

## MB Leaders condemn Government's Escalation



The outrageous reaction of security forces today was met with strenuous anger and denunciation by all national currents topped by the Muslim Brotherhood, which now encounters one of the most furious government escalations as hundreds of its members have been arbitrarily arrested in less than a week. The crackdown comes after the MB (with the coordination of other opposition trends) called for a series of demos and protests in solidarity with the Gazan people; a huge one was staged today in downtown Cairo and was violently dispersed by the state security apparatus, whose assault did not spare parliamentarians.

Several MB leaders blew their whistle on the government's response especially the flagrant offense against MPs, who supposedly enjoy immunity. MB first deputy-chairman Muhammad Habib dismissed what happened today as "an insult on Egypt's legislature." He voiced the MB's condemnation of such government practices which "denigrate Egypt's reputation" and "are incompatible with the people's will." These protests, according to Habib, are trying to send one message across: Egypt has a paramount responsibility to lift the Gaza blockade, open up Rafah crossing border, and put an end to the suffering of besieged Palestinians through the provision of fuel, food, medicine, and electricity.

Habib also highlighted the fact that Egypt's national security is dependent upon the situation in Palestine, and that Palestinian resistance is the only shield against Zionist expansionist dreams in the region. He ended up saying that protests will not stop until the government fulfils people's demands. Mahmoud Ezzat (MB secretary general) wondered why the Egyptian regime rounds up demonstrators who advocate the rights of an occupied nation and express their concern over their country's national security. He confirmed that the role of the regime is not only to

lift the blockade, but also to help the Palestinian people gain their liberty. "Through such demonstrations," Ezzat maintained, "we want to show solidarity with the Palestinian people, tell the Zionists we will always support legitimate resistance, inform the U.S. administration that we will never surrender to its pressures, and to remind our regime of its responsibilities."

Executive Bureau members Muhammad Mursi and Mahmoud Ghozlan were also astonished by the government's response. Muhammad Mursi affirmed that the demos were not an attack on the government as much as a call for the rescue of Gaza strip. He underlined the need for a unified stance between the people and the government of Egypt to provide Gaza with necessary humanitarian aid. "The state security onslaught is unacceptable since at that point in time our government should coalesce with the people to preserve our interests and to advocate the rights of Palestinians," Mursi said. Moreover, he said that marching to the Arab League implied that we are not only addressing the Egyptian regime, but Arab regimes as well.

In the same context, Mahmoud Ghozlan criticized repressive measures taken by the regime to smother demonstrations and peaceful marches. He said the people have the right to express their angry feelings which are completely justified and are a national duty, since Gaza lies at Egypt's borders and we might face the same destiny one day. He described what's happening in Gaza as a "holocaust" represented in the horrible war crimes perpetrated by Israeli occupation including deliberate mass murder of civilians without the least moral scruples. Ghozlan then called for the immediate release of all detainees in these events, and said, "If the government is not willing to save the situation in Gaza, it should at least allow people to do so."