



Arab Reaction — The Other Enemy of the *Intifada*

The following article was sent to AWTW by J.K., a Tunisian Marxist-Leninist.

The outbreak of the popular insurrection in Palestine on 8 Dec. 1987 after the heroic glider operation against a Zionist military target, and its continuation for more than six months now, proves once again that the popular masses in this part of the Arab nation are determined to carry on the struggle for liberation. They have given the correct response to the reactionary Arab regimes which are hatching up political settlements with the enemy. The latest in the long series of plots woven behind the backs of the people are the decisions of the Amman Summit and especially the decision to resume relations with the Egyptian regime.

The revolutionary uprising of our people in Palestine has swept away such capitulationist schemes and has put forward the question of national liberation on the Arab level and worldwide after a period of stagnation and a series of Zionist-imperialist attacks.

The *Intifada*: Another Link in the People's Struggle against Zionism-Imperialism

The conditions of oppression and homelessness suffered by the Palestinian masses, the barbaric raids against the refugee camps, the campaigns of persecution, imprisonment and torture of the patriotic militants, all these factors caused the

masses to revolt throughout Palestine, including in the territories occupied in 1967. This has dealt a blow to such expressions as "the state of Israel" and "the Arabs of Israel" which are now being promoted by the reactionary Arab leaders (including Palestinian leaders).

The Zionist rulers were planning an invasion of south Lebanon to avenge the fedayee glider operation. They sent thousands of troops into south Lebanon as part of their preparation for invading the villages there, in order to strike at the bases of the Palestinian and Lebanese resistance. But the uprising in the occupied territories caused much faltering in the ranks of the Zionists and caused them to give up their vicious plan, or at least to delay it. The spread of the insurrection and its continuation shows that the masses have chosen the road of struggle and revolution as the only path to liberation. The mass revolutionary movement, despite its still limited and spontaneous aspect, is a real blow to the idea of "Israel's legendary power" and its "invincible military force," etc.

After the insurrection broke out in Gaza it spread quickly among the Palestinian masses in the West Bank and later hit all of occupied Palestine (wrongly called Israel). The flame of the revolt blazed forth as the Reagan-Gorbachev summit, the Amman Arab summit and the resumption of relations with the capitulationist Egyptian regime,

which concluded the Camp David agreement, were all taking place. All the reactionaries stepped up their race for a "political settlement" of the so-called Middle East conflict. They seek a "peaceful solution" that subordinates the masses to the very imperialist forces that spawned the problem by creating and supporting their instrument of oppression and exploitation: the Zionist settler state.

The killing of four Palestinian workers by a Zionist military truck was the spark that set Gaza afire with popular protest. All the masses of the occupied land, men, women and children, went out in the streets in a violent mass movement, with the youth playing a heroic, leading role. This new generation was born amidst raids and massacres and daily destruction (extortion of land, demolition of houses, killing of their fathers, torture, etc.). This is an angry generation that has never known the taste of childhood, but has lived deprived of all the needs of a decent life and national dignity and has grown prematurely into little/big heroes ready to assume their responsibility to defend the land and pride of their people. They are armed with rocks and Molotov cocktails, burning bottles and eggs. They build barricades and set obstacles to attract the Zionist troops into narrow streets in order to fight them better. They are youth and children — armed with the sign of victory, unflinching when they face the ene-

my, defying Zionists and imperialists with all their heavy arms and tanks, their prisons and their barbarous torture.

The Zionists have failed to stop the march of these fearless youth, even though they raided camps and hospitals and broke into closed shops and houses, cut electricity and water to Palestinian villages and camps and imposed curfews on them. They tried to terrorise the Palestinian masses, but what happened is the opposite: terror and panic have struck the Zionists since the glider operation in which two fedayee fighters (one Syrian, the other Tunisian) sacrificed their lives to destroy the so-called security belt and take part in setting the whole of Palestine ablaze. All savage repression has failed to quench the flames of this popular revolt or stop the fearless advance of the youth against American-Zionist tanks and guns and bombs.

More than 150 have been killed, over 3000 wounded and many thousands imprisoned — the insurrection goes on. The Zionists have broken the hands of 1200 demonstrators, buried four Palestinians alive, caused the miscarriages of 100 pregnant women, besides the daily torture only equalled by the crimes of the Nazis. Fourteen Palestinians were burned alive in a hut, many have been thrown out of airborne helicopters. All this barbarous repression is aimed at terrorising the people into accepting Zionist-imperialist rule.

The Zionists and imperialists have yet to learn that it is impossible to stop the struggle of a people determined to fight for its dignity. The reactionary Arab lackeys of imperialism, as well as opportunists of all kinds, consider the Zionist settler state as an accomplished fact that must be accepted, and seek to conclude agreements with the Zionists such as Camp David, or through contacts between the kings of Morocco and Jordan and the Zionists. These lackeys officially recognise the Zionist-imperialist occupation and even justify it by pointing to the occupiers' military-technological superiority. The insurrection of the oppressed masses and the entire revolutionary history of

our people stand as proof that the people of Palestine as part of the whole Arab people will not accept the imperialist-Zionist "accomplished fact" but will fight imperialism and Zionism and their lackeys, the feudal class and the comprador bourgeois class in all Arab countries. On the basis of this shining truth, all the revolutionary forces of the nation are called upon to take part in the struggle.

The statement of the Committee of the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement on the revolutionary struggle in Palestine pointed out correctly that the objective situation in Palestine calls for truly revolutionary leadership, which can be provided only by a Marxist-Leninist party armed with the science of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. Only such a force is able to make use of a people's revolutionary army as the main form of organisation, and of people's revolutionary war as the main form of struggle, in order to eradicate Zionism and imperialism and, under the leadership of the proletariat and its party, to build a New Democracy which will develop into socialism and communism. The Marxist-Leninists in some Arab countries are aware that the subjective forces are lagging behind the developing objective conditions. It is their responsibility to develop into a vanguard party in order to lead the struggle of the popular classes of the Arab nation to a victorious conclusion.

In the absence (or weakness) of this subjective force, the struggle of the masses is liable to be limited and contained by reactionary forces. In fact, various reactionary forces are trying to crush the movement or make it serve their own goals. Along with the attempts of Murphy and Shultz to demobilise the masses by advancing so-called solutions and negotiations with some traitors in Jordan and Palestine, Mubarak called for "stopping the violence for six months," and Arafat declared to the French magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* (1 Jan. 1988) that "Negotiations as equal partners means the PLO and Israel sitting at the table of the International Conference."

The aim of the struggle of the revolutionary forces and the popu-

lar masses in Palestine as part of the oppressed and divided Arab nation is *not* to put pressure upon the superpowers and "Israel" so that they accept a mini-Arab state in Gaza and the West Bank led by the PLO and coexisting side by side with the Zionist state. This deal was refused by the people in 1948 and will not be accepted in 1988, even though that is the design of capitulationist Palestinian leaders. They intend to achieve this goal by peaceful means, through negotiation with the Zionists and with the help of Russian social-imperialism and even U.S. imperialism. They view the insurrection as an additional factor for convincing the Zionists and imperialists to negotiate with the PLO. This opportunist view of the insurrection is shared by the leaders of Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), and is sustained by the Soviet Union and the reactionary Arab regimes.

But unfortunately for them, their capitulationist and liquidationist plans are not working. They are rejected by the Zionist enemy itself. And they are opposed as well by the Marxist-Leninist forces and the revolutionary patriots and popular masses, because these forces struggle to uproot Zionist-imperialist-reactionary oppression through revolutionary violence.

For the Unity of the Arab People

The Arab reactionary leaders fail to understand why these capitulationist plans are not working even though they serve the interests of imperialism and fall short of the demands of the popular masses in Palestine and other Arab countries. The Arab kings and sheiks and the feudal and comprador classes as a whole have hatched such schemes ever since the Balfour Declaration in 1917, even before the creation of "Israel." The Hashemite feudal family ruling Jordan, for example, tried to annex the "Arab part" to their kingdom ever since the decision to partition Palestine in 1948; their history is filled with the blood of Palestinians and Arab patriots who refused this plan. The "Black September" massacre in 1970 is an out-

standing example.

The revisionist parties in the Arab countries, wrongly named communist, have stood against the liberation movement in Palestine and have accepted the division of the Arab nation by imperialism in the name of realism. They provide great theoretical and political support to the Zionists by calling for cooperation with the "democratic forces in Israel," including the Zionist revisionist party Rakah, and by promoting, along with the most reactionary regimes and the PLO, a reactionary theory of non-interference in Palestinian affairs, which means leaving the Palestinians to face the Zionist-imperialist occupation alone, without any assistance from other Arab revolutionary forces and the Arab masses as a whole.

Even though these opportunist and reactionary forces, including the Arab and Palestinian leaders and the Soviet revisionist puppets, do not question the existence of "Israel," the Zionists and the U.S. imperialists have so far rejected their capitulationist plans. Why?

It is true that only the Marxist-Leninists armed with Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought can give a theoretical and practical answer to this question. Their answer is drawn from a scientific analysis of Zionism itself, and from the historic struggle of the Arab masses for unity and national dignity.

Zionism is the most savage expression of imperialism, the form of imperialist oppression and exploitation imposed upon the Palestinian and Arab people. Before the era of imperialism, there was no such thing as Zionism (the first international Zionist congress was held in Basel in 1897). And now, without economic and military support from imperialism, there would not be such a thing as "Israel." The genuine Marxist-Leninists consider that there is not the slightest shade of distinction between "Israel" and imperialism, and therefore take incantations like "the right of Israel to exist" to mean "the right of imperialism to exist and oppress, etc." The reactionaries and revisionists and opportunists try to create illusions of such a distinction among the masses in order to dissuade them from taking the

revolutionary road.

The Arab regimes and the Palestinian leaders do know that there are no boundaries or limits "Israel" will settle for. It did not settle for half of Palestine in 1948, and since then its goal has been to expand and realise the Zionist dream of a "Greater Israel" stretching from the Nile to the Tigris River. It occupied Gaza and the West Bank, as well as the Golan Heights and the Sinai, then south Lebanon; it raided targets in various Arab countries (Tunisia, Iraq, etc.).

The reactionary Arab rulers and revisionist parties ignore the *imperialist-expansionist* nature of "Israel" exactly because they are vile guardians of imperialist interests, just as the Zionists are. They strive to prevent revolutionary war against Zionism and imperialism because such a war will blow up their puppet states and kingdoms along with "Israel." That is why the lackey rulers in the Arab countries have armed themselves in order to repress popular revolt. The insurrection in Palestine has put them in an uncomfortable position before the masses, so they are trying hard to stop it or contain it by setting into motion negotiations with the Zionists and imperialists. Instead of providing political and material support for the people in revolt, not to speak of military assistance, and instead of letting the masses volunteer to take part in the battle, the Arab rulers have held summits and issued declarations and speeches, and at the same time have savagely repressed mass demonstrations of support in various Arab countries and persecuted those who expressed their willingness to volunteer.

The Arab masses have always considered the struggle in Palestine as their own, and have expressed this position on many occasions. Some outstanding patriotic leaders of anti-imperialist insurrections in Palestine are from other Arab countries. (The Syrian leader Ezzedine Kassam led the great revolt from 1936-1939, and many militants from various parts of the Arab nation have been active elements within the Palestinian guerrilla groups and the Lebanese resistance.) The broad popular support in the Arab countries for the present revolt, despite the repression

imposed by the ruling dictatorships, shows the close relation between what is going on in Palestine and the Arab liberation movement.

The popular masses in many Arab countries demonstrated to affirm the united goal of national-democratic liberation and the necessity to mobilise all the popular classes of the nation to destroy the obstacles and artificial borders which imperialism is trying to preserve and reinforce. The reactionary lackeys of imperialism did not hesitate to savagely crush all manifestations of support. In Casablanca, Morocco, for example, military helicopters fired on a demonstration in which masses of people took part, many of them demanding the right to volunteer; four young demonstrators were killed and dozens wounded. In Tunisia, there were demonstrations throughout the country, especially in the capital and in the south. Over 6,000 people took part in one of the latest demonstrations in Tunis. The masses shouted slogans against Zionism and imperialism, but also against the Arab traitors and the local government, which they described as "a servant of the Mosad," especially after the assassination of a PLO leader in Tunis (Abu Jihad).

In Egypt, mass demonstrations have been met with various forms of fierce repression, including the use of guns. The puppet Mubarak regime is keeping the masses in Rafah (in the part of the Sinai under Egyptian rule) under armed control in order to prevent them from assisting the masses in revolt in the remaining part (under Zionist occupation).

In Kuwait, the government officially forbade demonstrations, whereas in Jordan, Saudi Arabia and other countries around the Gulf, the direct presence of imperialism and its control over the police and the army, together with feudal despotism, means that the masses of these countries suffer as much terrorism and oppression as their fellow Arabs in occupied Palestine.

This situation brings the popular masses, who consider the battle against Zionism as their own and are prepared to give unlimited support to the revolutionary people in Palestine, face to face with the reaction-

ary rulers of their own countries. They actually have to fight those rulers as part of their struggle against imperialism and Zionism.

The Prospects: the Tasks of the Revolutionaries

It is obvious that the reactionary rulers of the Arab countries, as representatives of the Arab feudal class and the comprador bourgeoisie, are firmly united against the masses and their revolutionary forces. Together with the opportunists and revisionists, they form a reactionary united front backed by imperialism and social-imperialism worldwide. The masses need a force capable of uniting the popular classes of society in a revolutionary anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist front, to unite all the scattered groups of fighters into a revolutionary people's army, and to unite all these struggles into a revolutionary people's war. This uniting and leading force is the Marxist-Leninist party built on the basis of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought. In the absence of such a party, the struggles in various parts of the nation are doomed to remain spontaneous, scattered and sporadic. Actually, it is the task of the Marxist-Leninist party to organise and unite the revolutionary masses and lead them in a people's war which will end only with the defeat of Zionism and imperialism and their lackeys. It must be pointed out that this is not the first insurrection in Palestine and in other Arab countries: the Great Revolt of 1936 continued for three years and developed into armed struggle against British occupation and Zionist immigration, but it finally failed because it was not led by the vanguard party of the working class, the only class that is thoroughly revolutionary and has nothing to lose but its chains.

We are in the presence of an oppressed nation struggling against Zionist-imperialist and feudal domination, a colonised, semi-colonised, semifeudal society for which the only path to liberation is protracted revolutionary people's war under the leadership of the working class, with the participation of all the popular classes of society,

that is the whole of society except the feudal and comprador bourgeois classes and the opportunist and revisionist forces that serve reactionary imperialist interests. This is the road of revolution charted by Comrade Mao for colonial and semicolonial countries, the road to national and democratic revolution leading to a new democracy, as a part of the world proletarian revolution (as he explained in "On New Democracy"). Actually, Comrade Mao did not only point out the way to liberation for the Chinese people and oppressed peoples of the world in general, he recommended that the Arab people follow the same road as the Chinese people. A conversation Comrade Mao had in 1965 with Ahmed Shukeiri, at that time the leader of the PLO, is of great importance for all the world's Marxist-Leninists. Comrade Mao addressed the Arab nation through Shukeiri, saying: "The Zionist movement is mobilised with all its forces against the Arab nation. You have to mobilise all the parts of your nation in order to act on all fronts. That is the strategic line which must be followed; otherwise Israel will try to combat you country by country." Comrade Mao added: "Imperialism created Formosa for us, and in the same way it created Israel for you. But we succeeded in destroying it thanks to the struggle of the Chinese people and their Long March. What if two million fighters from a nation that numbers more than 100 million marched across the river and into the occupied land? You say that the enemy will kill them all... It would be better for your cause if Israel committed such a historical crime." (Quoted by *Almustakbil*, No. 565, 19 Dec. 1987)

What then are the basic lessons to be drawn from the insurrection in Palestine and the present situation as analysed above, on the basis of the teachings of Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tsetung Thought?

— The heroic *intifada* of the Arab masses in the occupied land of Palestine is the correct response to the schemes hatched by imperialism and its capitulationist lackeys. It proves that the Arab people have no choice but armed struggle as the only way to overthrow Zionism and imperial-

ism, as well as their local servants.

— The *intifada*, despite its spontaneous character and limited weapons, has filled the Zionists and imperialists with panic because they are defending an unjust cause, whereas the fearless people do not hesitate to make sacrifices because they are defending a just cause. The result of the struggle is not determined by the type of weapons used.

— When we point out the courage and heroism of the youth fighting the Zionist enemy, this does not mean that the people must continue fighting with these simple means, especially against a strong, well-armed, imperialist-backed enemy. The means and methods of the struggle must be developed into a protracted people's war as the only path to liberation, New Democracy and socialism.

— This task can only be fulfilled by a radical leadership representing the interests of the working class and the whole people. Despite their contradictions the reactionary and imperialist forces are united against the revolutionary forces of the Arab nation. This makes it vital to unite the Arab oppressed people in a united national democratic front and a revolutionary popular army under the leadership of a united Arab Marxist-Leninist party. The building of such a party is the central task of revolutionary Marxist-Leninists in all Arab countries.

— Meanwhile, the Marxist-Leninists (individuals, groups and organisations) must encourage the masses to support the insurrection and fan the flames of revolt. They must combat the position of indifference and non-interference encouraged by imperialism and practiced by the Arab regimes and opportunist, revisionist and obscurantist parties. It is the responsibility of revolutionary communists to mobilise the people around correct slogans such as the right to fight the Zionist-imperialist enemy, the right to volunteer and to train, the opening of borders, etc. These slogans can only be imposed on the puppet regimes through struggle which will develop into armed struggle as part of the people's revolutionary war. □