

Lebanese Forces into the accord, despite earlier suppositions that he could contain the internal fascist contradictions.

Boycott Gemayel!

In the aftermath of Hobeika's ouster from East Beirut, the nationalist forces opened fire on the mountain strongholds of Gemayel and Geagea, north and east of Beirut. Fighting broke out on the traditional frontlines: Beirut's green line and the mountains around Souk al Gharb. Jumblatt and Berri declared a boycott of Amin Gemayel's regime, and were joined by other prominent politicians such as Suleiman Franjeh and Education Minister Salim Hoss. Prime Minister Karami drew the obvious conclusion of the whole affair when he said, «If the transition period is to scrap political confessionalism, why don't we shorten it and call for immediate implementation?»

On January 22nd, Hobeika visited Damascus and returned from there to Lebanon. Press reports spoke of a front of all those forces committed to implementing the tripartite accord. According to PSP official Shehaye, the nationalist forces have two options to get out of the crisis: «implementation of the tripartite accord or the removal of its opponents. There is no third alternative. As long as Gemayel is determined to obstruct the accord, we face an unknown destiny.» As we go to press, it is unknown whether there will be a decision to eliminate the military power of the Gemayel-Geagea axis, or if political means will be employed; or if the hard-line fascists will unleash a new round of violence. In any case, January's events reaffirm the improbability of ending the Lebanese crisis as long as the fascist forces retain their military prowess and their hold on state power.

Shelling and raiding villages is usually presented as reprisal for anti-occupation military operations, or to force the youth of a village to join the SLA. The real intent is population transfer in line with Israeli plans for continued intervention in Lebanon. Those subject to displacement are patriots. Due to their activity in the Lebanese National Resistance, they are perceived as undesirables by the Zionists, to be replaced by a loyal population drawn mainly from among Christians. The Israeli expulsion policy in the 'security zone' is the extension of the process begun in April 1985, when Lebanese Forces commander Samir Geagea withdrew his fascist forces from the Saida (Sidon) area, and thus triggered a Christian exodus to Jezzine. The ultimate aim is to empty the South of its native population.

In this context, one can analyze the changed demography of the villages between Jezzine and Marjeyoun. As mentioned above, Sojod is deserted as is another village, Mlikh (formerly 3000 inhabitants). Residents of Blatt have been expelled. Louizi is almost deserted. Kfar Houna had 10,000 inhabitants: one-third Shiite, two-thirds Christian. Today there are only 130 Shiites left. The Christians who opposed the segregationist policy also had to leave and were replaced by Christian refugees from the Saida area.² Aramta, before a totally Shiite village, is now inhabited by only 50 Shiite families, along with 70 Christian families who were relocated there to occupy the empty houses. Rihane was a small Shiite village; most of its original population has fled. Seventy Christian families have been resettled there.

Israeli 'Security' Zone

Rampant Human Rights Violations

In June 1985, when 'Israel' announced its withdrawal from South Lebanon, attention turned away from the area as if the problem had been solved. The reality was an altogether different story. Up to 1000 Israeli occupation troops, advisers and intelligence agents (Shin Beth) remain in southernmost Lebanon - the Zionists' so-called security zone. Here they preside over a reign of terror where the thugs of Lahd's South Lebanon Army (SLA) do the dirty work - killing, arresting, torturing and otherwise harassing the local population.

«They came to us at midnight and said anyone who does not leave will be slaughtered.»

These are the words of a resident of Kounin, speaking to reporters at a refugee assembly point north of the 'security zone'. They describe how Israeli occupation troops and SLA militiamen stormed into Kounin (located in the 'security zone') on December 31st, and expelled 400 residents. Twenty families of Meiss al Jabal, near Marjeyoun, suffered the same fate in early August, when some of the sons of the village deserted from the SLA.

Sojod, between Jezzine and Marjeyoun, is today a ghost town. Its 2000 inhabitants were violently expelled in July: «The last survivors having had to

escape the bullets of the SLA.»¹ Sojod is today the site of an Israeli-SLA military position. The population of many other villages in this area has been minimized by constant shelling and other forms of pressure enacted by the SLA and the Israeli occupation troops. In June alone, 2000 villagers were displaced from Yater and Kafra. The International Centre for Information on Palestinian and Lebanese Prisoners, Deportees and Missing Persons records over 450 instances of Israeli-SLA violations against the South's population from May through October 1985. These include raids on villages, house searches and arrests, dynamiting homes, firing on civilians, etc. The center notes that this list is far from comprehensive.

The detained and missing

The number of prisoners from South Lebanon was greatly reduced with the emptying of Ansar in April 1985, and the September release of the 1200 detainees who had been transferred to Atlit in occupied Palestine. Yet arrests have continued on a daily basis, and the fate of those detained today is, if anything, even more precarious. Denied not only legal recourse, but also family visits and contact with the Red Cross, their status is actually that of missing persons. When the ICRC approached the SLA about visiting the Khiam detention center, they were told that Israeli permission was required. «When we turn to the Israelis, they say they are not responsible for the prisoners and refer us back to the SLA. We have been playing this kind