

TRANSLATION

OF ARTICLE FROM MARCH 10 ISSUE OF SONTAGSBLATT

DS: That means, as things stand: Federal state of the West Bank, lead by the PLO, and under the Hashemite crown. What does the PLO think of that?

Masri: Nothing at all.

DS: This does not seem to impress you particularly.

Masri: Things change now in this area very quickly. This applies almost to all fronts and positions. When the Palestinians one day finally see their own government in their own land within their reach, then the transition from small struggle to great debate will follow. That is because the object of these debates will be the structure which their own state will have. And their object will also be whether they can cope with all this without the sincere help of their neighbours.

DS: It is usual to speak of Palestinians. Actually the refugees lived for quarter of a century without intensive communication, under various conditions and influences, in various countries, Syria, Lebanon, Gaza, West and East Jordan, as visiting workers on the Persian Gulf, etc. Under these conditions how can a common political will be formed?

Masri: This is the problem. And this will cause unknown difficulties. Think of the West Bank. There are living 750,000 Palestinians, partly on their own land, their own houses. Then will come Palestinians from refugee camps, say in the Lebanon. Poor as they are, the have-nots are suddenly next to the houses of the relatively well-to-do. All are Palestinians alright. However, this will not be enough in the long run to prevent social conflicts. Israel itself with her enormous capital resources in the background, with her technology,

An own state for the Palestinians: This is the subject of discussion in the Near East. G. Mack spoke with Taher Masri, the Minister of the West Territories of Jordan.

"As far as we are concerned they may have their own state".

Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt: The establishment of an own state for the Palestinian refugees is a subject widely discussed in the Near East. Does it look for the first time since 27 years, as if this problem which was held to be insoluble, is approaching its solution?

Taher Masri: The Palestinians had various possibilities to achieve a solution for their problems. It appears that the PLO (the mother organization for the various Palestinian organizations) concentrate their efforts now on the establishment of their own state in the territory of the West Bank, now under Israeli occupation. This decision will create certain problems for them. I do not mean by this that the Palestinian refugees could not be asked so far at all about their approval - as a matter of fact I believe that the PLO has here very good communication with the people ...

DS: The West Bank is, in spite of the Israeli occupation a part of the Jordanian state. The concept of a new state of Palestine, however, makes arrangements regarding the Jordanian territory, as if it no more belongs to the Jordanian sovereignty.

Masri: The Jordanian sovereignty extends without doubt, and in the full legal sense, to the West Bank. The PLO cannot certainly evade this. We obviously consider this territory, as before, as a part of Jordan. On the other hand, we also know that some Palestinians are not satisfied with this. The attitude of our government on this point