

Arab Liberation Front. "Political Statement". *Al-Ahrar* (Beirut), September 19, 1969.¹

June 5 created an atmosphere of objectivity and self-criticism: it relieved Arab life of the pressures formerly exerted by group fanaticism, party priggishness, claims to hold the monopoly of truth, exclusiveness, and dissension between revolutionary organisations. It left the way open for the reconsideration and reappraisal of beliefs and institutions. This is the most propitious atmosphere for commando action, and for its spirit and character, because it rejects all tendencies to exclusiveness and unilateral action, all restrictions and contentiousness.

In the face of world imperialism and reactionary Zionism, the very existence of the Arab nation is threatened, and its only hope of salvation lies in its assembling its revolutionary forces and mobilising all its resources for the battle.

The two years which have passed since the defeat have shown how essential it is that commando action should make a new leap forward to complete the glorious advance initiated by the heroes of this nation when they chose the course of armed struggle, and to make commando action stronger and more impregnable in the face of the danger of encirclement and blockade to which the Arab revolution in Palestine is exposed.

This danger is manifested, in particular, in the attempts to contain the revolution within its regional framework and to cut the artery which joins it with its sources of strength, ability and competence in the masses of the Arab revolution.

These attempts are a preparation for the day when it will be possible to crush the revolution in Palestine.

Exaggerating Palestinian Capacity:

The hostile forces of conspiracy have exploited an urgent necessity which has been felt by commando action, especially in its early stages. This is the necessity to affirm the Palestinian identity so as to rescue the popular will from the tutelage of Arab regimes and to create an image of the usurped rights and dispersed people of Palestine which is compatible with this identity, recognises it and even actually helps it to emerge. The object of this is to provide the Palestinian identity with an image that is distinct from the Arab identity and even, whenever possible, at variance with it. By allowing the Palestinian identity its full expression such an image will enable commando action to become a regime with the status of the other regimes.

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These hostile forces are gradually exaggerating the capacity of the Palestinian identity, as distinct from the Arab identity, to fight, to endure and to achieve total liberation, with the eventual object of calling on the Palestinians to stop fighting, enduring and struggling for total liberation, on the pretext that it is impossible for them to do so alone.

In this way they hope to oblige the Palestinians to relinquish their false hopes for unjustifiable despair.

These hostile forces have also exploited the reluctance of the Arab revolutionary forces to respond to the real and immediate need for popular armed action in Palestine, so as to present the Arab revolution as abandoning the Palestine cause, and to say that Palestine was neglected in the previous stage because it was the stage of the Arab revolution. In fact, of course, the previous stage was not that of the Arab revolution, because it had not yet assumed its true form, which involves arming the Arab masses. Admittedly there was a sporadic and partial resort to arms, but this was not regarded as a permanent principle or an essential characteristic of the revolution.

Connection with Arab Unity:

Ever since commando action started, it has been the target of attempts by a number of parties to prevent the revolution in Palestine from being openly, unambiguously and ideologically connected with Arab unity.

The enemy is well aware how greatly his interests would be endangered if the principle of the connection between the liberation of Palestine and Arab unity were to be proclaimed and affirmed. He realises how vital is this principle and to what extent it is in conformity with the Arab situation and with the readiness of the Arab masses in all parts of the Arab world. This is why he is ready to make concessions, and sometimes even to offer aid, to prevent this connection being achieved.

They have done this to every Arab revolution everywhere, and today they are trying to do the same thing to the Palestinian revolution. This applies not only to the colonialist countries, which are only too pleased to regard every Arab problem as purely regional, and in particular to refuse to recognise the existence of any connection between the Palestinian identity and the existence, unity and resurgence of the Arab nation. It also applies to the majority of the traditional Western non-communist leftist movements, and the reactionary Arab regimes. Even some of the regional leftist movements in the Arab homeland have been involved.

The traditional Western leftist movements vied with each other in their support of the Algerian revolution on one condition, that it should remain Algerian, and some of them are making the same condition today in supporting commando action. The explanation of this attitude is that these

movements are still under Zionist influence which does not tolerate any support being given to any Arab action which implies aspirations to Arab unity. Moreover, these movements have not completely severed their links with colonialist interests; they can oppose particular forms of colonialism, but they cannot go all the way in opposing all forms of colonial exploitation and influence to which Arab unity spells certain destruction.

This has always been the attitude of the Arab League and the reactionary Arab regimes, both to the Palestine problem and to all Arab revolutions.

This attitude has always been illustrated by the way each country insists on maintaining its sovereignty, and by the refusal to recognise the connection between the Zionist invasion and the creation of the State of Israel on the one hand, and the domestic situations in the Arab countries on the other, and the connection between these reactionary countries and colonialism.

For example, these regimes refuse to use oil as a weapon to exert pressure on the colonialist countries. They also refuse to abrogate the treaties and abolish the foreign bases which exist in some countries, as their contribution to the Arab confrontation with Israel.

Thus the extent to which the Arab countries are contributing to the liberation of Palestine still goes no further than providing assistance and donations and making declarations. In this way they belittle the extent of the issue, ignore its profundity and deny the blatant and undeniable fact that what is involved is a Zionist-colonialist invasion.

The Arab regimes, as has always been the case, do not want the Arab revolution in Palestine to reach them or to affect their social and political situations. They are therefore trying to restrict the problem to the Palestinians as a form of bribe, in the hope of preventing themselves from becoming involved in the effects of this revolution.

The attitude of certain progressive Arab regimes and certain leftist movements in the Arab home-land to the Palestine problem differs only in degree, not in kind, from that of the reactionary regimes. Their exaggerated, sometimes even extremist, leftism, is based on their suspect and conspiratorial silence as regards the connection between the Palestine problem and Arab unity, and this silence is to be explained by their acceptance of the facts of fragmentation and regional action. In return for ensuring acceptance of, appreciation for and favourable propaganda on behalf of commando action in Arab and international fields, these circles require that it should ignore the organic link between the liberation of Palestine and the Arab revolutionary movement, and be content that the matter should be restricted to the framework of aid, generosity and brotherly help.

What they are proposing should be tried today is what the Arabs have been trying to do for fifty years. Since the Balfour Declaration, throughout the successive Palestinian revolutions, the war of 1948, and the series of events which led up to the creation of the State of Israel, the impotence of revolutions has been only too obvious; they have been contained and stifled.

The Arab Liberation Front:

The revolutionary pulse with which the spirit of our nation has been throbbing since June 5, while concentrating the nation's attention on the deep wound inflicted on it in Palestine, has made armed confrontation of the enemy the true criterion by which to judge how serious are the Arabs in their attachment to their homeland and in their devotion to values and ideals. It is a test not only of their willingness for self-sacrifice, but also of the extent they appreciate how essential is science to any revolutionary struggle. It is a challenge to place science in the service of the revolution, and to raise the revolution in its thinking, its organisation, planning and means of action to a high and constantly developing scientific, technical and technological level, because to aspire to and attain such a level is essential for any organisation if it is to be honest with itself and to its mission.

Today a new force is entering the battleground of sacrifice. Called the Arab Liberation Front, it is blazing a new trail for the revolution to follow under the banner of Arab revolutionary ideology, and with a national organisation which includes Arab fighters from all corners of the Arab homeland, who have promised the eternal Arab nation to recover Palestine for it and to stain the earth of the Holy Land with their blood.

The Arab Liberation Front is open at ideological and organisational levels, and as the framework for a broad front, to every national, to every fighter who chooses the course of armed popular struggle as the only way for the nation to confront the historic challenge, to repel the invaders and to liberate the land and the people.

The Popular War of Liberation:

The Arab answer to the Zionist colonialist invasion which will prove effective against the conspiracy of hostile forces to detach commando action from the Arab revolution, lies in enhancing every aspect of the Arab revolution and raising its standards so that it may rally and concentrate its forces and devote itself exclusively to transforming armed popular struggle into a popular war of liberation.

The popular war of liberation will only really start and deserve the name, when Arab resistance has expanded to comprise the whole people, pitting the weight of Arab numerical superiority against colonialist and Zionist technological superiority, and assuming its true form as a vast Arab tide which will sweep all before it as, employing all the vast resources, powers

and means possessed by the whole Arab people, it clashes with the artificial ethnic group brought from all corners of the globe, and with the colonialist military, political, cultural and economic bases which have been implanted in Arab territory.

The function of this popular war is to recruit the whole Arab nation, freely and voluntarily, and to ensure that every Arab enters the battle side by side with the Arab armies which, in their structure, consist of popular struggling elements, and in their spirit are intrepid and devoted, on the understanding that this battle requires that every single Arab should participate in it.

The Arab liberation war, in its sacred struggle against the presence of the Zionist-colonialist enemy and his interests throughout the whole homeland, is one of the fundamental international fronts in the struggle against imperialism, headed by the United States of America, and is laying the solid foundations of a human society in which freedom and peace will prevail and from which every form of exploitation will be excluded.

The Arab revolutionary movement failed to build up the Arab revolution, because it did not build it in the form of armed popular struggle, and armed popular struggle will remain unable to reach the level of a popular war of liberation unless it links up with the principles of revolutionary Arab ideology.

Arabism, Socialism and Democracy:

The sort of commando action which is capable of fully representing the total presence of the Arab nation in Palestine, which is indispensable for the achievement of equality with the vast forces which colonialism, Zionism and reaction deploy in the battle, is armed popular struggle characterised by Arabism, socialism and democracy.

By involving the whole Arab homeland, armed popular struggle will ensure that all parts of the nation are aware of the danger to its existence of the Zionist and colonialist invasion and will undertake to confront this danger.

Concentration on Palestine will both create unity and liberate Palestine, and just as unity will restore to Palestine its freedom, so Palestine will restore to the Arabs their unity. Palestine is the road to unity and unity is the road to Palestine, and any attempt to separate or contrast these two slogans can only weaken and impair both the battle for liberation and Arab unity.

Henceforward the Arab people will only accept unity if it aims at liberation from the start, and there will be no unity unless it is established by the masses with the object of liberating Palestine.

Moreover, the people will not believe that a front is capable of achieving liberation unless it approaches it with the strength of the whole Arab entity - the strength of the whole Arab nation employing all the means at its disposal

and embodied in an organisation comprising the fighters of the whole Arab homeland.

Only if this struggle is socialist in character will it be capable of giving the toiling masses of the Arab people full awareness, mobilising them for the revolution, and raising their standards of organisation and efficiency, thereby isolating all classes, institutions and regimes that have historical links with the interests of colonialism and its political and economic entity. The revolutionary atmosphere generated by armed struggle is injurious to these interests, and the very first step that is taken towards raising the level of support for this struggle will threaten them with complete destruction.

These classes act against the revolution either by confronting it directly or by clinging to it and its organisations, sucking its roots, stopping its growth and obstructing its advance.

Moreover, it is socialism that will guarantee that the leadership remains in the hands of the toiling masses who will be most persevering in their efforts to ensure that the struggle attains the level of a popular war of liberation, because they have the greatest interest to do so.

The socialist and progressive character of this struggle will also make Zionist-colonialist propaganda less effective in deceiving the peoples of the world and presenting Israel as a country intended to be a refuge for an oppressed, advanced and progressive people. It will disclose the colonialist and racist character of Israel to every freeman in the world, and, what is more, even liberate the Jews from the domination of the Zionist movement, and reveal to them the truth and justice of the Arab cause.

The democratic character of this struggle lies in its connection with the mind and spirit of the people, whom it protects from the maladies of tutelage and self-deception and from the dangers of deviation and dissociation from revolutionary principles and values. It also protects them from bureaucratic inflexibility and the proliferation of organisations. On the other hand, it provides them with a spirit of security and frankness in the relations between leaderships and the bases, and creates for every individual a place in the battle in which he can perform his duty and deploy his energies to the full.