

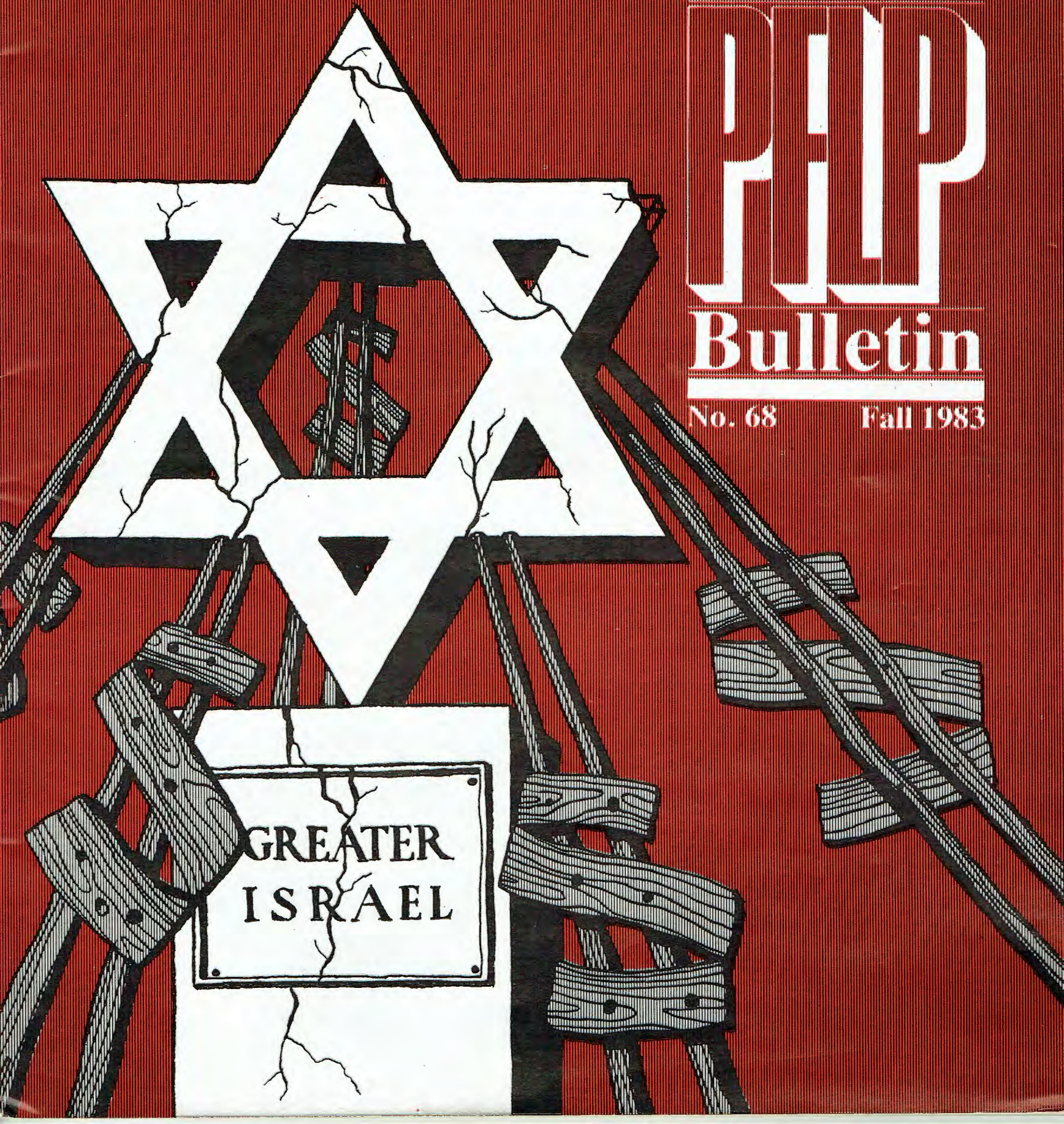
Begin's Resignation:
**Reflection of Zionism's
Battle Scars**



PPP
Bulletin

No. 68

Fall 1983



**GREATER
ISRAEL**

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Notice to Readers

Again, we would like to thank all of those who have confirmed their address with us. If there is a check by your name on the mailing tag of the Bulletin you receive, then you are on our new mailing list and will continue getting the Bulletin regularly. However, there are many former subscribers who have not contacted us. We urge you to do so immediately by filling out the following form. Some people have written how to pay their subscription. Please do not send money now. In the following issues, we will publish an account for the payment of subscriptions.

This issue was sent to press September 1, 1983.

Note: Our last issue was sent to press June 30th, not July 30th as was mistakenly printed.

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Editorial

MCFARLANE ON THE SCENE AS LEBANON EXPLODES

In principle, the appointment of Robert McFarlane to replace Philip Habib as special US envoy to the Middle East was a mere changing of the guards. It signifies no change in US imperialism's approach to the conflict in our area. On another level, however, it does have a significance: It is part of a new political offensive aimed at exerting further pressure on Syria and the PLO to change their positions on the Israeli-Lebanese accord. This is to prepare the ground for reviving the almost buried Reagan plan. It is of course calculated in the White House that any US success in the Middle East will add to the credit of Reagan in his bid for reelection.

As such, McFarlane's appointment cannot be separated from that of Kissinger to head a new commission on Latin America, or from US envoy Richard Stone's efforts to meet with representatives of the FMLN. All are moves that try to show the US public that the administration's policies are working, despite mounting evidence to the contrary. The Salvadorean revolution's continued advance in the face of increased US support to the reactionary regime and its army is perhaps the most blatant example, and it has called into question the administration's overall Latin America policy. Failure to resolve the impasse in Lebanon, and thus open the way for expanding Camp David, is another.

These examples of failure coincide with the increasing public debate in the US generated by the effects of the Reagan Administration's militaristic, cold war policy. As the time for actually deploying the nuclear missiles in Europe draws nearer and popular opposition continues to rise, more US citizens are becoming aware that these policies create a state of international tension that could endanger their own lives. More enlightened bourgeois forces are painfully aware of the problems which Reagan's policies are creating for US allies in Western Europe, and for the US in the future. Broader sectors of the working class are seeing the connection between the administration's military build-up and the cut-backs in wages and social services. The Reagan Administration needs to curb and/or absorb these phenomena before the next election campaign starts for real. Making at least the pretense of foreign policy successes is one element in this effort.

In the Middle East, the focus is on the current impasse in Lebanon, which in imperialist eyes is mainly due to Syria's refusal to withdraw its forces on the basis of the US supervised accord. Appointing McFarlane was intended

to get around President Assad's refusal to meet Habib. In this sense, the nationalist position against the accord enforced the change. Precisely because of his great service to US imperialism in the crucial period of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, Habib is not suited for the mission of imposing its results on the nationalist forces. On the other hand, McFarlane's appointment reflects the US administration's increased concern with the impasse in the Middle East. McFarlane is a higher ranking official than Habib, and more closely connected to the hard-core right-wing nucleus of the administration. He is thus more trusted to act concertedly in the interests of the new offensive and help sell Reagan's foreign policy to the public, regardless of whether it resolves any issues. In this context, the mere fact that the Syrian government received McFarlane is presented as a success, even though the fundamental Syrian position has not altered.

Lebanese nationalists disrupt McFarlane's visit

McFarlane's early August visit to the area came as a continuation of US efforts to obtain the withdrawal of foreign forces from Lebanon, i.e. pressuring Syria to this end. However, by the time he arrived, the US had concurred with the Israeli plan to redeploy its occupation forces. Thus, the envoy's real purpose was to prepare the conditions for the Lebanese Army to take control of the areas evacuated, chiefly the Shouf mountains.

His endeavors were greatly complicated as the contradictions between the Lebanese Army and the fascist forces on the one hand, and the masses and nationalist forces on the other, re-erupted in widespread violence. (See article on Lebanon in this issue.) Moving the Lebanese Army into the Shouf became the test for US ability to sponsor the imposition of reactionary stability in Lebanon as a whole. The outcome of the battle for control of these mountains will in turn reflect on the regional situation, for the Arab states view Lebanon as a main testing ground for US policy. Success here is a prerequisite for Arab reaction's daring to move openly into an expanded Camp David.

Thus we saw McFarlane enlisting the Saudi and Jordanian regimes to play a role of mediation between the Lebanese government and Walid Jumblatt, leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, the most influential force among the Druze population of the Shouf. Also top Egyptian officials visited the Gemayel regime short-

ly after McFarlane's prolonged stay in their country.

However, using Arab reaction as the US proxy has its limitations in the current situation. Beshir Gemayel's spring '82 reception in Taef was seen as Arab reaction's blessings on the Phalangist Party taking the Lebanese presidency, but by now, the Saudis have real reservations about the performance of Amin Gemayel's government. By fostering the Phalangist Party's climb towards absolute hegemony for the right-wing Christian bourgeoisie, this government has provoked broad popular opposition, blocking the process to stabilize Lebanon. Arab reaction needs stability in Lebanon to proceed into the US plans and is unsettled by the new outburst of popular initiative. In this situation, the US's unilateral support to the Gemayel regime, like its unconditional backing of the Zionist state, makes it difficult for Arab reaction to be successful in pressuring the nationalist forces. This in turn inhibits implementation of the US plan on the political level.

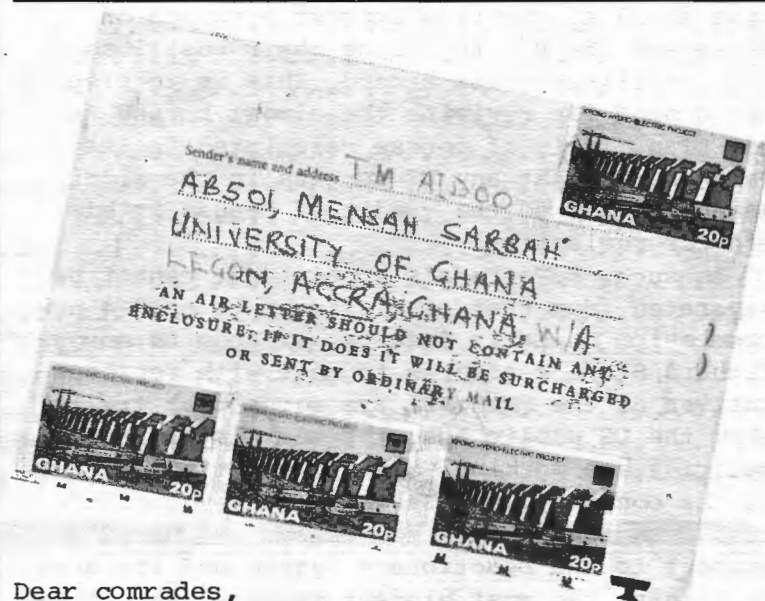
The Lebanese nationalist forces' renewed confrontation of the regime's policies and army can complicate the US plans on another level as well. It can complicate the Reagan Administration's efforts to gain domestic support for any expansion of the US military role in Lebanon. Despite its cold war jingoism, the Reagan Administration has yet to dispell the so-called Vietnam complex. Taking El Salvador as the best example, there is widespread opposition to sending US troops to combat areas overseas.

Lebanon has again become a combat area, and already there are clear indications of the gradual involvement of the US forces in the battle against the nationalist forces. On August 29th, US Cobra helicopters attacked nationalist positions in Shuwaifat and the southern outskirts of Beirut. On this day, 3 US soldiers were killed and 7 injured.

If popular defiance of the army persists, the Multinational Forces will increasingly find that their mission of support to the authority entails confronting the people. This will have greatest impact in the US, which is most involved in rebuilding the army, but it can have repercussions in all countries contributing to the Multinational Forces. In such case, the conflict in Lebanon will move closer into the domestic politics of the imperialist countries. A new opportunity will be opened for the anti-imperialist forces in these countries to expose that support to Gemayel's regime is no support to Lebanon's people, unity or stability. In this way, the renewed popular struggle in various parts of Lebanon, to save the country from becoming a fascist dictatorship and US-Israeli protectorate, provides the objective basis for increased international solidarity with the Lebanese national democratic forces.

Thanks for Your Solidarity

We would like to thank all of those who have written us confirming their wish to receive the PFLP Bulletin. We particularly appreciate that fact that many have taken the opportunity to express solidarity with the Palestinian revolution, as was the case with this letter we received from Ghana:



Dear comrades,

Greetings from the PFLP Solidarity Committee of Ghana. First, I wish to state that our address remains the same, and that we decided to sell the Bulletin during the long vacation when most of our members left for home...

Let me congratulate the PLO and all progressive forces within it for the bold resistance you offered the US-backed Israeli invasion in Lebanon. Yes, victory is on the side of the Palestinian people. You are surely not alone in the struggle. We are with you!

We are planning to hold a day of solidarity with the PFLP in December this year. Kindly send us PFLP posters. We shall write you again to inform you of preparations here and hope to extend an invitation to you.

Today in Ghana, gigantic efforts are being made towards socio-political transformation. Our people are in a revolution. We of the PFLP Solidarity in Ghana see our revolution and that of the Palestinian masses as one, because both are directed at dealing blows to imperialism.

Revolutionary greetings,

T.M. Aidoo
AB501 Mensah Sarbah
University of Ghana
Legon, Accra
Ghana, West Africa

New Massacre

PFLP issued the following communique July 27th.

Yesterday Zionist settler gangs committed a new crime in occupied Al Khalil - no less horrible and inhuman than the massacre in Sabra and Shatila camps last year in Lebanon. These gangs stormed the Islamic University in Al Khalil, spraying defenseless students with automatic rifle fire and throwing hand grenades. As a result, 40 were killed or wounded.

This crime came at a time when Al Khalil had been declared a military zone under the complete and direct control of the Zionist forces. Thus, there is not a shadow of a doubt as to the authorities protecting and encouraging such despicable offenses under

the leadership of the terrorist Begin, who is personally responsible for the Deir Yassin massacre in 1948, where hundreds of men, women and children were killed with the aim of terrorizing Palestinians into leaving their villages at that time.

This new crime occurs in the same framework: to terrorize the Palestinians into leaving their city in order to facilitate its conversion into a Zionist settlement. In response to this horrible offense we emphasize the following:

1. This crime will not go unpunished.
2. The government of the Zionist state and its institutions are totally responsible for

this massacre, which is a clear example of the organized terror practiced in this entity.

3. We call on all international institutions, including the UN Security Council and General Assembly, to define their position on the crimes of the Zionist entity and to impose strict penalties, in addition to reconsidering its membership in such international institutions.

4. We have great confidence in the masses of our people and in their ability to confront the Zionist plans, to remain steadfast and continue their struggle against occupation until victory and liberation are achieved.

On Begin's Resignation

As we go to press, the full impact of Begin's resignation is not yet clear. It is impossible to give a full analysis, for the reactions and positions of the political forces in the Zionist entity have yet to crystallize. Still, it is possible to posit the underlying reasons for the resignation.

Begin resigned at a time when the Zionist entity is facing aggravated internal contradictions in the aftermath of its prolonged war Lebanon. Therefore, we can define the basic reasons for the resignation as internal.

The invasion of Lebanon had negative effects on the socio-economic conditions in the Zionist state. The economic crisis has escalated to the point of enforcing the government's recent decision to cut expenditures, which will affect education, social services and even the military establishment. The economic crisis has led to increased contradictions within the ruling Likud coalition, threatening its unity.

The invasion of Lebanon also had a political and social impact on the Zionist entity. This invasion failed to achieve its full objectives, mainly, destroying the infrastructure of the PLO, despite all the military, economic and human resources invested to this end. This led to unprecedented anti-war dissent in 'Israel'. The daily economic and human losses suffered as

a result of the deep, prolonged Israeli involvement in Lebanon continue to evoke broad opposition to the existing government policies. This presented the Likud coalition with an added political and social dilemma, and led one member of the Knesset to make the following comment on Begin's resignation: "What Begin had gained in Camp David, he has lost in Lebanon".

It is clear that Begin was concerned about maintaining the policies with which he led the Israeli state. He thus delayed submitting his official resignation until the internal conditions of the Likud coalition were rearranged for remaining in power without new elections. Moreover, Begin's choice of Shamir, despite the Herut Party's previous designation of David Levi as his successor, is clear evidence of this. Shamir is known to be very close to Begin in terms of his political convictions and approach.

While we emphasize that the reasons for the resignation are internal, questions may arise regarding its timing: Whether it is related to Reagan's reassertion of his initiative for resolving the Middle East conflict and/or to King Hussein's recent maneuvers to participate in this initiative. These questions remain to be clarified by future developments. In any case, Begin's resignation does not signal a change in the aggressive policies of Zionism, but it may be a prelude to new initiatives to alleviate the internal problems within the Zionist state.

Fascism Hits Al Khalil



Israeli paratroopers arrive in Al Khalil after university massacre.

It is true that Ahron Gross, the Israeli killed in the Al Khalil market on July 7th, was a student. Pro-Zionist media, however, neglects to mention that he, like many such students, was a machinegun-carrying settler. His death at the hands of three Palestinians was a logical result of the decades of attacks on our people by these settlers. Moreover, it is an irony that the same settlers who were enraged enough to pursue the attackers for 1½ hours, left Gross to literally bleed to death in the street as they continued their rampage. The fire of their machineguns resounded in Al Khalil for 20 consecutive minutes; later the body of a Palestinian youth was found on a side road; the next day, the body of a young Palestinian child was found hanging from a tree. Meanwhile the Zionist police ignored Gross, thinking he was an Arab. It was Palestinian residents of the city who brought him to the hospital.

The Zionist authorities found this an opportune time to (1) dismiss the acting mayor of Al Khalil, (2) declare the city a closed military zone to promote settlement plans, and (3) unleash the fanatic potentials of the Kiryat Arba settlers on helpless students at the Al Khalil university. This horrible crime, designed to look like an act of revenge, cannot but inspire a mixture of disgust and indignation.

The timing and precision of the university massacre, the one hour delay before the police arrived at the scene, though the university director telephoned them while the attack was in progress, leave no doubt as to the authorities' collusion in the settlers' operation. To add insult to injury, these same authorities had the audacity to suggest that "Arab fanatics unable to bear the sight of Arabs and Jews co-existing in peace" were responsible.

Zionist violence - needed for settlement

Why the escalated campaign of terror crowned by the carefully plotted attack on students?

Sadly enough, this massacre came as no surprise. It crowns a series of aggression, harassment and provocations that have been going on for some time. (See "The Sword of Settlement" article in Bulletin No. 66.) Recently, this campaign included the burning of 200 dunams of orchards, expelling families from their homes under the pretext that Jewish families owned the property tens of years ago, frequent curfews and then declaring the heart of Al Khalil a military zone, confiscating the bus terminal...

Events in Al Khalil are by no means an isolated case. They resemble previous acts of Zionist terror which are liable to reoccur in any part of occupied Palestine, for they are part of an overall plan to Judaize the occupied territories. This plan begins by encircling the Palestinian cities, then settling Jewish families in their center, and finally filling the gap between these two points of attack with settlements. This aims to divide and further subdivide the city, literally squeezing the Palestinian residents out of their homes.

Practical steps to this effect are well underway in the Al Khali district. In the surrounding hills, Susiyeh settlement is being built, as is Edwar on the road between Kiryat Arba and the city. The authorities are arranging to move 500 more settler families into the heart of the city in the near future.

Have land will settle

It is no secret that the Zionists build the settlements on land which belongs to Palestinians, who for their part do not give up their land as easily as the enemy would like. Nor is it a secret that the authorities revert to all sorts of methods to grab land: declaring it necessary for "security" purposes, converting it to a military zone, then building settlements on it; or just plain terrorizing the owners away and stealing it.

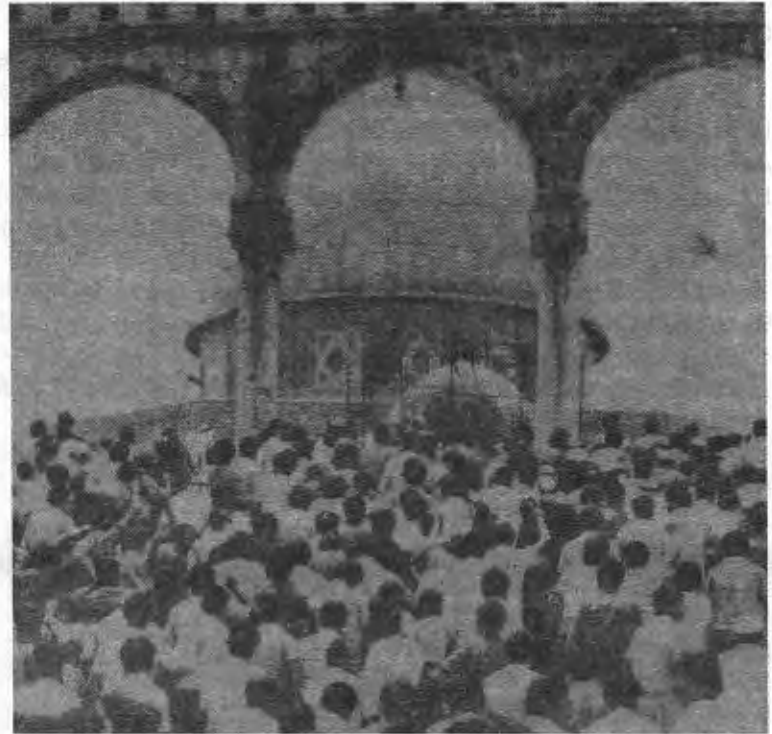
Our people's resistance has cost the Zionists more than they bargained for in terms of protests, court cases, demonstrations, clashes, injuries and deaths. Although they have no qualms about their methods, continuing in the same way will eventually mean turning the whole of occupied Palestine as a military zone. This could prove to be quite awkward on the local and international level in the long

term. Thus, new 'legal' ploys are being devised to provide more acceptable means for expropriating land. Recently, the Israeli commander of the central region, Uri Orr, issued a new order cancelling the authority of local West Bank courts to deal with matters pertaining to land. Now all cases, applications and appeals concerning land must go to a special three-man committee, consisting of a Palestinian judge and two representatives of the Israeli military courts.

Incompetent investigators???

What could be a better indication of the fascist character of the Zionist authorities than that it is consistently Palestinians who are accused, beaten and arrested by the same authorities, who themselves engineer the crimes committed in occupied Palestine. No Zionist was apprehended or even questioned for the university massacre, because "investigation into the incident is incomplete" as is - after 3 years - the investigation into the attempted assassination of mayors Bassam Shakaa, Karim Khalaf and Ibrahim al Tawil; as is the investigation into the explosion on the grounds of an Al Khalil school, the throwing of a grenade into the home of a Palestinian family that had refused to sell their home to settlers in February of this year, etc., etc. Moreover, the Zionist press consistently refers to the murderous settlers as "unknown elements".

No less indicative is the fact that armed settlers were allowed to keep guard along with the military police in Al Khalil. This they did



Jerusalem, July 29th: Thousands demonstrate by storming the market after Gross' death, setting it afire and destroying 759 shops and vegetable stalls, causing inestimable damage. This was added to the huge loss incurred by the market as a result of the curfew imposed during the feast days. Moreover, four hours after the university massacre, settlers took over the Tareq Bin Ziad secondary school and turned it into a prison for the Palestinians who had been arrested. The 800 boys registered for the coming school term face the prospect of being

Bir Zeit students arrive to protest the harsh sentences passed on July 27 demonstrators.



left without instruction this fall as vacancies in neighboring schools are limited.

Our people respond

The Al Khalil massacre touched off a general uprising throughout the occupied homeland: in Jerusalem, Bir Zeit, Qalqilia, Nablus, Ramallah, Bireh, Jenin, Halhoul, the villages and camps of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as well as in the Galilee and Triangle areas.

Zionist patrols increased; border police were called in; helicopters hovered overhead; thousands of soldiers were mobilized. Yet this strenuous muscle-flexing was to no avail. Palestinian workers in the 1967 occupied territories went on strike July 27th; hundreds of handbills were distributed calling on all to resist and retaliate. The strike and demonstrations occurred despite the Israeli censors' delaying distribution of newspapers so that no call could be published early enough for the people to act or join in.

At Bir Zeit, hundreds of students demonstrated with anti-Zionist slogans. Tear gas was used, and the military police pursued students through the streets firing their machineguns; 5

students were seriously injured. Despite curfews Palestinians demonstrated, and clashes in Nablus and Qalqilia were so severe that the authorities called in reinforcements. Demonstrations occurred in the Galilee in Kafr Qasim, Tireh, Taybeh and Baqa. In Um Fahm, Zionist patrol cars were prevented from entering the town. In Araba, demonstrators destroyed a patrol car. In Sakhnin, a number of buses were burned.

At the end of this day, the grand total of arrests was 187 Palestinians, 17 of them women - and no Zionists. In Azzoun camp near Nablus, a 60 year old woman was arrested for throwing stones at a patrol car. During the ensuing trials, the severest penalties ever for stone-throwing and demonstrating were handed out: fines equivalent to \$1,000 and prison sentences ranging up to two years.

Our masses have learned to expect such 'justice'. Despite this, their potentials burst forth as further proof of their endless store of selflessness, sacrifice and perseverance for the sake of freedom. We do not await the mercy of UN resolutions to descend on our heads. Forceful resistance is the only language the enemy understands, and our masses have learned well how to employ it.

Judaizing Al Khalil - Historical Background

The Judaization process against Al Khalil started in 1968, with the founding of Kiryat Arba settlement on the outskirts of the city. This was the first step in the plan to encircle Al Khalil with settlements and Jewish quarters, very much like what has happened to Jerusalem.

It was decided that Kiryat Arba should be the nucleus of a Jewish city of 50,000. Since 1968, there have been efforts to expand this settlement at the expense of land belonging to Al Khalil and the surrounding villages. This effort escalated after the Likud came to power. In 1980, more than 3,000 dunums from the villages around Al Khalil had been expropriated for the express purpose of expanding Kiryat Arba and the adjacent industrial area. In 1981-82, another 10,000 dunums were expropriated from Al Khalil and Su'air, Bani Na'im, and Al Shuyukh villages in a further effort to reinforce Kiryat Arba by founding a number of other settlements.

Moreover, Kiryat Arba was to serve as one end of a bridge which would split the city in two parts. The first step towards this goal was the permission granted by the Israeli authorities for the Kiryat Arba settlers to take over a part of the Ibrahimi mosque. Settlers

belonging to the Kahane gang and the Gush Emunim began to harass Arab citizens, attacking them and taking over their homes on the pretext that the property had belonged to Jews evicted in 1929.

In April and May of 1979, Al Khalil witnessed attacks by the settler gangs on a number of Palestinian homes. In the beginning of 1980, Begin's government used the killing of a settler in the market as an excuse to allow settlers to move into the city; two Jewish schools were founded. Then the authorities used the May 1981 military operation, which killed 6 and wounded 17 settlers, as an excuse for rebuilding the Jewish quarter and deporting the elected mayor, Fahd Al Qawasmeh along with Halhoul mayor, Mohammad Milhem, and Sheikh Tamimi, claiming them to be instigators of terrorism.

In the past months, Zionist settlers escalated their terror campaign against the citizens of the city and their property. The authorities took over the Osama Bin Munqith School for Girls in the heart of the city. In this context, we can see that the current Zionist measures against Al Khalil are an extension of a long process aimed at the city's Judaization. This in turn is linked to overall Zionist colonization plans. As openly stated by Knesset member, Hanan Burat, a leading Kiryat Arba settler and member of Gush Emunim, the settlers aim to throw the Arabs out of Al Khalil and from the entire West Bank.

Mustafa Natshe has been acting mayor of Al Khalil since the 1980 deportation of Fahd Qawasmeh. On July 7th, he and the elected municipal council were dismissed. According to the Jerusalem newspaper "Al Fajr" (English edition, July 15), civil administrator Shlomo Elia told foreign reporters that Natshe had refused to give municipal services to settlers, produced anti-Israeli publications in the municipal offices and brought "enemy funds" into the city. However, a news bulletin printed only in Hebrew came closer to the truth of why the Zionists wished to get rid of Natshe. In this, Elia accused the acting mayor of "petitioning the High Court and accusing the civil administration of abetting the illegal demolition and construction of buildings by settlers in the heart of the Hebron market." This proves that Natshe's dismissal, like that of the other elected mayors, intends to remove the obstacles to intensified Zionist settlement and its ultimate goal of official annexation of the 1967 occupied territories.

In the following interview, made by "Al Hadaif" in early July, Natshe gives an account of the developments connected to his dismissal and the Zionist plans for Al Khalil. He also comments on the inter-Palestinian fighting in the Beqaa Valley which resulted from the conflict in Fatah, and on the unity agreement between PFLP and DFLP.

Interview with Mustafa Natshe



Recently there have been serious events in Al Khalil, escalating confrontation with the enemy. Would you give an overview of these events?

Recent events in Al Khalil are not isolated from the total settlement plans of the enemy, which aim at dividing the city, dissecting its main sectors in order to be able to dominate each part of the city separately.

A month ago, the events began to take on a new perspective in that the military authorities closed off a sector in the heart of the city with barbed wire and set up checkpoints. This sector in particular is of strategic importance, since it is the point which joins all parts of the city. Moreover, it is the center for all transportation, as well as being the economic artery of the city.

The harassment of Palestinians by Zionist settlers continued until the occupation authorities took advantage of the killing of one of these settlers last Thursday and dismissed the municipal council, claiming that it instigated Palestinian citizens to carry out activities against settlers...

Do you think that the killing of this settler is the real reason behind dismissing the council?

The decision to dismiss the municipal council is not a result of the above-mentioned incident... Moshe Arens himself declared that the decision was in his drawer for some time waiting for the appropriate moment.

The military authorities considered the killing of the Zionist settler, Ahron Gross, as justification for declaring the dismissal; a curfew was enforced, after which at 2 p.m., a large number of settlers of Kiryat Arba marched down to the vegetable market at the center of the city, burning a large number of shops and stalls and shouting slogans against Palestinians. At that time, three from the military government came to inform me that the head of the middle region wanted to meet with me at the military governor's headquarters in Al Khalil. Indeed, I met with the head of civil administration. The military governor of Al Khalil accused me and the municipal council of instigating activities against the settlers and of printing handbills opposing occupation in the offices of the municipality.

I denied these accusations and pointed out that Palestinian citizens try to counteract the continuous aggression leveled at them by the settlers of Kiryat Arba in particular.

I was informed then and there of my dismissal and that of the municipal council members. An Israeli officer was appointed to take on the responsibilities of the municipality until a new mayor is appointed. I believe that what is being said about this situation being temporary is untrue. It is not farfetched to expect this step to be the prelude to appointing a Jewish civil mayor - a demand which the settlers in the area insist on.

After the curfew was lifted, Al Khalil was declared as a closed military zone under the pre-

text that the Peace Now movement was planning a demonstration. In your opinion, what is the real reason behind this declaration?

To be honest, many Israelis are opposed to the idea of settling in this city; they consider that the increase of settlements within the city will broaden the gap between the Arabs and Jews, thus further pushing off any prospect of peace in the area. On this basis, the Peace Now movement, the Committee of Solidarity with Detainees, as well as other groups (Israeli Committee in Solidarity with Bir Zeit University, Rakah, etc. - our note) in Israel oppose such a step. The Peace Now movement is one of the active groups which used to come to Al Khalil every night; once before, they organized a demonstration in Al Khalil against settlements. Moreover, a number of those Jews who have been residents of Al Khalil before 1927, participated in this demonstration. Thus, the authorities wish to prevent the entry of such groups into Al Khalil, to allow in only those radical Zionists present in Kiryat Arba and in Khalil.

Do you believe this is the real reason?

Yes, this is my belief.

What is the danger involved in declaring Al Khalil a closed military zone in terms of the situation of the city and its Arab citizens?

The danger lies in the fact that at any time they can forbid anyone to enter the city under the pretext of its being a military zone. I imagine that this is a temporary situation and for security reasons only. However, it has not ended up till now.

Are there any new developments with regard to the settlements?

Wounded at the university



At the moment there is only the bus station. The authorities ordered the bus company to transfer its station to somewhere near the Ibrahim mosque, giving the excuse that they want to take over the station for security reasons. However, the company refused such an order.

We heard that the families of Palestinian prisoners demonstrated after the latest events. Did the authorities bend to this?

No, nothing of the sort happened.

In light of the escalating mass uprising in the Khalil region, what is required of the PLO in order that the uprising continues and increases the intensity of confrontation with the enemy?

The PLO is required to unify its ranks, because this will strengthen our stand and our steadfastness. Also Palestinian information sources can play an important role in exposing the practices of the enemy on the level of the Palestinian masses as well as on the international level. This will create pressure, which we badly need to enable us to confront the enemy plan, which is beginning by emptying Al Khalil of its Arab population as a first step to completely taking over the city.

No doubt you, along with all the masses, are following anxiously the events in the Beqaa and what they mean in terms of danger to the cause. What is your opinion?

We were extremely pained by these events; no one expected that things would reach the point of solving differences with arms. No one here could understand how Palestinian blood could be shed on the soil of the Beqaa with Palestinian arms. Thus, we call on our brothers in the Palestinian revolution to adhere to democratic dialogue as a way of solving their internal problems, and to adhere to logic for the sake of the continuity of the revolution and its independence as a decision-maker, on the basis of the unity of the PLO.

The PFLP and DFLP not long ago announced the formation of a joint political-military command as a first step on the path to unity. How do you evaluate this step?

The unity of the organizations of the PLO is the wish of all those who desire the interests of the Palestinian revolution. Naturally, we support this joint political and military command between two major organizations of the PLO and consider it to contribute to the unity of the PLO and to its independent decision-making.

Contradictions Explode

Against the backdrop of Israeli redeployment, the internal contradictions in Lebanon exploded once again in violence. Events in July and August exposed the falsity of Amin Gemayel's claim that 99.9% of the Lebanese people support the accord with the Zionist state. Mass confrontation of the Lebanese Army in Beirut and the Shouf mountains, escalating resistance in the South, and the formation of the National Salvation Front show quite the opposite. Broad sectors of the Lebanese people are ready to fight to defeat the Israeli occupation and its anticipated successor: Phalangist domination under the auspices of the reactionary government and its army - and US imperialist backing.



Late August: Lebanese Army tank captured by the nationalist forces.

By redeploying their occupation forces, the Zionists' main aim is to push the Lebanese Army and the Multinational Forces to share the burdens of trying to enforce reactionary stability in Lebanon. In Zionist thinking, if unrest continues in the Shouf mountains, this would serve as a handy pretext for prolonging their occupation behind newly fortified lines and enforcing stringent "security" measures, as outlined in their accord with the Lebanese government.

Amin Gemayel's regime, for its part, saw the Israeli redeployment as an opportunity to extend its domain beyond the capital, by sending the US-retrained army into the Shouf. While the regime has protested the partial "withdrawal" as a hindrance to the total withdrawal it professes to aim for, these protests had a purpose other than stopping the Israeli move. Fearing that its authority and army cannot bear the new

tasks, the regime was thus appealing for more help from its imperialist backers.

Indeed, the regime's fears were well-founded for the resulting situation engulfed not only the Shouf but Beirut itself in violence. Despite the deployment of 10,000 Lebanese Army troopers in West Beirut against the nationalist uprising in the last days of August, it took 4 days - and the help of the US Marines - before the regime could even claim to have regained control.

Alongside the regime, the fascist organizations have undertaken the direct coordination with the Zionists concerning the redeployment. Thus, in early August, Phalangist Party chief, Pierre Gemayel, met with Israeli Foreign Minister Shamir in Beirut. An official visit to 'Israel' was made by Danny Chamoun, commander of the National Liberal Party's Tigers militia-

the Phalangists' junior partner in the fascist Lebanese Forces. According to Israeli radio, Chamoun, who met with Shamir and Defense Minister Arens, emphasized that the Lebanese Army could only take control of the Shouf with close Israeli cooperation. Later in August, Arens visited the Lebanese Forces in Beirut, provoking broad nationalist protest.

The Lebanese masses and their nationalist forces, however, turned the tables on the plans to exploit the redeployment situation. By directing their struggle against the Lebanese Army and the policy of the Gemayel government, they reclarified basic facts:

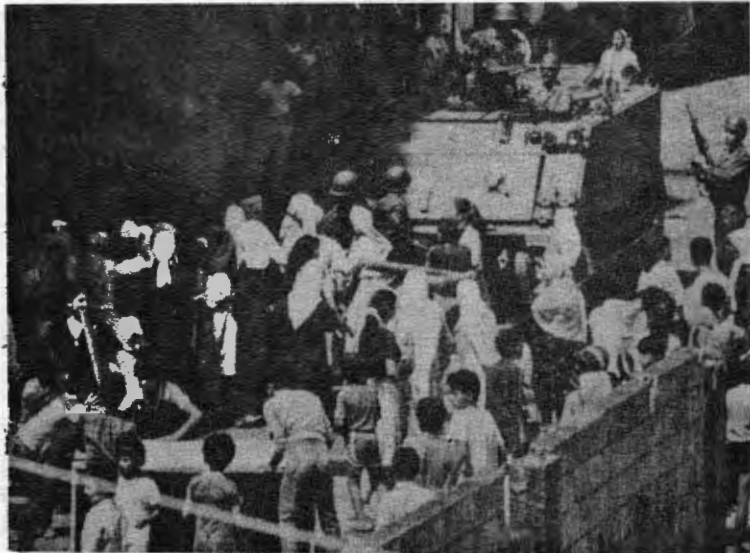
First: that the crisis in Lebanon is rooted in long-standing political and class contradictions between the popular forces, who aspire to a democratic Arab Lebanon, and the reactionary bourgeoisie, which is allied with imperialism and whose primary political representative is the Phalangist Party.

Second: that the confessional system, designed to secure the domination of the right-wing, is unable to foster a strong, united authority that can govern the entire country.

Third: that the Israeli occupation, far from resolving the internal crisis, aggravated it radically by enabling the Phalangist Party to assume state power, as a new vehicle for spreading sectarian, fascist domination. (In this context, the recent revelations that relations between the Israelis and this party date back to 1948, acquire more than historical interest. In 1951, the Zionists tried to buy the fascists into power by financing their campaign for the presidency. However, it took a genocidal war and a massacre before a Phalangist could be installed as president of Lebanon in 1982.)

As a result of the above-listed factors, a new civil war has begun, which will assume much larger dimensions than the one in 1975-76, due to the increased involvement of 'Israel' and US imperialism in Lebanon.

Wadi Abu Jamil, July 15th



The masses vs. the army

In a joint statement on July 4th, Amal leader Nabih Berri and Walid Jumblatt, head of the Progressive Socialist Party, confirmed their opposition to the Lebanese Army taking over security tasks in the Shouf on the grounds that the central government is dominated by the Phalangist Party. They predicted, "The project of partial withdrawal will lead to a new civil war ... It will engage the Lebanese Army in the fighting against Lebanese civilians who are refusing the hegemony of the Phalangist Party supported by the authority."

Ten days later, a Lebanese Army patrol reconnoitering its anticipated move into the Shouf, was met by 1,000 angry residents in Aley, who had blocked the road with burning tires. One of the military jeeps lunged into the crowd, killing two persons. Armed clashes then broke out with the Progressive Socialist Party militia; 7 army officers were killed and 7 others wounded, as were two local residents.

In this 1st armed confrontation between the Druze community and the army since the last civil war, the people were backing up the pledges of the nationalist leaders that the army would be resisted if it tried to spread its domain without a prior political accord, whereby the government guarantees a degree of power-sharing with other political forces. For obvious reasons, the position of the Phalangist Party is the reverse; deploying the army is demanded first, for by then fascist domination would be secured before any political negotiations. To prove this point, Joseph Hashem, Politbureau member and Phalangist Party head in the Shouf, pointed out: "The Greater Beirut experiment (whereby the army was deployed mainly in the West) has succeeded at least in preventing internal strife." However, the masses made a mockery of his words.

The day after the confrontation in Aley, an atmosphere of civil war prevailed in West Beirut. This time the conflict stemmed from the state's negligence concerning housing needs and its outright animosity by acting on landlords' demands to evict refugees. On the morning of July 15th, a demonstration began against the government decision to evict 40 Shiite families from a school building where they were living and teaching their children in the Wadi Abu Jamil quarter. When the army arrived to disperse them, it was confronted by Amal militiamen. Armed clashes began and spread to the surrounding neighborhoods. Fighting between the army and nationalist forces raged into the evening by which time the army had 'solved' the problem by arresting approximately 100 people. Amal's leadership demanded the resignation of Prime Minister Wazzan, also Interior Minister, charging that the eviction heralded a city-wide

drive to force thousands of refugees from the capital. A general strike was observed in West Beirut the next day.

The Lebanese National Salvation Front

In this period, a wide variety of forces and prominent figures came out against the Phalangist drive for hegemony. The broad Lebanese opposition to Israeli occupation, to the accord with the occupiers, to partition, and to the policies and army of the central government, found organizational expression with the July 23rd announcement of the formation of the National Salvation Front. Speaking on behalf of the Lebanese National Movement, former president Suleiman Franjeh and former prime minister Rashid Karami, Walid Jumblatt presented the Front's founding charter at a press conference with a broad spectrum of nationalist organizations and figures in attendance.

The Front's leadership is a three-man command council (Jumblatt, Franjeh, Karami) assisted by a 12 member national council; it has responsibility for setting up bodies in the Beqaa and North Lebanon to administer economic, informational, military and social security affairs. Committees associated with the Front will also

be formed in Beirut and the occupied South. Support to the Front was announced immediately by the Amal Movement.

In its composition and platform, the National Salvation Front represents a continuation of the role of the Lebanese National Movement, but it moreover represents a qualitative and quantitative broadening of the former coalition. It is interesting to recall that in Feb. 1981, the Lebanese National Movement declared its intention to work for a broader nationalist front. Under the impact of ensuing events, this goal has materialized; the new front represents the genuine leadership of the majority of the Lebanese people.

Challenging the regime

Starting when Amin Gemayel was pleading his case in the US, his regime came under serious challenge on the ground and politically by the formation of the National Salvation Front.

On July 22nd, the nationalist forces opened fire on Beirut International Airport, which is being used by the Lebanese Army as the springboard for its move into the Shouf. The first part of August, as McFarlane toured the area, there was continued fighting in the Shouf be-

The National Salvation Front- Founding Charter

After the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, dangerous developments and events have accelerated. One of the most serious developments, which pose a threat to Lebanon's future, was the signing of the Lebanese-Israeli agreement, which marks a new stage of relations worked out by the US and Israel. The current dangers force us to mobilize the national potentials needed for countering the challenges that were imposed on us by means of continuous aggression, oppression and hegemony. Active confrontation lies in all the national Lebanese forces' rejection of the agreement.

In its attempts to implement this agreement, the Lebanese regime ignores the following facts:

First, the agreement endangers the national unity of Lebanon and is a clear violation of the country's 1943 National Covenant.

Second, the agreement aims to destroy the unity of the country's military and administrative establishments through the perpetuation of Saad Haddad and his militias' present existence, and through the Lebanese-Israeli joint committee which is given a free hand in running Lebanon's affairs, while depriving the Lebanese people of participating in this process.

Third, the Lebanese regime disregarded the country's constitution by giving up South Lebanon and conceding the country's national sover-

eignty, territorial integrity and natural resources, particularly in the South.

Fourth, the agreement cancelled the country's democratic set-up and deprived the Lebanese people of freedom of expression and thinking about their national aspirations and vital issues.

Fifth, the agreement turned Lebanon into a gateway for Israel's various investments which will eventually damage Lebanon's economy and affect the economy of the entire Arab region.

The provisions of the Lebanese-Israeli agreement drive Lebanon to abandon all Arab ties, especially its commitments to the resolutions of the Arab League and Arab summits.

The agreement converts Lebanon into a base for aggression against the eastern Arab countries in general and Syria in particular.

These facts and realities, included in the agreement, are no more than preliminary steps taken by the Lebanese regime which is willing to give up some parts of Lebanon for the sake of setting up "Petit Liban". Such a racist state is completely rejected on the national and Arab levels.

Moreover, this entity will have serious repercussions on the region's unity, because it will lead to full partitioning.

(Translation of the text as it appeared in "Syria Times" newspaper, Damascus, July 24th.)

tween the Progressive Socialist Party on one hand and the army and Phalangists on the other. Shelling affected other areas in and around Beirut. By August 10th, the airport had closed down, and the Marines put on top alert. Jumblatt threatened that his forces would keep the airport closed until the resignation of the government. Another pressure was applied as the Progressive Socialist Party held 3 ministers for a 24-hour period, after they had visited the local reactionary leader, Arslan, in the Shouf, in an attempt to gain admittance for the army. The ministers were released on the condition that they relay a set of demands to the government (see box).

Demands conveyed to the Lebanese authorities

1. Resignation of the government of Prime Minister Shafik Wazzan "because it is incapable of ruling the country".
2. The Lebanese Army cannot enter the mountains without prior agreement.
3. Withdrawal of all heavy arms aimed at the mountains.
4. Public announcement of the official attitude towards the presence of the Lebanese Forces militia in the mountains.
5. Public announcement of the State's attitude towards the two sets of nationalist and Druze demands previously submitted to the authorities.
6. Announcement of a clear position on the prosecution of citizens.
7. Announcement of a clear position on the fate of kidnapped citizens.
8. Compensation for shell damage done in the mountains.
9. Resignation of Internal Security Forces Director Zahi Bustani and Military Prosecutor Asaad Germanos.
10. Cancellation of all recent official appointments of Phalangist Party members.

On August 29th, Amal shelled the runways of Beirut's airport, physically reinforcing the nationalist forces' pledge to keep it closed. This reflected awareness of the fact that the regime was intent on blocking the way for a political accord, and that the nationalist forces had no choice but militant resistance. The following four days of shelling and street fighting in Beirut reemphasized the regime's decision to use force to impose fascist domination. Moreover, under the cover of the Lebanese Army's counterinsurgency operation, the Phalangists massacred Lebanese civilians in quarters of West Beirut.

It is now difficult to imagine that Amin Gemayel can govern without making any concessions to the nationalist demands. His only salvation is increased imperialist involvement. Yet the



Where to? MNF train to land in places inaccessible by helicopter.

last round of fighting shows that West Beirut and its southern shantytowns can become a trap for his "bodyguards". Increased US involvement will only accentuate the parallel already being drawn between Lebanon and El Salvador, where massive military and economic aid seems unable to bolster a bankrupt regime against the people.

Though the military balance of forces would clearly seem to be to the enemy forces' favor, the Lebanese nationalists have a rich experience in urban warfare. They know the nooks and crannies of their city, and more important, they know their people. Last September, despite the brutality of their attack, the Israeli army failed to totally control West Beirut. More than one of their soldiers were killed in broad daylight on main streets. The Marines now risk being drawn into the same quagmire of popular resistance. Moreover, a new split in the lower ranks of the Lebanese Army cannot be ruled out as this army is subjected to the pressure of confronting broad sectors of its own people.

The Lebanese nationalist forces have boldly asserted their ability to lead the resistance to the enemy plans for Lebanon. Their struggle has become a frontline of the battle against the new accord, and thus against the Zionist-imperialist-reactionary plans to spread Camp David in the area. As such, it deserves the full support of the Palestinian revolution and of all the Arab masses, national regimes and progressive forces.

Zionist Redeployment - Fortification

By moving out of the Shouf and redeploying their forces along the Awali River and southwards, the Zionists hope to cut their own casualties, reduce the number of Israelis called for reserve duty and cut expenses. (According to Finance Minister Aridor, the occupation is costing 'Israel' \$1 million a day.) Thus, this move has no relation to the persistent Lebanese, Arab and international calls for withdrawal, but is solely designed to meet the Zionist leadership's needs.

Externally, they hope to pressure Syria more. Obviously, the redeployment allows for a greater military concentration on the frontline in the Beqaa against the Syrian and PLO forces. This fits in with the plans of the US and Lebanese regime. With escalated internal conflict in Lebanon, the virulence of US statements, blaming Syria for the withdrawal impasse, increased, while Lebanese government officials joined the Phalangist Party in open threats against Syria. It is more convenient for the enemy forces to heap all blame on Syria rather than acknowledge that their project for Lebanon is opposed by broad sectors of the Lebanese themselves. In this context, Reagan officially welcomed the redeployment as giving "needed leverage" against Syria.

Internally, the Zionists want to curb the crisis and increasing dissent that results from continuing to occupy Lebanon. A main cause of the dissent is continuing Israeli casualties. As most of these occur in the area where IDF presence will be maintained, redeployment amounts to fortifying a new frontline and increasing "security" behind it. To this purpose,

electric fences will cut the South off from the rest of Lebanon; heavily fortified positions are being built along the Awali River; 45 km of new roads are to be built, and 50 km of existing roads upgraded as part of the project to control the South.

In late June, an IDF officer summoned mayors of the South to announce new security measures. These were introduced by the following: "The population has to understand that we will remain in the southern zone for at least five years."

The measures include:

- a ban on all Lebanese traffic on main roads between 7 p.m. and 6 a.m.
- farmers can go to the fields only between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- anyone coming within 200 meters of an Israeli position will be shot.

This amounts to permanent curfew.

Moreover, this kind of "withdrawal" is no guarantee that the occupation forces will not return to their original positions. As openly stated by IDF officers, their troops remain close enough to the strategic Beirut-Damascus road to cut it off at will. The boundaries for redeployment were drawn to include the radar surveillance station on Mount Barouk, so Israeli spying on Syria will not be diminished. Moreover, on August 4th, Israeli radio reported that the IDF was trucking prefabricated houses to Damour, 16 km north of the pull-back line. One can surmise that the Israelis plan to leave a residual force at their airstrip there, and/or greatly fortify positions to be used by Saad Haddad.

The Occupied South

Chronicle of Resistance

The people of the South are bearing a heavy burden of repression due to the Zionists' desperate efforts to root out all resistance. Despite this, the masses are increasingly showing their will to stand up to the occupiers. This expands and strengthens the popular base for the military operations of the Lebanese National Resistance Front (LNRF). Now it is evident to all that what the Zionists want is much more than "halting terrorism": They want total control. A single statistic indicates the extent and effects of this control, and also tells why, objectively, Lebanese resistance to the Israeli occupation can only continue to grow: In the first half of 1983, Lebanon's exports were cut in half as compared to the same period in 1982. Besides imposing repression and national humiliation the occupation is quite literally undermining the economic existence of broad sectors of Lebanese, benefiting only a limited strata of merchants who are intimately involved in flooding the market with Israeli products.

Below we chronicle some of the instances of mass and military resistance to the Israeli occupation which have occurred in South Lebanon in the recent period: ▶

By early July, the Zionists had begun daily air transport shuttles from 'Israel' to their new airstrip in Damour, to bring in troops and supplies while avoiding attacks on the coastal road. On July 8th, one of these planes was shot at by a shoulder-launched rocket, showing the LNRF's ability to find means for circumventing the new security measures. This was one of eight reported attacks on Israeli forces in Lebanon in the first week of July.

On July 11th, a land mine exploded under an Israeli troop carrier and tank truck on the bridge spanning the Hasbani River near Hasbaya, in the far southeast corner of Lebanon. A major and staff sergeant were killed, and 16 other Israelis injured, while the two vehicles were destroyed. In a scene reminiscent of occupied Palestine, the IDF combed the area and placed two nearby villages, Mimes and Bit-sana, under a three-day curfew. Notables of the Hasbaya region were threatened that orchards would be destroyed if the people did not stop harboring resistance fighters. While Israeli jets roared over the South in mock raids, orchards and vineyards were destroyed along a 20 km stretch. The IDF entered Mimas and assembled all males aged 15 to 75, while they conducted a 7-hour house-to-house search. After four men were arrested, the soldiers taking them away were pelted with stones by women and children, while other villagers burned tires and made stone barricades. The soldiers fired to disperse the crowd and tried to beat a hasty exit but were charged by a group of villagers, and fist fights ensued. The IDF had to call in reinforcements, and the women and children were struck down by their rifle butts.

Also on July 11th, another issue related to the occupation was challenged. Palestinian women from Rashidiyah and



Southerners protest arrest

Bourj al Shemali camps marched towards the Zionist military headquarters in Sour, demanding the release of Ansar detainees while women from Ain al Hilweh staged a similar procession in Saida.

On July 14th, 3 shops selling Israeli produce were blown up in Nabatiyeh. In another event, a civilian failing to heed a 10-hour curfew was shot and wounded by the IDF.

On July 21st, Syrian forces downed an Israeli reconnaissance drone over the Beqaa. The next day, a remote-controlled bomb exploded against an Israeli foot patrol in Aley, injuring 11 soldiers.

On July 23rd, a car bomb demolished the "Voice of Hope" radio station, which is aligned with Saad Haddad's fascist militias and notorious for propaganda campaigns against the Palestinians. On July 25, the LNRF made several actions: Two explosions occurred in the Saida areas caused by rockets

aimed at the Israeli headquarters and another military position; 3 border patrollers were injured; an Israeli check point at Damour was attacked.

On July 27th, villagers in the South went on strike and marched in protest against the arrest of three Amal leaders by the IDF. Again on August 7, they gathered in mosques and other public places to protest the occupation and call for releasing the detained.

On July 28th, the LNRF attacked one Israeli patrol 7 km south of Beirut, another between Saida and Sour and a third near Sour, where 7 enemy soldiers were killed and an armed personnel carrier demolished.

On August 8th, Syrian forces downed another Israeli drone. An Israeli patrol was attacked east of Sour, where helicopters were seen evacuating the wounded. Also, a number of prisoners escaped from Ansar. The IDF spokesman reported this as the first of its kind, although Defense Minister Arens had much earlier told the Knesset that four successful escapes had occurred. In Saida, the head of the Israeli creation, the "National Grouping" (formerly "National Guard") was wounded by gunfire.

On August 10th, resistance to the Israeli occupiers and the fascist-dominated Lebanese Army converged as the national forces shelled Beirut airport and nearby positions; 2 Israeli soldiers were killed and 4 wounded.

WE WILL RETURN

On the feast day marking the end of Ramadan, the Muslim month of fasting, it is customary to visit the cemetery to pay respects to the dead. This year, when the families of Ain al Hilweh went to the cemetery they were pleasantly surprised to find a paper on each and every grave with the following message:

"The fedayeen will soon return"

Ansar Detention Camp

NEW EVIDENCE OF THE FASCIST PRACTICES OF ZIONISM.
OUR NEW SYMBOL OF RESISTANCE

Between July 10th and 20th, 1982, the Zionist army transported thousands of prisoners, taken in the invasion and held in Khadera and Joura camps in occupied Palestine, to a big new detention center built near the town of Ansar in occupied South Lebanon.

Ansar detention center is the largest ever established in the history of Zionism, but it is not the first or only detention center that reveals the fascism of the Zionist entity. Besides the many short-term detention centers and interrogation rooms, the Zionist entity has 20 prisons. Here, physical and psychological torture and humiliation are the common treatment meted out to our Palestinian brothers and sisters.

Yet the large size of Ansar camp, the huge number of prisoners and the terrorist torture reveals more strongly than ever before the Nazi face of Zionism and its military institutions. This is evident in a variety of forms; most obvious is the great similarity between the practices and physical structures at Ansar and those at the detention camps built by the fascists in the colonized countries during World War II. One example of the fascist practices is opening fire on unarmed prisoners, killing scores of them for the mere fact that they demanded their minimal human rights.

This report deals with the unhuman living conditions the prisoners suffer. We hereby try to enlighten Arab and international public opinion of the nature of Ansar. At the same time, we question the silent and ineffective position of some international organizations. Their failure to rescue the prisoners proves their incapacity to stand up to the Zionist state's terrorism.

Ansar was built near the villages of Ansar and Dewar in the Nabatiyeh district. It covers an area of land four miles in diameter and contains 20 sections. In the beginning, each section had 500 prisoners spread in 20 small tents. With the beginning of the winter (1982), this was changed to seven large tents.

Each section is encircled by a double line of thick barbed wire fixed on 2.5 meter high iron posts. Each section is surrounded with high earth embankments topped by observation towers that are equipped with heavy machine guns. In front of each section, there is a tent for the Israeli soldiers who guard. A tank carrying four machine guns continuously circles the camp. The camp is also equipped with hundreds of powerful spotlights.

Living conditions of the prisoners

The inadequacy of housing and health service gives an indication of the conditions. The average space for each prisoner does not exceed 2.2 square meters. This does not differ greatly from the average space allotted to prisoners in other Zionist jails. It is, however, far below the world average, which is 8.9 square meters.

The degree of crowding reaches the point that the prisoner can only sleep on his side in one position all night. Obviously, this causes the prisoners pain and sickness. In addition, the tents open from all four sides to make it easier for the guards to observe the prisoners. This subjects the prisoners to the extremes of heat during the day and cold at night. Each prisoner is given three blankets; one is used as bedding and two as covers, while the prisoner uses his shoes for a pillow. Each prisoner received two sets of shorts and undershirts, one pair of pants and one shirt. All are second-hand clothes, left from the army and dyed brown or blue.

Health conditions

The health of the prisoners is threatened, as can be seen in the following:

1. Nutrition: The prisoners suffer continuous hunger due to the inadequate quantity of food, which does not meet the minimal requirements for daily food intake. Breakfast consists of 300 grams of bread, one teaspoon of jam or a very small piece of cheese, and a cup of tea. Lunch consists of 300 grams of bread and a small bowl of rice with either carrots, beans or potatoes. Dinner is 300 grams bread plus one potato or half a boiled egg or a 300 gram can of meat to be shared among ten prisoners.
2. Absence of medical care: The best indication of this is what was said by one of the prisoners: that this expression is not to be found in the dictionary of Ansar.

Each camp has a doctor who is one of the imprisoned. He does his best given the lack of equipment and medicine. Every three days, he meets for a few minutes with an Israeli doctor across the barbed wire and presents him with a

report of all cases of sickness. The Israeli doctor gives him some pills and then suggests treatments which are not at all useful given the poor health conditions. In the case of complaints of sickness by the imprisoned doctor or any of the prisoners themselves to the Zionist soldiers or officers, the routine response is: "Let him die".

One of the Israeli doctors who supervises "treatment" in Ansar commented to the Israeli newspaper "Al Hamishmar" that "Among the 6,000 prisoners still there, there are 300 who suffer from serious and dangerous diseases like diabetes, asthma, slipped disc, ulcers and rheumatism; there are those who are blind, deaf, mute and paralyzed."

3. Lack of sanitation: Cleanliness is another expression that is omitted in the Ansar camp dictionary. There are no bathing facilities, and the chances for washing oneself are very rare. When a prisoner is granted a bath, he is given a gallon of cold water which he pours on himself in the open in one of the corners of the camp. The soap is of poor quality as well. The prisoner waits a long time for his next bath since the water is usually cut off. When it comes, it is barely enough for drinking. The toilet facilities are just a big space covered with a board with holes cut into it. Ten prisoners go to the toilet together. The toilets lack water and are part of the living quarters without any dividers. Obviously, the prisoners are subjected to germs and a bad smell.

Fascist practices against the prisoners

The worst hardship for the prisoners in Ansar is the physical and psychological torture to which they were subjected from the moment of their imprisonment until now. In addition to the barbaric torture practiced under interrogation, to force the detained to confess membership in a Palestinian resistance or Lebanese nationalist organization, the prisoners still face individual and collective torture and punishment on a daily basis. Such practices stem from the Zionists' fascist instincts. We can give some examples to show the fascism of the Zionist entity and its terrorist military establishment:

- During the daily count, which lasts over an hour, the prisoners are forced to sit on their knees with their hands over their heads. Anyone that makes any small move is punished by ten strokes on the back with a club or a thick metal electrical cable.
- Going to the toilet without permission, coming near the border line of the camp, moving from one tent to another or even standing up in a tent are all reasons for being struck on the back hard enough to leave marks.
- On Saturday nights, the night guards start

consuming alcoholic beverages; when they get drunk, they pick out a few prisoners and take them off to practice the methods of torture taught to them by Zionism.

It is worthy of note that a large number of the prisoners are children under the age of 15, or men over 50 or 60 years old. In spite of all the terrorist practices, no accusations have been proved against them.

Ansar has become a revolutionary school

The Zionist military establishment's policy towards the prisoners in Ansar is basically the same as that employed in all Zionist prisons. Its primary aim is to destroy the prisoners physically and mentally, and to transform them into useless flesh. This was clearly expressed by the former Zionist Minister of War, Moshe Dayan: "We will transform these killers into a burden on their society; we will not let them out except as mummies or like pieces of Swiss cheese which have more holes than cheese."

Did this policy succeed in Ansar? Have the Zionists achieved their goal to destroy the prisoners physically and in terms of their morale? No, the increasing reports of uprisings in the prison camp testify otherwise. According to an article in "Al Hamishmar", quite the opposite has occurred. The author states, "I was informed by the people in charge that Ansar camp has become a higher academy, a university for the PLO, where the prisoners have undergone radical and continuous "brainwashing" sessions. The prisoner who was not affiliated with any organization at the time of arrest, today, when he is released, will be one of the radical officers in the PLO. I was also informed by the responsables that a third of the prisoners who were not associated with the PLO have today become members in the full sense of the word. To the west of one of the stables is a tent full of scores of young people who were released from Ansar camp and went back to fight the Israeli army and were arrested again, and it seems that the training they received in the camp was good." (as reported in the Kuwaiti newspaper "Al Qabas", March 30, 1983)

The prisoners have shown their determination to challenge the Zionist military authorities and defeat their policies. Since the uprising in Ansar in September 1982, where the first two martyrs of the camp were killed, many others have occurred and other prisoners have been shot in cold blood. Yet these steadfast prisoners of war have defeated all the neo-Nazi plans aimed at their destruction. They have remained steadfast in the face of hardship and resisted the effects of the torture. Ansar has become a school for the revolution, proving that steadfastness and resistance are the only means for defeating the enemy's plans.

Comrade Ayoub

«**Ansar is a Revolutionary Academy**»

During the siege of Beirut, "Al Hadaf" wrote that Comrade Ayoub Sadiq had been martyred in Ain al Hilweh camp of South Lebanon. His heroism in battle was well-known to our comrades and to the people of Ain al Hilweh. They said that he had killed himself in setting off a belt of explosives. Others said it was in an attack on an Israeli tank. However, one thing was clear: The PFLP office in Ain al Hilweh - its arsenal and documents - was not taken by the enemy. It was blown up and burned. The Zionist enemy was only able to capture Comrade Ayoub outside the area after he had accomplished his difficult mission. After being detained in Ansar for more than a year, Comrade Ayoub was released this August. "Al Hadaf" made the following interview with him.

So, you are still alive...How did the story of your martyrdom come about? How did you feel when you found out that you had been pronounced a martyr?

It was the result of the conditions, in particular after Ain al Hilweh had fallen. We cabled the comrades in Beirut to inform them of our situation and received order to withdraw from Ain al Hilweh. The comrades gathered in a place we considered relatively safe, and I returned to our office and arsenals in order to destroy everything. It is necessary to say here that the comrades tried to convince me to reconsider carrying out such a mission. It is my estimation that they did so because they didn't want to lose a comrade; also because it was very difficult to move about; the enemy was combing the area by land, sea and air. My position was that this mission required the sacrifice necessary; there was ammunition, documents and details on comrades, etc., especially details of military units in the South and our organization's presence in Ain al Hilweh.

The area was exposed to Israeli tanks, which were concentrated in the hills of Sayroub. Some sniper shot, and a missile exploded. I blew up our office and burnt all papers. The fact that my comrades heard the first explosion, combined with the fact that I did not return, led them to believe I was killed.

In Ansar, the comrades asked if I was present or not. The fact that my comrade thought I was martyred, linked to that situation, reflects their trust and confidence in my actually carrying out my mission.

Can you tell us how "Al Hadaf" was published in Ansar? What is the role played by revolutionary publications in a camp for political prisoners, in light of the harsh situation?

We had to confront the poisoned news published by the Israeli newspaper "Anba" For example, before the last session of the PNC, this newspaper chose news items which gave the impression that the existing differences were the beginning of the end of the PLO. Another example was the coverage of the Israeli prisoners held by the PFLP-General Command and the (previous) refusal to have them visited by the International Red Cross. This was used to give the impression that our continued imprisonment was due to the General Command and the PLO in general, and thereby create grudges among the imprisoned resistance members.

Faced with these poisoned attacks, we had to publish a magazine which would arouse, unify and mobilize. We published "Al Hadaf", and the overwhelming majority of the prisoners greeted it with satisfaction. Letters of salutations would reach the editorial staff from the camps (of Ansar), from individuals and organizations. We felt the presence of the Front (PFLP), when we received the paper and pens in support of the magazine. We published 44 daily issues. We would write by hand enough copies to distribute to the 31 camps of Ansar. There was a weekly cultural supplement; eight issues were made. However, due to insufficient paper, it was changed from a daily to a weekly. The columns and material were varied: editorial, commentary, analysis, studies, culture and satiric cartoons.

We had other experiences in Ansar: a publishing house we called "The Publications of the Continuing March". We translated the book of the Israeli journalist, Amnon Kapeliouk, on the Sabra-Shatila massacre from French to Arabic. Also the book written by a comrade from the Kurdish Workers Party, "A Historical Review of Kurdistan", was translated from Turkish to Arabic by a comrade in Ansar. We made posters and were able to send large numbers of them outside the camp...

Based on your experience in Ansar, what are the methods used by the Zionist enemy to try and break the morale of our revolutionaries? How were these resisted?

The enemy aims at lowering the morale of the prisoners, and also at recruiting some of them. They use hunger, and morality - they order the prisoner to take off his clothes and threaten to assault him sexually. Another case was that of a comrade whose sister they brought and then told them to commit incest. When they refused, they were beaten until losing consciousness. Other methods of humiliation are used: They order the prisoner to make barking or braying or mewing noises for long periods of time. They used to tell us during interrogation: "Your leaders have run away...we entered their houses and saw how they lived...you are victims, why do you fight?"

It is important to note that the Zionists have made a number of studies in Ansar, dealing with psychological and social issues. They would bring ten prisoners and ask them specific questions, most of which were considered insignificant, like "How much alcohol do you consume daily?", "What was your income?", "How much do you smoke daily?" Then some questions had a political tone: "What is your attitude towards Begin?" Some of these questions had several answers to choose from, like the American-type multiple choice tests. The answers to the Begin question from which we were to choose one were: (a) courageous, (b) very courageous, (c) very, very courageous, (d) a coward, (e) very cowardly, (f) very, very cowardly, (g) humanitarian, (h) a terrorist, (i) fascist. There were many other studies made.

The enemy was also spreading doubts and trying to distort the image of our leadership and martyrs. There was also a study dealing with the doctors and the questions always revolved around the physical condition of the leadership of the PLO, and their ailments, especially Comrade George Habash, Yasir Arafat and Naef Hawatmeh.

The military prisoners in Ansar, who had first been imprisoned in occupied Palestine, also said that they underwent a study. They had been taken to an exhibition of pictures of weapons used by the resistance; the questions focused on the various technical specifications of these weapons.

This humiliating situation prevailed for the first five months. However, the prisoners began to consolidate their forces and unify their activities in an organized manner until they were able to enforce a lot of their demands. The situation reached the point where if a soldier swore at a prisoner, or pointed his machinegun to shoot, or if they delayed the ambulance needed for a sick prisoner, all would rise. Moreover, we succeeded in refusing to go for

interrogation; there would be an uprising in all the camps, and the enemy on several occasions did not interrogate the prisoner in question.

How was the unity between the different Palestinian organizations in Ansar? How was the Palestinian-Lebanese alliance manifested under imprisonment?

There was a joint leadership with representatives from every Palestinian and Lebanese organization; this branched off into leaderships for each prison camp. All the demands, complaints and conditions of each camp were given careful study before any move was made. The democratic relations contributed to strengthening united work, since all take part in one way or another, by contributing ideas and programs, by discussing them before a decision is made.

From the very start, the enemy tried on more than one occasion to spread rumors, so as to cause differences between Palestinians and Lebanese. They distributed the Israeli "Jerusalem Post", which had an interview with Ibrahim Ghaddar, who spoke in occupied Palestine. This was aimed at causing a rift between the prisoners by portraying the Lebanese prisoners as oppressed by the Palestinian prisoners. On the basis of that interview, the prison authorities called some Lebanese prisoners and tried to convince them of the contents of the interview. They asked these prisoners to submit letters confirming its contents and demanding to be separated as Lebanese in special prison camps. However, the Lebanese comrades adamantly refused to do so; they contested the contents of the interview before the head of Ansar himself.

However, despite this, for other reasons, the enemy stormed the camp and gathered some of the Lebanese prisoners and put them in a camp by themselves. The number of Lebanese prisoners is around 1,000. The enemy soldiers took about 250 by force and put them in a separate camp. Despite this, their camp is still with the other camps, and their struggle is aligned with the rest of the prison camps. In my opinion, this is enough to show the strong bond between Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners.

In Ansar did you hear about the differences in Fatah and the resulting clashes? What was your reaction?

We had our special secret methods of obtaining information in Ansar, which the enemy was unable to intercept, though they sensed it. In addition, a new source became available: The enemy authorities started to turn on the radio and amplify certain news bulletins and repeat them over and over, trying to lower the morale

of the prisoners, strike their unity and create conflicts to distract them from their daily confrontation with the guards. However, the prisoners were well aware of the enemy aim and the chance was lost for the enemy.

Another important factor which consolidated the prisoners' unity was the calm discussions which took place about the reasons for the differences in Fatah and the solutions for such a conflict. This was a chance to activate political discussions. I would like to take this opportunity to direct a call to our brothers in conflict in Fatah to benefit from the example of the stand taken by all the prisoners in Ansar and their unity against the enemy, and to employ democratic dialogue as a solution to their differences.

We heard of a number of uprisings in Ansar. What were the factors leading to them? Could you tell about the big uprising when the tents were burned?

As prisoners we consider ourselves in daily confrontation with the enemy. In addition to the spontaneous uprisings which took place if a comrade was called for interrogation, or to demand an ambulance for a sick prisoner, there were carefully planned and timed uprisings. We would base these on international documents and agreements, especially the Geneva Convention of 1949, which deals specifically with the rights of prisoners-of-war and the rights of civilian prisoners. We demanded the release of the very young and elderly, of the medical personnel and the handicapped.

The big uprising on June 6th, commemorating one year after the Zionist invasion of Lebanon, led to the burning of 90 tents and hand-to-hand fighting between the enemy and the prisoners; many of their soldiers were wounded, including the colonel in charge of interrogation, whom the prisoners had nicknamed "The Gestapo Man".

How did you fight the boredom and the heavy passing of time? Were you given the chance to organize past-times?

The enemy wanted Ansar to be a place of humiliation, breakdowns and brainwashing, but they were unable to fulfill such a plan. Ansar was turned into a revolutionary academy from which prisoners would graduate even more attached to the cause. We converted the harsh conditions into more tolerable ones - We made the hell of Ansar into a paradise. We may be accused of exaggerating, but that was the reality. I am not exaggerating when I say I wish I had remained until the very end.

In Ansar we planted little vegetable gardens with beans, carrots and onions from what was in the kitchens. We made programs for illiterates

and for teaching foreign languages. We used to sing and dance the dabkeh (folk dance) despite the threatening looks and objections of the enemy soldiers. We used to play chess with pieces made from dough, soap or clay. After that, the International Red Cross brought us a chess set. The prisoners did handicrafts: making masabeh (bead chains) from olive pits, mud or wood, sculpting with stone, or drawing pictures and slogans.

How were you able to fight the enemy's attempts to recruit collaborators from within your ranks? How were you able to defend yourselves?

We formed a security committee and organized nightly guard shifts to keep an eye out for anyone who might submit a report to the enemy. We uncovered some collaborators who are part of a network distributed throughout the prison camps. We questioned those we caught and imprisoned them inside their tent, not allowing them to leave it.

The collaborator Hassan Zeidan from Ain al Hilweh camp worked with the enemy for eight months outside Ansar after which they brought him into the prison camp. He did not stay for more than fifteen minutes, because of the 'grand welcome' he received at the hands of the prisoners who met him with ropes, sticks and knives. He was carried out of Ansar by the enemy soldiers and had to have 18 stitches in his head.

Tell us about the escape that took place and how big was it?

The idea of escape was always there; the possibility was carefully studied. We noted the change of guard duty, patrol cars, the weak points, etc. We would try to see what was outside the camp by climbing on top of the tents, noting which places were less illuminated. These preliminary steps resulted in the digging of a tunnel, secretly. Before the idea of tunnels, there were several escape attempts, most of which failed. The enemy tried to take advantage of this situation and encouraged its collaborators to act out an escape. A week later, the enemy would bring some of them back, and some would work from outside.

The enemy aimed at two things: first, to take advantage of such a situation to make a propaganda campaign justifying any future murders in the camp under the pretext of an escape attempt. This was the case with Abdou Al Aba, who they killed, saying he tried to escape. A second point is that they try to discourage prisoners from even thinking about escaping.

On the last escape, which was reported in the newspapers, I have no idea.

After a year of imprisonment in Ansar, how do you see your experience? What lessons did you learn which could benefit others in their revolutionary struggle? Do you feel more mature?

First of all, I do not regret having been imprisoned. I consider myself one of the lucky ones who had the chance to share such a rich experience, which will become part of the heritage of Palestinian-Lebanese national struggle. In short, the lesson were:

1. The importance of self-confidence and not breaking down when faced by the savage methods of terror and torture used. The prisoners have developed a kind of immunity to the harshest conditions.

2. The importance of the unity of the militants on all levels in the face of the common enemy.
3. No matter how strong the enemy or how advanced his methods, the will to resist remained unshaken in our revolutionaries.
4. The enemy treated us according to carefully planned methods; we reacted spontaneously. This experience showed us more of the reality of the enemy, and disclosed our mistakes. We were able to overcome this by organizing our ranks and by uniting our determination.

As to whether I feel older or more mature, I feel as if I had been reborn in Ansar. I matured quickly during my detention, more quickly than would be possible for anyone living under conditions different than those in Ansar.

Ansar and the Tunnel to Beirut

Elias Khoury is a progressive Lebanese poet who had been living abroad. He returned to his country after the Israeli occupation and wrote this poem expressing the true meaning of Ansar. Our translation is based on the song of the popular progressive Lebanese singer Marcel Khalifeh, who put the words to music.

The barbed wires, the standing tents
spotlights, watchtowers, guards
A new city inhabited by thousands of men
A city of oppression, fear and thirst
It is called Ansar camp
A faraway camp
We at times forget it
or they try to make us forget it
while we live in our own small prison camps
This faraway city
its shadow is spreading over us all
Voices reaching us from behind, the barbed wire
cast its shadow over us all
as if we were there, or there is here...
And we become prisoners
And we become Ansar

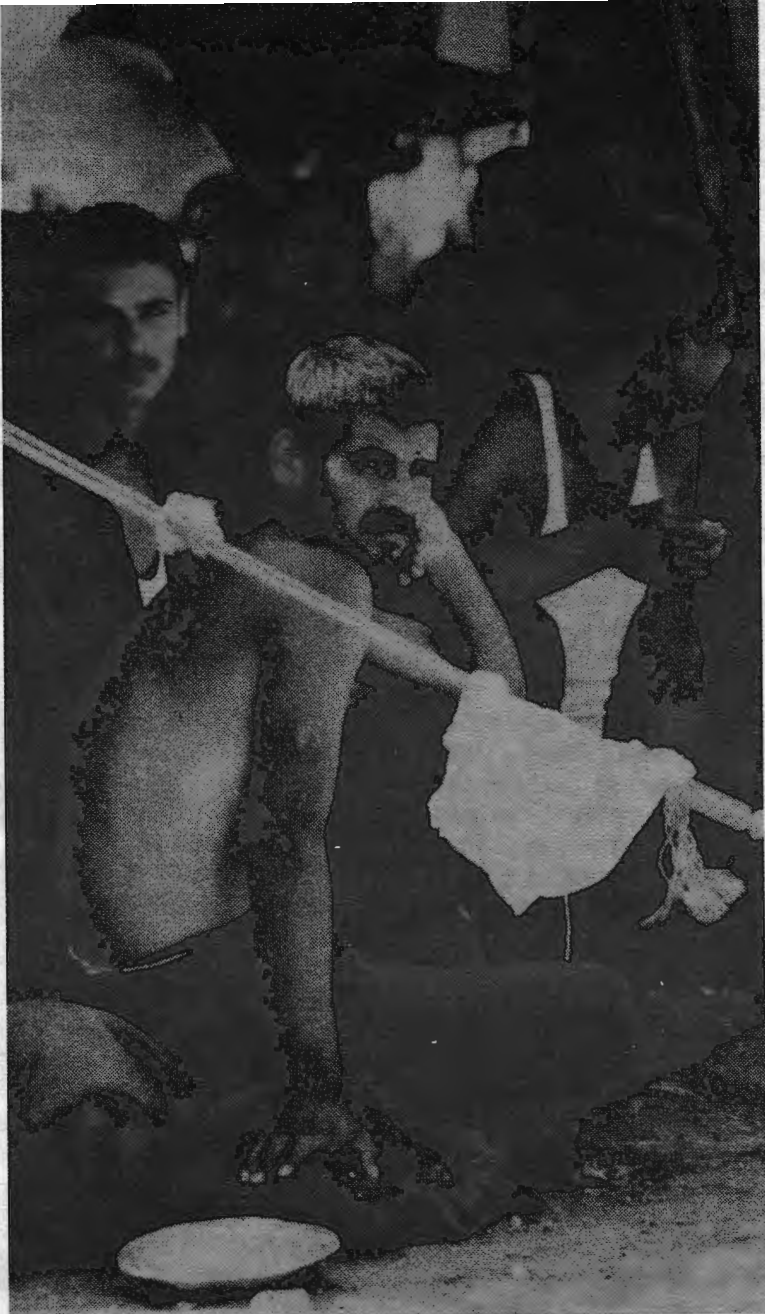
Thousands of men were taken by the executioner
from the occupied cities, villages and camps
He took them blindfolded and chained,
leading them from one torture to another...
Thousands of men awaiting their fate
They bribe the time and wait
They live and dream and try not to forget
They engrave on their new memory—our new memory
the stories of the executioner and the victim
so we don't forget
And we will not forget

Ansar has become the daily talk of the South
Some are released from the prison camp
only to reenter
Some are never going to be released...
It is like a miniature of South Lebanon
or a miniature of this Arab world

This large, silent world that has lost ability
to speak or to protest
Yet in Ansar, in the midst
of rain, sickness and cold, they cry out
The news of their uprising has begun to emerge
from behind the barbed wire

The season of the feast...
Lebanese independence day
and other uprisings we don't know of
The sound of the bullets heard by the peasants
tells of their presence...
They were the independence celebration
They sang national songs, lit branches
and carried torches
They were more free than us...
more beautiful in their stolen freedom
They were lighting the spark
which occupation tries to destroy

In Ansar there is a total life that is forgotten
A life of generations and generations
I knew well this time
the real meaning of occupation
I am the man alone
I look, but don't see
They ask me, I answer...or don't answer
They crucified me...
there was no cross, no woman
they crucified me under the sun
I fell and my face is in flames
I am a man from Ansar
I, the one who saw darkness all around
The eyes are drowning...but I see



his eyes gazing deeply at the distant future
I didn't forget their faces
or the face of the sea I saw there

I am the man from Ansar
where the days are full of days
where the barbed wire is pinned to the eyes
and the eyes are wider than the earth
Here we start...the journey started
Our voices are becoming louder
the barbed wires are getting higher
and the sound of bullets rises

So when are you coming, our friends?
This camp, this city, is always searching
for ways to continue life
Most important, the prisoners try to wait
At the end of this long tunnel of waiting,
they expect those who stand
and await their return
Why should we keep away from them?
Why should we forget them? or pretend to forget?
We forget them because fear has forced people
to live at the minimum, or below
This is the main force under occupation
We forget them because internal wars
still tear us apart
We forget them because
massacres generate massacres
We forget because of the death sweeping over us
This magnitude of death that doesn't stop
trying to turn us to mere ghosts
living in the oppression of occupation
or in fear of occupation
We forget them because we forget ourselves...
Because we forget and despite our forgetting,
yet they don't forget

You were all there
Time is on your side
and the songs at your fingertips
and death clings to your clothes
I saw you...we were together
no one hesitated to join
even those who fell
and found no one to bury them...they came
When the enemy stopped us and called the men
I saw them resurrected
They dusted off their clothes
and wiped the bloodstains with their sleeves...
They were coming
When they took us blindfolded, we saw everything
When I grew thirsty,
I thought of the eyes I left behind
I didn't cry
From one hall to another, I walked with you
and from one interrogator to the next...
I didn't forget the fedayee's face
as he was dying,
the face of a man from Sour
who fell like a wrinkled bundle of clothes,
the face of a child from Qana, full of thorns,

In Ansar there are eyes...
hungry for the love of freedom
In Ansar there are still hands raised
to express freedom and search for freedom
In Ansar there are prisoners,
not recognized as prisoners -
human beings, not treated as humans
In Ansar, all of you, all of us...
We enter with them the small low tents
and live the daily humiliation
And we are left with no choice
but to make flags of our shirts
for our sake and the sake of those
still outside the thorny wires of Ansar
So that the truth of our situation
cannot be turned into a big lie
This land is ours
We will not let it become our fatal prison

From Ansar to Beirut
extends the tunnel of waiting
From Ansar to Beirut
men stand with their shadows stretched
to cover all of Lebanon

The Sabra-Shatila Massacre

A year has passed since the massacre which claimed countless lives - women, children, elderly, Lebanese and Palestinian - in Sabra and Shatila. They were killed only because they were living in the Palestinian camps, and to their misfortune, had stayed in their homes...

Sharon declared that the IDF would bring peace and security. But, like "Operation Peace for the Galilee", the Israeli invasion of Beirut brought neither. Rather, it was the bulldozer paving the way for one of the most hideous crimes in recent history. It brought to the camps the savage fascist militias and made easy their rampage of killing, torture and destruction. Israeli responsibility for the massacre is no secret, despite the attempts to whitewash it by constituting the Kahan Commission. The

testimonies of Lebanese, Palestinians, journalists and medical personnel of differing origins and orientations, and the confessions of Israeli soldiers and officers themselves leave no doubt that the mastermind behind the massacre was none other than the Zionists, who have a long history of slaughter since arriving in Palestine. This fact needs no further proof, for it was also they who savagely bombarded hospitals, shelter and schools, to murder as many as possible during the preceding invasion. It is they who assassinate and torture our people under occupation. The Sabra-Shatila massacre was an extension of the Zionist politics of genocide.

The enemy knows that the steadfastness and courage of the Palestinian revolution is based on the sympathy and support of the masses.



Having failed to conquer the fighters in Beirut the enemy tried to fulfill its war aims by striking the unarmed masses. Choosing Sabra and Shatila was no accident, for these two camps had a long history with the Palestinian revolution and had become its symbols and strongholds. A massacre here was intended to facilitate the wholesale expulsion of Palestinians from Beirut and all Lebanon.

Lessons and repercussions

The invasion of West Beirut and the ensuing massacre proved for the thousandth time that Zionism knows no respect for agreements or international standards when it comes to pursuing its colonial, expansionist objectives. It is a significant 'coincidence' that with the 1st anniversary of the Sabra-Shatila massacre approaching, Zionist settlers enacted another slaughter with the cover of their army in Al Khalil. This says plainly that the fascist characteristics of 'Israel' are dominant and

unchangeable. It reaffirms that the way to challenge this barbarism is not conciliation but organized confrontation.

Those who have derived the lessons of the massacre and its aftermath can say that it had reverse effects thrown back in the faces of the planners themselves. Internal debate and problems increase in the Zionist entity, affirming that the nature of this entity is antagonistic not only to Palestinians, Lebanese, and other Arab people, but to all those who are not 100% Zionist.

Finally, despite all Zionism's genocidal attempts, the Palestinian masses did not flee from Lebanon en masse. Lebanese-Palestinian solidarity has only increased in the escalating struggle against continued Israeli occupation in South Lebanon. Our people in occupied Palestine are steadfast, still challenging the Zionist plans, and the PLO remains very much alive. We salute the masses, Lebanese and Palestinian, for they were not cowed by Zionist barbarism.



Being handicapped was no immunity



Killed for their Identity
Killed for their Poverty
Killed for their Nationalism
Killed for their Revolutionary Spirit



Many were tortured to death

Mounir, 13 years old, the only one of his family to survive:

"On Thursday afternoon there was heavy bombing and we went down to the shelter...armed men arrived and forced us to come out. They lined up the men against the wall and killed them, then they took the women and children away...There was some trouble there. One of them lost control...and began firing at us. My mother, brother and

sisters were hit. I was hit in the leg, and one shot just skimmed my head...Then the armed men said: 'Will the wounded stand up - we're going to take you to hospital.' I was hurt and so was my mother. I whispered to her not to believe them and to stay where she was. But when she saw the others get up, she did the same. They lined them up against a wall and shot them."



A Palestinian woman who lost her husband and four of her ten children:

"At about 5 in the morning a group of armed men arrived and ordered us out. We went out in our pyjamas and each of us grabbed hold of a child... When we were outside, they asked my husband what his nationality was. He said he was a Palestinian from '48 and



A Lebanese survivor:

"When we protested that we were Lebanese, they retorted: 'What are you doing, then, among the Palestinians?' We explained that we lived in this area, and that these were our 'homes'. They then said: 'That's your fault - you should have kicked the Palestinians out'..."



Strangled with his neck chain



that he was a telephone mechanic. He also said that he'd lost the use of one arm. The bloke lifted up his machinegun to hit him and at the same time he insulted him and called him a 'terrorist'. Then he ordered us to face the wall and to look straight ahead, and then they shot at us several times. I had my 2-year-old son in my arms. I heard him say 'Father' just before his skull was

shattered. I was shot twice in the shoulder. There's still a stain in the wall from my son's brains. And his little sister's too - she was on her big sister's shoulder and she too was shot in the head...She was just a year old. Then there was Sami - he was 2, then Farid, 6, and then Bassem - he was 13. My husband was killed too..."

PFLP-DFLP: For Left Unity

In our last issue, we printed the PFLP-DFLP communique announcing the formation of a joint political-military leadership on June 25th. In this article, we aim to clarify the political-theoretical reasons and perspectives for left unity in the Palestinian arena. The article also presents the background for the PFLP and DFLP having taken this step towards unity. In the following pages, we print a representative sample of the response there has been to this step from other political forces and from our masses.

The formation of a joint leadership between the PFLP and DFLP, as the beginning of a scientific process leading towards total unity, is a strong indication of the revolutionary development and political maturity of the two fronts. This step opens the way for a revolutionary alternative to existing factionalism and provides a scientific basis for responding to both strategic and immediate issues facing the Palestinian national liberation struggle. Unity on a sound revolutionary basis is the key to overcoming the crisis facing our revolution and to making the internal democratic reforms which are an important prerequisite for any revolutionary change.

Strategic perspective

The importance of left unity in the Palestinian arena is based on the political-theoretical premise that our people's struggle, like any national democratic revolution, needs a strong vanguard leadership to be victorious. Ultimately this means the unity of the left forces into one united communist party. Such a party would be the leading force in a united national front and would moreover insure the continuity of the revolutionary process in the interests of the Palestinian working class and dispossessed masses.

With this as the long-term perspective, it is the duty of all Palestinian left forces to find what concrete steps can be taken to catalyze the process of left unity. Due to the specifics of the Palestinian situation and struggle, different constellations of left-wing forces have emerged. Thus today we find the Israeli Communist Party-Rakah and the Jordanian Communist Party, both of whose memberships is primarily Palestinians. There are other left-wing forces struggling under occupation, as represented by the Sons of the Village and the Progressive Nationalist Student Movement in the 1948 occupied territories, and the Palestinian Communist Party on the West Bank and elsewhere. There are also the revolutionary democratic organizations that have developed within the ranks of the Palestinian armed resistance and the PLO.

It is our view that the optimal starting point for the process of uniting the Palestinian left is among these revolutionary democratic forces. The unification decision taken by the DFLP and PFLP is a very important step in this direction; at the same time, it is but one step. The process upon which the PFLP and DFLP have embarked is open to other revolutionary democratic organizations, trends and individuals who are committed to a line that correctly combines the tasks of preserving Palestinian national unity and at the same time furthering working class ideology. Expanding the unity process requires an open dialogue to bring the political positions of these forces closer to one another. We hope that by taking a practical step the PFLP and DFLP have made a push in this direction.

Certain factors already exist which make the work to unite the revolutionary democratic forces now present in the PLO's ranks a realistic and desirable task; the most important of these factors are:

- All these forces have adopted Marxism - Leninism as their theoretical-ideological framework and guiding principles. This means that all are, in principle, committed to representing the interests of the working class within our revolution.
- All these forces accept the concept of transformation from a revolutionary democratic standpoint to the standpoint of the working class.
- As a result, there is a closeness between the political line of these forces, especially on central issues. This closeness varies in degree among the respective forces, yet overall there is a political line which is quite distinct from that of the right wing in the PLO.
- All these forces, in general, share a similar political strategy for the Palestinian national liberation struggle, which goes beyond the perspective of other Palestinian national organizations.

Strengthening the Palestinian revolution

In addition to the strategic necessity of uniting the left forces into a single Palesti-

nian communist party, there are also more immediate reasons why Palestinian left unity, and especially that of the revolutionary democratic forces within the PLO, is needed. The Palestinian national struggle must be insured against wrong practices and policies, against deviations or compromises that could undermine our people's unity, national rights or goals. By uniting, the revolutionary democratic forces can more decisively influence decision-making in the Palestinian revolution. Besides acting as a guarantee for the revolution's continuity, left forces, by virtue of their unity, can make a more substantial contribution to the daily organizational work and mass mobilization which strengthens the revolution as a whole.

The positive effects of unifying the left forces are qualitative, not merely quantitative. The importance of uniting the DFLP and PFLP, as an example, does not lie in just acquiring, say, twice as many members in one organization. Rather such unity creates a new objective situation in the Palestinian arena and the PLO. It constitutes a force that far surpasses the political weight and effectiveness of the respective components combined but working separately. It constitutes a force with a broader range and stronger appeal on the mass level, and with more influence on the political and military levels. In this way, the unity of the left forces will bring about a change in the internal balance of forces in the Palestinian arena.

Moreover, the unity of the revolutionary democratic forces, and eventually the left as a whole, will have a significant positive impact on the Palestinian revolution's alliance with the Arab national liberation movement, and with other progressive forces on the Arab and international levels.

Background for the unification step

The decision of the DFLP and PFLP to form a joint leadership is the result of a long process which involved deep, extensive discussions. It is a result of the well-developed relationship between the two fronts, which has both an objective and subjective base. The PFLP and DFLP have a common origin as nationalist forces that adopted Marxism-Leninism. Thus, we share a common ideological and theoretical foundation for analyzing the social, political and class phenomena relevant to the present and future conditions of the Palestinian national liberation struggle. Today, there is increased closeness in our political views, which has evolved from the objective developments of struggle and from bilateral discussions over the past three years. There are also political and organizational matters on which an identity of views has not been reached. These matters will be re-

solved through continued discussions and dialogue between the two fronts on both the leadership, cadre and base levels.

Shared emphasis on unity of the left

The decision to take this unifying step, even though consensus has not been reached on every issue, is the result of the high priority given to the unity of the left by both organizations. This was reflected in the most recent congresses of the two organizations.

The political report adopted at the PFLP's 4th national congress in 1981, posited that one of our main tasks is to create a revolutionary democratic axis as a first step towards building a united Palestinian national front under the leadership of the working class and its vanguard party. The unity of the revolutionary democratic forces in the Palestinian arena constitutes an essential practical step in the process of uniting the Palestinian communist movement.

Also, the political, ideological and theoretical report adopted by the second congress of the DFLP in 1981, called on all democratic left forces to be an example and leader for all of our people, to protect national unity by rejecting all selfish or dogmatic, narrow organizational differences, and to initiate democratic unity as a solid nucleus for the broad national alliance within the PLO. The DFLP struggles to solidify the unity of all democratic forces on the basis of democratic, front relations...

The discussion process

In the first half of 1981, the DFLP and PFLP established special relations in light of the resolutions adopted by their respective congresses. However, these relations actually date back to 1979, when a series of meetings were held between the two leaderships in order to attain unified working relations. Since that time, the question of unification has been a point of discussion at all organizational levels of both fronts, and in joint meetings. All these meetings affirmed the need to continue and increase efforts to reach developed unified relations.

After the heroic battle of Beirut, it was logical and moreover a national duty for all Palestinian organizations, especially the left forces, to critically review our past experience and derive its main lessons. This was imperative in order to overcome all shortcomings and mistakes, and to develop the positive aspects as well. One of the main lessons harvested by both fronts, after a series of concentrated meetings involving the leadership and cadre of both, was the urgency of national unity and

the unity of the Palestinian democratic forces in particular, as a main prerequisite for protecting our revolution and achieving victory.

This demanded a qualitative leap forward in our bilateral relations, to give a new push to the unity process by establishing strong working relations that gradually develop towards the total unity of the two fronts in one body. To this end, various meetings were held between Comrades George Habash and Naef Hawatmeh in Aden, facilitated by the Yemeni Socialist Party and especially the highly appreciated efforts of Comrade Ali Nasser, General Secretary of the party, and President of Democratic Yemen.

The Aden agreement between the two fronts in early December 1982, aimed at organizing and furthering the relations, based on the fact that PFLP and DFLP constitute the two main left Palestinian organizations that are capable of playing an essential role in protecting Palestinian national unity, and at the same time are essential components in the strategic process of uniting the Palestinian left in one communist party.

The Aden agreement was approved by the central bodies of both fronts. It specified the steps needed for developing relations. Implementing these steps on all organizational levels required close cooperation between the two fronts. Therefore, a series of meetings were held between the two politbureaus and on all organizational levels to discuss the best means of achieving this step. These meetings were very positive and further clarified to both parties that the subjective and objective conditions were ripe for taking this step. In addition to meetings between the two fronts on all organizational levels, internal circulars were exchanged on the matter, and working papers on cooperation on all organizational levels were drawn up. In the same period, the political harmony prevailing between the two

fronts was also expressed through the issuing of joint communiques addressed to our masses.

For unity

As stated in the communique announcing the joint leadership, this step does not constitute an axis aimed against other organizations. Rather it is a unifying step aimed at consolidating the PLO's unity. It is a step in accordance with the PNC's resolutions. In this way, the two fronts offer a model for how to develop national unity while maintaining the broad framework of the PLO. This step is based on commitment to developing this framework in order to build a united national front to lead our revolution and achieve our people's aspirations.

In this way, the Palestinian left offers a new response added to its previous ones, as evidenced in the battles in the last war and especially the battle of Beirut, and in the political battle against all capitulationist plans after the war, and in the battle to preserve the unity of the PLO, as was seen at the last PNC, when our enemies everywhere were waiting for a split as one of the fruits of the Zionist invasion.

The formation of the joint leadership is to be followed by other steps on all organizational levels and in the mass organizations to prepare for total unification. This is not a process whereby the one front merges into the other, which makes it a unique, trailblazing experience in the Palestinian revolution. Rather, the intention is to fuse the two organizations into one. In this, we have taken inspiration from the experience of Democratic Yemen, where the unity of three parties - the National Front, the Popular Union Party and the Vanguard Party - into one organization paved the way for forming the Yemeni Socialist Party in 1978, as the vanguard party.

Political Commentary

A wide range of nationalist, revolutionary democratic and communist forces and parties welcomed the unification step taken by PFLP and DFLP. Below are the evaluations of three Arab communist parties.

Comrade Suleiman Al Najab,
Politbureau member -
Palestinian Communist Party

"This is a responsible act that evolved through a deep, objective process, that will push the unity of the revolutionary democratic forces in the frame-

work of the Palestinian national movement. At the same time, it serves to speed up this process. It is indeed a great service to the unity of all Palestinian national forces and organizations that are determined to overcome all obstacles and continue the struggle to estab-

lish an independent Palestinian national state under the leadership of the PLO.

"We share with you the view that this is not an axis of isolation, but rather a revolutionary instrument for defending and strengthening unity, especially in these times when unity is threatened, which affects and threatens our people's struggle in the occupied homeland and everywhere. We hope that other Palestinian national forces will use this step to increase efforts to protect their unity and the PLO's.

"On behalf of the leadership of the Palestinian Communist

Party, I express our conviction that this step can definitely develop the alliance between the two fronts and our party. Since the declaration of the reformation of our party, we have put this as one of our major and urgent tasks, that will serve Palestinian national unity and the unity of its progressive forces."

Comrade Yousef Feisal,
Vice General Secretary -
Syrian Communist Party

"This step brings together two major forces of the Palestinian and Arab liberation movements, especially as both

agree in the definition of the main enemy and the essential alliances. They also agree on the nature of this stage and the balance of forces. They also share the same analysis regarding the essential immediate and strategic goals of the Palestinian revolution... Syrian communists, like other national and progressive Arabs, salute this step towards unity and wish it all success..."

Comrade Abed Al Aziz Al Atti,
Politbureau member -
Jordanian Communist Party

"This step is quite important to us as Jordanian commu-

nists; we welcome it with great joy...Our party, which is based on internationalism, which includes Palestinian and Jordanian communists, and struggles within the largest concentrated Palestinian community and among the Jordanian working class, which contains both Palestinian and Jordanian workers, looks up to the unity of all forces and organizations that will build scientific, Marxist-Leninist socialism...We salute this step that will lead to total unity, for this will support and solidify the struggle of our Palestinian and Jordanian masses and impact positively on our work in Jordan."

Telegrams

From PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat to PFLP General Secretary George Habash:

"I received with great joy your leading step of unity that will strengthen and solidify our revolution at a very critical time, to confront all conspiracies which, regretfully, are directed by Arab brothers, that threaten our revolution and people. This important step towards unity has had a deep impact on everyone in the Palestinian revolution and brought great comfort to all. I, as the chairman of the PLO, call upon you and all my Palestinian brothers to take further unifying steps based on the Palestinian National Council and its revolutionary path."



From Comrade Ali Nasser, President of Democratic Yemen and General Secretary of the Yemeni Socialist Party, to Comrade George Habash:

"On behalf of the Politbureau and Central Committee of our Yemeni Socialist Party, I extend to you, and to the leadership of both fronts and all their cadres and fighters, our warmest comradely congratula-

tions for your great achievement of establishing a joint political-military leadership.. This truly reflects your responsible national position towards the unity of your national struggle in order to strengthen its principles and confront all attempts aimed at weakening it.

"This step was received by our people and party with great satisfaction and appreciation. It is considered an important gain for the Palestinian revolution, especially at a difficult time, for increased efforts are required to solidify national unity in order to confront all conspiracies threatening the Palestinian people's struggle.

"As we express our high appreciation of your efforts towards this achievement, we affirm our solidarity with your revolutionary path as part of the Arab national liberation movement against imperialism and Zionism..." (excerpted)



From Comrade George Hawi, General Secretary of the Lebanese Communist Party to Comrades Naef Hawatmeh & George Habash:

"The unifying steps taken to establish a joint political-military leadership for PFLP and DFLP, and the other steps to strengthen relations between

the two fronts and unite their forces, assume particular significance in light of the threatening crisis facing the Palestinian revolution. It indicates the highly responsible attitude of the leadership of both fronts...We extend our congratulations, hoping that this historical step will be an effective one in preserving the unity of the revolution, by overcoming the existing obstacles for the benefit of the greater cause for which we all struggle."



From Comrade Mohsen Ibrahim, General Secretary of Communist Action Organization in Lebanon

"On behalf of the Politbureau of the Communist Action Organization in Lebanon, which is now meeting to discuss the dangerous developments facing the Palestinian revolution, we support your leading unifying step...Your decision to form a joint leadership is a true expression of genuine Palestinian nationalism. It confirms your representation of the true Palestinian left, which realizes that unity is the starting point for the required response for a national liberation movement facing a detrimental crisis. Unity is also the framework through which democratic political or

organizational reforms can be achieved. Indeed, splits were never the means for change, no matter how loud the cry of revolutionary slogans.

"On this occasion, we salute your serious efforts to maintain Palestinian national unity by your continued interest in reuniting Fatah and

your emphasis on preserving the unity of the PLO. Our long comradely experience...allows us to address you now...affirming to you and the brothers in Fatah that what is needed is adherence to the formula that there is no existence for the PLO if it is fragmented. This is the formula for pre-

serving unity, the cause, the organization, the symbol and its independent political decision-making without deviations...This formula provides the cornerstone for Arab national steadfastness; it demands the maintenance of the alliance between the PLO and Syria..." (excerpted)

We also received congratulations from:

The People's Front for the Liberation of Oman
The National Democratic Front (North Yemen)
The National Liberation Front of Bahrain
Representatives of 17 organizations in Poland -
- DFLP organization in Poland
- PFLP organization in Poland
- Palestinian Communist Party
- Yemeni Socialist Youth Union
- Palestinian Popular Struggle Front
- Palestinian Liberation Front

- Union of Sudanese Students
- Iraqi National Democratic Front
- Arab Socialist Movement
- Arab Socialist Baath Party of Iraqi (in opposition to the regime)
- Iraqi Progressive Student Front
- General Assembly of Foreign Students
- Palestinian National Liberation Movement (Fatah)
- Jordanian National Students Union
- Arab Students Federation
- Lebanese Communist Party
- Lebanese Progressive Socialist Party

Mass Response

The staff of "Al Hadaf", PFLP's central organ, made interviews in the Palestinian camps around Damascus, seeking the opinion of our masses regarding the joint leadership between the PFLP and the DFLP. The following is a sample of the response received.

Brother Abu Zaki, a school teacher with three children:

"Honestly, hearing about the joint political-military leadership between two strong Palestinian organizations was very good news. This means we united our efforts to confront the threats facing our revolution. We were wishing for such a step a long time ago. This step implies that the leaderships of both fronts are going in the right direction and are examples for other organizations.

"This step has a very positive impact on the people, because they derive hope and strength from unity. In addition, this step will positively affect the struggle of our people under occupation, and the Arab national liberation movement, especially the Lebanese

National Resistance Front, which is essential for our struggle. In discussions with my friends, I felt that all are optimistic and salute this step."

Brother Ibrahim Shama, a grocery store owner:

"The unity is good, but it should include all other organizations. All must unite together to confront the enemy plots. The fact that our enemy is always conspiring against us should bring deeper understanding and brotherhood between all the fighters in the Palestinian revolution."

A Lebanese sister now living in Damascus. She could not give her name as her husband is in Ansar:

"This was one of the most beautiful news we have had since 1970. I believe that all forces must unite to become stronger and more organized. For the past 18 years, we have experienced the differences between the various organizations while other revolutions were able to be united. We don't want our revolution to be one of many shops (factions) and many leaders, but we want it one united Palestinian revolution."

Um Mohammad, housewife and mother of nine children:

"God willing, this step can be the start of a good thing. We must unite and agree together very fast. Differences and splits serve no one except the enemy and the colonizers...Our goal is Palestine."

Nadia Saed, ninth grade student:

"It is a step that made us all happy, and we hope that the unity is not limited to the two fronts, but to have all organizations unite, since we have one common goal, that is, the liberation of Palestine."

PLO Central Council

On August 5th, the PLO Central Council ended its first session since the 16th PNC. A number of the leaders of the different Palestinian organizations and representatives of all sectors of the Palestinian people, especially those living in Jordan, were present. This gave the session added weight. However, the representatives of one organization, PFLP-General Command, were absent.

For three consecutive days, the members of the Central Council discussed the most recent political developments related to the Palestinian struggle. The discussions exhibited a high degree of responsibility and vigilance concerning the preservation of Palestinian unity in the framework of the PLO. An atmosphere of democracy prevailed, allowing for criticism of some policies and actions of the PLO leadership. The council demanded an objective assessment of the present situation and immediate democratic reform in the PLO institutions. There was strong determination to solve the problems presently facing the Palestinian struggle.

The significance of this session lies in the fact that it was held in a very critical time. The Palestinian struggle now faces two dangers in particular:

1. In the occupied territories, the Palestinian people and revolution are facing the Zionist-reactionary attack on two levels: (a) the concentrated Zionist attempts to empty the land of its people in order to transform it into Zionist settlements. The danger lies not only in the results of these attempts - uprooting thousands of people and the confiscation of 60% of the land, but also in the bloody form these attempts are taking, as seen

in the latest events in Al Khalil; (b) the intensified Zionist and reactionary efforts to develop alternatives to the PLO. In this respect, the Israeli-Jordanian coordination increased in the last few months; there is clear cooperation between the Israeli-sponsored village leagues and the clients of the Jordanian regime in the occupied territo-

ries, who have escalated their maneuvers greatly in the recent period.

2. Outside the occupied territories, there has been inter-Palestinian fighting which threatens divisions in the ranks of the revolution. This conflict had escalated dramatically in the Beqaa Valley prior to the Central Council's session.

No to Palestinian Government-in-Exile

Comrade Abu Maher Yamani, member of the PLO Executive Committee and of the PFLP Politbureau, made the following statement to the press in late July:

Much has been said during this period about a Palestinian government-in-exile. Some of these statements have been linked to members of the PLO Executive Committee, giving the impression that the establishment of a Palestinian government-in-exile is a subject being considered by the Executive Committee during its meetings.

As a member of this executive committee, I find it important to declare that this subject has never been proposed on the agenda of any of the sessions of the Executive Committee. Nor has it been proposed within any official framework of the PLO, despite the fact that some Palestinian figures suggested the idea to some Executive Committee members as a way of facilitating the process of convincing the USA to open negotiations with such a government without involving the PLO and its institutions.

We warn of the danger of proposing such an idea, which would give the impression to the Arab and Palestinian masses

that the phase of armed struggle has come to an end, and that the period of political compromises within the framework of capitulationist concessions, as promoted by the US administration, has begun. First and foremost of such plans being promoted is the Reagan plan, which our masses rejected from its inception; this rejection was underscored by the resolutions of the 16th session of the PNC in Algeria.

We call upon our Palestinian and Arab masses, who have confronted the conspiracies formulated to eradicate our revolution and cause, to douse out any enthusiasm which may arise about these erroneous ideas.

We find it important to declare that our people, and the fighters and militants of our revolution, are firm in their adherence to the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people wherever they may be. Therefore, they reject any new formulations which would constitute a replacement for the PLO and the armed struggle.

In addition, there are the attempts of some Arab regimes, especially the reactionary ones, to contain the PLO and its independent nationalist decision-making. These dangers result from the difficult situation facing the Palestinian revolution and also from the possibility of rightist deviations on the part of some circles in the PLO, who recently called for a Palestinian government-in-exile.

Thus, the council was required to draw up solutions for the problems presently facing the Palestinian revolution. The main issues discussed at the session were:

- the situation in the Beqaa and the internal fighting
- the PLO's international and Arab relations
- the situation in the occupied territories
- the situation in Lebanon, including the formation of the Lebanese National Salvation Front.

It is worthy of note that the question of a government-in-exile was not placed in the agenda. The overwhelming majority of council members expressed opposition to this idea as being incorrect at the present stage, for it would mean ending the role of the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Moreover, it would constitute a reversal of the decisions of the last PNC.

The above issues were dealt with in a serious manner with a high proportion of council members participating actively in the discussions.

As declared by Khaled Fakhour, PNC Chairman, there was unanimous agreement on ending the internal fighting and condemning any party that uses arms against the other. A proposal was adopted to form a military committee, composed of military cadre from different resistance organizations, to supervise a ceasefire.

Moreover, the discussions reflected the strongly anti-

imperialist sentiment of the council majority, with especially hard criticism directed against US policy. The overall positive results of the discussions were reflected in the final statement issued by the council (see box for excerpts).

Follow-up Committee

As the main problem now facing the PLO is the internal fighting in Fatah and the Palestinian-Syrian relationship, the council decided to form a follow-up committee to deal with these matters. There are a number of indications that this committee can function positively.

1. The Committee consists of a relatively large number of council members and is headed by Ibrahim Baker, a respected



patriot and former member of the PLO Executive Committee. The committee represents different political trends and includes persons having good relations with all parties to the conflict.

2. The committee's action is to be based on the positive results of the Central Council session, both the political resolutions and the specific proposals adopted concerning the crisis in Fatah and Palestinian-Syrian relations.

3. The committee begins its work in a situation where there is a united position on the part of all the forces in the Palestinian arena that adhere to the unity and independence of the PLO, and the need to maintain the nationalist line based on a complete democratic reform in the PLO in-

stitutions and rejecting internal fighting.

4. This committee is basing its efforts on finding an inter-Palestinian solution in the spirit of preserving the unity and role of the legitimate Palestinian institutions, which rules out any attempt of the Arab governments to intervene for the purpose of containing the PLO.

On this basis, the follow-up committee is expected to coordinate with the committee of six, previously formed by the PLO Executive Committee, to deal with these same matters. The new follow-up committee represents an extension of the first committee's work. In light of the above, the tasks of the follow-up committee are:

1. To stop the fighting between brothers-in-arms, for as long as this continues, it will be impossible to seek, much less find, a real solution.

2. To seek a solution based on democratic dialogue between the parties to the conflict. This solution must aim at preserving unity in Fatah, because this on the one hand consolidates the PLO's unity, and on the other hand, opens the way for reforming and developing the PLO.

For overcoming the crisis

The Palestinian revolution has previously faced crises related to single organizations or at large. In every case, our revolution has proved its ability to overcome the crisis, and maintain its unity, independence and nationalist line. Today, due to the experience of the revolution, and the increasing influence of the democratic revolutionary forces within it, we are more than ever capable of overcoming this crisis and emerging more powerful. To this end, one point must be kept in mind: The internal differences in Fatah must not be allowed to reflect on the PLO

institutions, for this could lead to division. In accordance with this, the PFLP and DFLP have been able to exert positive influence in our coordinated efforts to maintain the unity of the PLO in the present situation.

Based on the results of the Central Council, we express our full support to the work of the follow-up committee. Already, this committee has

met with the two sides in Fatah, and agreement was reached on a set of principles for beginning discussions to resolve the conflict. This in itself is a sign of progress, but it is important that all are aware that it will take serious, patient efforts to reach a real solution. The work of the follow-up committee presents an opportunity for success in protecting the

achievements of our revolution but conversely, its failure could open the way for squandering these same achievements. Thus, we call on all Palestinian organizations and concerned parties to give this committee and its work their support. This is required of all who value the unity and independence of the PLO and the continuation of its nationalist line.

PLO CENTRAL COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS - EXCERPTED FROM OFFICIAL STATEMENT

...The Council, in the name of the Palestinian people inside and outside Palestine, expresses its concern and condemnation of the fighting among brothers-in-arms in the Beqaa Valley, and calls on all parties involved to stop these actions. It also condemns any party that renews the fighting.

...The Council emphasized the importance of Palestinian - Syrian relations in order to build a strong front opposed to the Reagan plan. In this respect, the Council expresses its deep sorrow at the decision demanding that Yasir Arafat, head of the Executive Committee of the PLO, leave Syria. Also the Council stresses the necessity of resolving the Palestinian-Syrian differences on the basis of:

(1) supporting the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in order to achieve their national aims; and (2) strengthening the unity of the Arab national forces to confront the Zionist-imperialist enemies and their lackeys. The Council calls for an immediate dialogue and building relations on the basis of militant cooperation against the imperialist plan for the area, especially the Camp David agreement, Begin's project and the latest US - Israeli accord imposed on Lebanon...

The Council highly evalu-

ates the unanimous position of our people in the occupied territories, their rallying around the PLO and its leadership, and their adherence to Palestinian unity. The Council emphasized this position of our people as the rock on which all imperialist-Zionist schemes will be destroyed. Thus, it calls on our people to strengthen this unity and develop the confrontation vs. all forms of Zionist oppression, expansion and settlement. The Council highly appreciates the heroic struggles waged by the popular masses in Al Khalil, Bir Zeit, Nablus, Jerusalem, etc., against the Zionist gangs supported by the Begin government... In this context, the Council affirmed the importance of executing the PNC resolutions concerning rebuilding the Palestinian National Front in the occupied territories as an arm of the PLO, and developing the armed struggle against Zionist occupation...

The Council appreciates the intensification of heroic resistance against the Zionist attack in Lebanon. This reemphasizes the united struggle of the Palestinian and Lebanese people in confronting the common enemy. At the same time, it sees the importance of the Syrian-Lebanese-Palestinian relationship in order to support the struggle of the Lebanese people for an independent sovereign, united, Arab Lebanon. Moreover, the Council supports the positive step

made by all the Lebanese nationalist forces to unite in the framework of the National Salvation Front; it expressed concern for our Palestinian people in Lebanon, who are exposed to daily terror and oppression at the hands of the fascists and the Zionist occupation forces, for which the Council holds the Lebanese government responsible...

The Council proposes to the Executive Committee to work immediately to execute the political-organizational program and resolutions of the PNC on all levels. It also proposes that the regular work of the PLO institutions be observed and supported to guarantee national unity based on democratic dialogue and reform in the ranks of the Palestinian revolution and the PLO institutions...

The Council emphasizes its condemnation of the US schemes which aim to control the Middle East, whether by relying on its base 'Israel' or through the establishment of the Rapid Deployment Force, and the US - Israeli strategic agreement. The US plan aims to liquidate Palestinian national rights through the Reagan plan, which denies the role of the PLO and the national political identity of our people, their right to return, self-determination, and the establishment of their independent national state. Also, the US plan aims to subjugate Lebanon to US-Israeli authority through the latest accord...

War Scars on the Zionist Entity

This June, one year after the Zionist invasion of Lebanon, "Al Hadaf", the PFLP's Arabic weekly, printed a study of the effects of this aggressive war on the political situation in the Zionist entity. Below we print the first section of this study, dealing with the dissent in the Zionist military. In our next issue, we will continue with a section on the economic effects on the Israeli population.

Aside from the great influence exerted by external factors, the functioning of the political system in the Zionist entity rests on the following three internal bases:

1. the relationship between the military institution and the government
2. the Israeli voters' reaction to the ruling government's approach
3. the positions taken by the parties and parliamentary coalitions on the political map

Despite the great concern of these parties not to overstep the principles necessary for the stability of the Zionist entity, and its cohesiveness in confronting external challenges, these main bases of the political system have been exposed to a series of shocks. This has led to their gradual deviation from the traditional framework agreed upon at the time of the establishment of the Zionist state.

A review of the changes that have occurred vis-a-vis these bases indicates that the most powerful shocks came as a result of major events on the military front: the Six-Day War (1967), the October War (1973), and the invasion of Lebanon (1982).

This study aims to shed light on developments relevant to these internal bases that occurred as the result of the Zionist entity's savage invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

The countershock

It is true that the magnitude of the Israeli attack on Lebanon was a shock to Palestinian, Arab and international expectations. It had been assumed that the attack would stop at Zah-rani or maximally at the boundaries of the city of Saida. Yet it is equally true that this attack in turn exposed the Zionist entity to a countershock. The Israelis, and others as well, were surprised by the level and effectiveness of resistance to the invasion.

At the onset, the Israeli government pledged to complete the attack within 72 hours or at most one week. The Israelis enacted a huge mobilization; they enjoyed technological superiority and used the most advanced US weapons, some never before employed; they resorted to the most cruel and savage methods of warfare.

In spite of all this, the Palestinian resistance and their allies of the Lebanese National Movement were able to stand against this military power for more than three months, as exemplified by the battle of Beirut. Moreover, they were able to deal painful blows to the attacking forces, making the Zionist entity pay a high price for what it gained in depriving the Palestinian revolution of its main base in Lebanon.

It is enough to read what appeared in the Israeli media in order to see that the negative effects of the war were not only on the Palestinian-Lebanese side. These sources point out the great loss to the state of 'Israel' and to its military establishment in particular as a result of a battle which was waged when the balance of forces was tilted in Israeli favor on more than one level. This compelled a concerned Israeli like Martin Fan to question the "victory" proclaimed by the Zionist leadership: "The results of the Lebanon operation were disappointing...The good reputation enjoyed by the Israeli soldier received a strong blow at the hands of the Palestinian." Even some army generals who led the attacks were forced to admit this fact. The commander of the first operation against Beaufort Castle said, "I don't believe we achieved a military victory in Lebanon despite the huge areas we reached, and that is due to our great human losses" (interview on Israeli radio, June 18, 1982).

The political-military relationship

From another angle we can sense the reality of the Israeli position in the divisive phenomena that emerged in the military institution, leading to a situation never before experienced by the Zionist state.

Successive Israeli governments have been careful to adhere to the principles outlined by Ben Gurion for regulating the relationship between the Israeli military and political institutions. In his book "The Israeli Militarist between the Battlefields and the Ballot Boxes", Uram Bairy writes that Ben Gurion's "principle of expediency" prevailed, stipulating that the army be subordinated to the political authority

and operate as a professional tool in the hands of the political institutions in applying the policies of violence in foreign relations.

Based on this principle, the Israeli political institutions have always been careful to keep the officers and soldiers of the army out of ideological and party political struggle. In return, the army was granted the immunity of a 'holy cow'. By observing the relationship between the political and military institutions, we can see how successful the Israeli government has been in controlling the army as a tool executing decisions without any objections or discussion. (The fact that Israeli governments have included a number of former generals does not change this reality.) On this basis, the Zionist state has waged all its wars prior to the invasion of Lebanon 1982.

Rifts in the political-military relationship

In view of this traditional pattern, the new tendencies that entered into the relationship between the Israeli army and government during the war in Lebanon assume special significance, even though as yet they are limited and weak. There was a series of signals that the military institution was no longer an obedient tool in the government's hands - and that it was no longer immune to politics.

The phenomenon of protest in the army was manifest in cases of individual disobedience. This reached a dramatic level as the battle of Beirut progressed, with Colonel Eli Geva asking on July 26th, to be relieved of his duties as commander of a tank brigade besieging the city. This ended with his dismissal from the army after all the attempts of his superiors to get him to retract his decision had failed. His case was followed by that of others: the resignation of Colonel Eli Beniva on August 1st, and General Omram Metizna, assistant commander of the Eastern Front, who demanded leave from his post for a long vacation without pay.

Protest was also expressed in collective positions on the part of soldiers and sometimes even officers. This took different forms, including the rejection of orders. This led the Israeli Defense Minister, Ariel Sharon, to speak of hesitancy to move a reserve battalion due to widespread opposition among its soldiers and officers. Later this battalion came to be known as the "Rejection Battalion". The press reported later the arrest of the commander of the Ailet unit and some of its members for refusing orders. Begin was reported to have admitted to a friend that the army no longer obeys orders.

Protest was also expressed in the increase of cases of desertion. This led the Israeli military police to intensify control at the

borders between 'Israel' and Lebanon, and to have patrols comb the markets of Israeli cities looking for deserters (reported in the Israeli daily "Davar" on July 6, 1982).

The protest in the military assumed clearly political dimensions with the three following phenomena:

1. Demanding Sharon's resignation

Two meetings, which included high-ranking army officers, were reported. The first was held on Sept. 24th, 1982. Here the officers directed sharp criticism against Sharon and most of them demanded his resignation, reflecting the widespread lack of confidence in the Defense Minister which prevailed in the military's ranks. A secret meeting was later reported near Tel Aviv, where more than 100 officers, ranking not less than lieutenant colonel expressed disappointment and complaints in a way not previously seen in 'Israel'.

Also, petitions, signed by hundreds of soldiers and officers were circulated, stressing their lack of confidence in Sharon and demanding his resignation. Moreover, personal confrontations took place between Israeli officers and the Defense Minister. In one such meeting, it was reported that an Israeli officer confronted Sharon face-to-face, saying, "I am just a little officer with the rank of colonel, but I speak in the name of 3,000 paratroopers who have lost their confidence in you."

2. Soldiers and officers organizing and participating in demonstrations

The most significant of these demonstrations was on July 8, 1982, when thousands of soldiers protested the war and demanded Sharon's resignation. Prior to that, a number of military personnel had joined the July 3, 1982 demonstration when 100,000 people protested the war in Lebanon. Most of the statements given in this demonstration were made by reserve officers. In the big demonstration on Sept. 25, 1982 after the Sabra-Shatila massacre, a number of soldiers participated in uniform, carrying their personal arms and demanding the resignation of Sharon.

3. Soldiers organizing protest groups

The most active and significant groups were: Soldiers Against Silence, formed June 30, 1982; There is a Limit, declared on July 17, 1982; and It is Enough!, declared on June 11, 1982. These groups emphasized rejecting service in Lebanon and called for Sharon's resignation, holding him responsible for involvement in a war "which has no justification." They demanded an end to the war and withdrawal of the IDF from Lebanon. The members of some of these groups preferred to be imprisoned rather than serve in Lebanon.

Political implications of the military dissent

Naturally the protest phenomena in the ranks of the military affected political circles in 'Israel', because they were indications of a disturbance in the traditional relationship between the political and military institutions. The Israeli daily "Yediot Aharonot" on October 1, 1982, expressed the danger of the new phenomena as follows: "Anyone with connections to security affairs knows very well that the IDF absolutely never faced such an involvement as it is now facing, not even after the great shortcomings of the Yom Kippur War. The turmoil is great and everybody feels that the belt is tightened too much. This never happened in the history of the state of Israel, and everybody understands that these new developments carry with them some political aims, especially as the demands put forth in the 'military' protest coincide to some extent with the positions of certain parties in the political institutions. This means that the party 'virus' is infecting the army." In a television interview, Chief of Staff Eitan expressed his concern about the phenomenon of 'political intervention' in the army; he queried, "What would happen if one or another political group asked their followers in the army not to execute military orders?"

Mirakh, the Labor Alignment, also expressed fears about the army's intervening in political affairs, despite its own attempts to take advantage of the protests in the military in its political battle against the Likud. Haim Bar Lev, Labor Party Secretary, described this phenomenon as disturbing, especially when army officers demand the resignation of the Defense Minister. He said, "The popular objections to the objectives of the war being echoed within the ranks of the army is a matter that could have very dangerous consequences" ("Maariv", Sept. 23, 1982).

Zionism capitalizes on the dissent

Naturally, the phenomena of dissent that penetrated the military institution was seized upon by some forces who tried to exploit this to save the Zionist state from the crises it is facing as a result of the invasion of Lebanon.

The savage Israeli attack contributed to destroying the image that Zionism has cultivated in world public opinion of the small David ('Israel') confronting the giant Goliath (the Arabs who are purportedly out to slaughter Jews and throw them in the sea). The Israeli invasion of Lebanon presented quite a different picture to the world: 'Israel' stood forth as the source of real terror.

Due to the specifics of its origin, the Zionist state is abnormally sensitive to the external world, especially the US and capitalist Europe. Thus, it was natural for some

Israeli circles to grab for any straw that would help to soften the sharp criticism directed against 'Israel' in connection with its attack on Lebanon. The means chosen to this end was focusing on some individuals and holding them responsible for all the 'mistakes' in order to retrieve the Zionist state from the gutter clean and healthy. The use of this method was especially prevalent after the Sabra-Shatila massacre.

The contents and formulation of the bulk of the dissent expressed in the ranks of the military fit neatly into this framework. Thus, the



Thousands of Israelis demonstrated in Tel Aviv one year after the invasion, demanding an immediate pull-out from Lebanon.

protest phenomenon in the army was used as evidence of the purity of the Zionist state and its army in an attempt to confine the responsibility for the atrocities committed in Lebanon to some members of the government, Sharon in particular. In this context, sectors of the Israeli media welcomed news of the protests in the military and began to propagate this as evidence of the "awakening of the Israeli conscience" and of the "humanitarian attitude" of the Israeli soldier. Moreover, the protests were also presented as proof of the "democracy" prevailing in 'Israel'. The same tendency was

apparent in the work of some Zionist forces outside 'Israel' and in the pages of the western bourgeois media.

Why the protest phenomenon in the military?

In view of this discrepancy in the Israeli and imperialist media's portrayal of the protest phenomenon, it is important to reveal the basic points deliberately ignored by those who advocate the "moral awakening" thesis.

First: This newly awakened Israeli "conscience" has been very successful in hiding all through the long years of the Arab-Israeli conflict. In spite of all the aggression, massacres and other crimes enacted against the Palestinian and Arab people, this "Israeli conscience" never woke up - until the latest aggression. On the contrary, it lauded the symbols of Zionist terror, placed them in government positions and hailed them as the "Kings of Israel".

Second: The phenomenon of protest within the Israeli army did not emerge until after it had become clear in the field that the attack on Lebanon would be a prolonged one. As was noted by the military correspondent of "Al Hamishmar" on October 4, 1982, "The rifts began to appear in the army ranks at the end of the advanced stage (of the move) towards the Beirut-Damascus highway." This is three weeks after the invasion began.

According to the testimony of Israeli officers, the prevailing impression in the army prior to the invasion was total confidence that Israeli tanks would continue their march over the ruins until reaching Beirut (radio interview with General Shaul Nikdimon, June 18, 1982). An Israeli army major, interviewed by "Al Hamishmar", described the atmosphere in the army at the beginning of the attack as follows: "Everyone was smiling and telling jokes very loudly; everyone estimated the number of Palestinians he would kill or capture."

Referring back to the case of Colonel Geva, we find that he participated in the 1973 war and the "Litani Operation" against South Lebanon in 1978. Also the "conscience" of Colonel Geva was not awakened until more than a month of the 1982 invasion had passed, i.e. he had participated in the battles in South Lebanon.

When we compile the atrocities committed by the Israeli army on its way to Beirut, a question arises about the causes of this "awakening of conscience" which hit some Israeli soldiers and officers at the gates of the capital.

In order to answer this question, we must examine the fact that the 1982 invasion of Lebanon imposed on the Israeli army a new style of warfare. In its previous aggressive wars, this army was accustomed to achieving rapid victories with minimal losses. With this expect-

ation, the army waged the latest war, thinking the task would be simply to harass "fleeing PLO men". The steadfastness and courage of the Joint Forces surprised the attackers and enforced conditions of battle that differed radically from their expectations. This point was emphasized by the Israeli major who led the second attack against Beaufort Castle: "I have participated in the four Arab wars, and this is the only war where I feel we are fighting a real war" ("Yediot Aharonot", June 8, 1982). An Israeli colonel made a comparison between the occupation of the Sinai, which took less than two days, and taking one Joint Forces position - Beaufort Castle, which required double that time. The Joint Forces changed the 72-hour battle planned for by the Israeli military into one of more than three months, forcing the Israeli army into the long war it had always avoided.

We must also examine the impact of the human losses inflicted on the invading force by the Joint Forces. Though the extent of these losses was consistently played down by official Israeli spokesmen and figures, some Israeli officers testified more candidly. Major Ahron Biriang, in an interview with "Al Hamishmar", said that the losses inflicted as of the ninth day of the war were more than 2,000 killed and 8,000 injured. The military correspondent of the same newspaper noted: "Our losses from the Palestinian artillery and Katusha rockets during the last year were less than recorded in half a day during this week of war" (June 14, 1982). Even Sharon admitted, "We paid a very high price in the Peace for the Galilee operation."

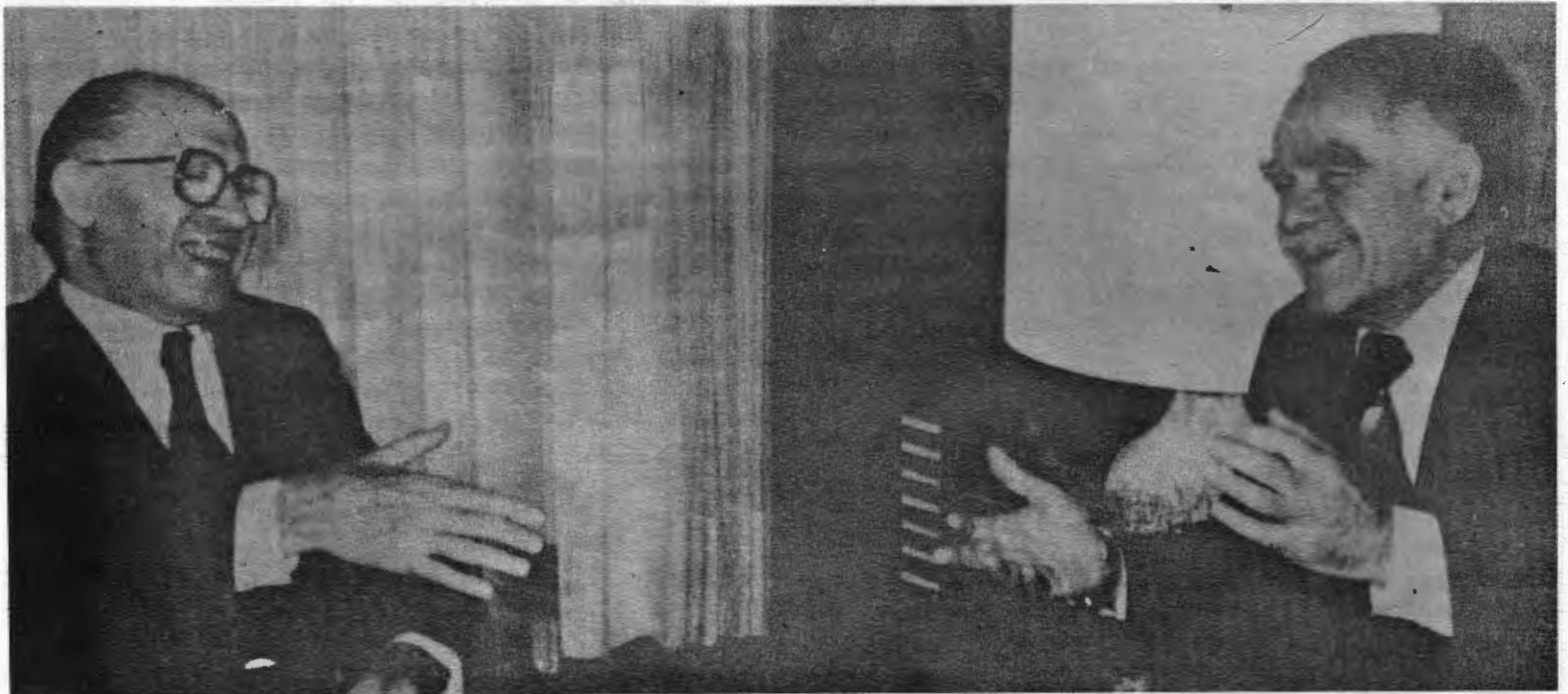
Third: The heroic resistance of the Joint Forces played a major role in awakening the "conscience" of Israeli soldiers and officers. The performance of the Joint Forces fighters surprised, frightened, and in some cases even elicited the admiration of the Israelis. Though the balance of power permitted the IDF to prevail against these heroic actions, still the degree of resistance offered imposed new perspectives relevant to the future development of the Arab-Israeli conflict. More specifically it proved the possibility of engaging the Zionist enemy in a prolonged battle, which in turn points to the possibility of the eventual defeat of this enemy. This perspective was not lost on the Israeli army, as was particularly apparent in comments on the Palestinian youth, the Lion Cubs, who were termed the "RPG kids". One Israeli general told "Haaretz" newspaper: "If a child of 10 years of age carries an anti-tank machinegun, destroys the tanks of the Israeli army, and even more bold, wants to arrest me, what will this child do when he becomes older? How will he face the Israeli army then? ...I am worried that a generation like this is a very dangerous one."

Awakened conscience, or fear?

Based on the above, we can draw a main conclusion about the protest wave that hit the Israeli army, this so-called awakening of conscience. This phenomenon emerged specifically under the impact of the Joint Forces' heroic resistance. This indicated the emergence of a new situation on the Palestinian-Arab side of the conflict, upsetting the calculations of the Israeli army. An Israeli wrote in "Davar" on June 18, 1982: "So many light years have passed since the formation of the arrogant assumption that in order to occupy Lebanon, Israel needs the musical band of the IDF."

The spread of demoralization in the ranks of the Israeli army further confirms this conclusion. As has been reported by western correspondants, the demoralization in the armed for-

is what I am going to say to the families of officers and soldiers killed when I go to pay them condolences." Another Israeli officer, General Ben Tsion Shraider, spoke very frankly to "Haaretz" on this matter: "There is strong opposition among the officers. Many of them don't support entering West Beirut, perhaps not for humanitarian reasons, but due to the high price that we will have to pay in the case we really do that. Absolutely, the reasons were never humanitarian. Many oppose entering Beirut because they are fully aware that they might get killed or injured. You can say that opposition is a result of fear of entering this city. I remember the last battle on Sunday, August 1; almost 220,000 bombs...were dumped on West Beirut. Do you believe that the one who does all this would not enter Beirut for humanitarian reasons?"



From one terrorist to another: "See if you can solve the problems our policy created."

ces under the constant threat of the commandos is a recurring theme in private discussions with Israelis. Even the phrasing used by some Israeli soldiers in condemning the war hints at the fear from which the phenomenon of protest was born, although they have been careful to formulate their position in moral terms. One can sense this fear lurking behind the "awakening conscience" in the song that spread among Israeli soldiers during the war: "The planes come down to us...transfer us to Lebanon...and there we must fight for Sharon...Then we will return in a coffin".

A review of the testimony of the officers who opposed the war shows that the thought of human losses weighed heavily in their minds. In explaining his opposition to entering Beirut Colonel Geya said, "What worries me very much

On this basis, we can rule out the alleged "awakening of conscience" as the prime motivation behind the protest phenomenon in the Israeli military. Rather, the main motivation was fear: fear of human losses, and apprehension as to the consequences of the new perspective for the Arab-Zionist conflict which was opened by the Joint Forces' prolonged, heroic resistance. The resulting rift in the traditional relationship between the Israeli political and military institutions is limited as yet, but this tendency could have great importance regarding the future development of the Zionist-Arab conflict. In the final analysis, this depends on the extent to which the Palestinian and Arab national liberation movement fully understands these new developments, and incorporates their lessons into their program for the coming stage.

Egypt: Mubarak's «Democracy»

Recently "Al Hadaf" had the opportunity to interview Rifat Saed, Deputy General Secretary of the National Progressive Unionist Party of Egypt. Below we print the main part of this interview which deals with the internal situation in Egypt, especially the new election law adopted on July 20th.



While the US controls everything in the country how can you defend national industry?

Can you characterize the internal situation as more democratic since Mubarak came to power?

To talk about democracy in a third world country is always something relative. The situation is not the same as it was under Sadat. It became not worse. It is better for us as an opposition party. We can issue our paper, "Al Ahali" - 175,000 copies weekly. Counterattacks like confiscation of paper, typewriters and printing machines have stopped.

There is a new way of dealing with the opposition: They try to absorb us. When we showed them that we are not ready to be absorbed, they

started to create difficulties. The good chances that had been given to opposition parties are becoming smaller again, step by step, the more we make use of them. Some difficulties we have to face are still covered by the state of emergency, for instance, the prohibition of mass meetings. Some days ago they arrested some of our people in Beni Suef and detained them in the Citadel Prison, one of the most horrible places one can imagine...

What about the new election law?

It is completely madness. You cannot deal with it in any reasonable way. Egypt is the only country all over the world that has two systems for elections: the absolute for local and senate elections, and now the relative system for the People's Assembly. The relative system is against our constitution. There should be a decision against it from the high constitutional court, but they are members of parliament. (Now) independents cannot contest the election, and they prevent people from establishing new parties. That means that anyone who wants to be a candidate has to join one of the existing parties. We are not afraid of this margin of 8% minimum, not even of 15 or 20%, but they will manipulate anyhow, everybody knows. How could there be a participation of 99.9% (as officially claimed in the last elections), when the voting list of all who are entitled to vote is more than 30 years old, containing names of emigrants and people who died years ago?

How would the 8% margin affect election results?

Opposition parties are not strong in all areas. Our strongholds are working class areas. Let us say that our opposition party receives 20% in Alexandria and 15% in Cairo; that would mean 6 seats or members in Alexandria and 8 in Cairo. But according to the new law, we would probably lose them, because we can't reach 8% in total. The seats allotted for women (30%) will be guaranteed to the major party. That means 31 seats for the government in advance. Each member of parliament should represent 100,000 votes in a district. In the case we get 99,000 votes in a district, we will lose and the government party will gain a seat with 30 or 40% only because of the total percentages. This law is completely

crazy. In Sinai for instance, are 2 members of parliament. That means that a party might receive 40% but no seat. This is the situation in 9 districts. All together that means, of course, that the new law guarantees all seats of parliament to the government. OK, let them have it. We should not participate in that game.

Will you call for boycott?

Politically, it should be extremely useful to participate in the election campaign. Candidates should hold mass meetings in the streets and use the campaign to introduce the party program to people, but what can we do? TV, radio and all daily newspapers belong to the government. We are not allowed to hold mass meetings, but we should not justify the games of the government.

That means boycott?

We are still discussing. The possibility of a boycott is the most probable one.

What difficulties do you face besides this new election law?

You know what administrative interference means in a country like Egypt. They, government-party members, are responsible for the distribution of buildings, flats, everything you need for construction - wood, iron, concrete. If you are a party member, you get what you want. If not...

But you find ways to express opposition?

For instance, in Helwan, we prevented (then Israeli president) Navon from visiting any factory. It was announced that he wanted to see Helwan Textile Company. One day after this announcement, the Palestinian flag was to be seen all over, in every part of the factory. They had to discover that we held the majority of the trade union, the workers and the administrative staff. They looked for another factory in Helwan but failed completely. So they started to put pressure on our workers.

It was the same as it happened to the Palestinians in Beirut who were killed according to their ID card. When they (the authorities) discovered that the place of birth according to the ID card of a worker was a village in Upper Egypt, they sent him to that village, even if he was born in Cairo and just his father came from Upper Egypt. There are no jobs in the villages; this is the reason for people to come to Cairo. When they send a worker to a village, he will not find work - or maybe as a servant in a school if he is lucky... That's the way they put pressure on people.

So Mubarak is not better than Sadat was?

The situation under Sadat was unbearable. The situation under Mubarak is less unbearable. We try to use it, radicalize...

How does this less unbearable situation affect the masses?

We had some movements, some strikes. We encourage them, by our paper, by criticizing the government. Mass struggle is not usually announced, but it happens.

Doesn't the socio-economic situation force people to stand up for their rights?

Of course, it's becoming worse, but the more you get poor without consciousness, the more you become afraid.

What are the main demands your party works for?

Daily life forces us to face problems like cholera, illiteracy, salaries, rats... Things are connected. While the US controls everything in the country, you cannot defend national industry; you cannot defend the national economy without fighting for political independence; you cannot solve the economic problems without getting rid of foreign banks; you cannot fight for democracy only, while people are starving... Sadat's end indicated the collapse of the whole system.

Sadat was shot by Islamic radicals. Are you afraid of tendencies like that?

No. We are against individual actions, assassinations, against fanatic Islamic groups, but at the same time, we want any political element to be able to exist. Treating them violently creates counterviolence. These Islamic groups were created by Sadat himself to counter communists and leftists. There is a certain danger but not to the extent like Iran. The Egyptian people are not that fanatical, and don't forget that one-fifth of our population is Coptic, and the fanatic movement is split into 72 groups or even more.

Might pan-Islamism replace pan-Arabism?

Pan-Arabism is defeated, buried in Beirut, when the Palestinians were encircled for such a long time and nothing happened. All Arab regimes are responsible: those we call reactionary, moderate and those who are called progressive. All of them are responsible. We are in need of a new formula for pan-Arabism. It does not exist now. It should not be the petit bourgeois formula.

Bright Star- 83

Jordanian Participation Revealed

The start of the month-long Bright Star-83 military maneuvers on August 10th, underscored US imperialism's interventionist intentions in our area. Officially stated, the main purpose of these exercises is to "test American and western readiness to protect the oilfields of the Middle East from foreign conquest". As is well-known, "foreign conquest" in the Reagan Administration's jargon means nationalist and/or revolutionary social change. Plainly stated, the purpose is to execute the US decision to make the Rapid Deployment Force immediately operative, and to test coordination with the armed forces of US allies in the area.

In light of current contingencies, Bright Star-83 has other purposes as well. As has been charged by the nationalist opposition in Egypt, it aims to threaten Libya. Two AWACS, capable of spying on neighboring countries are present in Egypt as part of the maneuver. Flaunting US-Arab reactionary military strength in Egypt cannot be separated from the current imperialist intervention in Chad, and the attempts to blame the conflict there on "Libyan interference".

Broadly speaking, the maneuvers represent a threat to the sovereignty and independent development of all the peoples of the area. For this reason, Democratic Yemen, Iran, Ethiopia, Libya and Syria have lodged official protests vs. the maneuvers. Bright Star-83 has been denounced by all nationalist and progressive forces, and even in the media of some reactionary states. Nonetheless, 5,500 US troops and a comparable number of Egyptian forces went ahead with

the exercise, but the Mubarak regime imposed a virtual news blackout concerning the details of the arrival of US troops and equipment, and the exercises themselves.

Besides the maneuvers in Egypt, Bright Star-83 officially includes anti-guerilla maneuvers in Sudan, an amphibious landing in Somalia and air exercises in Oman. However the revelation that secret US-Jordanian exercises took place just prior to the official opening in Egypt on August 10, gives credence to speculation that other unannounced preparations for aggression have also been on the agenda.

King Hussein hosts the RDF

On August 7th, it was announced that the commander of the Jordanian air force, Staff General Mohammad Taysir Zaarour was demoted to assistant chief of staff. He was replaced by Lieutenant General Ihsan

Hamed Shardam, brother of the commander of the Jordanian Special Forces.

What was not officially announced was that this shuffle was due to the poor performance of the Jordanian air force when it had engaged in joint exercises with 750 US troops of the RDF a few days earlier in the northeastern desert, in accordance with previous bilateral agreements on military cooperation signed by the US and Jordan's regime.

Two US AWACS, which had most probably been on a mission in Iraq before, were used in the maneuvers with King Hussein in attendance. Before his eyes, simulated enemy air raids destroyed a Hawk anti-aircraft missile base without its having fired a missile. It was later discovered that the missile batteries were defective. King Hussein left the field in great annoyance, and the changes in the air force command were soon made.

Added to this new proof of the Jordanian regime's collaboration with the US efforts to spread its military network in our area, there were unconfirmed reports that similar secret maneuvers took place in Saudi Arabia and Iraq.



Threat to PDRY

The PFLP received the following message from the Yemeni Socialist Party, dated August 10, 1983:

The Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Yemeni Socialist Party sends its comradely greetings to the leadership of your militant party. We would like to discuss with you the US military maneuvers "Bright Star", which are taking place in the period from August 10th to September 10th. We do so in the spirit of consultation on common issues related to the struggle of our Arab peoples and liberation movement.

You understand clearly that US imperialism is actively working to impose its hegemony in the entire Arab area. In so doing US imperialism opposes the Arab people's will to complete their liberation and achieve social progress, in particular the will of the Arab people of Palestine in their just struggle for the right to return, self-determination and establishing an independent state on their national soil, led by the PLO, their sole, legitimate representative.

Now US imperialism does not solely depend on Israel, as a forward base, and the reactionary Arab regimes to protect its interests and suppress the national democratic struggle waged by the Arab people. Thus, while continuing to depend on them, US imperialism is also installing military bases in the Arab region. At the same time, it surrounds the Arab countries with a large number of warships and fleets which carry nuclear weapons. Moreover, joint military agreements were signed with a number of Arab

countries, enabling the US to increase its military experts and obtain facilities for transporting and stocking arms, and using the territories of these countries for aggressive purposes.

The US administration officials bluntly declare their readiness to intervene militarily in the internal affairs of the Arab countries, especially in the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf, under the pretext of protecting the "vital interests" of the US and confronting the "Soviet danger", etc. In this context, the Rapid Deployment Force is the means for executing this policy of military intervention. For these purposes yearly training programs are held with the full cooperation of the governments of Egypt, Sudan, Somalia and Oman in these countries' territories, skies and territorial waters.

The military maneuvers taking place this year are the third of their kind. They reveal more clearly the aggressive objectives which US imperialism is working to achieve. It is no longer a secret that among these objectives is intensifying tension in the area, increasing aggressive provocations, and preparing for an attack against Democratic Yemen, the national regimes and the Arab national liberation movement. This is done jointly with the forces of the puppet regimes. All this occurs at the same time as the ongoing attempts to liquidate the Palestinian revolution, and to subject Syria and other Arab forces of steadfastness.

In the view of the Yemeni Socialist Party, these military maneuvers and the entire conspiratorial aggressive policy of imperialism should not go unchallenged. Rather, continuous struggle is demanded to expose and combat it. We anticipate that your militant party will express in different forms your opposition to the US imperialist military maneuvers and aggressive policies against our people.

US Military Presence in the Arab Gulf and Peninsula- In Historical Perspective

Operation Bright Star - 83 lends special relevance to the following study written by the Popular Front of Bahrain this May. We have made slight editing and abbreviation and added some boxes.

The US presence in the Arabian Gulf and Peninsula is manifested in many forms, dedicated to establishing full control of the region at present and in the future, taking into consideration imperialism's experience in the last 20 years, so that this control will not collapse.

US strategy in this region is part of the US global strategy, which is becoming more aggressive with the increase of national struggle and Soviet strength. This strategy aspires particularly dangerous aspects in the Gulf due to the magnitude of imperialism's economic inte-

rests here, which the US is keen to preserve. The US thus seeks to block the liberation of the people of the area, for this would greatly contribute to the anti-imperialist struggle and social progress in the three continents.

It is worthwhile to review the US military presence in a historical context: the current presence, the future hegemonical plans, and the planned imperialist options in the case of intensified revolutionary struggle in the Middle East.

First: US military presence historically

Beginning in the 19th century, the US focused on the missionary field, whereby officially supported missions were established in Muscat

A shiekh sitting on the pipes is not enough to protect the oil.



and Bahrain. The Protestant church, the American school and the missionary hospital were set up side-by-side. Religion was used to break national resistance; education was used to develop pro-American cadre; the hospital served to impress the masses, posing US imperialism as humanitarian and thus different from the defamed colonial powers. It has been proven that these establishments were tools of US imperialist infiltration, regardless of the good intentions of some of the personnel of that era.

At the beginning of this century, the Arabian Gulf was the exclusive domain of British imperialism. The US entry took place when US oil monopolies succeeded in securing concessions in Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, and in imposing a partnership with their European allies in the so-called Red Line Agreement of 1927.

In the military field, the initiative of President Roosevelt, who declared in 1942, that the "defense of Saudi Arabia is of vital importance to the US", marks a turning point in the US policy of interference, competition and later inheritance of the British role in the region, militarily and politically.

US military interests were manifested in two phenomena:

1. US military presence at the British naval base at Al Jufair in Bahrain after the second world war in accordance with arrangements with the UK. This US presence continued under the British umbrella until December 1971, when the UK withdrew from the Arab Gulf. The US maintained its military presence through treaties with the governments of Bahrain (Dec. 1971) and Saudi Arabia (1954). In Saudi Arabia, the US stationed a military training mission headquarters which developed into a major base. The role of this base receded with the development of facilities as part of the US-supported Saudi military build-up.

2. Support to local regimes—the Nixon Doctrine: US concern for the Arab Gulf region increased with the 1968 British declaration that they would withdraw by the end of 1971. US officials propagated the thesis of a "military vacuum" due to the British withdrawal, and the impact of this on imperialist interests in the region.

Due to US preoccupation with Vietnam, coupled with the relative weakness of the local opposition, which posed no imminent danger to the ruling regimes, the US developed the Nixon Doctrine. This emphasized development of the US-supported regimes, and intensification of their economic, political and military bondage to the US and the rest of the capitalist camp. This was designed to strengthen the common interests between the monopolies on the one hand, and the local ruling alliance, composed of ruling tribes, compradors and state technocrats on the other. The Nixon Doctrine as applied in the region was based on two pillars: Iran and Saudi Arabia; Iran

was entrusted with the military role and Saudi Arabia with the political.

US arms flowed to Iran where a complex of air, ground and naval bases and surveillance stations, and a huge US-trained and armed Iranian armed force were established. The Imperial Iranian Armed Forces, acting as regional gendarme in accordance with the Nixon Doctrine, dashed into Oman in late 1973, staging a fierce war against the Omani revolution, inflicting a military defeat on the PFLO, and recapturing most of the liberated zone.

However, US policy generated its negation in Iran. With the flow of arms, the development of the military hierarchy, increased dependence on the US and growing isolation of the ruling class, the masses and nationalist forces rose in revolt, ending with the fall of the Shah in Feb. 1979. The US was pushed into the corner, unable to act; the final blow was dealt to US presence in Iran with the victory of the revolution, the collapse of CENTO and of the Iranian military establishment as an annex to the imperialist military presence. The collapse of the Nixon doctrine in Iran did not mean that the US totally dropped this policy. Rather, it was altered in the context of the new regional conditions after the Iranian revolution.

The local ruling powers were weak, perplexed and shaken, confronting a popular uprising in the wake of the Iranian revolution's victory. The US administration undertook a new policy of direct involvement. The US sent two squadrons of F15s to Saudi Arabia in early 1979 to reassure its client that was terrified by the revolution in Iran and the revolutionary initiative against the regime in Sanaa, North Yemen.

Top US Arms Customers

The extent of US armament of Saudi Arabia, and the importance attached to the role of Egypt and Pakistan, was apparent in statistics published in "Disarmament Forum" recently. In the fiscal year of 1982, Saudi Arabia was the biggest overseas customer for US arms, buying to a value of \$7.400 million - three times more than in 1981. It was followed by Australia (\$2.800 million), Egypt (\$2.100 million), Pakistan (\$1.000 million), and 'Israel' (\$656 million).

Note: The Zionist state's relatively low ranking in these statistics must be viewed in relation to the fact that it possesses a much greater arsenal in advance and enjoys a highly privileged position when procuring US arms. When not outright donated, arms are paid for on a very long-term basis; the bill is almost entirely covered by other US aid. Thus, the sales of a single year do not necessarily give an accurate picture of the US military support to 'Israel'.

The US introduced the Carter Doctrine which stresses the establishment of the Rapid Deployment Force of 110,000 troops, selected from the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines, to be deployed in areas of strategic importance. The Gulf region has been sighted as a primary target for this aggressive policy of direct intervention. Does this mark a real shift in imperialist policy? No, the imperialists, like the colonialists before, use local client regimes, but if these fail to subjugate the people, then direct intervention is employed.

During Carter's era, Zbigniew Brzezinski advocated manipulating contradictions between the US's adversaries. Moreover, not expecting to find parallel interests with its adversaries, the US should seek to find the points where its own interests intersect with theirs. This thesis was manifested in the Iraq-Iran war, which the US has manipulated to draw Iraq into its camp, to weaken Iran and to establish a military net in the region. This war has served the US more than any other single event in the Gulf region in recent decades.

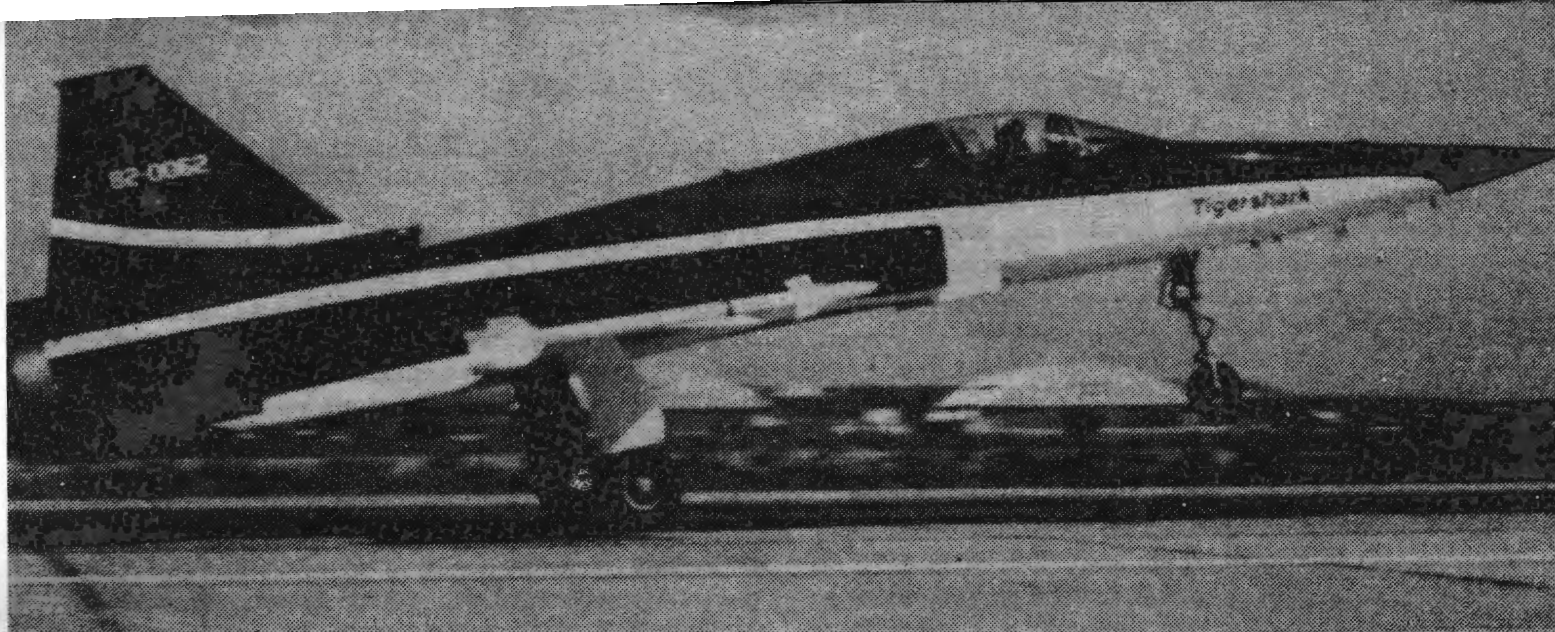
When the Reagan Administration took over with its program of escalating confrontation with the socialist camp and liberation forces, it pushed Carter's strategy of direct military involvement even further. The Carter Administration had provided most of the logistical requirements for the RDF, but it still faced organizational problems due to rivalry in the Pentagon hierarchy. Reagan overcame these obstacles through the formation of the Central Military Command, independent of the four branches of the armed forces with its own command and responsibility covering the region from Egypt to Pakistan. It is well known that the Middle East, especially the Arab Gulf and Peninsula, assume special importance in this aggressive policy. Securing oil and imposing a reactionary settlement for the Arab-Zionist conflict are the cornerstones of US policy in the Arab world. These two objectives are inter-related. It is no coincidence that Saudi Arabia, the leading oil-producer and primary US client, plays a dominant role in efforts to impose US policy vis-a-vis a settlement for the Arab - Zionist conflict.

Second: Forms of US military presence

For the sake of simplicity, we divide the US military presence into two categories: overt and covert. These two forms complement each other, while US military presence is in turn complemented by the presence of its western allies such as the UK and France.

A. Overt US military presence

The US naval base in Bahrain at Al Jufair shows the US's direct involvement in the Arab



Bahrain has bought 6 US Tigershark fighter bombers to the tune of \$180 million.

Gulf, even where the UK once dominated. The title of this base, until 1977 the US Middle East Task Force Command, has been changed to the US Administrative Support Command. Also, the terms of agreement between the US and Bahraini governments were altered from the 1971 to the 1977 treaty. Yet, this made no real change in the fact that this base has always served US regional strategy and shifting policies. During the March 1983 visit of Bahrain's Crown Prince, also Defense Minister, to Washington, further facilities were granted to the US.

The victory of the Iranian revolution in Feb. 1979, signalled a new, qualitative military build-up in the region. The Iraq-Iran war gave an added pretext for this. After the fall of the Shah, the US propagated the domino theory while the client regimes were anxious for the US to prove its credibility. Carter officially designated "The Gulf and Peninsula region as a vital region for the US and its allies, which will be defended by all means, including military means." Carter initiated the RDF as a means of carrying out the strategy of direct intervention. Detailed maps of a possible US military takeover of the Arab oil fields and facilities were presented by the US administration to the Congress. The Pentagon sent several missions to the region and nearby countries in search of bases and facilities for the RDF.

The multipurpose base at Masireh, Oman, has been used by the US 7th Fleet, in partnership with the UK, since the Vietnam war. After the termination of the UK commitment in 1979, the base became fully US. Since early 1979, several military delegations have visited Oman. In late 1981, the US Defense Secretary and Chief of Staff visited Oman to select the locations for new US bases and to make detailed plans for their establishment and development. In March 1980, the US and Oman signed an agreement granting the US military facilities in Oman. The US appropriated \$414 million for the development of US bases, facilities and infrastructure in Oman. Officially, the US acknowledges facili-

ties in seven bases: Salalah, Thamreet, Raysoul, Muscat, Al Seeb, Masandam and Masireh.

Direct US military presence in the Gulf is part of a broader, more complex presence in the surrounding countries: Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, Kenya and Turkey. It is supplemented by the French bases in Djibouti and the Comores. It is part of an even more complex structure comprising NATO, SEATO and the Pacific Alliance.

B. Covert US military presence

Current US policy is an extension of the Nixon doctrine of bolstering the client regimes in order to confront local adversaries. In this Saudi Arabia is a key factor. Support to the Saudi regime is undertaken through the US-Saudi comprehensive agreement of June 1974. Since the fall of the Shah, the US has been promoting Saudi Arabia as a strong force and US arsenal. With this prospect, the following projects were undertaken:

1. The construction of military cities and comprehensive bases which are much bigger than required by the Saudi Armed Forces (SAF) and much more complex than its capabilities. The standardization, systems and operation are such as to fit the RDF.

2. The flow of thousands of US military advisers, experts and operative personnel under the pretext of training the SAF, National Guard and Security Forces.

3. The shipment of huge supplies of arms, equipment and ammunition, far surpassing the needs of the SAF. Recently, it has been reported that the US is shipping 1,000 ultramodern M1 tanks, 800 of which will be stored for the RDF. The US returns from arms sales, training, construction, operation and maintenance of military infrastructure constitute the quickest and most effective way of recycling oil revenues. The US and other western states have hereby secured billions of dollars yearly.

4. Regional cooperation between Saudi Arabia and other US clients: Turkey, Pakistan, Morocco. In addition to housing US bases and facilities,

these states are linked to Saudi Arabia in an undeclared alliance under US guidance. They furnish Saudi Arabia with training, expertise, and in the case of Pakistan and Morocco, military contingents. In turn, Saudi Arabia finances their armament and gives other economic aid.

5. Saudi Arabia initiated the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and guided it to be a military and security pact under the US umbrella. After the fall of the Shah and the Iraqi regime's entrapment in a war of attrition with Iran, the two obstacles to Saudi domination in the Gulf were removed. The road was open for establishing a new, Saudi - led regional order. The GCC was established at the Abu Dhabi summit in May, 1981, comprising the six pro-western oil states of the Gulf: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, UAE, Bahrain and Oman. Two characteristics of the GCC are noteworthy:

(1) Though the GCC is a comprehensive pact, the military and security aspect is predominant.

(2) Though the foundation document states that the aim of the GCC is to establish its own power as an alternative to foreign powers in the Gulf, the contrary has been the case: US military presence accelerated with the progress of the GCC's military and security projects.

In October 1982, the GCC defense ministers held their first meeting at Taif, Saudi Arabia, and made the following decisions:

(1) Unification of their air defense systems with the AWACS deployed in Saudi Arabia as the backbone. The AWACS is operated on lease by a US corps linked to the US Central Command.

(2) Allocation of 650 million US dollars to boost Oman's military build-up and 150 million to Bahrain for the same purpose. Notably, the boost in Omani and Bahraini armament was undertaken by the US, which is to supply Bahrain with F5E Starfighter planes and both countries with US tanks, ground-to-air missiles, Tow rockets, etc.

Two tendencies exist within the GCC concerning US military presence:

(1) Oman advocates open alliance with the US to confront what it considers "Soviet expansion and subversive local activities initiated by the Soviets". Bahrain concurs with this line.

(2) Saudi Arabia, in light of its leadership of official Arab and Islamic politics, shares the basic outlook of Oman, but prefers covert US presence and a US presence ready on the horizon. The US forces should intervene when the local forces are unable to control the situation. Before 1979, Saudi Arabia opposed Oman's policy but since then it seems that the two policies coexist. In any case, US military presence in the two forms complement each other.

Though Kuwait, and the UAE to some extent, oppose both the above lines and call for the GCC's non-alignment, they could not block the Saudi-dominated GCC.

Third: US projects of domination

Although US military presence in the Arabian Gulf and Peninsula is the most prominent form of domination, the US and other imperialist forces have undertaken policies to subvert the socio-economic and cultural structure in order to consolidate their grip on this region. We will review these policies briefly:

1. Upon the oil boom of 1973, the imperialists and local regimes adopted policies for distorting the class structure by encouraging immigrant workers from countries linked to the US, such as Pakistan, South Korea, Thailand, Bangladesh, etc. in addition to India. At the same time, obstacles were put in the way of Arab immigrant workers, especially Palestinians, Syrians and South Yemenis. This policy aims at keeping the citizens non-productive in a parasitic society, characterized by consumption and foreign dependency, with oil revenues as the only source of livelihood.

2. Several sources have revealed that some immigrant workers (Koreans and Thais) are actually trained military corps in reserve, waiting for the order to act on behalf of the US.

3. Total corruption of the individual citizen and local strata through fully paid, covert unemployment (state employment), redistribution of oil revenues, encouragement of brokerage, land speculation, embezzling, etc. and the promotion of a consumptive life style.

4. Deformation of the political development and consciousness: The ruling tribal families have been preserved and strengthened, not only by sheer force, but through propaganda and brainwashing.

5. Ideological and cultural alienation: Two complementary trends are officially encouraged - the Islamic reactionary trend and the western-

The start of the Gulf RDP



Pakistan: Air Cover for Imperialism

The US's latest aid package to Zia Ul Haq's regime in Pakistan, running at \$3.2 billion and including the delivery of 40 F16s, has a very specific design. Bolstering Pakistan's air force is another way round for securing the reactionary Gulf states. For two decades, Gulf pilots have trained in Pakistan, and coordination has increased with the advent of the GCC's unified air defense system. Currently, Pakistan is building new air bases in Baluchistan, some along the coast facing the Gulf and others in the north facing Afghanistan. Besides being useful for the regime in warding off the Baluchi people's historical struggle for independence, Pakistan's new military facilities fit neatly into US plans

for ensuring control of the Gulf oil and for countering Soviet support to the progressive government in Kabul.

While officially denying involvement in the RDF, Zia Ul Haq's regime is playing a leading role in the creation of smaller, local RDFs, such as have been mentioned by some of the Gulf rulers previously, to act on behalf of the US, or supplementary to RDF action. On June 30th, the "Indian Express" daily reported that a special division of 20,000 men had been set up in Pakistan in accordance with a US plan. This force is being equipped and trained along RDF lines, ready to be flown to a neighboring country in the event of a crisis for imperialist-reactionary control. The activities of the US and Pakistani armed forces will be coordinated through an air command for the Middle East and Gulf to be based in Karachi.

oriented trend. Progressive and nationalist ideology, culture and ideals are branded as communist and associated with evil.

Four: Imperialist options

A. Imperialism resorts to coup d'etat once the popular movement reaches the stage of threatening US presence and the client regime concerned. Examples are Turkey, Pakistan and Iran in 1956. The scenario which took place in these countries could be repeated in any Gulf state. The course of events in North Yemen in the late sixties, which led to the establishment of a pro-US military regime, is a successful experience for the US in the Arabian Peninsula. The fact that the military hierarchy being developed in the Arabian Gulf and Peninsula is linked to US advisers and the CIA, makes this option both credible and logical.

B. The second option is immediate, direct US military involvement. US officials have repeatedly assured that such involvement should be in full cooperation with the states of the region and their armed forces. It is here that the policy of direct intervention converges with the Nixon doctrine's application. We can see preparations for this option in the following:

1. The joint military maneuvers with local forces in Egypt, Oman, Somalia and Saudi Arabia as in Bright Star, Nov.-Dec. 1981, and Brave Tiger, Nov.-Dec. 1982.

2. The establishment of an undeclared pact among the regional forces: Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Pakistan, where the latter two are assigned the role of regional gendarme, but this time as auxiliaries to the US presence on the horizon - the RDF. The Turkish military's operation in Kurdistan this spring is a prime example of the Turkish role. The US bases established for the

RDF at Adna (Turkey) and Baluchistan (Pakistan) are in the vicinity of the region designated for US intervention.

C. The third option is practiced through the Zionist state, which since its establishment in May, 1948, has played the role of US gendarme in the region. "Israel" is the staging base of a continuous US war against the Arab nation. Though it has its own objectives, namely expansion at the expense of Arab land and people, "Israel", through its wars and, paradoxically, its "peace" treaties, has furthered US hegemony over the Arabs enormously. Israeli aggression has weakened more than one Arab regime, forcing them to seek a settlement with "Israel" by way of US mediation. Kissinger noted this phenomenon and stipulated that active US mediation should be determined by a positive stand on the part of the Arab oil producers towards the US and its allies.

Egypt: Update

With the rapprochement between Mubarak's regime and other pro-US Arab regimes, Egypt's role in the imperialist military plans for the area will become more prominent in the future. The late-May suspension of US-Egyptian talks on developing facilities for the RDF at Ras Banas might have seemed to retard the Reagan Administration's hopes for making the force immediately operational. However, the real core of RDF presence in Egypt became clear a month later with the revelation that a secret US Air Force base had been established in Egypt last year. Charted for expansion, this base now comprises 100 US airmen and the storage of \$70 million worth of military supplies.

Interviews from Prague

At the World Assembly for Peace and Life Against Nuclear War, held in Prague (see last Bulletin), we had the opportunity to interview various other delegates. Below we share two of these interviews with you. We were also privileged to interview Alfred Nzo, one of the leaders of the ANC-South Africa, but unfortunately the tape was malfunctioning. Also we spoke with women from the FMLN of El Salvador in Spanish.

US Peace Council

Robert Prince, Vice Chairman
of the US Peace Council

What kinds of activities are there against the nuclear race in the US? Who carries out these activities?

In the US today, there is a strong movement against the nuclear arms race. Since Reagan was elected as President, this movement has grown a lot. Many Americans are worried that Reagan's Administration is actively pursuing a policy that could lead to a limited or all-out nuclear war. Such a war would mean the end of humanity as we know it. Reagan's plans to build the MX missile, to come to build neutron bombs and to force Cruise and Pershing missiles on Europe, are meeting stronger and stronger resistance from all sectors of the US people. Reagan is pursuing the nuclear arms race at the expense of the working and poor people of the USA. His plan calls for 1.5 trillion dollars in military spending for the next five years. Such an insane program is of course at the expense of jobs, education, health care and other social programs, which have been cut by Reagan.

What are the possibilities for support to the Palestinian struggle in the USA? What are the new tendencies of US policy on the international level against the Palestinian

people? What kind of struggle do you see against these tendencies?

Since the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June 1982, there has been a new atmosphere in the US for speaking of the situation of the Palestinians. At the same time, there is much criticism, much more than ever before, of the policies of Begin and Sharon, both of whom are seen to be the enemies of peace. The massacre of Palestinian civilians at Sabra and Shatila shocked the conscience of many Americans. As a result, more and more, the American people don't look at the Palestinian-Israeli conflict from such a one-sided view as they did in the past. There is growing recognition that real peace in the Middle East must include in its core recognition of the (Palestinians') right to establish an independent state on their own Palestinian territories that Israel occupied in 1967. While all this is obviously not new to Palestinians, in the US these ideas are finally taking root in a serious manner. I'll give you some examples:

- (1) Since the war, many churches have come out with positions sympathetic to the Palestinian right of self-determination.
- (2) There are today new and very serious groups in the Jewish community that disagree with mainline Zionist thinking - for example, the New Jewish

Agenda. (3) In the US Congress, many voices are calling for cuts in US military aid to Israel, especially some members of the Congressional Black Caucus. (4) The United Auto Workers, an important US union, passed a historic resolution at the last convention, recognizing the right of the Palestinian people to their own state.

While Zionist support in the US remains strong, these new developments will make it more difficult for Reagan's Administration to act blindly in cooperation with Israel.

How do you evaluate the results of this assembly?

Many of the members of the US delegation have commented that by attending this assembly, they feel they have participated in a truly historical turning point. In any case this assembly has been important for the US delegation. We have all seen the strong sentiment from the socialist countries to reverse the nuclear arms race. We were very impressed with the demonstration of over 20,000 people this week. We have met and discussed with representatives from national liberation movements, including the PLO, ANC, SWAPO, El Salvador. We had the opportunity to hear the shining remarks of Yasir Arafat. This is a lot for us in one week. The assembly will inspire the US delegation to return home and work even more seriously for peace.

Do you believe that the international policy of Reagan helps the American people?

The international policy of the Reagan Administration, whether in the Middle East, Latin America, Africa or Europe, is not a policy in the interests of the American people. It is a policy in the interest of multinational corporations who both inside and outside the US know only one principle: the maximalization of profit. Reagan's foreign policy is dangerous, even reckless, for it does not rule out military confrontation with the USSR. The people of my country bear special responsibility to ensure that President Reagan is not re-elected in 1984.

SWAPO

Pendubeni Civula-Kaulinge, member of SWAPO Central Committee and Secretary General for the SWAPO Womens Council:

What kind of activities are carried out in your homeland against the nuclear race? Who is promoting these activities?

The Namibian nation, being a colonized one, is faced with all kinds of dangers. My people are under the grip of a dangerous regime on the African continent. This regime has already equipped itself with nuclear weapons, which it produces itself, and the Kahan desert of our country is being used as the testing ground for these dangerous weapons. Thus, the Namibian people feel very insecure, and women in particular have organized meetings and demonstrations where they explain the danger of nuclear weapons.

How do you see the possibility for mutual support between the Palestinian resistance against Zionism, and your resistance against the racist, aggressive regime in Pretoria?

What is the program of the US Peace Council on the Middle East?

The main points of our program concerning the Middle East are:

1. There should be a cut in US military and economic aid to Israel, Egypt and Turkey.
2. US military bases in the Middle East should be dismantled.
3. The Rapid Deployment Force should be dismantled.
4. There should be no US nuclear missiles in the region.
5. There must be a settlement of the Palestinian-Israeli crisis based on the Brezhnev peace proposal, or the US - Soviet joint statement on the Middle East of October 1, 1977

Dear comrades, our enemies - South Africa and Israel - have made our two struggles almost identical if not the same. The humiliation you have gone through as Palestinians, through the Zionist policy of oppression, detention, killing and maiming, is exactly the same as that we have gone through as black Namibians through the apartheid policy which gives rights to whites to kill, torture, maim and detain us without their being responsible to any authority.

Therefore, we all are fighting now to regain our human dignity and the independence of our country, where we will be living in peace and tranquility. Knowing the aims for which the Palestinian people are fighting, I came to the conclusion that we all fight for one thing, that is, recognition of our people's rights and independence, and a homeland for the Palestinians. Therefore, the possibilities for our cooperation are very great, since our aims are the same and there is nothing contradictory if not just complementary.

As fighting peoples, we have to close ranks and intensify our cooperation so that we exchange views and informations which are useful in toppling our common enemies, that is, apartheid South Africa and Zionist Israel.

Would you comment on the new trends in US policy against your people?

The present US government has brought to a standstill the negotiations which have been going on for seven years now, concerning the independence of my country. Although the western contact group, i.e. Britain, France, West Germany, Canada and the US, appointed themselves to negotiate for our independence, we on our part gave them the chance to... even knowing that they were big supporters of the racist regime of South Africa. With the coming to power of Mr. Reagan, the West's intentions became clear. The US policy concerning the independence of Namibia became categorically clear - that Namibia can only become independent if the Cuban internationalist troops withdraw from the People's Republic of Angola. The Cubans went to Angola according to bilateral agreement between the governments of Angola and Cuba. If one asks him or herself about the connection between Angola and Namibia, so that the withdrawal of the Cubans can be made a precondition to our independence, one comes to the conclusion that the US is not sincere and acts overtly on behalf of South Africa.



سبيرا وشاتيليا

NEVER AGAIN
SABRA-SHATILA



International Seminar on the Sabra-Shatila Massacre
Athens, September 16th-18th 1983

الندوة الدولية حول مجزرة صبرا وشاتيليا
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