

NAYEF

HAWATMEH

General Secretary of the Democratic Popular
Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

'For the Unity of all the Revolutionary and
Nationalist forces, to ensure the complete
withdrawal of the Zionist forces, and the
restoration of the rights of the Palestinian
People.'

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INTRODUCTION

This is the full text of the interview carried out by Mulhem Karam, editor of the Lebanese paper 'Al-Beiraq', and the chairman of the Lebanese Union of Journalists, with Nayef Hawatmeh, the General Secretary of the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The following talk was published in the above mentioned paper, on the 17th of April 1974, and in it, the General Secretary answers a number of questions of great importance to the Palestinian and Arab people. The questions range from, the Palestinian attitude towards the passing of liquidationist solutions, to the issue of the disengagement of forces on the Syrian front*, and finally to the political and military conditions which had to be satisfied on the national level to defeat such solutions. In this talk the General Secretary calls on all the patriotic and progressive forces, Arab and International, to help to harden the Syrian attitude and to work from the actual ditches of struggle to force the Israeli invaders and aggressors, to withdraw from the occupied Arab Land occupied after the June 1967 War, and to ensure the national rights of the Palestinian People, represented at this stage, in the rights of our Palestinian People on the Palestinian soil occupied in 1967, for their self-determination, their national independent authority, and the rights for all our dispersed people to return to their country.

1 May, 1974.

* At the time the interview was carried, Kissinger was still trying hard to achieve a disengagement of forces on the Syrian front.

Question: Do you believe that the disengagement of forces on the Golan front could be a step towards a Just Peace?

Answer: Let us be clear from the beginning, we, in the Palestinian Revolution, fight and struggle against any disengagement on the warring fronts which would lead towards the stabilisation of the situation and the return of the no peace no war situation, or would lead to a solution of liquidation and surrender, represented by the American Zionist solution, which is based on further Zionist expansions and the suppression of the national rights of the Palestinian People. From here we stand firmly against any disengagement of forces, similar to the Egyptian model, which was achieved lately. This disengagement was a victory, from the strategical and tactical point of view of America and Israel, in which the disengagement of forces was established by the setting up of a buffer zone with UN troops stationed on it. This disengagement was not linked with any political or military conditions which will make it part of a complete withdrawal to be carried out according to a timetable, and with the condition that the national rights of the Palestinian People be recognised.

Question: Then, you object to the steps taken by Egypt

Answer: The disengagement which was carried on the Egyptian front was in favour of Israel and the United States of America. In the first place, it was neither linked with a fixed declaration with a specific timetable for a withdrawal, nor was it linked with the recognition of the rights of the Palestinian People, but it was considered as a part of a 'permanent settlement' without a specific definition of what the statement means.

'It pointed towards an unspecified permanent settlement, which could not possibly mean complete withdrawal and neither could it mean the recognition of the rights of the Palestinian People. It remained confused talk, with Israel refusing to clarify the agreement as it had refused to mention any specific time able for its withdrawal or even mentioning complete withdrawal from the occupied territories, in the agreement. The sole interpretation of it remained flexible and confused'.

From here, according to my estimation, the Palestinian Revolution, and all the progressive patriotic forces have to struggle not to allow a disengagement on the Syrian front, similar to the one achieved on the Egyptian front, to take place. Any disengagement has to be linked with certain political and military conditions which will facilitate the complete liberation of all the Arab Territories, and the recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian People. This demands the rejection of any presence of UN troops between the two parties, to ensure the best operating conditions for the Arab military forces; defensive and offensive. It requires, politically, from American imperialism and Israel, that this disengagement step be only part of an agreement for the complete withdrawal of the Zionist forces from all the occupied Arab territories, fixed by a timetable, and the recognition by Israel and America of the national rights of the Palestinian People. Then only would the disengagement step be in favour of the Arab and Palestinian cause.

But in the event of achieving a disengagement on the Egyptian model, this would mean the exclusion of the Syrian front from the direct struggle and the obstruction of the possibility of re-engagement if the ennemy violates the timetable for the complete withdrawal.

THE ISSUES OF THE AMERICAN SOLUTION ON
ARAB FRONT

Question: What are in your opinion the steps of
The American solution

Answer: In the event of the success of this step
as with the Egyptian model, the third step will be
on the Lebanese front, and we should not ignore
the signs which appeared not long ago, in the
Lebanese Parliament, when certain people asked for
UN troops, and the discussion of the situation with
the guerrilla groups. Also, the declaration of
Mr Nasri Ma'louf, the Defence Minister: "In case
of the arrival of any UN troops on the Syrian
front, it would be legal for us to think to ask
for the stationing of UN troops on our borders".

It is also possible that a pre-arranged
Israeli attack will take place and temporarily
occupy part of the South of Lebanon until the
arrival of UN troops to the Lebanese borders.

The fourth step, according to my estimation,
will be between Jordan and Israel, taking similar
steps, leading to the stationing of UN troops
with the setting up of spearhead bridges for the
forces of King Hussein outside the West Bank, which
would allow Jordan to re-occupy the West Bank at
a later date.

This will be dependent on what happens on
the Syrian front, but if Syria rejects a dis-
engagement treaty similar to the Egyptian one,
this will be a great start towards the defeat
of the American-Zionist liquidationist solution.

But if everything goes similar to the EGYPTIAN
model, even if that includes disengagement
from certain Syrian territories occupied in the
June War; Al-Kuneitra for example, the cycle of
the American solution would have started along the

lines which I have mentioned, on the fronts surrounding the enemy. Thus Israel will be protected from all the sides with a wide buffer zone between the Arab armies and the enemy, and under the supervision of the UN troops. In this case, the key to the solution will fall into the hands of American Imperialism. Then the United States will again impose a situation of no war no peace and the stabilisation of the situation. Also she will start with a new series of discussions based on obtaining further concessions from the Arab side whenever any step is taken by the Arab people to change the situation at some future time. These concessions can be exemplified in the increase of the American Imperialist sphere of influence in the Arab region, the consolidation of American interests, and the positions of the Arab reactionary forces, thus strengthening the encirclement of the Palestinian Revolution until it becomes a revolution encircled by the Arab regimes. Hence a situation will arrive when America will begin to put pressure on these regimes to attack and liquidate the Palestinian revolution. On the other hand it will give Israel the chance of regaining its breath and enable it to continue to execute its expansionist policy of setting up more settlements in the occupied territories to create what is called a new status quo, to annex further Palestinian and Arab lands, to completely suppress the rights of the Palestinian People, and to partition once again the Palestinian lands between Jordan and Israel.

This is the essence of the American-Zionist solution which achieved a great victory on the Egyptian front, and which America is trying to extend to the Syrian front and then to the other fronts.

We have to stand solidly for a disengagement solution on the Syrian front that will not go the same way as the Egyptian one which would open the

way to the American solution and thus let the key to the solution of the problem fall into the hands of American imperialism.

THE ROAD TO FOIL THE LIQUIDATIONIST SOLUTION

Taking all this into account, we struggle since the October cease fire, to foil this liquidationist solution, and it is possible actually to foil it, provided a situation could exist where all the forces of the Palestinian and Arab revolution and other friendly forces would work together on the following revolutionary program:

1- On the Palestinian front: The revolution and our people should take a united national stand under the slogan of defeating occupation, the rejection of the return of the Jordanian troops to the West Bank, the right of our people to their national independence, and the establishment of their national independent authority; a base for the revolution and a step forward on the road to complete liberation of the Palestinian soil, without any peace treaty, recognition of Israel, or concession on any historic right of our people to all their land. Thus the gun would be raised to pursue the struggle until complete liberation.

2- On the Arab front: a) Support the Syrian patriotic resistance so that no section of its forces would become isolated as happened to the Egyptian forces, and, that the Syrian forces could have the capability to pursue their struggle against the enemy.

b) The patching up the relationship between Iraq and Syria immediately and without delay to put all Iraq's military and financial potentials to the Golan front, and to the support of the Palestinian Resistance.

c) The total massing of Arab potential to force the enemy to withdraw from the occupied territories, and to unconditionally recognise the rights of the Palestinian People and the re-use of the

oil weapon and its nationalisation.

3- On the international front, extra solidarity, and we are sure that our strong position will lead to the increase of international support for us especially from the socialist countries and the world's national liberation movements.

AIMS OF KING MUSSEIN'S DISCUSSIONS IN THE ARAB CAPITALS

Question: What is your opinion about King Hussein's discussions in Cairo and other capitals?

Answer: King Hussein's moves fall within the context of the mentioned American solution. It would be nothing new to say that the Jordanian regime, is very strict in following United States directions, and therefore declined to join in the October War, when the road to Jerusalem lay open in front of their forces.

Question: How was it actually open?

Answer: Israel could not have been capable of massing more than 2,000 troops, two regiments, on the Jordanian front during the October War, after calling up its reserves and the stationing of 325,000 troops on the Egyptian and Syrian fronts, while Jordan had five regiments, 80,000 troops, and it was within its capability to advance into the West Bank, in the direction of Jerusalem. Even if it could not reach Jerusalem it could have still been able to liberate some land, without losing any. In addition, Israel couldn't withdraw any of its troops from Sinai or the Golan to cover the Jordanian front. But the Jordanian regime didn't carry that out, thus rendering the required services to Israel, by keeping the Jordanian front out of the battlefield despite the calls addressed to him from the two presidents, Assad and Sadat, and the leaders of

the Palestinian revolution. According to the Jordanian note to Kissinger during his first round "Jordan didn't take an opportunist stand crucial to Israel, and for that reason, it should be rewarded by the return of the West Bank to it". Since then the Jordanian Government has declared its responsibility for the Palestinian people of the two Banks East and West, and on the soil of the West Bank, and also that the Palestine Liberation Organisation is only responsible for the issues of the Palestinian People of the Gaza Strip and the issues of the 'refugees'.

Thus, the Jordanian rule insists on splitting up the Palestinian People into two peoples, and declares itself responsible over one of them.

The final moves came in the Arab Capitals, after King Hussein's visit to Washington, and according to America's advice to him, he tried to break the Arab isolation imposed on his Jordanian rule and to get a recognition from certain Arab capitals that he is responsible for the Palestinian People and the occupied land of the West Bank.

In addition, the Jordanian rule practices all forms of political double-crossing, by giving the impression that Jordan is considering the issue of the recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the sole representative of the Palestinian People.

Question: Then, didn't Jordan recognise that?

Answer: He didn't recognise that, and all our information on the discussions of Hussein in Cairo emphasises that.

Question: What about the discussions between President Anwar Sadat and King Hussein?

Answer: The joint Jordanian-Egyptian communique published after their discussions, came as a clear indication of all this. The communique was preceded, over a number of weeks, by a full campaign by the Egyptian-Jordanian news media, with regards to the recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the sole representative of the Palestinian People to cover the visit to Cairo. When the communique was published, it proved clearly that King Hussein's position as regards the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the rights of the Palestinian People, did not change. The communique did not even mention the Palestine Liberation Organisation as a representative of the Palestinian People, nor as the leadership of the Palestinian People.

The communique talks about the Palestinians and their right for self-determination, without any definition of who these Palestinians are, or how would they decide their determination?

At the time the Jordanian Prime Minister returned to Amman from Egypt, he declared, explaining the Jordanian reactionary understanding of such unclear crosswords: that Jordan recognises the Palestine Liberation Organisation - is outside the frame of his responsibilities as a state - over the Palestinian land occupied in the 1967 war.

Now King Hussein carries on with his tours to split the Arab unanimity over the recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the sole representative of the Palestinian People. All this, is linked with the American solution which still supports King Hussein, and supports his understanding of the rights of the Palestinian People all of which is solvable within the United Kingdom project.

This is in agreement with the greed of the

Jordanian rule in their bid to return to the West Bank, and is a favourable response to the Zionist theory based on the rejection of any Palestinian independent national existence, and to the statement by Zionist leaders that 'there is no room between the sea and the Syrian-Iraqi borders except for two states: Israel and Jordan'.

It was on this basis that our criticism of the Egyptian-Jordanian communique was made, and also it was our duty to struggle against all attempts by the Jordanian authorities to break out of the Arab circle of isolation and split the Arab unanimity over their stand that the Palestine Liberation Organisation is the sole representative of our people, and our right to self-determination without any Hashemite or Arab guardianship.

The Egyptian-Jordanian communique represents a new concession by the Egyptian leadership in favour of the American solution plans. It represents as well a concession in favour of Israel and the reactionary Jordanian regime at the expense of the People of Palestine, and his right to an independent national existence, and self-determination over all his land, in which the enemy has been evicted. Also our information indicates that King Hussein has again repeated his aggressive and annexation policy towards our people and the Liberation Organisation during his discussions in Damascus, emphasising his responsibility over the West Bank and its people.

THE REVOLUTION IS ALONE RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING THE PALESTINIAN POSITION.

Question: Certain Arab media say that it is not the right of the Palestinians alone to decide the Palestinian policy?

Answer: True, the Palestinian problem, is a Palestinian and an Arab problem at the same time,

in the same way as a problem of any other Arab people is a problem concerning that Arab people and the whole Arab nation. But the role of the peoples of the Arab nation and its patriotic forces is to express its solidarity and its link with any other Arab people in his struggle for his freedom and self-determination, and not to replace this or that people in their struggle for self-determination.

The Lebanese people, for example, or the Iraqi or the Syrian or the Egyptian or any other Arab people, is firstly and finally responsible for their self-determination, and the Arab forces have to support the steps they take for their present and future, and not to impose on them the form of the struggle they should follow or the line of their actions. Is it not sufficient, the bitter experience of a quarter of a century since the conspiracy of 1940-7 where the Palestinian independent national existence was suppressed, and the control by the Arab Governments over the fate of the Palestinian People, from behind his back and without his consent?

The Palestinian revolution succeeded after a long struggle, to re-instate the Palestinian problem into its own hands, without getting the permission of this state or that. The main achievement of this revolution is the making possible for the Palestinian people to expose his independent national identity which was intended to be suppressed since the execution of the double conspiracy of 1940, exemplified by the setting up of the Israeli State on one side and the annexation of the rest of the land to the Arab countries, by which, the independent national existence of the Palestinian people was absented, and his role in the struggle to liberate his own soil was denied. It is the DUTY of the revolution and all the Arab forces,

that genuinely care about the Palestinian cause and its liberation, to pursue its struggle to obtain an independent Palestinian existence to correct what happened in 1948, and to support the Palestinian people to retrieve any Palestinian land occupied, on which to build a national Palestinian State, so that the struggle would be based upon its true nature; a Palestinian-Zionist struggle, and an Arab-Zionist struggle simultaneously. Israeli and American attempts are simply trying to return the situation, with respect to the Palestinian people, to where it was after the conspiracy of 1948. That is, consolidating the conspiracy, by keeping the problem of the Palestinian People as a problem of Arab refugees who should be absorbed in the vast Arab lands, compensated and lodged there.

The rejection of the American-Zionist-Hachemite solution, which is specifically the liquidationist solution, should be based upon the support for the Palestinian revolution and people in pursuing their armed, ideological and political struggle against the enemy, enabling this people to determine his future over his soil, and the getting up of his national independent state, which would represent a negation to the Zionist state; as each state rejects the existence of the other. These were the plans of colonialism, Zionism and Reaction from the start. They were carried out in 1948, and it is our duty to reject the results of such plans. The main step leading to this rejection and the liquidation of the Zionist state is the resurrection of an independent Palestinian State on Palestinian soil which becomes liberated and the occupation removed from over it, to represent a revolutionary base for the Palestinian People from which to pursue its protracted struggle against the Zionist State, for a democratic state all over the Palestinian soil, irrelevant how long it may take, or how high the sacrifices may be.

Once again, we stand at a turning point in the life of the national Palestinian cause, and its people. The beginning of the victory against the Zionist state is in the resurrection of a negation on the Palestinian soil which becomes liberated and the colonialist forces evicted from over it.

Any Arab attempts to rob the Palestinian people of his full rights for self-determination do not serve anybody except the American-Zionist solution and the greediness of the annexative Jordanian rule, whatever the slogans he tries to camouflage himself with.

THE NATIONAL CONGRESS FACES A HISTORIC TURNING POINT

Question: What are the issues to be discussed in the National Congress during its meeting taking place very soon in Cairo? Would there be a plan to unify all the Organisations? (see appendix)

Answer: The next session of the National Congress is one of the most important and most dangerous sessions, for on the agenda there is the adoption of some decisive resolutions which will enable us to intensify the struggle against the American-Zionist-Hashemite solution, by mobilising all the Palestinian patriotic forces to defeat the Zionist occupation and stopping the return of the reactionary Jordanian rule to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip or to any liberated Palestinian lands, enabling our people to resurrect his national independent entity within a democratic national authority over all the Palestinian lands which he liberates, and removes the Zionist occupation from it. Realising this decisive position, it is possible to solidify the unity of the factions of the Palestinian Resistance and the unity of the Palestinian people inside the occupied territories, and wherever they exist

in all the sister Arab countries.

Realising this decisive resolution will make it possible to protect the guns of the revolution from encirclement and all liquidationist attempts, and ensures the continuity of the revolution in all its future stages. The Arab patriotic forces must support the National Congress to achieve this resolution which will put a stop to any attempts of the Israeli occupation to set up 'self rule' in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip under its domination. In other words, setting up a state protected and responsible to the Zionist administration, led by reactionary Palestinians read to co-operate with the occupation. Also, this resolution will put a stop to the United Kingdom project* and all the attempts to to implement and solidify IAG's conspiracy, based on the tearing up of the Palestinian lands between Israel and the rulers of Jordan, and the suppression of an national independent entity for the Palestinian People, which goes along with the American and Zionist present and historic plans, set up on the rejection of an independent national Palestinian entity.

This resolution will put an end to all defeatist and submissive trends in the Palestinian and Arab arena, and will enable the revolution to stand on its own national land, between the ranks of its own people rather than staying as a 'guest revolution' in the Arab countries continuously threatened according to the plans of the enemies and the moods and whims of the Arab States.

GENEVA CONFERENCE WOULD NOT SUCCEED IN OFFERING
PEACE

Question: If the Palestine Liberation Organisation

* This is a scheme proposed by King Hussein, early 73, to annex the West Bank, with himself as a King and a reactionary Palestinian as a Prime Minister.

Becomes convinced that the talks at the Geneva Conference are moving towards a just peaceful solution, would there be any other conditions upon which the Palestine Liberation Organisation would take part?

Answer: With respect to the Palestinian and Arab struggle against Israel, Just peace comes under the impossible peace, at the present moment, and according to the present balances of power. Just peace is the peace which is based in essence upon the removal of Zionism and its organisations, exemplified by the State of Israel, from the area. This peace is impossible to achieve at the present stage. For just peace to prevail, the full rights of the Palestinian people should be restored, and the racist, expansionist, colonialist state should be replaced, on the entire land of Palestine, by a Democratic Palestinian State where Arab and Israeli Jews would co-exist, enjoying same rights, and not the Jews exclusively, so that we don't fall into the Zionist propagandists traps that claim the unity of World Jewry. This sort of peace is impossible at the present stage, and Israel will remain a stronghold for the expansionist greediness of Zionism and colonialism, and an allied tool of Imperialism in the struggle against the people of Palestine and all the Arab peoples and their right to development and advance, and the building up of an independent life in the area.

The Geneva Conference could not succeed in achieving a permanent just peace in the Arab area. The most it could arrive at would be a temporary ceasefire, short or long term, depending upon the results reached. It is certain that the struggle at the present moment, is a struggle between the surrender liquidationist solution, and the struggle for the complete withdrawal from the occupied Arab lands with the regaining of the Palestinian people of his right.

for an independent national entity over the Palestinian lands from which the enemy forces withdraw. We have all to struggle to achieve this provisional national aim, which represents a big step forward on the road for the liberation of the rest of Palestine at the next stage. What is taking place now, would not represent just peace, and would not be more than a temporary ceasefire. As for the stand of the Palestine Liberation Organisation with regards the Geneva Conference, we have to note the following:

- 1- The process up to now has emptied the Geneva Conference of any real significance, and transformed it into a skeleton where all the moves being made, occur outside the framework of the Conference; between Washington, the Arab capitals and Tel-Aviv.
- 2- The United States and Israel are continuing this method to prevent the Soviet Union from playing its role in support of the Arab forces so that the situation would remain tipped in favour of the imperialist Zionist pressures. On the other hand the Soviet Union is trying to enliven the Geneva Conference, to exert his weight, in order to readjust a balance in favour of the Arabs so that events would not take place between the capitals of the area and Washington which takes an overwhelmingly biased stand towards Israel. If the United States is ready to offer some concessions to the Arabs, they would only be to protect its interests in the area after the October War.
- 3- The Palestinian national stand with regards the Geneva Conference will be decided according to the developments of the balance of forces, and the degree to which it will serve the Palestinian and Arab positions, based upon the complete withdrawal from the occupied territories occupied in 1967 and the recognition of the national rights of the Palestinian People; or the opposite to this. Thus it is premature for the PLO to take a definite stand with regards the Geneva Conference, for this will be decided, as I have already said, in the light of the development of circumstances in the

forseeable future. B. this, the way to Israeli and American plans and tactics as well as those of the Arab Governments will be blocked; those Governments who wish to exploit the stand of the PLO to cover their own stands or wish to wash their hands of their national commitments, towards the Palestine cause.

One last point I wish to emphasise again, we have always declared that a Geneva Conference based on resolution 242 does not concern us, for it considers the case of our people as one of 'refugees'.

THE ISSUE OF A PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT...
WHY, WHEN and HOW?

Question: Is it true that President Sadat and Yasser Arafat agreed to form a provisional government, and what is your opinion about a government in exile?

Answer: According to our information, no such agreements have taken place, so far.

As for a provisional government, this is an issue on the agenda of all revolutions. But the timing of such a step should be a function of the state of affairs of the revolution, and to what extent this step will serve the revolutionary struggle.

For example, notice the National Liberation Front of Vietnam, it decided to form a provisional government when all the conditions for its declaration became ripe; when the National Liberation Front became the recognised leadership both internationally and, essentially, among the Vietnamese People.

But in Cambodia, the United Liberation Front decided to declare a provisional government

as soon as the American coup d'etat took place.

With regards to our revolution, the formation of a provisional government will be considered under the following circumstances:

- 1- If Israel attempted to form a local rule in the occupied territories to bring to fore a reactionary leadership in place of the PLO.
- 2- If Jordan tried to set up bridges for its forces and administration inside the West Bank, within the framework of a deal between Jordan, Israel and America to execute the United Kingdom project.
- 3- If it became essential to get a larger international recognition for the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian People. Under any one of these three situations, the question of a provisional government becomes a serious proposition.

THE LEFT, THE REVOLUTION, AND THE STAGE OF NATIONAL LIBERATION

Question: It is known that you represent the Left of the Resistance. To what extent you actually represent that, and the Left you represent, is it communism?

Answer: The question of the Left is not solely defined by a person's ideological views, but with the link up between his theoretical orientation and his actual practice. From this position, we, and all the international progressive and left-wing media, consider the Democratic Front to represent the Left of the Palestinian Resistance, united ideologically, politically, organisationally and militarily. This does not mean that other left wing tendencies among other groups do not exist.

As for the second point, I don't know what exactly you mean by communism. We are revolution-

aries using Marxism-Leninism as a work guide, which should include all the national peculiarities of our people, and we refuse to copy any left-wing experience from the experiences of the peoples and other revolutionary movements of the world. We decide our position in relation to other forces of the Left and other progressive trends in the world according to the interests of our people, our Arab Nation and the common struggle against colonialism, Zionism, and the forces of reaction in this world.

One last point in this respect: the Left in its essence is that which rejects what is useless and old, and only picks out, from the patriotic and national traditions, what is useful for the struggle. Also, it is in total cohesion with the people's national and social matters in the light of every stage in the struggle. The Left has no private interests to seek. Its interest is the unlimited allegiance to the service of the people and the national question at all stages of the struggle.

As for our people, we are passing through the stage of national liberation, we have our program and methods of work to achieve the tasks of national liberation within the framework of the struggle for Palestinian national unity by means of a united national front, comprising all the forces with all their class and ideological differences. These forces meet within the Front around a common denominator for solving the problems of national liberation. As for the differences between the forces of the Palestinian Revolution, we will solve them by dialogue and democratic struggles among the masses, taking the utmost care to safeguard the Palestinian national unity.

THE LEFT AND ZIONISM DO NOT MEET, AND THE ONLY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEM IS THAT OF A CONTINUOUS WAR.

Question: This leads us to a three sided question you addressed yourself in a previous talk to the Israeli Left, can you work together with that Left? Can you meet ideologically? Do you think that there exists a Left in Zionism? Should that Left govern in Israel, do you think this will solve the Palestinian problem?

Answer: Let us define first what is the Left. Historically, it is the tendency to struggle against all forms of national and class oppression and as such, it is nationally against all entities that rise at the expense of other peoples and implant a foreign people in its place. As is the case in Israel, Rhodesia, and South Africa for instance. The Left is also against all forms of oppression and class exploitation in any society. Accordingly, the Left in Israel is precisely the one that takes a stand and struggles against Zionism and the State of Israel - which is based on the national oppression of the Palestinian People - and struggles against Imperialism and the alliance between Imperialism and Zionism.

Thus, on that level, the organised forces of the Left in Israel are meagre forces and almost ineffective so far. They are formed of small organisations such as the Revolutionary Communist Union and Matzpen, also, the majority of the Arabs struggling in 'Israel', centre around Rakah (the Israeli C.P.), not because of its radical Left stand regarding the state of Israel, but because it represents the only opening for the Arabs to struggle against Zionist expansion and to safeguard the national and social rights of the Arabs in Israel. All these organisations take anti-Zionist stands to varying degrees; and they represent forces supporting the common struggle

against Zionism. We, in fact, declared more than once the possibility of a common struggle for the victor of the Palestinian rights. But these forces, up to now, have not been very effective in the Israeli society. This is due to the deep penetration of the Zionist ideology among the social classes of the Israeli society, including the working class.

As for the existence of a Zionist Left; the Left and Zionism do not meet, and the only relationship they can have is that of permanent war. Therefore, there is no such thing as a Zionist Left. However, it is possible to find among the Zionist forces, some who are less or more aggressive with dreaming inclinations for a colonialist settlers empire. But all of them are Zionists, with their ideological and political tendencies based on colonialism, aggression and expansion. As for the last part of the question; with the deep penetration of the Zionist ideology in the Israeli society, and its alliance with imperialism, the doors that would lead the anti-Zionist Left to the seats of the Government will remain closed. This issue is linked to the fracturing of the Israeli society, which is a function of a decisive change in the balance of forces in favour of the Palestinian and Arab liberation movement, with the military forces in the forefront.

A comparison between the wars of 7 and 73 shows this very clearly. After the war of 7, the tie between the Israeli society and the Zionist ideology of expansion and aggression was strengthened, because the balance of forces was drastically tipped in favour of the enemy. While the October war created a chain of splits due to the semblance of Arab victory that was achieved in this war.

What is now taking place in Israel, is a tangible picture of the above. However, we should not cling to any illusions, as to what is happening, although it is necessary, to exploit these essential contradictions among the ranks of the enemy. The required breakdown that will open the way for the anti-Zionist forces inside Israel has not been realised yet. This requires, as I have said, a decisive change in the balance of forces in favour of the Arabs.

THE INTERNATIONAL HARMONY AND THE ISSUES OF NATIONAL LIBERATION

Question: Do you think that a military confrontation between the Palestinians and Arabs with Israel is possible in the atmosphere of international harmony?

Answer: The term, international harmony, is an ambiguous one, it was coined and promoted by imperialist circles and right wing reactionary forces. The term international harmony means the possibility of ending the contradictions in the world, such as, the contradiction between socialism and capitalism, the contradiction between the oppressed and oppressing nations, the contradiction between rich and poor, the contradiction between industrial and developing countries even, if we assumed for the sake of argument, that the Soviet Union and the United States are trying to reach an agreement between themselves, these attempts will be smashed upon the rocks of the contradictions that exist in the world.

What is taking place, are attempts for international detente, inspite of imperialism, not by its own choice, because of the changing balance of international forces more and more in favour of progressive and national liberation forces.

This is why, for instance, imperialism had to come to terms with the outcome of the second

World War, having refused to do so for over a quarter of a century. Also, the attempts of the United States to co-exist with the People's Republic of China having refused to recognise its existence for over 25 years, and considering Taiwan as the representative of the whole of China. International detente is in the interest of the struggling peoples, depending on their ability to exploit this detente in favour of their liberation, national issues and development. However, imperialism, having been forced to give some concessions for detente, also tries to exploit this detente to strengthen its positions and to strike at the people's struggling for liberation and progress.

As regards our areas, what was said about 'detente', did not stop the October War from being waged, indicating that peoples could benefit from detente to further their suppressed national and social rights.

Inasmuch as we develop our conditions and subjective capabilities and methods of struggle, we can exploit detente to further our interest. But to wait for detente to solve our problems would be the ultimate in fatalism, dependability, and the elimination of our subjective role in determining our present and future.

Lastly, yes... we can carry on with our fight without detente constituting an obstacle, by depending on our people, arming and organising them and giving them their democratic freedoms

He who trusts and believes in his people and nation, is not afraid of the bends that the revolution follows on the long twisted road, because each of the opposing forces tries to impose itself. But, as we notice, the imperialist and racialist regimes are suffering repeated defeats in this world, and also in our area. The difference

between the wars of '7 and 73 is a striking example.

Events AND LESSONS OF THE VIETNAMESE EXPERIENCE

Question: In your last speech you used the example of Vietnam. However, the events of Vietnam led to two Vietnams between which the gap is being deepened. Can we afford such a division on the Palestinian scene?

Answer: What happened in Vietnam is the outcome of the evolutionary process of the struggle on the Vietnamese soil itself. The revolution started in the first instance for CNE Vietnam, free, independent and democratic. But the confronting sides and their balance of forces did not allow the Vietnamese Revolution to reach its patriotic goal in one go.

The signing in 1954 of the Geneva agreement asserted the situ de facto, that the Vietnamese Revolution had then reached; that is, the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as a great step towards the liberation and the unification of the whole of Vietnam, with the South remaining in the hands of a pro-French, then a pro-American regime. In the face of the American refusal to respect the Geneva Conventions, the Vietnamese in the South took up arms again, backed by its rear base, Democratic Vietnam. By the end of 72, the Paris agreements were signed, which only realised part of the aims of the Liberation Front, which went on fighting again for a united, prosperous and peaceful Vietnam.

These agreements were merely a recognition of the de facto situation, which in turn, was the outcome of the struggle. It is certain that the Saigon Regime refuses now to abide by the agreement and this will lead the armed struggle from its present tactical frame into a long term

APPENDIX

The Palestine National Council which met in Cairo between the 1st and 3th of June, 1974, has adopted the following resolutions:

1- Council stresses the previous stand of the PLO with regards 242 resolution, which ignores the national rights of our people, and treats our people as a refugee problem. Therefore, dealing with this resolution on this basis is rejected at any Arab level and in international dealings; including the Geneva Conference.

2- The PLO will struggle by every means, the foremost of which is armed struggle, to liberate Palestinian land and to establish the People's national, independent and fighting authority on every part of Palestinian land to be liberated. This requires making more changes in the balance of power in favor of our people and their struggle.

3- The PLO will oppose any plan for the establishment of a Palestinian entity, the price of which is recognition, conciliation, secure borders, renunciation of our national right, and the deprivation of our People's right to return and determine their fate.

4- Any liberation step that is achieved constitutes a step towards continuing the effort to achieve the PLO goal for the establishment of the Palestinian Democratic State.

5- The PLO will struggle with Jordanian national forces for the establishment of a Jordanian-Palestinian national front whose aim is the creation of a national democratic government in Jordan - a government which will cohere with the the Palestinian entity as the outcome of struggle.

6- The PLO will strive to establish a unity of struggle between the two people and among all Arab liberation forces which agree to this program.

7- In the light of this program, the PLC will struggle to strengthen national unity which will enable it to carry out its duties and tasks.

8- The Palestinian National Authority, after its establishment, will struggle for the unity of all the frontline states to continue the liberation of all Palestinian Soil.

- The PLO will seek to strengthen its solidarity with the socialist countries and all the World's forces of liberation and progress to foil all the plans of Zionism, reaction and imperialism.

10- The Revolution Command will work out the tactics that serve and lead to the achievement of these aims.

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