



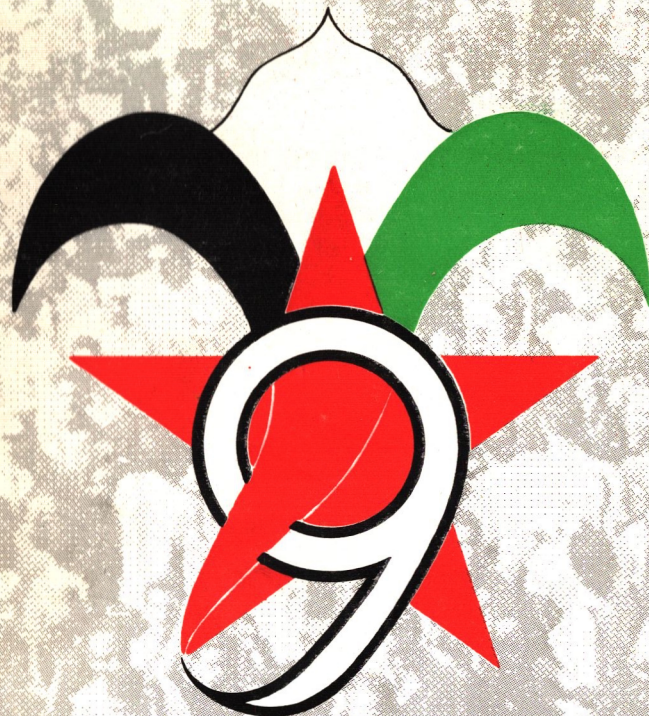
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Interview With **NAYEF HAWATMEH**

Secretary - General of The D.F.L.P.



**THE PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION
AND
THE CONFRONTATION FRONT**

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NAYEF HAWATMEH**

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An interview with Nayef Hawatmeh,
Secretary-general of the Democratic Front
for the Liberation of Palestine,
on the ninth anniversary of the Front.

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FOREWORD

On February 22, the Palestinian people and the Palestinian Revolution celebrated with the militants of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (D.F.L.P.), the ninth anniversary of the foundation of the Front. Rallies and other celebrations were held in Lebanon, in Syria, and in other countries where there are Palestinian communities. The scope of the celebrations demonstrated the growing role of the Palestinian Left in the Palestinian national movement.

*The following text is a translation of an interview given by comrade Nayef Hawatmeh, secretary-general of the D.F.L.P., to the weekly magazine, **al-Hurriyah**, on the occasion of the ninth anniversary of the Front. In this interview the secretary-general discusses the development of the Front, its role, and its relations, on the Palestinian, Arab, and international levels. He analyzes the current Palestinian and Arab situation and the efforts of the patriotic Arab forces and countries united in the Confrontation Front, to defeat the plan to impose a "pax americana" at the hands of Sadat and Israel.*

**THE FIVE STAGES.
GRASPING THE CENTRAL ISSUES**

Q. On February 22, the D.F.L.P. entered its tenth year with its importance on the Palestinian level and its role on the Arab and international levels growing ever stronger. How can we assess this growth, and what are the Front's future prospects, in view of the rapid evolution taking place in the region?

A. The role of any revolution, and of each phase in the long-term, overall strategic process on the road to victory, can only be determined in light of its capacity to define the central issue of the struggle in each phase. This is precisely what distinguishes the role of the revolutionary vanguard: its capacity to determine, to grasp, this central question, to develop the program to deal with it, and to take the initiative in presenting that program to the revolution and the people so that it may become the program of the revolution and of the entire people during the phase in question.

It is in the framework of this historic revolutionary process that the role of the D.F.L.P. and its actual capacity to represent the vanguard of the revolution, must be seen. According to this guideline, all of us — sons of the revolution, sons of the masses of our people, the Arab and international forces of liberation and progress — must examine the role of each group within the revolution and its concrete, effective significance in the life and the future of the revolution. We must examine the evolution of its role, its accomplishment of its tasks, and its leadership of the people, step by step, towards victory.

The role played by the Democratic Front in this framework provides the basis for the popular support it receives.

By means of an objective critical examination, one can arrive at a clear picture of this role: the comprehension of the crucial issue in each phase, and the distinction of taking the initiative in drawing up a program and proposing it to the people and the various organizations of the revolution. Very early in its history the Front drew up the general national democratic program for a solution of the Palestinian question in the framework of a unified, secular, democratic state in which democratic justice can be fully realised; a state hostile to imperialism, Zionism, and reactionary, chauvinist tendencies. And this, while the other groups were still fluctuating among various approaches contain-

ing religious, sectarian and reactionary chauvinist elements, far from proposing a radical democratic solution to the problem.

In a second phase, when the revolution was faced with the opposition of the reactionary Jordanian authorities, the Front took the lead in singling out the primary task in the struggle, and called for action to block the Jordanian regime before it could take the initiative and resolve the conflict at the expense of the revolution, over the bodies of our martyrs. But, due to the shortsighted failure of certain forces to grasp this historic necessity, the initiative was left in the hands of the royal reactionaries. These reactionaries, after rejecting any form of peaceful co-existence or union on the basis of the common struggle against the occupation and Zionist and imperialist expansionism, unleashed a fierce attack against the revolution.

In the third phase, the revolution arrived at an historic turning point at which the definition of the central issue in its program would decide the fate of the revolution: whether it would be pushed back and isolated, or would instead win a hearing at the Arab and international levels in our people's name, and gain wide Arab and international recognition. Once again it was the Democratic Front which took the initiative in precisely and concretely identifying the central issue in the period immediately preceding and immediately after the October 1973 war. The Front took the

lead in shaping, proposing and defending the national transitional program of the revolution, the people and the PLO – the program of return, self-determination, and the establishment of an independent state as a strategic transitional goal in the total historical strategic process of realizing, through various stages of struggle, a unified, democratic, secular state.

Beginning in August of 1973, the Front struggled for several months, with strong popular support, until, in June 1974, by a decision of the twelfth session of the Palestine National Council, the transitional program was officially adopted by the people, the revolution, and the PLO. The adoption of this program, as well as the decisions of Algiers and Rabat (October, 1974), which were linked to its adoption, permitted the revolution and the PLO to win wide Arab and international recognition for the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. This unified our people and all the Arab peoples under the standard of the liberation of all the Arab and Palestinian territory occupied during the June 1967 attack, the return of the Palestinian refugees, and the right of the Palestinian people to unconditional self-determination in the framework of an independent state. This program paved the way for international recognition by the socialist countries, the non-aligned countries, the countries of the Organization of African Unity, and the Summit of Islamic Countries. Its adoption was instrumental in

the decisions of the U.N. General Assembly in November, 1974, including the granting of observer status to the PLO and the recognition of that organization as the sole legitimate representative of our people. All of this was accomplished on the basis of the national-patriotic transitional program which the Democratic Front was first to advocate and formulate as the essential need at the historic juncture cited above.

In this way the Palestinians' just national cause gained Arab and world-wide legitimacy and won the support of world public opinion, to the exclusion of Zionist Israel, imperialist Washington, and the racists of South Africa. Similarly, the world came to realize that "there can be no peace in the Middle East, without a just solution for the Palestinian cause, and ... no settlement of the Arab-Israeli-imperialist conflict, without the recognition of the legitimate, inalienable rights of the people of Palestine, and in particular, its right to return and to self-determination in the framework of an independent state".

The fourth stage, that of the two years of war in Lebanon, was characterized by fierce conflicts among Arab alliances which, along with Israel and imperialism, made Lebanon their battlefield. Here the Democratic Front recognized the importance of defending the revolution and the PLO and of exerting an all-out effort to prevent the revolution's falling victim to this conflict among the different Arab camps. When the war escaped from

the hands of the local forces and came under the control of the Arab alliances, the Front called for a general national mobilization. Our command called to the battlefield the members of all the organizations of the Front to defend the revolution, the people and the PLO against the campaign to isolate and destroy them which had resulted from the evolution of the conflict in the Arab region.

Our Front was the first to practice this correct and sound policy, and to call on all organizations of the revolution and its allies to do the same. The Front pursued the struggle with great energy and determination. Of all the martyrs from the various organizations within the revolution, the second largest number were of the D.F.L.P. — including two members of the Central Committee, comrades Salem and Murad.

This history explains the role and leadership of the Democratic Front among our people, both inside occupied Palestine and in all the countries of refuge, in the Arab world and abroad. The Front's role in the current phase is based on the accumulated strength of this leadership, and on its practical and scientific ability to grasp the most important question in each stage, and to take the initiative in dealing with it.

The Fifth and Current Stage: Confronting Sadat's Capitulationist Policies

In this stage Sadat has taken the criminal step of completely meeting American terms. He has capitulated on the issues of the Arab- Israeli conflict and the struggle against imperialism throughout the Arab world. This criminal act has brought our people's cause and its revolution, and the entire Arab cause of liberation and progress, to a new, crucial turning point; its outcome will decide the fate of our cause, the revolution, and the region, for many long years to come. When on November 9, Sadat announced his intention to visit Jerusalem, our Front immediately condemned this step and exposed it as a link in the chain of capitulationist acts by the bourgeoisie in power in Egypt, and by the other reactionary Arab bourgeoisies which have taken the same path. The Front launched a call for total popular mobilization in our occupied country and among all Arab masses throughout the Arab world, so as to organize the broadest possible front to halt this regression

which Sadat is trying to generalize and spread throughout the region. We called on all divisions of the revolution, and the PLO in particular, to take the initiative in condemning and exposing this capitulationist policy, and in gathering together the full spectrum of Arab and Palestinian forces to confront, repulse and defeat it, on the basis of the national-patriotic transitional program for the liberation of all Arab and Palestinian territories occupied in 1967, and the fulfilment of the inalienable rights of our people in this stage to return, self-determination and an independent state. These rights have been confirmed by the Palestine National Council, the summits of Algiers and Rabat, and the United Nations.

While Sadat was capitulating totally to American imperialism's conditions, and fulfilling to a large extent Israeli Zionist terms as well, the Democratic Front was calling for the cooperation of all forces which oppose Sadat's plan and all reactionary steps towards capitulation to imperialism, Zionism, Arab reactionary tendencies, and their liquidationist intentions. On November 16, at the General People's Congress of the Libyan Arab Republic, the delegate of the Democratic Front exposed the implications of Sadat's move. He urged that without delay an Arab front be formed under the standard of the national-patriotic transitional program for the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict without conditions or restrictions. This front, which would block the moves towards

capitulation, would include Libya, Algeria, Iraq, Democratic Yemen, Syria and the PLO. The delegate called on Libya to take the lead in the formation of the front, to prevent Israel and imperialism from extending their hegemony over the entire region as a result of Sadat's move.

During the same Congress, the Front proposed that a meeting be held of all organized Arab forces for liberation and progress, with their parties and their popular organizations, so as to form a unified front grouping all these forces — to confront the plans of imperialism and its local exponents, and to create an alternative to capitulationist solutions to the problems of the struggle between the Arab national democratic liberation movement and the imperialist design to transform the region into an imperialist preserve where Israel can act and expand at will, while the Arab and other reactionary elements of the Mideast stand guard for imperialism and its capitulationist solutions.

This determined initiative was broadcast live on Libyan radio and television. The Congress was transformed into a vehement popular demonstration against capitulation and the policies of Sadat. Libyan leaders immediately took effective action. By the morning of November 17, the demonstration had spread to the streets, demanding unified action by all forces to strike at the capitulationists and to establish a front of Arab resistance and confrontation.

By the evening of November 17, a number of steps had been agreed upon. Abdel Salaam Jalloud, accompanied by the delegate from the D.F.L.P., left immediately for the Mideast for serious discussions with Palestinian, Syrian and Iraqi leaders on the need to group our forces and form a front for resistance and confrontation. At the same time, a Libyan envoy and comrade Abu Layla, member of the Political Bureau of the D.F.L.P., flew to Aden to complete the call for the creation of the steadfastness front. This all took place before the PLO Executive Committee declared its position to the masses. The Committee delayed in making this declaration until November 18; thus the declaration appeared only the day before Sadat's capitulationist visit to occupied Jerusalem, where he asked Zonist leaders for peace on American terms. Now, these leaders were demanding total acceptance of their own conditions, which go even further than the American terms.

At this new crucial juncture, once again the Democratic Front took the initiative in identifying and advocating the essential need and in struggling to realize it. The patriotic Arab countries responded to our call so as to confront the immediate danger which threatened the Arab movement for liberation and progress, our Arab world and every country in it; and to prevent American imperialism and Israel from carrying out their plans as easily as Sadat had accepted American conditions, with no firm, swift confrontation to isolate his initiative

and his capitulationist policy; and to rouse the energies of the Arab peoples for a long, hard struggle on the road to the liberation of the Arab peoples and countries, and the unconditional and unrestricted realization of the Arab and Palestinian rights of this stage.

The Masses Judge Each Organization

These efforts led to the Tripoli Summit, at which the Arab Front of Resistance and Confrontation was founded on the basis of the Tripoli declarations. This isolated Sadat's policy of capitulation. In addition, it clearly defined the various Arab alliances and their supporters, and the alignment of forces. Thus we unequivocally opened fire in our political campaign against the enemy front.

An immediate outcome of the Tripoli Summit was the formation of a tactical political alliance among the forces involved. Working from this starting point, the Democratic Front, together with all active, serious militant forces, Palestinian and Arab, pursued the evolution of this alliance into an effective, progressive strategic front. The Tripoli Summit had already set out the tactical goals: the isolation of Sadat, and the inspiration in the Arab peoples of new faith in the possibilities inherent in the ranks of Arab progressive and liberation forces. This had led to a general popular conference of all

the Arab parties, unions and popular organizations. Here, a central directing body, the General Secretariat of the Conference of the Arab People, was set up. This organ was to work for further development of the initial step, and to function as an element of organization and adherence for all Arab and progressive and liberation forces in a broad Arab national front. Through this front the resources for struggle of the Arab masses would be mobilized to defeat capitulationist settlements of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and to deal with the problems of the struggle against imperialism and Arab reactionaries in the Arab world and in the surrounding regions.

Our contribution at the Algiers Summit followed the same principle of advancing the front of resistance a step forward. We are also taking part in the General Secretariat, in which we strive for the development of a broad national popular front. We are convinced that this task should be given the utmost thought and attention so as to develop an integrated strategy. This, we realize, cannot be achieved in a single step, for there is a great disparity in the degree of radicalization and seriousness of the various forces involved in the Confrontation Front and the General Conference of the Arab People. For a revolutionary there is no choice between the policy of capitulation and its supporters, and the policy of confrontation and its partisans. In spite of the major weak points in the Confrontation Front, the choice is clear and

irrevocable. We realize, of course, that this evolution towards an integrated, progressive strategic front demands an enormous and unflagging effort on the part of all — particularly on the part of serious militants who are aware of these weak points and have no illusions about them.

The militant masses of our people, who carry out the struggle, follow, observe and evaluate each organization. The Democratic Front bases its existence on their judgment, since theirs is the only evaluation which is based on a daily concrete experience. It is the judgment of the people which has produced the broad support for the national-patriotic internationalist line of the D.F.L.P., its growing membership, and its increasing weight in the development of PLO policy. The Front struggles within the PLO to ensure that it will continue to adhere to the camp of resistance and confrontation, in spite of the efforts by reactionary leaders and the rightist Arab bourgeoisie to attract the organization to their ranks and their capitulationist settlement. These efforts, whether they take the form of political or military warfare, seige, or underhanded attempts to divide the organization and destroy it from within, are intended to push the PLO into sanctioning the plans of Sadat, the right, and Arab reactionaries, or to at least paralyze its capacity to take firm, consistent action and to continue on the path of resistance, confrontation, and the unconditional realization of the inalienable transitional rights of our people.

The concrete experience of the masses, accumulated day after day, month after month, year after year, has given the D.F.L.P. and its militants an enormous and priceless confidence in its correct, sound policies in each phase and before each decisive juncture: determining and advocating the central task of the immediate struggle and mobilizing around that task, so as to transform it into a general policy and program for the revolution, our people, and the PLO.

The people's determination, its consciousness of its cause, and its daily struggle with imperialism, Zionism, and the cowardice of Arab armies, makes it the only fair judge of each organization within the revolution. It is the people who decide to support each of these organizations or not, and whether or not to mobilize around the central task of the struggle. That is how the masses state their common position; and their position is a refusal to give in to either defeatism and capitulation, or to adventurism and illusory solutions which leave the struggle paralyzed and the revolution and the masses running in a closed circle.

On the basis of their actual experience, the masses define their line by mobilizing around the positive national revolutionary program which is most appropriate for the development of the situation and the struggle. From this starting point our forces will grow and accumulate until, in spite of the obstacles presented by the Arab-Israeli conflict,

we will unconditionally realize our people's and our nation's rights in this stage: the liberation of all Arab and Palestinian territories occupied in 1967, and the realization of the inalienable transitional rights of the people of Palestine to return and to self-determination in an independent state.

DISSUADING THE PALESTINIAN RIGHT

Question: *In what direction are the Palestinian resistance and revolution moving today? What are their structures inside and outside the occupied territories? What are their tasks in the present circumstances, and what obstacles and challenges are they likely to encounter?*

Answer: The Palestinian revolution, or more precisely, the forces linked to the progress of the people and the country, is armed with a correct, scientific, revolutionary national-patriotic program with regard to the inalienable rights of our people in this stage. This program was the fruit of a long popular armed struggle and the accumulated experience of many years. It represents the first time in the history of our people that its broad national movement has succeeded in formulating a program which takes into consideration the local, regional and international balance of power, and which can aid in the realization of transitional goals. A succession of Palestinian leadership, from

the Balfour Declaration in 1917 to the June War of 1967, failed to formulate a correct transitional program which defined the central issue in the struggle in the framework of the overall strategy. In the period before 1948, the Palestinian leadership failed to grasp the primary task of the struggle in each phase and to mobilize all resources, forces and patriotic classes to strike a unified blow for the realization of that primary task. The defeat of the British Mandate, for instance, would have been a step in the right direction; it would have isolated the Zionist offensive and prevented its extension, as a prelude to the defeat of Zionist designs on Palestine. Between the years 1935 and 1939, our leaders once again failed to perceive the major tasks of the revolution; instead, they joined with Arab reactionary forces, thus placing the fate of our national cause in their hands.

The great disaster came in 1948. The reactionary Arab regimes waged the war in the context of the colonial Zionist and reactionary plan for the partition of Palestine. Palestinian leaders failed to recognize the principal need to protect the national independent identity in the framework of a national State under our people's control on all Palestinian territory. After 1948, the Palestinian leadership had lost its equilibrium and its weight; the field was left open for plans of annexation and liquidation.

It is only in recent years that the revolution —

having maintained its determination through many epic and bitter years, and after rivers of blood have been shed — has succeeded in formulating a national transitional program in the context of the historic, strategic, inalienable rights of our country and our people. This was a great achievement which armed both people and revolution with a concrete program under which to mobilize and to struggle boldly and tirelessly. The D.F.L.P. is honored to have taken the initiative in formulating this program and in campaigning for it until it triumphed in the National Council, where it became the general program of the revolution and the PLO.

This achievement put us on the road to victory, however many years and sacrifices may still lie ahead. That is the identifying characteristic of the clarity of a correct political line.

On the other side of the coin, the situation has become more complex, more difficult and more violent, due to developments in the Arab world since several regimes fell in behind the Egyptian alliance and Kissinger's step-by-step policy. This policy has led from the talks at km. 101, the disengagement of forces, and the notorious bilateral accords, to the current regression in the Arab situation and its regional and international alliances. It has seriously disrupted the balance of forces in favor of Israel and imperialism.

This deterioration in the balance of forces, and

the influence of Arab alliances on the Palestinian camp, complicated the Palestinian internal situation, particularly in the revolution and the PLO, as these alliances tried to lure the PLO and our people's cause to the strategy and tactics of one alliance or another. It was here that the greatest dangers arose, because of the susceptibility of the national bourgeois wing within the revolution and the PLO to influence and pressures from one alliance or another — to be exact, from the Egyptian-Saudi alliance, which headed the principal current with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict. This susceptibility gave rise to serious problems for the forces of the revolution and the PLO, as some organizations supported one camp or another instead of adhering to the policy of alliance under the long-term national transitional program, through firm, continued struggle against the capitulationist plans and manoeuvres of imperialism, Zionism, and the Arab right and reaction. Faced with the steadfastness of the Palestinian masses and the bases of our revolution, and the resolve of the national-patriotic revolutionary wing within the revolution and the PLO, the Arab regimes resorted to wars, political pressure, blockades and the force of arms, in an effort to push the revolution and the PLO into acceptance of such solutions. And when these efforts failed — due to the steadfastness of the masses and of their national radical current — these allied regimes tried a different approach: soon, and particularly after the summit at Riyadh, they launched an attempt to

take the Palestinian stronghold from within — to win it to their side, or at least to so divide it as to paralyze any militant initiative designed to realize our people's rights through steadfast struggle against defeatism and capitulation.

There were moments when these alliances came perilously close to extracting from the PLO a statement accepting resolution 242, in exchange for official contact with the United States. This was, in other words, a call for the PLO itself to void its own national program and to free the Arab countries from their obligations under the resolutions of the Summits of Algiers and Rabat and under the international resolutions upholding the general transitional rights of our people. And what is more, these alliances came close to convincing the national bourgeois wing to abandon the representation of our people by the PLO. To take its place, Palestinian delegations assembled in secret were waiting in the wings, ready to take part in the conferences, such as the Geneva Conference, which would decide the fate of our national cause and our people's rights. Sadat's Egypt and Saudi Arabia played the leading roles in these efforts.

These dangers are not yet past. They persist even though Sadat's true colors have been exposed by his capitulation to American terms for settling the Arab-Israeli conflict and for resolving the Palestinian problem in the framework of a weak, deformed Palestinian entity tied to Jordan, while

the Palestinian refugees — half our people — would be resettled in the other Arab countries, with many different Arab nationalities. Messengers and messages are still going back and forth between Sadat and the national bourgeois wing, in spite of the PLO's participation in the Confrontation Front and in spite of its signatures on the documents of this front, totally opposed to the solutions of Sadat, Carter, Begin and King Hussein.

Confronting the Indecision and Vacillation of the National Bourgeoisie

This task requires that we and all true national-patriotic forces and currents in the revolution and the PLO, insist on:

- 1) Serious commitment to, and a truly militant practice of, the national program, in all steps undertaken by the revolution and the PLO and in all its initiatives and policies:
- 2) Unity among all factions of the revolution within the PLO and under the standard of its program. Dissuasion of the national bourgeois wing, which has been manoeuvring for months, and continues to manoeuvre, to paralyze the PLO and to lure it into adapting itself to capitulationist plans. Meanwhile, this bourgeois wing vacillates between silence towards Sadat's actions, and the neglect of any serious initiative to consolidate the revolution, the PLO and the Confrontation Front

on the basis of the national-patriotic program defined by the decisions of the National Council, the Tripoli document, and the statements issued by the summits of Tripoli and Algiers;

3) A constant effort to unify all groups of the revolution in the PLO. Joint struggle to isolate the threat posed by the policies of the Palestinian right and the preparations it has undertaken completely on its own, to repeat the mistakes of former Palestinian leaders and join the bombastic partisans of reactionary, defeatist deals and half-way measures, who curry American favor. (This is the policy of Fatah, under the leadership of the bourgeois wing of the revolution and the PLO);

4) Persistence in the struggle to resolve the threats which menace our people's struggle in the occupied territories. This must be achieved first by insisting on the assembly of all trade union, political and professional forces, which represent all the patriotic classes of our people, in a united front; and secondly, by consolidating the line confronting the occupation, colonization, and creeping annexation — under our people's illustrious slogans: No to occupation and "self-rule"; no to a weak Palestinian entity tied to Jordan; yes to the revolution, to self-determination, and to unrestricted, unconditional independence in the form of a national Palestinian state;

5) A revision of the structure of the PLO and its political, administrative, organizational and military

bodies, so that it may become a true expression of the broad national alliance of all groups of the revolution and of the masses. This must replace the individualism and monopolization which a single faction of the revolution now exercises in the offices of the PLO, and the division among the various factions which exists in the military section — as is the case with the Palestine Liberation Army. We must struggle for a unity free of all external patronage or internal monopolization;

6) Pursuit of the struggle to halt the deterioration in the unity of patriotic syndical movements in the occupied territories. This deterioration is being instigated by the national bourgeois wing in the PLO. This was the case with the dissolution of the National Front and efforts to divide the trade unions in the West Bank. In addition, we must continue our efforts to unify all forces under the standard of the national program and the PLO;

7) Unwavering efforts at the base and among the middle cadres to resolve the short-comings of the Palestinian organizations:

— patriotic struggle among our people and the bases of the organizations according to the principle of proportional representation; this will unify the popular base;

— the participation of all currents and forces in the responsibilities of leadership;

— the transformation of these organizations into democratic organizational channels for our entire people, organized through the efforts of the broad base on the patriotic and professional levels. This is the alternative to the present situation of diffusion and division of the base, the separation of these organizations from the greater part of their masses, and the marginalization of varied tendencies by their exclusion from participation in responsibilities, which has resulted from the monopolistic and divisive policy which currently predominates.

New Leadership Will be Identified by its Role in the Struggle

That is what we must do, daily and in an organized manner, in order to confront the challenges and obstacles of the current phase on the Palestinian plane — in the occupied territories, within the revolution and the PLO, and among the refugees scattered in the Arab and foreign countries of refuge. We are not a numerous people, but we are scattered over a large geographical area. This calls for many different forms of union and organization. The most effective arm for sustaining our people through the long and difficult struggle, will be the arm which enables our entire people to take part in all the institutions and popular organizations of the revolution. This is the point which will distinguish the advanced cadres who will be in the front line of leadership.

On the Arab level, our task is to continue the struggle to develop the Confrontation Front into a serious strategic progressive front under the standard of a clear and coherent national-patriotic program opposing any capitulationist or liquidationist solution — either in the Arab-Israeli and Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or in the struggle against imperialism and its monopolistic intentions in the Arab world. In addition, we must intensify and concentrate the struggle to form a broad patriotic Arab front. The General Conference of the Arab People represents a first step in this long process.

Our struggle is not going on in some isolated region of the world. Rather, this is the core of a world in struggle against the active forces of imperialism, against Zionist Israel, and against reactionary forces and racist regimes. In this world all forces of liberation, progress, and true peace, support our people and the peoples of our Arab world, thus forming a broad international front. We must struggle to consolidate and deepen militant, active relations with this international front, so as to develop every form of political and material solidarity with and support for our people and the Arab peoples in our national-patriotic struggle to defeat the imperialist-Zionist offensive and its capitulationist solutions. The accomplishment of these tasks would allow us to fulfill our international role in the common struggle against the forces of aggression and underdevelopment in our world. These tasks can be our salvation from the

Zionist movement and from Israeli aggression which, in alliance with imperialism, combats all forces of liberation, progress and world peace.

AGAINST ARAB REACTIONARY SOLIDARITY; WITH THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONFRONTATION FRONT

Question: In addition to what has already been said regarding the formation and consolidation of the Confrontation Front, is it possible, in the wake of the Tripoli and Algiers Summits, to evaluate the actual meaning of that front: its accomplishments, its weak points? How has it advanced to date, and what advances must it make in the future?

Answer: Besides the points we have already mentioned in the previous answers, we could add that this Front is still at the level of a political alliance: it has yet to develop into an advanced strategic front with coherent organization of its military, material and political resources. The Tripoli Summit was a first step, the Algiers Summit another. Policy and strategy were clarified, and the connection was made between the struggle against the Zionist enemy and against Sadat's policy of capitulation, and the struggle against imperialism, and against the local reactionary currents which carry out imperialism's plans and their capitulationist solutions, in both the Arab countries and in Africa. The Algiers Summit also saw an

advance because of the essential support given to the Syrian front.

These steps constitute the beginning. Three distinct problems must be resolved before the process can be completed:

1) The continuation of the dialogue with Iraq. Iraq must be persuaded to contribute to the front on the basis of a clearly defined, concrete charter of struggle which makes it possible to carry out the tasks of this stage: confronting the imperialist, Zionist and reactionary plans concerning both the Arab-Israeli conflict and the liberation movements in both the Near East and North Africa. This involves the oil question in particular. We have stated, and we will repeat, that without the "front lines" — Syria and the PLO — a confrontation front could not be formed. Similarly, a confrontation front without the participation of Iraq will find itself seriously weakened as it tries to carry out its tasks in the struggle against the Zionist enemy, its expansionist plans and its capitulationist terms;

2) The crystallization of a national-patriotic charter and its internal provisions for the organization and maintenance of relations among the parties of the front. This relationship must be quite different from the solidarity which exists among Arab reactionaries or the solidarity among the regimes which have fallen in with the enemy and its capi-

tulationist terms. A serious commitment must be made to the charter and its provisions, and distrust and precautions among the various parties of the front must be eliminated. This may be done by establishing relations on a clear, concrete basis, free of ceremony and demagoguery. The rectification of relations between Iraq and Syria, and among Syria, the Palestinians, and patriotic and progressive Lebanese forces, is of particular importance to the establishment of a serious and unified position and of confidence and solid relations among the parties, which are essential if we are to meet the challenges of opposing capitulationist and liquidationist solutions;

3) Formulation of a military, material and political strategy which wisely allots resources and contributions among the various parties. The Syrian and Palestinian front lines must be developed and consolidated, while Lebanon must be protected from the Zionist offensive and the internal devastation which is being underwritten by imperialism, Zionism, and reactionary forces in the region. The rear lines — Libya, Algeria and Democratic Yemen and their **struggle** to aid the front lines, — must also be consolidated, along with their serious struggle against various forms of attacks on their borders.

By these means the Confrontation Front may attain the level of a coherent strategic front, with the people as the basis of its defense. To this end,

the masses must be organized, and their urge for liberation stimulated, through organizational channels, through the development of the central and regional organs of the General Secretariat set up by the Conference of the Arab People, and through an Arab front participating in the Palestinian revolution on the central or regional level (depending on each country's situation).

Through this process the Arab peoples and our people are manning the front lines in the confrontation struggle. They are armed with a capacity and resources for a long, hard, epic struggle which will continue until imperialism, Zionist Israel and capitulationist and liquidationist solutions have been defeated, and the national-patriotic transitional program has been realized, without conditions or restrictions, as a distinct step in the overall strategic process of realizing our people's rights.

EGYPTIAN HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

Question: With regard to Sadat, has he still some possibility of arriving at a deal with Israel, or has he reached an impasse? What is the likelihood of a fifth Arab-Israeli war?

Answer: Sadat has taken the road of capitulation, step by step, to American imperialist conditions with regard to the issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict and of the entire region. He has travelled the length of that road by submitting totally to Ame-

rican conditions concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict, U.S. plans to transform Egypt into a reactionary base at the service of imperialist operations throughout the Arab world and Africa, and efforts to transform the Egyptian army from a patriotic militant army opposing the Zionist enemy and imperialism, in the service of Arab and African national liberation, into a means for repressing the Egyptian masses and the Arab and African forces of revolution and liberation. Sadat has already used the Egyptian army to support reactionary forces allied with imperialism in the Arab world and in Africa: in his act of aggression against Libya; fighting alongside Mobuto, in collaboration with the C.I.A., against the people of Zaire in Somalia and Chad; in his intervention in the war against Ethiopia; and in the support he gives Hassan II of Morocco against Algeria and the people of the Western Sahara.

Sadat has cast his lot with the United States. He has accepted the role of regional policeman at the service of colonial and imperialist plans for the Arab world and Africa. His choice will lead him, step by step, to capitulation to the majority of the Zionist Israeli conditions, in exchange for the evacuation of the Sinai. First he will give in to Washington's conditions, beginning with the weakening and gradual demobilization of the Egyptian army, until Egypt survives on the mercy of the aggressive Israeli military complex, and by grace of the submission of its economy and people to the will of the United States and reactionary forces in

the Middle East. Next, he will sell out the Palestinian cause. In the end, a series of strange alliances, new to the region, will be formed among Israel, the Egyptian bourgeoisie in power, and world imperialism.

Washington wants to pressure Sadat into constantly doing its dirty work, and into signing a capitulationist settlement with Israel. When Sadat has been squeezed dry, like a lemon, the United States will begin to open the field for a new regime. At the moment the probable candidate appears to be the "New Wafd" party which is being groomed to replace the Center party: in any case, a change is to be expected when the resources of Sadat and his party have been thoroughly exploited, in the service of capitulation.

We foresee that the United States will resolve the problem of the Sinai — including the question of Israeli settlements and air fields — in Sadat's favor. In return, Sadat will accept the Israeli-American terms for peace, sell out the Palestinian cause to be divided between Begin and King Hussein according to the American plan, and complete Egypt's isolation from the rest of the Arab world.

The history of Egypt is repeating itself in the form of a tragi-comedy. Following the Egyptian renaissance under the regime of Mohammed Ali, the Khedive Tewfiq arrived on the scene to deliver Egypt into the hands of colonialism and foreign

privilege. Today, after the Egyptian and Arab renaissance which took place in the regime of Abdel-Nasser, Sadat has come along to toss Egypt back into imperialism's grasp.

Sadat is pushing the people and army of Egypt towards capitulation under the pretext that Egypt's weakness is a result of its wars with "Israel". He overlooks the fact that in the time of Mohammed Ali, when there was no "Israel", the forces of colonialism and the reaction launched a fierce attack to obliterate the Egyptian renaissance and isolate Egypt from its Arab context, so as to keep Egypt under imperialist domination, as a market and as a source of raw materials. Sadat pretends to forget that Mohammed Ali, and the Arab revolution in the Egypt of Abdel-Nasser, met the same fate, and for the same reasons. The imperialists into whose arms Sadat has thrown himself are working with Israel to destroy the renaissance in Egypt and to isolate it from the Arab world. The three-party joint aggression in 1956 was a clear example of this.

The future course of the path Sadat has chosen will be determined by the resoluteness of the Palestinian revolution and the front of Arab resistance. It will depend on their determination in stimulating the Arab peoples, and on their strategic international alliances, particularly with the socialist countries. These factors can make it possible to isolate and defeat the capitulationist steps

which Sadat is taking in fulfilment of the American imperialist and Israeli plan for resolving the issues of the Arab and Palestinian conflict with Israeli, as well as the issues of the struggle for liberation and progress in the Arab world.

The mobilisation and concentration of resources and energies in the patriotic Arab front, and its international alliances, are capable of defeating the plans of imperialism, including Sadat's initiative, which is hostile to the interests of our brother-people of Egypt, and to the interests of all the Arab peoples. The conflict between the two camps has already begun. The ability of the Arab revolutionary forces to take the initiative, strike quickly, and defeat imperialist and Israeli plans and their capitulationist, liquidationist settlement, will depend on the speed and coherence with which the resources of the patriotic front can be mobilized. This is true especially in view of the fact that the international political situation favors the forces of liberation and progress, and not the forces of imperialism and its collaborators: Zionists, racists, and reactionaries.

With regard to your question on a fifth war: in our estimation the initiative is now in the hands of the Israeli aggressor, particularly in view of the disruption of the regional balance of power in Israel's favor: Egypt's removal from the battlefield by Sadat, the continual weakening of its army, the rupture with Arab progressive and liberation for-

ces, and the breakdown in Egyptian relations with the socialist countries. The danger is that Israel will resort to a "lightning war" on the Syrian and Palestinian fronts, hoping to break the back of Arab resistance and to pull first Syria, then the PLO, into the mainstream of capitulation.

This is why it is of utmost importance that the Confrontation Front rectify the relations among its parties and integrate its resources on the various fronts, so as to be able to face any eventuality — including that of an Israeli blitzkrieg aimed at paralyzing the Syrian military machine and destroying the Palestinian revolution in accordance with the plans of the enemy front — imperialists, Zionists, and reactionary collaborators.