

the brightest landmarks of the last two decades. The emergence of the Palestinian revolution represented the popular response to the 1967 defeat. The Palestinian resistance represented a contradiction not only to the Zionist project, but to the Arab reactionary project as well. In practice, the Palestinian revolution has become the vanguard of the Arab liberation movement.

Having disappointed the calculations of the Zionist-imperialist-reactionary alliance, the Palestinian revolution has been the prime target for this alliance. In fact, the PLO's major task during the past twenty years has been to confront the enemy alliance's political and military conspiracies.

On the military level, there were the 1970 Black September massacres in Jordan; the 1975 Israeli-backed, Phalangist war against the Palestinians and the Lebanese national movement, and the 1976 Tel Al Zatar massacre; the 1978 and 1982 invasions of Lebanon, and the Sabra-Shatila massacre; the 1985-87 war on the camps waged by the sectarian Amal movement; and the continuous Israeli raids on Palestinian camps, especially in South Lebanon.

On the political level, liquidationist solutions have never stopped pouring in, among them: resolution 242, the Rogers plan (1970), King Hussein's United Kingdom plan (1972), Saudi Prince Fahd's plan (1980), the Reagan plan (1982) and last, but not least, the cancellation of the Cairo accord regulating Palestinian civilian and armed presence in Lebanon.

Yet like the phoenix, the Palestinian revolution rose up again and survived all the military and political conspiracies. Moreover, the PLO has grown to be a well-known, respected and recognized political body, as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Over 150 countries recognize the PLO. The principle of self-determination and the right to an independent Palestinian state are now accepted on the international level. Only those who hide their heads in the ground, like the ostrich, refuse to recognize these rights. Their rejection is translated into daily, US-backed, Zionist aggression against the Palestinian people inside and outside occupied Palestine.

Unfortunately though, the continuous blows dealt to the PLO during these twenty years have yielded some results. Unlike the Israeli tenets, the

Palestinian tenets have been shaken during the past few years, due to some Palestinian forces' betting on US solutions and harboring illusions about the results to be gained. This policy resulted in the Amman accord, but it proved to be futile, and this failure paved the way for restoring the PLO's unity at the PNC session in Algeria this April. This unification session rehabilitated the Palestinian tenets which are as follows:

1. rejecting resolution 242 because it does not constitute a solution for the Palestinian problem; rejecting the Camp David accords, the Reagan plan, and all capitulationist plans and unilateral solutions;
2. adhering to the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, return and establishing an independent Palestinian state;
3. adhering to the Palestinian people's historical rights in Palestine;
4. adhering to the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

These tenets are totally contradictory to the Zionist tenets, and this explains the failure of all the attempts to arrive at a solution to the Middle East conflict. Such solutions have consistently ignored the nature of the conflict and the Palestinian people's rights. For twenty years, political activities in the region have focused only on attempts to find a solution for the 1967 territories, ignoring the original occupation of Palestine.

'Israel' and its allies offer one of two 'solutions': either 'autonomy' or a confederation with Jordan. The PLO and its allies, on the other hand, offer a just solution based on the necessity of recognizing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. The Arab reactionaries look for a middle solution, one that includes Israeli withdrawal from most of the occupied territories in return for peace, recognition and coexistence with 'Israel'. Such a solution is undoubtedly at the expense of the Palestinian people's legitimate rights. There are even two understandings of the proposed international conference. That of Shimon Peres is an international umbrella under which all the parties concerned, except the PLO, would negotiate directly. To the PLO and its allies, an international conference means one where all parties concerned participate under UN auspices, with the PLO participating on an independent and equal footing.

It is true that the PLO's just solution will take a long time and much struggle. However, it is equally true that the proposed Zionist solution will continue to be in crisis, despite whatever temporary successes may be achieved.

## WHOSE DEFEAT WAS IT ANYWAY?

Despite the gloomy outlook in the region during the last twenty years, there is one fact that should never be overlooked. The Arab masses' capabilities have been suppressed, but this situation cannot last long. The most encouraging example is Lebanon. In 1982, the Zionists intended to reenact their successful June blitzkrieg, like in 1967, but the Israeli expectations of a 72-hour victory over the Palestinian and Lebanese fighters vanished in thin air only a few hours after the start of the invasion. Unlike the 1967 aggression, the 1982 invasion of Lebanon did not yield a quick Israeli victory. The Israeli army failed to conquer Beirut despite nearly eighty days of siege and a barbaric military assault. The Lebanese people's heroic resistance, led by the Lebanese National Resistance Front and supported by Palestinian forces and Syria, succeeded in driving the Israeli occupiers out of most of Lebanon. The invasion of Lebanon was the most costly aggression ever staged by the Zionists.

In addition to the Lebanese example, one should never forget the heroic uprisings of the masses in occupied Palestine and the Golan Heights. The Palestinian masses' continuous uprisings in the occupied territories affirm the dialectical relationship between our masses' struggle, whether inside or outside occupied Palestine. Since 1967, 250,000 Palestinians have been imprisoned in Israeli jails; 1,215 have been deported or expelled; and 1,300 homes have been demolished by the Israeli authorities. These are Israeli statistics and therefore modest estimations, but they give an idea of the scope of mass involvement in the struggle.

The latest example of the capabilities of the Arab masses was the 1985 uprising in Sudan, that overthrew the Numeiri dictatorship. So whose defeat was it in 1967? It was the defeat of the Arab regimes, not the masses. An Arab poet once said that the chains will be broken, and the darkness will fade away. Undoubtedly, the darkness will fade away. ●