overcome this difficulty? How is the Popular Front working to create deeply rooted, detailed slogans that also enjoy popularity?

SAADAT: The description you gave in your question is correct, and it reflects an organizational, structural, and programmatic defect. The basis for this defect is that our leadership does not bring together in its primary leading center all the preliminaries, outlines, and draft resolutions of organizations, departments, and specialized committees that it needs in the fields of national and social democratic struggle. In addition, the central leadership has a weakness in the area of its role in the field. This is the role that brings it close to feeling the concerns of the masses, to defining their needs, and re-formulating them in the form of a slogan and a goal and in laying down the mechanism to attain it.

Our comrade, the outstanding leader Abu Ali Mustafa felt this defect and proposed two essential points for a program to organize our work. The first focused on the need for the Central Committee to divide work among specialized committees like parliamentary committees to energize it as a comprehensive

institution striving to achieve comprehensive development of the Party's mechanisms in all fields. The second point was a reorganization of the specialized departments, the political and the organizational as specialized leading committees operating within the Political Bureau. The point also provided for the addition of two departments: the first for democratic and social work that was to be an incubator for preparing resolutions and drafts by specialists in those areas. The second new department was to be the Department for our People's Affairs in the part of Palestine occupied in 1948, which would pay careful attention to the specifics of the struggle of our people in this part of the homeland and would have the ability to set priorities in defining goals and giving direct guidance in the struggle. This was so that our vision would be realistic and able to amass the factors needed to arouse the hidden strengths to bring about the necessary militant action and to achieve a comprehensiveness in the mechanisms of our party for all the communities of our people in all the areas where they live.

When conditions did not promote the formation of the first proposed committees, our programmatic planning turned to the formation of the specialized departments, with the intent to re-energize the Political Bureau and Central Committee as contemporary institutions to step-by-step strengthen the relations of the leading bodies with the communications channels to the masses and the departments and committees that branch out from them. By grasping that second ring we can grasp all the necessary links to overcome our shortcomings. I believe that we have taken steps forward along these lines under the leadership of our comrade and leader, the martyr Abu Ali, and we must complete the task, and move our feet on the ground firmly and with confidence.

AL-HADAF: One of the weak points of the Intifada has been the lack of an official Arab embrace of it, and the weakness of the embrace of the Arab people. Do you have an idea of how to move on this level?

SAADAT: To grasp this subject at its first and most basic level, I would say that before the Intifada needs an official Arab embrace, it requires an official Palestinian embrace. Until now, and as I indicated earlier, the official Palestinian leadership has not defined the position of the Intifada in its program. This justifies us in referring to a lack of a unified national program to protect and support the Intifada. Therefore, providing an official Palestinian embrace to the Intifada will at the same time provide the premises for an official Arab embrace. If the official Palestinian position does not hold together when it is presented in Arab official circles, that fact will provide a cover for the incapacity of many of the Arab regimes, allowing them to slip out of their national duty to the Intifada. The simplest example is the issue of breaking diplomatic relations and stopping all forms of normalization with the enemy. How can such a decision be taken when open and secret political meetings [between the Palestinian leadership and the Israelis] have continued all throughout the course of the Intifada including in its most intensely escalated periods? Or, how can we insist upon a resolution reaffirming our stand for a comprehensive solution of all the issues of the struggle with Israel, and on all the fronts Syrian, Lebanese, and Palestinian while the smoke that rises

from the kitchens that cooked up the agreements of Taba, Washington, and Cairo hasn't cleared for a moment? The point of beginning and the tie that makes our position solid and firm is securing a solid Palestinian national embrace for the Intifada. This in turn will transform us into a body to exert real pressure, in addition to the pressure of the Arab people, to work for solid and firm official Arab resolve.

As to the popular embrace throughout the whole Arab Homeland, this matter requires effort and a systematic plan in order to activate all the forms and frameworks of popular Arab activity, so as to supply them with a solid position derived from the field of confrontation, and with the means of support that we need. This is apart from the fact that it is a project of the forces that are in agreement with the option of the Intifada and resistance as a basis for achieving our Palestinian people's goals at this stage. It is also a basic task for our people's political forces beyond Palestine.

AL-HADAF: Since 1990 the situation has been hard on the Palestinian cause. That situation was made more complicated after the explosions in New York and Washington and the ensuing war against Afghanistan and other candidate countries. How will you handle these circumstances in a way that serves the Palestinian cause?

SAADAT: If we agree that the Intifada and the resistance constitute a situation wherein our people are defending their national rights, their land, their holy places, their national identity, and their culture and dignity, then based on that we must demand a solution that goes beyond the declared Israeli maximum. This approach leads to the consecration of the logic of pragmatism while it obscures the principled opposition that we must take toward the new imperialist hegemony of globalisation being forced upon the countries and peoples of the world. This approach also leads objectively, under the mantle of warding off dangers and denying Sharon opportunities to profit from the international situation under American cover, to pressure on the Palestinian Authority to stop the resistance and the Intifada, lest it be consigned to the "terrorist" category. This position has had ramifications, beginning with the repression of the student demonstration in Gaza, and going as far as opening fire on them. There has been an attack on the Popular Front because it undertook to kill one of the most prominent symbols of racism and criminality in the Zionist government in response to its policy of assassinations and its targeting of the first political ranks of the Palestinian leadership. I hope that this does not continue, because a policy that is not built on a principled basis, that focuses on illusions, will only lead to frittering away our factors of strength and our means of self-defence, leaving us exhausted and incapable even of achieving the kind of solutions that were offered to us in the past.

The second approach to the Intifada centers on the principled position that is based on the place occupied by the Palestinian struggle on the map of global contradictions and the international and Arab revolutionary effort. This leads us to stake out a position that condemns the form of terrorism exported by Americans as globalisation, the latest form of their imperialism; to use this position to forge

alliances between the Arab regimes and the Arab popular forces that are opposed to the latest war of aggression against the peoples; and to strive to form the broadest possible world front to stand in the face of the new imperialism. Of overarching importance is that this three-fold tactic be applied in tandem with an escalation of the Intifada and the resistance. Otherwise, if the Intifada and the resistance decline while more moderate parallel activities are being pursued, the self-interest of our Palestinian people will be forfeited.

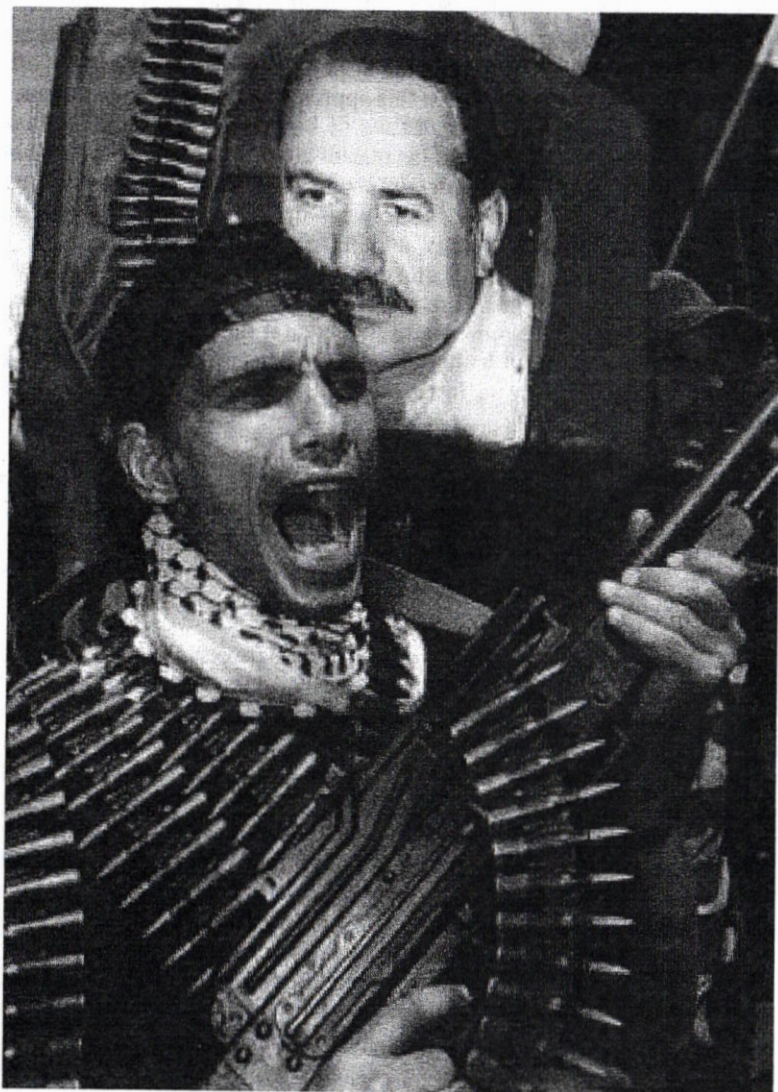
One may choose to avoid confronting a bull while it is stampeding around him, but avoiding confrontation at such a moment does not alleviate the eventual or present danger of falling under its hooves. Avoiding confrontation might appear "wise" and "logical" to one who draws up his policies in the coffee houses, offices, and parlors of diplomatic activity. But this approach appears impotent to one who builds his political position on the results of battles in the field. The contrast likens that between a slave who sees his master angry and breaks his strike out of fear of punishment and the free man who works as a slave, confronts his master, and starts a slave revolt that sweeps away his master's authority, liberating all slaves and returning bread, humanity, and dignity to each one of them.

The point of departure in this situation is in defining the goals of the mad bull. We all agree that these goals are evident in America's efforts to achieve total world hegemony. This hegemony means that even if the bull does not trample us today, it will trample us under its hooves and finish us off tomorrow. So which is the more useful policy, then, to resist this bull, or to throw ourselves under its hooves?

AL-HADAF: There exist international situations that in many ways parallel the Palestinian situation, such as Ireland, the Basques, and South Africa. Is the Popular Front clearly familiar with these situations, especially as regards secret and open work, forms of struggle, and organization? What can you derive from these situations that can be applied to the work of the Popular Front?

SAADAT: I agree that there are broad parallels between the conditions of the struggle of our people and the struggle of the Irish and Basque peoples, particularly after the birth of the Oslo Authority and the deepening of linkages between our national and our social democratic goals. This conclusion leads to the need for organizational forms of work that are appropriate to the actual conditions of our struggle. What is needed is a solid apparatus for struggle that is able to resist and to achieve the successes that lead to victory, the successes that we need for our national struggle against the occupation. In addition we need an open political and mass organization to lead the masses to play a national role and defend their democratic and social democratic rights. The preliminaries for this form of struggle were there in the years of struggle against the occupation, and it was possible to effect a qualitative leap in the mass organization, to unite it into a mass political apparatus that constitutes the open side of the party organization. What happened, in fact, was that things were turned over and we walked on our heads, rather than on our feet. This caused great damage in the form of losing mass support and great power in the conditions of an explosion of the national struggle with the

occupation, and in past times it resulted in lagging behind in the social democratic struggle. Nevertheless, argument is still taking place within leading circles of the party with the aim of arriving at the most correct organizational work forms, and with the aim of building all the necessary organizational forms to lead the complex struggle of our people in the national and social democratic spheres. I believe that reality and the ramifications of struggle with the occupation will bring us closer to building ourselves up according to the most correct form, the one most appropriate for our work.



Interview with Leila Khaled

Leila Khaled, a member of the Central Committee of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and member of the Palestine National Council, has said that some officials in the Palestine National Authority, some cabinet ministers and other security chiefs, have made statements reflecting a sharp difference of opinion, a fact indicating that there are open lines to the Israelis or the Americans with the aim of making sacrificial offerings to please Israel and America so that they will make this or that person the outstanding figure in the coming period.



Khaled as PFLP guerrilla in 1970

She added in an interview with the United Arab Emirates paper "al-Bayan," published on May 22, 2002, that Sharon's campaign against the Palestinian people has not yet borne fruit, and that the Palestine Authority is called upon to benefit from its experience of previous negotiations with the Zionists in order to reach the goals and regain the rights that all strata of the Palestinian people are working to compel Israel to accede to.

Leila Khaled said that what is taking place in the region is bigger than the power of the Palestinian armed organizations to confront, but that does not mean that they cannot resist it and halt it. She pointed out that the current period is one in which Washington has declared that whoever is not with it is against it. The following is the text of the interview as it appeared in "al-Bayan" newspaper.

QUESTION: There are those who say that the Palestinian negotiating practices have led to the big holes that the Palestine Authority has kept falling into over many long years. How do you read the political movements of the Palestine Authority in view of what is said to the effect that the more pressure that is applied to the Authority, the more it makes concessions?

KHALED: I believe that the Oslo line in addition to a failure to review the eight years of political activity and the latest all-out offensive indicate that this entity is just being lead by a gang, and that gang is not fit for negotiating.

If we examine what went on during the recent invasion we will be convinced that none of the results that the Palestine Authority with its old mechanism aspired to will be attained. It has been tested in the past, and has been tested up until now and at every stage it has established its failure and inability to fulfill the dreams of the Palestinian people. Unfortunately and in spite of all the appeals that were issued, whether within the Palestine Liberation Organization or outside of it on

the part of the Hamas Movement and the Islamic Jihad Movement, the leadership of the Authority has not made any real changes. On the contrary, it continued on its course of relying on negotiations "à la Oslo" as if this approach had not pushed the Palestinian people and their cause into the blind alleys of obscurity and frustration. The situation reached a point where people in the Palestinian and Arab arenas were tired of it all.

Sharon declared a war, not an offensive, which means that the enemy and the Israeli declarations are breaking through to any goal that this gang wants to attain through military and propaganda force, the power of money, and the activities that impel the whole world to overlook its actions.

Sharon's goals were to strike the infrastructure of the whole society and then to strike all the institutions of the Palestine Authority, to undermine the image of the Authority in the eyes of the people. Another point is that they wanted to create such ruin that it will force the Palestinian to say "I agree to any solution that is proposed, even if it means expulsion from Palestine." But the Palestinian reaction has established the opposite of what this gang, and behind them a number of countries, wanted. Sharon and his army bruised their noses on the gates of Jenin. Besides that, the siege of the President in his headquarters increased popular Arab and international support for him. In the past we have not witnessed international popular support. This proves that Sharon emerged from the destruction of Jenin defeated.

Another point is that despite Sharon's attempt to break up the infrastructure of the society and the infrastructure of the resistance, the people, whether in the organizations or the ordinary folks, are still resisting. They have not managed to expel the people. Instead we have witnessed how families stay on the ruins of their houses. The thought of moving doesn't occur to them.

QUESTION: Do you want to say that the Israeli policy as we have come to know it has not advanced even one step forward during the occupation state's recent military operations, and that Sharon has not attained any political goals through his action?

KHALED: At this stage it is not possible to say that since the war has not been completed and the [Zionist] army is still in the [Palestinian] cities.

QUESTION: To return to Palestine Authority's current working mechanism. You said that the Authority continued on its course of relying on negotiations "à la Oslo" and that it has not benefited from its past experience. But there are those who say that the opposition circles should keep silent about violations by Palestine Authority officials at this time until we get out of the crisis?

KHALED: It's not a matter of keeping silent. It's a matter of responsibility. This is what we have exercised. All the Palestinian circles have presented a number of initiatives and visions for the coming period, and how to get out of it with the most minimum Palestinian losses. We said, "Let us review Palestinian policy and the framework in accordance with which the Authority proceeds, the problem of

corruption, and the apparatus of the Authority. We have condemned political arrests and the state security courts because we see that them as part of a pattern of striking blows at general freedoms in Palestinian society, and we still condemn this. We have tried by peaceful and democratic means to rally the masses around it in order to press the Authority so that the Palestine Authority would not turn into a tool in the hands of Israel, as is envisaged by the Israelis who aspire to having the agencies of the Palestine Authority reduced to the role of a tool of Israeli security. Current Palestinian experience demonstrates that these Israeli hopes have been nothing but silliness and wishing in the wind, because we have seen how the Palestinian security men deal with the Zionist occupation. But today one of the conditions put forward by the United States of America and Israel after this experience is that the Palestinian security forces must be combined into one agency under a leadership that Israel approves of. Unfortunately, the reorganization of the Palestine Authority has come in response to an American-Israeli demand, and not based on the need that was basically an urgent need already. Therefore we say that any response to any Israeli conditions, whether related to security matters or to other things, just shows that the modality of Palestinian political activity and the Authority's course have not changed and they have not benefited from anything that has happened. We have noted that the statements by officials of the Palestine National Authority, cabinet ministers and chiefs of security agencies, reveal differences of opinions indicating that there are open lines to the Israelis or the Americans with the aim of delivering sacrificial offerings to please Israel and America so that that they will make this or that person the outstanding figure in the coming period.

QUESTION: Do you think that the sacrificial offering is precisely the Palestinian people?

KHALED: The Palestinian people have never for a day been a sacrificial offering. They are a sacrifice for their homeland alone.

QUESTION: Some say that what happened to the General Secretary of the Popular Front was the presentation of a sacrificial offering?

KHALED: We have declared our position rejecting this measure. We condemned his arrest and all the Palestinian forces and the masses were with us. Many marched in numerous spontaneous demonstrations in front of the presidential headquarters to condemn the arrest [of the Ahmad Saadat, General Secretary of the Popular Front], and to state that this arrest was an offense and that it is impermissible for the Palestine Authority to go to such lengths. Fighters must not be put on trial. What does Ze'evi represent to the Palestinian people? Or to the supreme national interest of the Palestinian people? His was the strongest voice calling for the expulsion and "transfer" of the Palestinians from their homeland. Rather than bringing Sharon and his gang before an international court for trial as war criminals, and regardless of any pressures that might be exerted on President Yasir Arafat, we find no justification for this arrest [of the PFLP General Secretary

and other militants] or for other unacceptable measures that have been taken to complete the course he has begun. We have said and still say that we must learn lessons from our own history of dealing with these Zionists. Until now we have not heard a single voice coming from the Palestine Authority demanding the arrest of the killer of the Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa [PFLP General Secretary, assassinated by the Israelis in August 2001]. This does not mean that we are unaware of the difficulties to which the Palestinian leadership and President Yasir Arafat personally have been subjected. But this absolutely does not excuse such concessions. They are unacceptable and harmful to the public welfare of the Palestinian people. They tear apart Palestinian national unity, whether that be at the level of the unity of the armed organizations or at the level of the people. Everyone has noticed that the siege of Yasir Arafat ended after the conclusion of the agreement of the six militants who were handed over so that they could be put under American and British control, and that this came in just this form so as to serve as a precedent for putting the whole Palestinian struggle on trial under the claim that it is "terrorism."

QUESTION: After Ahmad Saadat was handed over, many eyes have looked to your organization to see what your reaction would be. There has been a discussion of the arena for action for the opposition within the framework of the Palestine Liberation Organization. How do you read this arena for action?

KHALED: It's not a matter of the Popular Front alone. It is a concern of the whole Palestinian people. For example we have noted that the Authority's second agreement was the agreement that ended the siege of the Church of the Nativity. This points to the dangerous nature of the course that the Palestine Authority is following. It has begun to legitimize things that are unacceptable. It has made one concession after another at the expense of national principles. So at this stage, we see stamp of Palestinian legitimacy being put on the expulsion of Palestinians, whereas we used to fight to expose Israel for its practices of expulsion and exiling [of our people], this is regardless of the personalities in the Palestine Authority for there are those who act behind one's back and there are those who maneuver under the table, and in general this matter is no longer unknown to anybody. All this was completely exposed on the Arabic satellite TV networks. This means that the Palestine Authority no longer enjoys the trust of its people. All those unacceptable measures on the part of the Authority have taken place at a time when the Palestinian wound is still fresh.

QUESTION: We understand that tacitly the change of the Authority and this is unique has become a Palestinian, American, and an Israeli demand?

KHALED: No. There is a difference. The American and Israeli demand is for a restructuring of the authority, meaning that the personalities in it must have the blessings of America and Israel. In any case, there are differences between America and Israel. Sharon does not want Arafat and the United States still says that Arafat is the elected Palestinian president.

As for us, we say, we want a serious review of administrative and financial corruption in the Authority. We have presented files about that to President Arafat, following up on the subject, yet nothing of that sort has happened. These big mistakes have been committed, yet when we speak of political, administrative, and financial reforms we do not approach them as if they were the main contradiction facing our people. Our main contradiction is with the occupation. At the moment when the [Israeli] offensive was against Yasir Arafat as a symbol and as the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the President of the Palestine National Authority, all of us lined up behind him. We said clearly that we don't want and we will not accept Sharon changing our leadership. We united during this attack as one unit. But when we encounter a political error, we say "this is a political error," and we mobilize the masses of our Palestinian people so that the picture will become clear before our people. We are in a state of war, and in this situation the leadership should become a leadership of national emergency. Unfortunately, this has not taken place and we are still screaming "Release the prisoners!" "Don't agree to expulsion!"

QUESTION: The reaction of the Palestinian armed organizations indicates that they feel that what is going on is bigger than it is?

KHALED: That's right. Is there anything bigger than the United Nations as a source of international legality? Yet this legality was not able to move one ambulance to save wounded people.

QUESTION: Are we in the conditions of 1936 and 1948?

KHALED: We are in the conditions of 2002 after America has declared that whoever is not with it is against it, so it will fight "terrorism," and it has called all the strata of the Palestinian resistance "terrorist." As to us, we see that their main aim in that is to strike at the fighting spirit of the people. For that reason Yasir Arafat was besieged. For he possesses a history of struggle, in spite of his signature on the Oslo agreements. To put it simply, what they want is an Antoine Lahd [one-time commander of the south Lebanese militia that served as puppet forces of the Israeli occupation]. For them it is unacceptable for Arafat to be anything less than that. Because he refused that, he was besieged.

QUESTION: Did he refuse or was he simply not able to?

KHALED: No. No. He refused. But he was not able to bridle the existing situation in Palestine. And in general, no one will be able to stop our people from struggling. To be more precise, Yasir Arafat believed that by concluding the Oslo agreements he would be able to attain a Palestinian state, simply by being there. Yet in the end we saw how the Palestine Authority was less capable than its people. In fact it showed that it was incapable of understanding this enemy, in spite of the fact that the the Zionist movement, according to my opinion, is the biggest and strongest movement that human history has witnessed in the course of time. Yet the Palestine

Authority continued to deal in its negotiations and its reactions to this movement in a childish way.

I remember in this connection, I remember the 33rd Zionist Congress that was held in 1997 in Basle, Switzerland. There they said that their congress was being held at the time of four anniversaries: a century since the foundation of the Zionist movement, eighty years since the Balfour Declaration, fifty years since the establishment of the Israeli state, and thirty years since the unification of the capital city of Jerusalem. Then they discussed the coming century, in general dividing this period with one agreement.

Voices were raised at the congress asking, "do we want the Palestinians to have a state?" and the answer of the Zionist movement was: "No."

This answer meant that the whole scenario according to which the negotiations and other things were being carried on would absolutely never arrive at a Palestinian state. Not because the Zionist movement in its latest congress resolved as such, but because the facts do not say that there is a possibility for this Palestinian state to arise. When Sharon entered the election campaign, he clearly declared his political platform. It said that the Palestinians might have just 42 percent of the land under the obscure description that what they could have would be "less than a state, but more than self-rule." They would be, on this basis, free to choose the level they want between those two limits, whether it had to do with the criteria under their control, or with borders, trade, etc. Then there was another dangerous point that was adopted by the Zionists, and that was to determine the Palestinian negotiator himself. Shimon Peres pointed to this when he said, "there were times when we were negotiating with ourselves." But I want to confirm here that the Zionist resolutions are not a sealed fate for us, particularly since we are a people who resist and deserve to win. This is what compelled the United States of America in the person of George Bush to say that there was "a vision of a Palestinian state." Although that statement doesn't mean anything in practical terms, unless if we were able to play a role in the direction of mobilizing the Arab Nation that is basically with us, in addition to all the forces of progress in the world.

QUESTION: You in the Palestinian leadership have not succeeded until now in mobilizing the Palestinian people, disbursed throughout the globe. I want to point here to the Zionist movement and what you indicated to the effect that it was able to form a worldwide front to work in its favor. Yet Palestinian militant activity still ignores the Palestinians on the outside.

KHALED: What more can be done than the way things are now? In particular, since the present Intifada raised the ceiling of Palestinian work on the outside as regards the demand for the right of return. It cannot be denied that the Palestinians disbursed abroad have begun to raise their voices loudly to call for the right of return to their houses. This demand is no simple thing and there are attendant upon it a number of activities and actions all of which have compelled the Arab states to declare their initiative that raised the ceiling of Arab demands.

Have you not noted that the emergence of the committees concerned with the return and the activities they undertake have rewound Palestinian readiness

to return to the homeland? I would like to point out that we are not acting using a remote-control device. We do not want to forget that the Oslo agreements led to a division in the Palestinian street. They disappointed the people and created an atmosphere of despair. In addition, there have been the Arab peace agreements from Camp David to Wadi 'Araba that left the Arab world in a wretched situation. Faced with these conditions, is it possible for leaders to work in so calm a manner?



QUESTION: This was noteworthy among the Palestinians disbursed abroad. But is it possible for this "consciousness" to lead to some kind of movement among the Palestinians on the outside, in your view? That is, is it possible to summon up the era of the Popular Front in the seventies?

KHALED: I will come back at you with an opposite question. Did you ever hear of any demonstrations in the streets of Muscat and other cities in Oman? They are happening now. This shows that Palestinian blood has also been transfused into the veins of Omanis, and of Saudi brothers and sisters too. This is a kind of progress that leads to great optimism. We cannot forget what the brothers did in Bahrain. They have even begun to talk about the American military installations. Look at what the Kuwaitis have done! They all rose in response to the blood of the Palestinians. But I must say that I am absolutely not for the Arab Nation being turned into charitable associations. Certainly it is important that financial assistance be provided because the infrastructure of the Palestinian society has been totally destroyed. But it is more important to prevent destruction in the first place, and to take resolute positions.

Interview with Ahmad Saadat from Jericho Prison

Ahmad Saadat, the imprisoned General Secretary of the PFLP speaks to the London-based newspaper "al-Hayat" from the Jericho prison by telephone. This interview was conducted by Fathi Sabbah late May 2002.

QUESTION: How do you evaluate the situation now after the storm of the Israeli operation "Protective Wall" has died down a little?

SAADAT: The guns have quieted down somewhat after a military strike aimed at destroying the Palestinian infrastructure, whether that was the infrastructure of the Palestine Authority, or the political infrastructure of the national movement, or the social and cultural infrastructure. There is a feverish effort now on the part of the American Administration, the government of Ariel Sharon, and the staff of Zionist entity to gather the political harvest, by which I mean to exploit the military campaign and impose the Zionist Israeli concept of a settlement on the Middle East region. This settlement that has postponed the implementation of international resolutions, has not withdrawn from the territories occupied in 1967, nor recognized an independent state in those territories including in Jerusalem, their capital city nor implemented UN Resolution 194 that provides for the right of our people's refugees to return to their homes. Unfortunately this image is being consecrated with the agreement of the Arabs. Sharon's call to convene an international peace conference has been adopted in accordance with his conditions aimed at exploiting the part of the so-called Arab peace initiative that deals with it specifically that part of the Arab initiative that provides for normalization of relations with the Zionist entity. At the same time imposing the logic of his government on the perimeters and mechanisms of a peace settlement, although it is understood that Sharon does not want a political solution, nor any settlement. What he wants is to consecrate that status quo through military force. I believe that this is the general direction of the political movement that the United States is leading in the region. It is also aimed at containment of the militant Palestinian situation and the militant Arab situation, and at containment of all the achievements attained by Palestinian steadfastness in the face of the Zionist offensive in order to bend them into conformity with this plan. On the other side there is the viewpoint of the Popular Front that is based on the right of our people to struggle and attain their national and Arab aspirations for independence, return, self-determination, and their legitimate right to resist the hostile enterprise on the basis of a comprehensive program aimed at regaining the Arab popular movement and the popular public opinion that supports our cause in Europe and America and to build on these achievements in order to create new balances that can pressure Israel to implement international resolutions and to attain a settlement for this stage of the struggle.

QUESTION: Don't you think that what you said about the American position contradicts the vision that President George Bush presented of two states for two peoples, or is that in accord with Sharon's vision of a settlement?

SAADAT: I believe that the contradiction between Sharon's government and the American political rhetoric that talks of a settlement is just apparent. In particular, the American talk that is only about a state could agree with what Sharon wants. America has not used its influential role on the international political level to compel Sharon to implement all the international legal resolutions. This apparent contradiction takes place in the framework of the bilateral discussions between Sharon and America. We cannot build on that in order to win America's standpoint over to the side of the struggle of our people because of the position that Israel occupies in the framework of the comprehensive and regional strategic vision of defending the new world order and American interests in the Middle East region.

QUESTION: What is your view of the Arab initiative?

SAADAT: For there to be an initiative, there must be something new in it. What is new in it is the comprehensive readiness of the Arabs, decided by consensus, unfortunately, for a historic settlement with the Zionist entity and a solution on 22 percent of the land of Palestine, together with talk about the right of return in which there is no call upon Israel to adhere to Resolution 194. I see this as a new concession under the signboard of the search for any solution at all for the Palestine problem, something that puts all the Arab regimes under obligation to defend the Palestinian Arab people and the Palestinian cause as the core of the Arab cause.

QUESTION: Don't you see the resolution of the Central Committee of the ruling Israeli Likud Party as an acceptance of this initiative?

SAADAT: I think that before the Likud issued its resolution, the Arab initiative encouraged Sharon to invade the Palestinian territories.

QUESTION: How do you evaluate the performance of the Palestine Authority on the ground during the recent invasion?

SAADAT: What happened during the recent invasion is the result of an accumulation from the previous stage; an accumulation of weakness that began with the agreement to enter into the course of the Madrid Conference and wound up with the Oslo Agreements and their implementation. The Palestine Authority, in the framework of a comprehensive evaluation, was not able to carry on correct political negotiations and to make gains and achieve results on the ground. It was not able to seize control of the fundamentals for defending the Palestinian people, nor to build institutions that could run the social and vital affairs of the people, nor to lay the foundations for the birth of a modern and democratic political system able to arouse enthusiasm, harness energies, and employ them in the cause of domestic construction. Therefore the performance was overwhelmingly a failure.

If we discuss the confrontation with the enemy, despite the existence of a point of brilliance here or there in the heroic and epic scene that our people recorded in the camps of Jenin, Bulata and Nablus, there was no real confrontation of the Israeli aggression and invasion. The question that poses itself is: Didn't the Palestine Authority expect an attack such as this? The Palestine Authority battled the other forces on the basis of the need for there to be one authority, one decision making body, of the need for armed activity to be properly organized. It confiscated weapons from the opposition and seized arms, yet we did not see any direct presence in the efforts to repulse the offensive. Even at the headquarters of President Arafat there was no attempt to prevent the occupation from reaching it, and by attempt here I mean something that might have succeeded or failed.

In sum, the performance on all levels was zero. This fact requires all Palestinians and the political forces to stop and devote some serious new thought to what took place in order to draw lessons and conclusions.

QUESTION: Is the talk about reform, which you call reconstruction, going on upon the bases that you propose or on other bases and from other premises that perhaps America and Israel desire?

SAADAT: Everybody now is talking about construction and change and we call these "things that must be done." So the abrogation of the National Charter is called "something that must be done for peace." And a cease-fire is called "something that must be done." And political arrests are called "things that must be done for the good of the national interests of the Palestinian people." I say that change must be in response to and in answer to the needs of the people, and no one can tell them how to change.

Before making changes there must be an evaluation. We must draw lessons from every past political stage, and politics must be reconstructed. We must benefit from all the achievements that the people have won on the ground. On the basis of the policy that we construct, we will build the apparatus, we will build the apparatus of the Palestine Liberation Organization that we consider to be the framework that reflects the unity of our people and the content of their rights.

We must build a unified national leadership that represents all the political and social strata of the people, established for subsequent changes through democratic elections. I will mention here the resolutions of the last session of the Central Council that met about a month before the outbreak of the Intifada and that called for these things that must be done. It called for reconstructing the Palestine Liberation Organization and the National Council on the basis of the internal rules of the Organization, and not the superficial changes imposed from above by the President (Yasir Arafat).

QUESTION: Will the Popular Front respond to the demand in the street for change and take part in the process or will it simply criticize from the outside and from far away, as it usually does, according to some observers?

SAADAT: When there is value in participation from within, we are inside the

institutions. But when we lose hope in their ability to respond to what is needed according to the logic of the demands of our people we must be outside, just like any political party at times takes part in the existing political establishment and sometimes is outside it.

The Popular Front, like all political forces, is called upon not simply to talk about change but to wage a struggle for it. History has not recorded any class or stratum or political group that answered to the need for change automatically by itself. Events happen through popular democratic struggle that imposes change on those who don't want it.

QUESTION: If President Arafat called on you and said, 'come, let us for a new government in accordance with a change in method and behavior and not simply changes in personalities,' what would you do?

SAADAT: If he called on us, we would ask him to implement two things: first, to conduct a national dialogue embracing all the social and political forces and trends to evaluate the past stage and redefine the strategic political vision for managing the struggle. Second, it would be necessary for President Arafat and the Palestinian leading bodies to implement the resolutions of the last Central Council session that demand reconstruction of the National Council and the popular organizations, in addition to the achievements on the ground that have become obsolete and that must be posed once anew.

We will never participate in any body or committee that does not have a political basis. The basis for our participation is that we agree on the political vision of this or that body.

QUESTION: Do you think there can be a national dialogue while the General Secretary of the Popular Front is in prison?

SAADAT: I would suppose that if there were no acceptance of the General Secretary of any organization remaining outside of it, then there would be no acceptance of this dialogue.

QUESTION: But you represent the second biggest organization in the Palestine Liberation Organization. There are bonds of blood and historic relations between the Popular Front and the Fateh Movement, led by President Arafat.

SAADAT: We are proud of those bonds. They are what link us to all the militants among our people and the militant leaderships. But there is a mistake that needs correcting.

QUESTION: You mean the mistake represented by the incarceration of yourself and four other cadres of the Popular Front accused of killing Ze'evi?

SAADAT: Not just our incarceration. This is a part of a general policy. There are people who were arrested before us, and some who will be arrested after us. The

problem remains so long as there is talk about the "things that must be done" and complying with the demands of America and Israel.

QUESTION: While we are on the subject of your incarceration, can you explain how it came about that you were arrested and which officials you blame?

SAADAT: I don't want to break down the subject. I received a call to a meeting with Tawfiq al-Tayrawi [Director of Intelligence in the West Bank] and this call didn't come from nowhere. The order came from the Palestine Authority to talk with me concerning a specific subject via Tawfiq al-Tayrawi.

QUESTION: You mean that it came from President Arafat?

SAADAT: Nobody said that. But I suppose that al-Tayrawi's request to talk to me was not something he made up himself, but that it was because the President wanted it. Particularly since the subject concerns the persons whom Israel accuses of assassinating the racist extremist Rehebam Ze'evi [Israeli tourism minister who was assassinated by a group belonging to the Popular Front in October last year]. Israel had made the arrest of those four persons [now incarcerated in Jericho prison with Saadat himself] a condition of its granting Arafat permission to travel outside the country.

I will never say that the person responsible was some officer here or some officer there. I say, to put it succinctly, that the person responsible for my arrest was President Arafat personally.

QUESTION: When did you learn of the "al-Muqata'ah" agreement that led to your being transferred to the prison in Jericho, and as a result of which the siege was lifted from President Arafat and his headquarters in al-Muqata'ah?

SAADAT: I heard talk about the agreement before it was signed in its final form by telephone. I requested to discuss this matter with the President. There was no reply. They said there isn't any agreement yet. There was no talk about the agreement until I was informed by the President that the agreement had been concluded. I have a clear viewpoint on the agreement that is based on a rejection of political imprisonment, whether that be my imprisonment, or the imprisonment of my four comrades, or of Fu'ad al-Shawbaki. My viewpoint also extends to the trial, since I regard the trial of the four as a trial of the resistance struggle as a whole, not to mention that there are no bases or legal conditions for a trial, there was no charge, unless a person is accused specifically of resistance. I heard of the agreement when it had been concluded. We were not consulted about it nor was our viewpoint heard.

QUESTION: It has been said that the President met with you for an hour and a half and that you understood the matter of your being transferred to Jericho prison. Is that so?

SAADAT: The President knows that I am against the arrest and against the agreement that I consider a hand-over by another means. The hand-over was carried out to a third party that supervises and implements the agreement that provides for our imprisonment. The agreement is an arrangement that provides for the lifting of the siege from the President in return for the six of us being confined in a distant prison under Palestinian guardianship and under supervision and oversight of an Anglo-American team.

When I was told of the agreement I told President Arafat before we were transferred to Jericho that we must not give Sharon the opportunity to make a success of his program or to hide his political aim which is specifically to nullify the Palestine Authority in the West Bank or to re-occupy it and implement a program that we could call an agreement on the division of tasks. Sharon came in with a political program and in the end the matter was changed into a security program after the world rejected his political program. It was in this spirit that I spoke. I did not accept the agreement. If I was against the arrest in the first place, how is it possible for me to accept or agree with being taken as a prisoner under Anglo-American supervision and oversight?

QUESTION: Did the President reply to what you had to say?

SAADAT: No. He did not reply.

QUESTION: When did you tell him that?

SAADAT: Several hours before we were transferred.

QUESTION: Do you believe that you and the five others and the international fact-finding committee to Jenin paid the price of lifting the siege from the President?

SAADAT: At least we six paid the price. Particularly since the provisions of the agreement that was concluded specify the need for us six to remain inside the prison and that the release of any one of us constitutes the abrogation of the agreement.

QUESTION: Do you expect the President to release you personally should the Palestine Supreme Court rule to that effect, particularly since it is reviewing the matter now?

SAADAT: No. [editor's note: the Supreme Court ruled after this interview that Saadat's arrest was illegal and unconstitutional, as he has not been charged with any crime, and that he should be released immediately. The Palestinian Authority has ignored the ruling.]

QUESTION: Do you see the agreement ending the siege of the Church of the Nativity as a copy of the agreement on "al-Muqata'ah" or something else?

SAADAT: The agreement that resulted in lifting the siege of the church is worse than the agreement on "al-Muqata'ah." This raises a question: If we agreed under pressure to the deportation of 13 fighters outside the country, how are we going to stay in tune with defending the right of return of the refugees when the full weight of American and international pressure is brought to bear on the Palestinians not to demand the right of return?

QUESTION: Israel accuses you of responsibility for the assassination of Ze'evi?

SAADAT: From the political angle at least. The Popular Front didn't disavow his assassination. On the contrary, the Front regarded it as a legitimate response to the series of crimes that Israel had committed against the very heart of our fighters and leaders, such as Abu Ali Mustafa [the General Secretary of the Popular Front who was assassinated by Israel last year], with all the standing that they represent among Palestinians, Arabs and internationally.

From another angle, I do not put myself in the position of being an accused person defending myself, because I belong to a people who are waging a resistance struggle and an organization that is waging a resistance struggle. It is natural for me to be one of the people who always call for the continuation of resistance operations, one of which was the assassination of the extremist Zionist Ze'evi.

QUESTION: But the Palestine Authority, or some of the circles in it, say that the assassination of Ze'evi came at the wrong time?

SAADAT: I know when the timing is correct and when it is wrong. The Israeli offensive has not stopped for one moment, and the resistance is on-going and continuing.

QUESTION: The recent tripartite Sharm al-Shaykh summit (of Egyptian, Syrian and Saudi leaders) endorsed the condemnation of President Arafat for the martyrdom operations that it described as "terrorist" operations. Will the Popular Front continue to carry out such controversial operations now?

We believe that the resistance operations cannot be divided up: this is a martyrdom operation, this is not a martyrdom operation; this is permitted and this is not permitted; this is in the 1948 territories; this is in the 1967 territories. We look upon the entire Palestinian homeland, whether that occupied in 1967 or in the 1948 territories, as territories occupied by the Zionist entity.

I say to those who met in Sharm al-Shaykh and to those who want to install themselves as new Islamic scholars and legal experts so as to formulate new concepts about terrorism and what is legitimate and what is not legitimate that they must characterize the real situation in detail and to look which party is carrying out the aggression. Is it not the occupation? To put it another way, we will continue the resistance struggle in all its forms.

QUESTION: Do you have any final words?

SAADAT: The anniversary of the Disaster (al-Nakba), 15 May 1948, arouses in us great grief and kindles within us feelings that one cannot express, particularly as the 54th anniversary of the Disaster comes as we are still groaning under the occupation. I say to our people in all their political organizations, including the Palestine Authority, the time has come for us to stop, think, and evaluate the stages through which our struggle has passed, in particular the most recent period, since the Oslo Agreement, and for us to derive lessons and carve out correct policies that can put the Palestinian people in the position and framework that they must be in as a people fighting for freedom, and so that we can regain the Arab and Nationalist dimension of support for the cause. For the attainment of our goals there must be a democratic, collective leadership that rules on the basis of a political program.

Biographical data on Ahmad Saadat "Abu Ghassan"

- Born in 1953 in al-Bireh, the West Bank. His family originally was from the evacuated village of Dayr Tarif in the al-Ramleh district.
- Graduate of the Teachers Institute in Ramallah in 1975, majoring in mathematics.
- Married with four children.
- Regularly resides in the city of al-Bireh.
- Joined the ranks of patriotic work in the framework of student activity since his earliest youth after the defeat of June 1967.
- Joined the ranks of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in 1969.
- First arrested in February 1969, for 3 months.
- Second arrest in April 1970. Spent 28 months in the occupation's prisons.
- Third arrest in March 1973 for ten months.
- Fourth arrest May 1975 for 45 days.
- Fifth arrest in May 1976 for four years.
- Sixth arrest in November 1985 for two-and-a-half years.
- Seventh arrest in August 1989, administrative detention for nine months.
- Eighth arrest in August 1992, administrative detention for 13 months.
- Arrested and detained in the prisons of the Palestine Authority three times (prior to the current detention in the year 2002) in December 1995, January 1996, and in March 1996.
- Took on various responsibilities inside and outside prison. Elected member of the General Central Committee of the Popular Front in its Fourth Congress in 1981.
- Re-elected a member of the General Central Committee of the Popular Front and a member of the Political Bureau in the Fifth National Congress of the Popular Front in 1993, while he was confined under administrative detention.
- The Comrade was a member of the branch committee of the Popular Front in the Occupied homeland and became responsible for the West Bank Branch in 1994.
- He was re-elected to membership in the General Central Committee and the Political Bureau at the Sixth National Congress of the Popular Front in the year 2000.
- He was elected General Secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine at the beginning of October 2001 after the assassination of the outstanding leader, General Secretary Abu Ali Mustafa, toward the end of August 2001.
- He was taken into custody by the Palestine Authority by means of a trick on January 15, 2002.
- Along with other PFLP comrades, General Secretary Ahmad Saadat was transferred by the Palestine Authority to a Prison in Jericho under the supervision of American and British jailers on May 1, 2002.

The "Authority" can't stop the Intifada

Interview with Abu Ahmad Fu'ad

Published in the Jordanian newspaper "al-Watan" May 28th, 2002. Abu Ahmad Fu'ad is the Chairman of the Political Committee of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

QUESTION: Do you support military operations inside the part of Palestine occupied in 1948 or do you see them as negatively affecting the Intifada?

FU'AD: We support operations inside the 1948 territories. As is known, a military line is a translation of a political strategy, and our political strategy is Palestine, all of Palestine, that is occupied by the enemy. Therefore our military operations are not subject to a concept based on the idea that Palestine is only the West Bank and Gaza. This is what the Zionist enemy and some Palestinian circles are trying to inculcate. We believe that the Zionist entity is an example of a military barracks in which all the energies of the Zionist society have been mobilized for war. This enemy invades areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, it goes deep into these areas and commits massacres and murder. How can the Popular Front or any militant organization limit its resistance to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip? Therefore we consider all the land of Palestine occupied in 1967 and in 1948 an arena for resistance struggle.

It is our right to chose military targets or targets with political impact in any location. There is no change in the strategy of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

QUESTION: Anyone who follows the military operations notices that the Popular Front avoids operations in the part of Palestine occupied in 1948.

FU'AD: This is not an intended avoidance. We found military targets that achieve political aims in the West Bank and Gaza. The martyrdom operations undertaken by the Popular Front against a number of fortified settlements that were broken into demonstrate that they were painful and telling blows. From the political perspective, we make every settler feel insecure so as to compel him to begin to leave the settlements. This is a response to the objections that America, Israel, and their allies have raised to the operations that were being carried on in Palestine of 1948. They show the power of the resistance to deliver painful blows at the enemy and against his military forces and against his settlements whereas the Zionist leadership is always boasting that its army is so strong that it can't be overcome, and that the resistance cannot carry out breakthroughs or bring down the theory of security. The resistance has demonstrated, however, through its operations, one after the other, beginning with the destruction of a Merkava tank, through the blows delivered at checkpoints, that it is able to devise ways to fight and to overcome all obstacles.

QUESTION: How long will the Palestinian organizations limit their operations to the territories occupied in 1967?

FU'AD: In light of the criminal escalation that the Zionist enemy is undertaking, their destruction of refugee camps, and their killing of children, there is no longer any justification for any organization paying attention to the pressures exerted by powers supportive of Israel, whether as regards cease-fires or as regards not carrying out operations in the part of Palestine occupied in 1948. A number of Palestinian organizations have begun to return to carrying out operations inside the 1948 territories. This explains the return of the organizations that had been content to limit their operations to attacking the Israeli army once again to carry out military actions inside Tel Aviv, Natanya, and the part of Jerusalem occupied since 1948. In my opinion, the ban that some armed organizations placed on operations in the 1948 territories has completely ended despite the pressures being exerted upon them.

QUESTION: Where will things be going after the escalation of the Palestinian operations?

FU'AD: After the Madrid Conference, there were two predominant points of view. First, there was that of the Authority and those orbiting around it that can be summed up as saying that the option of a political settlement is the only option whereby the Palestinian people can attain their national rights; that the option of armed struggle is finished and is of no benefit after this group signed the Oslo



United Nations vehicle crushed in Jenin during Israeli offensive

Agreements and those settlement agreements that followed. Then there was the second point of view that was represented by a majority of the opposition armed organizations, including the Popular Front in a leading role. This point of view has maintained that without armed activity, without inflicting losses in the ranks of the enemy, without causing him to lose, it will not be possible to attain the minimum of our national rights. Ten years have passed in pursuit of the first option. Everybody knows that the results have been zero. But since the start of the Intifada and since its development towards military activities, it has become clear that the results of this approach are positive results that benefit the cause. This has put the whole of the Zionist entity in a bottleneck. The enemy is now enduring a crisis and failure. In my own estimation, the escalation of the military operations combined with the activities of the Intifada will force the enemy to retreat from its criminal plans and do some reappraisal. The proof of this is that the intensity of contradictions has begun to increase, starting with the decision of many Israeli officers to refuse service in the 1967 occupied territories. This is what they have publicly expressed, in addition to a decline in Sharon's popularity from 75% to 25%. All of this has come about because of the resistance operations and the failure of the Sharon plan.

QUESTION: Don't you believe that the Palestine Authority will retreat before Israeli and American pressure and official Arab silence?

FU'AD: The danger facing the Intifada is a political danger that the Palestine Authority will succumb to American and Israeli pressure and agree to play a role in ending the Intifada as a result of having been given assurances by the American Administration that if it plays a role in ending the Intifada, the Israelis will give it some concessions: a return to the negotiations without preconditions. This could be attractive to some in the Authority's leadership. The other issue is that most of the Arab regimes are pushing in this direction and are exerting pressure on the Authority to accept the Israeli and American conditions. I can be certain that some of these Arab actions are based on their positively responding to the American plan to save Sharon. The information we have confirms this, though the situation now is not appropriate to expose this in the press. In light of this, the Palestinian people must not accept a halt to the Intifada before it attains the national goals of the Palestinian people who have defined their choices by continuing the Intifada and the resistance struggle, by not stopping no matter what pledges Israel and America have given, for we have experienced ten years, and practice has confirmed for us that they will bring us nothing but harm.

QUESTION: Where does the Palestine Authority stand now and in the near future in the light of the political map of the Israeli-Palestinian course?

FU'AD: I believe that there are two tendencies. A tendency against the Intifada, and another that wants to profit from the Intifada in the negotiations. The first has failed to stop the Intifada and the second has tried to use it and undertook measures against Palestinian militants, arrested many from various armed active organizations most prominently the arrest of Ahmad Saadat, the General Secretary

of the Popular Front as a precedent that was the first of its kind in the history of contemporary Palestinian activity. This group regards the organizations that carry out military operations as terrorist groups and displayed readiness to return to the negotiations. But I believe that the movement of the masses is stronger, and this is an indication that the second group has failed to stop the armed resistance. Probably the Oslo group is no longer holding all the cards on the ground as it formerly did. This fact convinces me that the basic armed organizations, including Fateh, have moved from battling to defend the policies of the Authority to a position of defending the people instead, and of resisting the occupation regardless of the opinion of the Authority. This shows that the organizations in the field of practical activity are moving now, in the one single direction of resisting the occupation and holding fast to the option of Intifada and resistance. On this basis it would be difficult for the Authority to stop the Intifada even if it wanted to do so.

QUESTION: Is there any point in relying on the Israeli left?

FU'AD: We must not rely on them because Israeli society is moving towards the right and extremism represents the majority. These [leftist] phenomena leave their mark around the world but domestically they are very weak. In my estimation if Sharon fell, and this is probably going to happen, the new choice would be someone even more rightist. Based on this, we must not place great hopes on them [the Israeli left]. We must not live in the illusion that there are contradictions that will lead to the victory of the group it represents. These phenomena will grow with the increase in Palestinian steadfastness and the continuation of the armed operations. We must understand that this contradiction or opposition within Zionist society will never be the definitive factor in a basic change of the Zionist tendency with



4 PFLP militants arrested by Arafat, accused of killing Israeli minister Rehebam Ze'evi

respect to our stolen national rights.

QUESTION: Who is the most likely successor to Sharon if he falls?

FU'AD: Until now the most likely is Benjamin Netanyahu, because the Labour Party no longer has prominent leaders. As far as we in the Popular Front are concerned, we don't see any essential differences on the basic issues between Likud and Labour as regards the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes, or as regards withdrawal to the 1967 borders including Jerusalem. The proof of this is the fact that Ehud Barak and Shimon Peres rejected withdrawal to the 1967 borders in Palestine and the Jawlan [Golan] Heights.

QUESTION: Is it possible for the armed Palestinian organizations to bear the burdens of the escalation of their military activities in light of the position of the Authority and the absence of the kind of Arab activity that Hizballah enjoyed, since it had the support of Syria and Iran?

FU'AD: It is possible to continue. I believe that the enemy will arrive at the conclusion that it will never be able to obtain land and stability without leaving, and without agreeing to carry out the resolutions of international law. By continuing the Intifada and resistance struggle, the Palestinian people will attain their rights.

QUESTION: How long will the stagnation of the Arab street last?

FU'AD: We must recognize that this is the result of a crisis of the liberation movement and a result of continuous and organized official Arab repression. And the political parties are a part of it. They have grown flabby and have become prisoners of conceiving political struggle entirely within state boundaries, confining themselves to making propaganda and holding conferences but not going down to the streets and resisting the opposite plans on the ground.



Statements & Communiques



On the assassination of Abu Ali Mustafa

Press Office

Ramallah, August 27, 2001

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) mourns the death of its leader, the general secretary, Abu Ali Mustafa, who was assassinated by the Israeli army on the morning of 27 August 2001. Abu Ali Mustafa, the head of the second largest group within the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), was murdered by Sharon and his government. Sharon, however, acts with the full support and backing of the U.S. administration who bears full responsibility for the new escalation in the Middle East, due to its uncritical, unconditional, and blind support of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands.

Abu Ali Mustafa was elected general secretary of the PFLP last year, after Dr. George Habash (Al-Hakim) stepped down from the role. Abu Ali, a long-standing comrade of Al-Hakim, was a member of the PFLP since its inception in 1967. Abu Ali held the position of deputy general secretary until the PFLP's Sixth National Conference, where he was elected general secretary.

Born in Palestine in 1938 in Arraba, near Jenin, Abu Ali lived most of his adult life in exile until he returned home in 1999. He was part of the resistance movement against the Israeli occupation and fulfilled his duties from abroad as well as from Palestine.

In representing the PFLP, Abu Ali understood clearly his role and the role of the PFLP in expressing a radical humanistic vision for the Middle East problem. He was adamant and articulate in presenting this vision and loyal to the principles of the party. He defended the Palestinian cause and the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, foremost among them, the right of refugees to return and the right to establish a sovereign and independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. He called for the dismantling of all Israeli settlements and for continuing the Palestinian resistance movement until the Israeli occupation is brought to an end.

He presented the vision of an all-encompassing Palestinian state where people would live together in freedom regardless of their race, religion, or color. He called for a true democratic society where the rights of the majority are protected by the fulfillment of the rights of the minorities. He called the Palestinian resistance movement against the Israeli racist, colonialist occupation, a duty for every Palestinian and for every person who believes in equality, justice, and peace.

Abu Ali Mustafa lived and died defending the Palestinian cause and the rights of the Palestinian people. As the PFLP, and all the Palestinian people, mourn its leader, the PFLP vows to continue the Intifada and the Palestinian resistance movement until the Israeli occupation is over.

The Life of Abu Ali Mustafa

Abu Ali Mustafa (Mustafa Ali Al-Ali Zabri) joined the Arab National Movement in 1955 and became a member of the Arab National Association in

Amman. Together with his comrades and colleagues, he confronted the Jordanian government, calling for the annulment of the Jordanian-British pact and the dismissal of British officers from the Jordanian army.

In April 1957, he was arrested and imprisoned for several months, shortly after the Jordanian parliament was dissolved and the Suleiman Nabulsi government was dismissed. During that time, political parties were banned and Abu Ali was arrested again with many others who were tried in a military court. He was sentenced to five years in Jafer Prison in east Jordan.

After being released from prison in 1961, Abu Ali Mustafa continued his political work with the Arab National Movement and became responsible for the Northern District of the West Bank. He founded and built two organizations, one public, and one underground.

In 1966, Abu Ali was arrested again during a widespread operation organized by the Jordanian government against the Arab National Movement. Abu Ali was imprisoned without trial for several months in Zarka Prison in Jordan.

After the 1967 War, Abu Ali Mustafa joined Dr. George Habash in forming the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. He led the first commandos through the Jordan River inside Palestine and started forming the underground body of the PFLP. The Israelis searched in vain for him while he was hiding out in the West Bank. After several months, he secretly returned to Jordan.

In addition to being responsible for the PFLP in the West Bank, Abu Ali Mustafa became the commando-in-chief of the PFLP military forces (including the period comprising the battles in Amman in September 1970 and the battle of Ajloun in July 1971). Afterwards, he left secretly for Lebanon.

In 1972, at the Third National Conference of the PFLP, Abu Ali was elected deputy general secretary. From 1987 until 1991 he was a member of the Executive Committee of the PLO.

At the PFLP Sixth National Conference in July 2000, Abu Ali was elected general secretary.

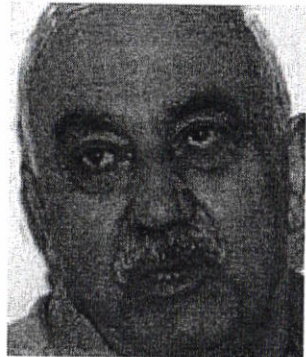
George Habash on Ali Abu Mustafa's assassination

August 27, 2001

Address by Dr. George Habash to the Comrades, the Palestinian people, and the Arab masses on the occasion of the assassination of the general secretary of the PFLP, Abu Ali Mustafa

To the Palestinian people, To the Arab masses,

Today I received with great sadness the news about the assassination of the leader Abu Ali Mustafa by Sharon and his Zionist gang. This



George Habash

heinous crime that has robbed us of our long-standing comrade for over half a century, reaffirms that the Zionist enemy is determined to annihilate the leaders of our revolution and its cadres in order to force us to surrender.

This enemy has apparently not learned the lessons of history. The enemy has not yet learned that the Palestinian people, who have offered hundreds of leaders and thousands of fighters, will not kneel in surrender. On the contrary, we will persevere in the struggle no matter how long it takes to regain our rights and the rights of our nation. We will remain steadfast in the struggle until the Zionist, colonialist project is defeated.

On this day we remember Ghassan Kanafani, Guevara Gaza, Al Amassi, Abu Jihad, Abu Iyad, Faisal Hussein; and before them we remember Al-Qassam and Abd al-Qader Al-Husseini, and countless others who have fallen in the battle for Palestine. Their sacrifice and their memory motivates us to persevere.

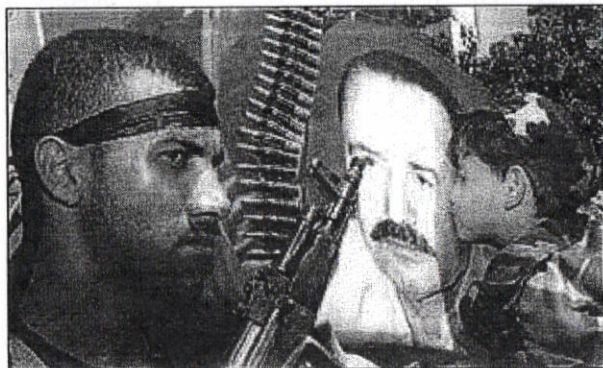
As I convey to our people and to the Arab Nation the loss of Abu Ali Mustafa whose determination, courage, and strength distinguished him over so many years, I assure you that the shedding of his blood will not be in vain. His comrades and his people will inhale the strength of his soul and become stronger and more determined to continue the struggle for freedom and independence.

We are proud to remember that until his death, Abu Ali Mustafa proclaimed loudly and clearly that the foul war of Sharon will not frighten us. Neither will it subdue us or force us to deviate the path of revolution — the path to freedom and victory.

Our people, who have lost a teacher and a leader, know that Abu Ali Mustafa was an exceptional man who had the charisma of a great leader. Our people will continue to learn from him and from his spirit of resistance — his patience, his determination, his strong will to force out the occupier and fulfill the dream of the right to return and the establishment of an independent, sovereign Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

On this sad and painful occasion, I turn to all brave comrades of the PFLP and all members of the Palestinian revolution at home and abroad: I call on them to remain faithful, not only to Abu Ali Mustafa but also to all those who have sacrificed their blood for the sake of Palestine and for the Arab Cause. We promise you, dear Abu Ali, that the Popular Front that you helped to establish on the

foundation of a spirit of resistance will continue to march on the same road, no matter how long and treacherous it is, no matter how much we will have to sacrifice. The destructive tactics of the enemy will never kill our steadfastness or our will to resist.



On the arrest of Ahmad Saadat

Declaration issued by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine To clarify the facts related to the arrest of Comrade Ahmad Saadat, the General Secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Front presents the following information:

1. We in the Popular Front view this as an act of deceit and a total political ambush prepared in advance by the Palestine Authority and its various security agencies.
2. In taking this position we refer back to the stance taken by Abu Ammar (Yasir Arafat) when he spoke to representatives of the patriotic and Islamic forces and to representatives of the Popular Front in a meeting with them last November. At that time he said that the subject of arresting Comrade Ahmad Saadat is not on the agenda.
3. Based on that, during these past months Comrade Ahmad Saadat did not act as a fugitive subject to arrest by the Palestine Authority, although he was out of sight of the occupation and its agents.
4. The meeting that was held in a hotel in the city of al-Bireh yesterday, Tuesday 15 January 2002 between a high-ranking security official in the Palestine Authority and a delegation from the Popular Front led by Comrade Ahmad Saadat took place based on repeated requests made by that official.
5. What took place in the hotel yesterday was a pre-planned brazen political arrest. The greatest proof of the planned nature of the operation was the presence of a large number of armed members of the various security agencies. In no way was Comrade Ahmad Saadat "turning himself in" as claimed by Security Service Colonel al-Tayrawi in a statement published in the newspaper "al-Quds" this morning.
6. We in the Popular Front view all that has happened as a clear act of submission to pressures from the Sharon government, pressures that we know will never end. Therefore, we will not accept this situation that encroaches upon the bases of Palestinian national unity.

Free Comrade Ahmad Saadat and all political prisoners!

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

January 16, 2002

Ahmad Saadat on his arrest

Press Release issued by Ahmad Saadat,
General Secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
while under the detention of the Palestinian Authority
January 25, 2002

In response to reports that political and security sources in the Palestine Authority present my arrest as part of an attempt to discover the location of the heroic comrades accused of killing the racist Zionist minister Rehebam Ze'evi, I am distressed that such statements have been made. They do not excuse or detract from the true issue of my arrest, which openly affronts all sincere efforts to raise the unity of our people and their political forces in defending themselves in the war waged by Sharon against their existence, principles, and national rights. I affirm the following facts:

First. It is delusional to believe that the Popular Front will entertain the notion of bargaining for the lives and freedom of its heroic comrades, and whoever has succumbed to this way of thinking would be wise to refamiliarize himself with our organization's legacy. The freedom of comrades is not even a matter for discussion in our central bodies. The leaders of the Popular Front will defend the freedom of their comrades at any cost, including their own lives. The Popular Front will remain the spearhead of the mass democratic struggle to safeguard democracy and to end all political arrests and the pursuit of militants.

Second. The Palestinian leadership must understand that its compliance with Israeli-American pressures and dictates only moves it from one narrow corner to an even narrower one. It invites even further pressures being brought to bear against it, leading to an endless and unacceptable series of dictates. It will reverse the achievements won by our people's sacrifices over the nearly sixteen months of intifada and resistance. The policy of tightening the noose on Palestinian militants accommodates the forces of Zionist occupation, but it will not satisfy them, as their appetite for our destruction is insatiable.

Third. The amelioration of our people's plight and the promotion of their national cause require utilizing all the resources at our disposal, contained within various political forces, to reorder the internal Palestinian situation and its institutions on patriotic and democratic bases. The objectives also require drawing up a strategic political program for continuing the intifada and the resistance in defense of our people and their firm principles. Therefore, it is the obligation of all patriotic and Islamic forces to wage the democratic struggle to safeguard our people's unity and tighten their ranks while expanding the scope of that struggle to social, as well as political, realms. Democracy is the wall that protects our unity, increases our strength dozens of times over, and provides the best method for opposing the aggression of the racist, Zionist Sharon government.

Day of the Land Statement

Statement issued by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine on the occasion of the 26th anniversary of the Day of the Land

More than a quarter century ago the masses in the Palestinian lands occupied in 1948 exploded in an uprising whose aims went beyond demands for equality. It brought the struggle against the Zionist Entity and its crimes back to its basics, as a struggle for the land and sovereignty over it. It is the struggle that unites our people wherever they may be located in support of this cause. This fact has turned this day into an eternal day. It gives eternal life to the struggle of the Palestinian people. It affirms their grip on their land, their rights, their identity, and their national aspirations. This uprising that yielded the fruit of reactivating the national identity of the Palestinians of the territories occupied in '48, this action that cannot but be reflected even at the level of the national institutions, takes as its priority its program regarding the issues related to the land and for social, political, and national rights.

Today, our people in the homeland and disbursed abroad pause and revive the memory of this heroic occasion. They are continuing their heroic resistance struggle and intifada - that has now entered its eighteenth month and is stronger and more determined to attain its goal of driving out the occupation and seizing back the national rights of our people to return, self-determination, and the establishment of an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital. On the ground the Palestinian struggle is causing the failure of the Zionist unity government's military program of confrontation. It is circumventing the political traps that America has set for it, that aim at undermining that struggle and seek to reduce our people to a Zionist security concern by means of the Tenet Understandings and the Mitchell Proposals, and by a fruitless reliance on the policy and mechanisms of the useless Oslo negotiations. Those negotiations have only led to the deepening of the occupation and its reorganization. Nothing more. If they continue, they will yield nothing but more wasted time and more wasted Palestinian effort, while the occupation will remain and its offensives and its denial of the sacred right of our people to self-determination will go on.

On this great occasion, and in the face of sharp challenges, we in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine affirm:

First. The immediate task of our people today is to continue the intifada and resistance until the occupation is driven off. It is not to squander its successes and sacrifices in order to return to the fantasies associated with Tenet and Mitchell and the fruitless Oslo negotiations that aim at ending the resistance and saving the government of Zionist unity from the impasse in which it finds itself.

Second. Returning to the policy of security coordination with the enemy, with its requirements and practices, blows away the unity of our people that has been reinforced on the battlefields of the resistance and intifada. Such a policy sows confusion inside the national ranks when work should be done to strengthen internal unity and to promote it from being a reality in the field to the level of

policy. The option of resistance struggle and intifada is the shortest and most effective path to attaining the aims of our people, now that the impotence and failure of ten years of going around in circles over the Zionist security agenda has been established.

Third. The steadfastness of the Palestinian people, the sacrifices and successes of their resistance struggle must be sustained. In keeping with the will of the Arab people, the official Arab regime must end its practice of submission to the American will by embracing and supporting our people as they resist the occupation and its attacks. Every means of support must be given to this heroic resistance. The regimes must cease trying to play the role of a disinterested intermediary. They must cut all ties with the Zionist Entity State on all levels - political, diplomatic, and economic. They must use the potentials of the Arab Nation to put pressure the American administration and its interests to stop its open alignment with the policy of the Zionist Entity State, its political concealment of its crimes, massacres, and mass murders against our people.

Fourth. The international community and its main institution, the United Nations - whose will the United States insists on falsifying by drafting it into what it calls its war on terrorism - must implement the Fourth Geneva Convention and provide temporary international protection for our people as they face the ugliest forms of massacre. This can serve as a preparation to enable our people to be rid of the occupation and to exercise their self-determination, to allow for the return of the people's refugees to the homes from which they were driven, and to establish their fully sovereign, independent state with Jerusalem as its capital.

Long live the anniversary of the Day of the Land! Continue the Intifada and the Resistance until the occupation is driven out! Glory to the martyrs and victory to our people!

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
March 28, 2002

Responding to the Israeli offensive

An Appeal by Dr. George Habash, founder of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and of the Arab Nationalists' Movement

To the masses of our Arab Nation,
To those who have Arab feeling,
To our Palestinian people in the homeland and abroad,

The Zionist enemy has again launched a total war against Palestinian cities, villages, and refugee camps with military orders to invade the cities of the Palestinian Bank - Ramallah and Tulkarm - as well as all the cities and villages of the Bank and Gaza Strip. The enemy is declaring general military mobilization in the Zionist army, following up with the perpetration of a series of massacres against our unarmed people in an attempt to break the Palestinians' resistance



and to undermine their heroic intifada and resistance struggle.

This ferocious Zionist offensive in effect proclaims, 'this is our response to the Arab summit and its initiatives.' It is nothing but an expression of contempt and ridicule not only for the resolutions of the Arab summit, but for the whole Arab Nation. It affirms once again that the Zionist enemy does not want peace and is not ready for it. It also shows that the Zionist enemy totally disregards international documents.

At this moment of destiny, at this critical turning point, I call on the leadership and organizations of the Palestinian resistance struggle to declare a general mobilization, to form joint defense and resistance brigades, embracing all the armed agencies and resistance forces, to defend our people. I call on the Arab Nation from the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf to take to the streets in solidarity with our people. I call on the concerned Arab states, who, in accordance with the Covenant of the Arab League consider any attack on an Arab state - and Palestine is an Arab state - to be an attack on all the Arab states; I call on the Arab leaders to live up to their responsibility towards our people and towards the resolutions of the Arab summit. Finally I call on the United Nations Organization and the UN Security Council to provide international protection for our people.

At the very least, the Arab states that have relations with the Zionist enemy, should close their embassies and expel their ambassadors. This would be the first message that they could issue on the path towards cutting relations with this entity. This Zionist offensive against our people is being carried out with American connivance. America is a partner of the Zionist enemy in all of its crimes. This necessitates that a message from the Arabs must be directed at America to say that this partnership comes at a price that America must pay.

I commend the steadfastness of our Palestinian people. I call for more national unity, more cohesion, more coordination on the ground, and resistance to this Zionist war so that this enemy is taught the lesson it deserves.

I salute our steadfast people in the Bank and Gaza Strip. I salute the resistance fighters in Ramallah, the symbol of steadfastness. I salute all the heroic resistance fighters in the Land of Palestine, and I say to them that victory will be the ally of the heroic resistance fighter.

Eternal glory to the virtuous martyrs!

Victory to the intifada and the resistance struggle!

Victory to Palestine!

Dr. George Habash

Founder of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

March 29, 2002

Press Statement

The Palestinian territories today are witnessing the biggest, most violent, and most serious all-out invasion by the Zionists, armed to the teeth with tanks and machines, that has been launched against the Palestinian cities and towns in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It started with the invasion of the city of Palestinian steadfastness, Ramallah; and of Tulkarm; while the siege of the Gaza strip was tightened.

The Palestinian resistance movement is escalating its resistance to this Zionist aggression in defense of our Palestinian people. This ferocious Zionist offensive reveals that Sharon is persisting with his war option in response to the resolutions of the Arab summit and that the Zionist enemy does not grasp any option or offer of peace. Therefore the following actions are necessary:

First. The Arab League and the Arab summit must respond to this aggression by convening an extraordinary meeting to declare the cancellation of their strategic choice of peace.

Second. We call on the Arab states that have relations with Israel to cut those ties immediately, to close their embassies, and to expel the ambassadors from their capitals.

Third. Effective practical steps must be taken on the ground to provide protection to our unarmed Palestinian people, and to open borders to allow moral and military support to reach our people.

Fourth. The Arab Nation must take to the streets in their rage to declare their condemnation of the Zionist aggression. We call on the Palestinian forces and the brigades of the resistance struggle to confront and stand up to the enemy tanks, to escalate the resistance, to strike the enemy wherever he is, and to strike deep inside the Zionist areas and at their settlements.

We demand a different Arab stance from that which emerged from the Arab summit. It must be an Arab stand that is commensurate with the dangers that our nation faces, commensurate with the Zionist offensive and Sharon's renewed plan aimed at breaking the Palestinians' steadfastness.

The Arab states that expressed their great enthusiasm for the intifada and

resistance during the work of the Arab summit now have the scope and field where they can translate these stances into actions. Our Palestinian people are in need of real support and of Arab and international protection. Our Arab Nation expects the response to be commensurate with the Zionist genocidal war that is taking place before the eyes of the whole world. I say that we do not need ambulances to be sent to us, although those are important; we need something greater than that, because Sharon's renewed plan goes far beyond and is much more serious than what the Arabs in their calm serenity imagine.

It has become even clearer that the American role is to stand by the side of the Zionist aggression. America is a strategic partner of the Zionist entity, and a partner in the Zionist wars. The American Administration supports the Zionist genocidal war against our people. The official Arab regime must exert pressure, must use the weapon of boycott, and act to boycott American interests in the region.

We appeal to our Palestinian people in their heroic steadfastness, we appeal to our Arab Nation to undertake to do more than the American Administration expects in protest against the total war that the Zionist enemy is waging.

The sacrifices of our Palestinian people, the columns of martyrs, will triumph in their battle, the battle of freedom and independence!

Eternal glory to our virtuous martyrs! Victory to the intifada and resistance!

Political Bureau, The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
March 31, 2002

Military Communiqué issued by the Forces of the Palestinian Popular Resistance, the Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades, the military wing of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Continuing the line of armed resistance, the tried and tested way to expel the occupying invaders; and in response to the continuing crimes of the Zionist entity and the government of the terrorist Sharon against the women, elderly, and children of our people in Ramallah, Bethlehem, Tulkarm, Nablus, Qalqiliya, Rafah, and in all the villages, cities, and Palestinian refugee camps throughout the homeland; and in spite of all the intensified security measures that the Zionists have taken; in a bold and heroic operation that is the first of a series of operations to be carried out by the column of martyrdom fighters from the Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades, our comrade the heroic martyrdom fighter:

Mahmoud Mousa Mahmoud Saleh broke through the border barriers that face the town of Bayt Hanoun in the north of the Gaza Strip and entered the so-called "Kibbutz Erez" that is located on the land of the Palestinian town of Damra at precisely eight o'clock on the evening of Tuesday, 2 April 2002, and after an armed battle with a force of the occupation troops, the heroic comrade died a martyr. The enemy radio, broadcasting in Hebrew, acknowledged that a number of Zionist soldiers had been injured. Helicopters were seen carrying their wounded to hospitals. We pledge that these hospitals will not be empty of the bodies of

Zionists until they depart from the land of Palestine.

We pledge to the masses of our people throughout the Arab homeland from the Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean that we will continue the resistance struggle and the martyrdom operations until our victorious triumph and the establishment of the State of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital.

Hail, all hail our heroic martyr and all the martyrs! Glory to the martyrs and victory to the intifada and resistance struggle! We will surely win!

Forces of the Palestinian Popular Resistance,
Martyr Abu Ali Mustafa Brigades,
The military wing of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
April 2, 2002

Political Declaration

No to the trial of the Heroes of the Resistance!

Masses of our great Palestinian people, Brave resistance fighters,

The leadership of the Palestine Authority has this day committed a grave offense against the Palestinian people and the resistance, against the militants who defend the honor of this people and the honor their leaders and fighters, and who struggle to attain our national goals.

The Palestine Authority has brought before a military tribunal the heroes who liquidated the criminal Rehebam Ze'evi, one of the most notorious symbols of Zionist racist and fascist terrorism and a member of the body that took the decision to assassinate our comrade the martyr Abu Ali Mustafa, the General Secretary of the Popular Front.

This military tribunal and the sentences it issued are rejected and condemned by the nation and by morality. Symbolically, they represent a trial of all the heroic militants among our people who are standing proud, persevering, and steadfast in the face of all this injustice. This trial serves as a cover for all the Israeli pressure and extortion to which the leadership of the Palestine Authority and our whole people are subject.

In spite of all the Zionist massacres and the siege that has been imposed on our people and on the President Abu Ammar (Yasir Arafat) personally, the leadership of the Palestine Authority has not learned the lessons of all this aggression and all these sacrifices. From the very beginning we have warned the Palestine Authority against the policy of submission to and compliance with Israeli dictates. We told President Abu Ammar that the arrest of comrades will not contain the Israeli threat, and will not secure our people from the aggression and siege that have been imposed on them. President Abu Ammar has not heeded this good advice, and the arrest and detention of our comrades and other fighters - whether in the President's headquarters, or in the headquarters of Preventive Security in Ramallah - have been turned into new pretexts for Zionist pressure and extortion.

By pronouncing sentences on our heroic fighters a heavy blow has been dealt to Palestinian national unity. It will assuredly have many negative

repercussions on the whole gamut of Palestinian national relations. These sentences are another manifestation of the Palestine Authority's permanent readiness to retreat before Israeli conditions and dictates. It is an indication of the policies that it is going to follow as it conforms to and complies with American and Israeli solutions for the struggle with the Zionist enemy. We call on all of our people, on all their patriotic and Islamic forces to beware of the disastrous dangers that this course poses for our people and our national cause.

In spite of this crime, we in the Popular Front will remain in the trench of resistance against the enemy. Our comrades' weapons will continue to be pointed at the Zionist enemy. At the same time we will continue to struggle, along with all patriotic and honorable Palestinian people, against the policies of the Palestine Authority that are erroneous and harmful to the nation and society.

Every salute to you, heroic resistance fighters!

You will remain before our eyes in spite of any military tribunals and sentences!

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

April 25, 2002

Press Release issued by the Political Bureau
of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

Commenting on claims by sources in the Palestine Authority that the General Secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Comrade Ahmad Saadat, expressed his understanding of the position of the President of the Palestine Authority concerning the agreement under which the Palestinian militants, in the first place Saadat, were transferred to a prison in Jericho under American - British guard, a spokesman in the name of the Political Bureau of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine has stated the following:

First. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine categorically denies what sources in the Palestine Authority have claimed to the effect that the General Secretary of the Popular Front had shown his understanding of the agreement under which the six militants were taken to a prison under American - British guard. On the contrary, the General Secretary of the Popular Front demonstrated his total rejection and condemnation of this disgraceful agreement undertaken by the Palestine Authority.

Second. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine holds the Palestine Authority and its President completely responsible for the fate of the militants, and in the first place for that of the General Secretary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, after they have been handed over to American - British forces.

Third. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine demands that the Palestinian bodies, the Executive Committee, the Central Council, and the Presidency of the National Council, declare their position on the hand-over of the Palestinian militants and what this means in terms of dangerous consequences

for the internal situation in the Palestinian arena.

Fourth. The Political Bureau of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine demands the release of the Palestinian militants, and in the first place of the General Secretary of the Front, and the abrogation of the invalid rulings issued against the heroic resistance fighters who defended and are defending the honor of their people and the freedom of their country.

Political Bureau, The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
Damascus, May 3, 2002

Masses of our Arab people,
Masses of our resistant Palestinian people,

We are marking the odious fifty-fourth anniversary of the rape of Palestine and the establishment of the Zionist entity on Palestinian land - a dagger in the heart of the Arab homeland - that took place with the connivance of the colonialists and before the eyes and ears of the international community.

Our people and we mark this anniversary in the shadow of a fierce Israeli offensive against our cities, villages, and refugee camps in which killing, destruction, and brutal aggression were visited upon every living thing. Our Palestinian people are writing the finest pages of resistance, glory, and steadfastness in confrontation with the Zionist military machine; they are sacrificing more virtuous martyrs to ransom the soil of Palestine and its holy places, and to attain their legitimate national goals, in the first place the right of return, of self determination, and of creating an independent, sovereign Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

We mark this anniversary at a unique time in Arab history, a time when history is repeating itself tragically, leaving the Palestinian people to their fate without a supporting stance on the part of the official Arab regime, bringing back to mind the inability of the Arab regime in 1948 to protect the land of Palestine and to support the people of Palestine in their resistance to the Zionist attack.

This is a unique time in Arab history, where the Arab regime is unable to defend pan-Arab security or the security of Arab states, and where the Palestinian people are fulfilling this role, defending the honor of the Arab Nation as well as their own.

It is a unique time in Arab history that demands that the official Arab regime and the Arab peoples and their political forces review the nature of the Arab-Zionist conflict, and ponder the panorama of the conflict in order to discover the objective and historical nature of the conflict, and to review their political programs, their means for taking action, and their national and pan-Arab roles.

This painful anniversary comes in the shadow of the most complicated and dangerous conditions; in the shadow of the Zionist American offensive in which this hostile alliance used the most modern American weapons to harvest the lives of thousands of martyrs and wounded, destroying the structures and institutions of Palestinian society, with the aim of imposing the dictates and conditions of surrender upon the Palestinian people, and upon their militant political forces,

with all their different political and ideological orientations and inclinations.

Despite these exceptional conditions in the life of the Palestinian people, the finest epics of struggle, steadfastness, and heroism have been written and the Zionist American plan to eliminate and defeat Palestinian memory and consciousness have been foiled.

Our people have confirmed and are ever going to confirm that they are firmly maintaining the choice of resistance, struggle, and intifada until their goals of freedom and independence are attained.

On this occasion the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine affirms the following:

1. The Palestinian people will continue the intifada and resistance in all their forms until all their legitimate national rights have been regained, in the first place the right of return, self-determination, and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. This right to resist and to continue to struggle has been upheld by the United Nations and international law.
2. The battle that the Palestinian people are waging is a battle for liberation from the occupation, and a battle for self-defense and for defense of national and pan-Arab rights and honor.
3. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine emphasizes need for Palestinian national unity on the foundation and bases of a clear political line that holds fast to national principles and the resolutions of national consensus.
4. We must revive and rebuild the institutions of the P.L.O. to confront the next stage with all its dangers, on sound political and organizational bases, and with a democratic collective leadership.
5. America is a participant in the aggression against the Palestinian people. There can be neither peace nor any solution without the implementation of the resolutions of international legality.
6. The Zionist entity is a phenomenon hostile to peace. This fact was confirmed by the latest congress of the Likud Party when it rejected the establishment of a Palestinian state.
7. We must overcome the traces of the aggression by rebuilding and reconstructing all the institutions on democratic national foundations; by freeing all political prisoners in the jails of the Palestine Authority; by halting all manhunts, political arrests, and summonses; and by working to free all the prisoners in the jails of the Zionist enemy.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine pledges to the masses of our Arab people and our Palestinian people wherever they are that it will remain faithful to the spirits of the martyrs and to the goals for which the Palestinian people have struggled and sacrificed everything dear and valuable. The Popular Front will continue the struggle in all its forms together with all the patriotic, democratic, and Islamic forces until the goals of our people are achieved.

Long live free Arab Palestine! Glory to the Martyrs! Greetings to the heroic Palestinian people and their courageous resistance fighters! Freedom to the prisoners and detainees!

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine
May 15, 2002

Palestinian history: a chronology

The current situation in Israel and the Palestinian Territories has a long and complex history. This chronology provides some key dates. It is important to remember that, for many centuries, Arabic-speaking Jews, Christians and Muslims successfully lived alongside each other in the area called "historic Palestine". The crisis there today is the latest development in a conflict that began when the first Zionists arrived in Palestine towards the end of the 19th century.

1880

The total number of residents in Palestine is approximately 480,000, of which around 24,000 (approximately 5 per cent of the population) are Jewish and the remainder Muslim and Christian. Jewish people in Eastern Europe flee to Western Europe and America after massacres in their home countries, and some settle in Palestine. After the first wave of immigration into Palestine in 1881, the number of Jewish settlers in Palestine gradually increases.

1897

After the Tsar's Government in Russia organises massacres against its Jewish citizens, Theodore Herzl, the founder of the Zionist movement, organises the first Zionist Congress in Switzerland. The Congress concludes that the only way Jewish people will be safe from anti-jewish persecution across Europe and Russia is if they have a land and state of their own. After much debate, Palestine is chosen as the location for a Jewish homeland.

1917

The British capture Palestine from the Ottomans during the First World War. The British Government promises to establish a national home for Jewish people in Palestine, in what was known as the Balfour Declaration. The Declaration also promises to safeguard the civil and religious rights of the existing "non-Jewish" communities in Palestine.

1918

The Jewish residents of Palestine own two per cent of the land. Initially, Palestinians welcome Jewish settlers, but as more arrive, pressure on the land increases.

1922

The League of Nations (forerunner to the United Nations) gives Britain a mandate to administer Palestine (previously ruled by the defunct Ottoman empire), with the intention of making it an independent Palestinian state and a national home for Jewish people. When Britain takes control of Palestine, 93 per cent of the population are Muslim and Christians, and 7 per cent Jewish (that is, Palestinian Jews and settler Jews including Zionists).

1920s and 1930s

A series of violent clashes occurs between some Palestinian communities and the more recently arrived Jewish settlers. Jewish underground guerrilla groups such as Irgun and Stern are formed to fight for an independent Jewish state.

1935

Jewish people own about 5.5 per cent of the land (equivalent to 12 per cent of the cultivable land). They acquire it by buying land titles for land that has been farmed by Palestinians

for centuries from large, predominantly absentee landlords.

1936

Palestinian resistance to the changes to population and land ownership brought about by the continued Jewish immigration in Palestine erupts into an open rebellion between Palestinian Arabs and the British forces. The latter crush the revolt, killing many Palestinians, and the British Government sets up a Royal Commission, under Lord Peel, to investigate the problem. It concludes that the British Mandate is no longer workable, and recommends that Palestine be partitioned into three zones: a Jewish state, an Arab state and a neutral territory containing the Holy Places.

1930s and 1940s

Jewish immigration into Palestine increases following Nazi persecution in Europe. At the end of the Second World War, many Jewish survivors try to come to Palestine. But under pressure from Palestinians, the British Mandate blocks their route. Jewish underground guerrilla organisations attack the British in response.

1947

Jewish people own six per cent of the land. The British Government announces that it intends to give up the Mandate, and to hand the problem of Palestine over to the United Nations. A UN special commission recommends that the land is divided as follows:

1. A "Jewish" state, which includes 52 per cent of the land. The population of this state would be 497,000 Palestinian Arabs and 498,000 Palestinian and settler Jews.
2. An "Arab" state, which includes 48 per cent of the land. The population of this state would be 98.7 per cent Palestinian Arab (725,000 Arabs and 10,000 Palestinian and settler Jews).
3. Jerusalem and the area surrounding it would become an "international zone".

The General Assembly approves the Partition Plan by a two to three majority, largely through the influence of the USA. Palestinian Jews and settlers, who make up less than a third of the population, accept the Plan, and all the Arab nations reject it. A civil war starts.

1948

The British Mandate in Palestine ends on 14 May and the new state of Israel is proclaimed. Within hours, the armies of Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and Iraq attack Israel. They are defeated and by the time of the ceasefire in January 1949, Israel occupies 77 per cent of the territory of Mandate Palestine. Jordan annexes the West Bank including East Jerusalem. During the conflict, more than 725,000 Palestinians (a large proportion of the population) become refugees internally within the West Bank, Gaza and land now controlled by Israel, and externally in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. The UN General Assembly passes Resolution 194, which declares that Palestinian refugees have the right to return to their homes and that Israel should facilitate this at the earliest practicable date. The United Nations Palestine Conciliation Committee (UNPCC) is established under Resolution 194 to facilitate the return or resettlement - and compensation of - Palestinian refugees based on their individual choices. However, after several years, the UNPCC cease to provide protection to Palestinian refugees. This is due, in large part, to Israel's opposition to the return of refugees and also to the lack of international will to uphold basic principles of international law applicable to Palestinian refugees.

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Abraham Guillen Press (distributor)
C.P. 48164
Montréal, QC
H2V 4S8
Canada
email: abrahamguillenpress@yahoo.com

Arm The Spirit
P.O. Box 6326, Stn. A
Toronto, ON
M5W 1P7
Canada
email: ats@etext.org
website: <http://burn.ucsd.edu/~ats>

Terrorist disclaimer: this publication was put together from public documents on the internet and from translations by a supporter for the most recent articles. We do not have a direct link to the PFLP in Palestine or elsewhere. Our intention is to provide an important left perspective to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict by those actually fighting on the ground in Palestine, instead of the regular academic commentators. In this time of intensified imperialist assault international solidarity becomes even more important as the U.S. criminalizes and calls "terrorist" the entire Palestinian resistance movement. We say put the real terrorists in prison - Bush and Sharon! End the occupation!

a radical voice from Palestine

recent documents from
the Popular Front For The
Liberation of Palestine



Arm The Spirit

**PRESSE
ABRAHAM
GUILLEN
PRESS**

This collection presents a revolutionary left Palestinian perspective to the events of the al-Aqsa Intifada, the spring 2002 Israeli offensive in the West Bank, and the continuing occupation. These events have left almost 2000 dead, thousands more wounded, and over 5,000 imprisoned.

The *Popular Front For The Liberation Of Palestine (PFLP)* is the largest revolutionary left formation in Palestine and has been fighting the Israeli occupation for over 30 years. This collection includes key documents putting the present Intifada into context, and outlines the basic demands and aspirations of the PFLP. It also includes interviews with PFLP leaders, and communiques of the important events since August 2001. A good and necessary introduction to the Palestinian resistance movement and the PFLP.



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