

Interview with Comrade Abu Ali Aish, commander of the PFLP battalion in the Mountain.

Do you expect new military developments in this area considering the Geagea-Gemayel efforts to sabotage the tripartite accord?

Bloody disputes occurred in the fascist camp regarding the tripartite accord. The opposition to the accord was seen in the unity between the Gemayel and Geagea factions that took control of the fascist-held area. Their unity had clear Israeli backing. There should have been a new program of action for the nationalist forces in response to this situation but, due to various considerations, that was not the case. The situation remained within the framework of increased clashes and bombardment between the fascist and the nationalist sides. Our analysis was that the enemy forces might try to improve their positions on the ground. Therefore we were in a state of high alert. However, our front was less active than the Bikfaya front because of the objective political fact that Gemayel's home is in Bikfaya.

How is your coordination with other Palestinian forces in this area?

We stress the framework of the Palestine National Salvation Front (PNSF) in relating to other Palestinian forces. Previously, the PNSF was not very active, but a month ago we initiated an activation in the Mountain. This had positive effects on cooperation on the leadership and local level. We are pleased with the new pace and are working to close any gaps.

What priority do you give to political education for the fighters?

An essential part of our program is political and ideological education. This is what creates the new type of revolutionaries. In our battalion, this work was done effectively until the time of the camp war (May-June 1985). For a few months afterwards, it was not carried out as we like, because some cadres had to move to other battalions. In that period we noticed an increase of problems related to discipline and behavior. We have now solved the problem and are happy with the situation.

How do you answer those who propose that Palestinians only fight in occupied Palestine?

This position does not arise from a vacuum, because the Zionist entity is our direct enemy. However, this fact should not blind us to other facts. We in the PFLP have a position that liberating Palestine is linked to change in the neighboring countries. These countries have different regimes and views on the Palestinian question. Change is the responsibility of the progressive forces in each of these countries. We in turn have principled relations with the progressive forces. We support the national liberation movements in their struggle to change the social, economic and political system. Such change is in our national interests. This is very clear in Lebanon. When we fight here, and aim our gun in a seemingly opposite direction, we are fighting the Zionist-fascist project here. When we support the Lebanese national movement in its struggle for change in Lebanon, we are moving towards the liberation of Palestine. We cannot fight the Zionist enemy from Lebanon if the fascists are in control. We support the Lebanese national movement which also supports us in our struggle to liberate Palestine.

have some joint bases with the LCP which is a very positive experience.

Malek: We have good cooperation with the PSP and the LCP. In battles, we coordinate firepower. We also do joint fortifications work.

Ziad: I can give specific examples: We paved a military road together. We dig trenches together. We share cars when needed.

How are your relations with the neighboring villagers?

Faraj: Most people from this area have left because of the war. There are three or four families left. Our relations with them are very good. We help them fortify their homes. We bring them water sometimes and give our old bread to their chickens. We visit them in our spare time and discuss the political situation, emphasizing that the war is not sectarian, but a nationalist war. The people also help us. We once had problems with the tiles on our roof; they solved that. Sometimes they send us home-cooked food.

Jamil: Our relation with the civilians is very special; it is based on respect and trust.

How is coordination with other Palestinian organizations in this area?

Nassim: We have good relations with all Palestinian organizations. We initiated visits and give them *Al Hadaf*, our central magazine. We also help in training them in new weapons if needed. We coordinate fortifications work. During a battle, if we hear there is an injury on another base, we send our car to take the injured to the hospital.

Ziad: We have close coordination with the organizations of the Palestinian National Salvation Front. We have started dealing with our allies in the PSP as one group when requesting materials or ammunition...

Some say that Palestinians should fight only in Palestine and not be involved in the struggle outside. How do you answer this?

Malek: We are here to support the Lebanese national movement's fight to defeat the fascist-Zionist project. It is wrong to say we must fight only 'Israel'. We all know that the imperialist forces cooperate on the international level - aggression against Nicaragua, Angola and Afghanistan, the occupation of Grenada, the close cooperation between US imperialism, Zionism and the fascist regimes in Chile and South Africa. That is very clear. It makes it important for revolutionaries to cooperate internationally. What about revolutionaries who face interrelated problems? It is impossible to separate the Palestinian cause from the Lebanese. As we have the right to fight Zionism from South Lebanon, so we have a duty to fight fascism in the Mountain, to help bring about the national democratic program in Lebanon.

Do you have any final comments?

Nassim: We would like to send greetings from the fighters against fascism and Zionism in Lebanon, to all anti-imperialist comrades in the world and to all socialist countries, especially the Soviet Union.

Malek: In the West, people have the idea that the fedayeen are terrorists who like shooting. Well we like shooting, because we love the land and we love the flowers. We shoot for the beauty of the land and the flowers.