



Destruction in Sabra

great steadfastness. Four Palestinians were martyred and 18 injured. The situation calmed down on June 7th, although Amal continued sniping at the camps. The next day, Amal unleashed a heavy barrage of shelling, without notice, against Bourj Al Barajneh and Shatila, causing the death of seven and the injury of 17, mostly civilians.

As we go to press, the camp war remains unresolved. Yet whatever the outcome, the cause of this war and the reasons for its continuation are already clear. As stated by Comrade George Habash, General Secretary of the PFLP, at a press conference on June 5th: Amal «aims to eliminate or subdue the Palestinian armed presence in Lebanon. Their fighters continue to violate the ceasefire. Amal's position applies not only to the Palestinian

armed presence but to all nationalist organizations that fought the Israeli occupation.» Comrade Habash stressed that the Palestinian revolution was only engaging in self-defense in the battles around the camps. He specified the correct basis for ending the fighting as follows: «an immediate, honest and strict ceasefire, the withdrawal of Amal's forces from the areas around the camps, increasing the presence of the Lebanese nationalist forces to act as a buffer between the camps and Amal's positions, and consolidating the Palestine National Salvation Front's presence in the camps to maintain security and deal with any Palestinian violations.»

The casualty figures mentioned above are not necessarily comprehensive.

Jordan

Iron Fist in Steel Glove

On May 14th, the Jordanian regime's forces viciously suppressed student demonstrations at Yarmouk University in Irbid. It is estimated that 18 students were murdered in cold blood.

The Jordanian and Palestinian masses of the Hashemite kingdom are not unfamiliar with the viciousness of a regime which has long since used practices similar to those of its Zionist neighbor. Any spontaneous expression of the people's solidarity with any national cause has been crushed by Hussein's forces, using the most brutal methods. No age group has been spared—old people and school children have fallen prey.

The recent massacre at Yarmouk University is, however, unprecedented in terms of the intensity and length of the clashes between the authorities and students, and in terms of the bloodiness and number of victims. The iron fist royalists have not only struck at Irbid.

Arrests, house searches and interrogations have been going on in the capital, as well as in other areas and villages of the country. In mid-May, the Secretary General of the Jordanian Communist Party, as well as 16 cadres, including six politbureau members, were arrested.

For the past several months, Irbid has been the scene of mass arrests, interrogations and harassment of intellectuals, unionists and nationalists. The regime's frenzied brutality shows the extent to which it is prepared to go to smother any form of democratic expression of discontent, regarding anything from students' academic demands to political freedoms. It is also a reflection of undercurrents of discontent born of an acute economic crisis. Moreover, with a

population majority of approximately 70% Palestinians, Hussein is finding it increasingly difficult to speed along with his plans to wrench Palestinian representation from the PLO. Even the bloody extremes to which Hussein has already resorted are not enough to cower the people into accepting him as their representative.

UNIVERSITY OF THE UNDERPRIVILEGED

The majority of Yarmouk's 3000 students come from the underprivileged sectors of society, who have been unable to obtain acceptance at the more prestigious Jordanian University of Amman. This is due to their inability to pay fees designed to allow only the more privileged to filter through, plus a rigid wall of regulations engineered with loopholes which allow acceptance only for some.

The acute differences of the past two years, between students and the university administration, revolve around passing grade averages, fees and a number of other academic issues. Because of their continuous struggle to implement their academic rights, student activists have been labeled as «destructive elements». The university administration, backed by the intelligence, has taken this as a convenient pretext for launching any number of arbitrary measures, the latest of which has been murder.

NATIONALIST CRESCENDO

The student uprising at Yarmouk University was the culmination of a series of events which began when a sit-in hunger strike was organized in solidarity with the Palestinian masses commemorating Land Day on March 30th. University administration employees, collaborating with the general intelligence, supplied lists of the names of student activists suspected of leading activities. Not only were students prohibited from organizing the yearly Palestinian exhibition, but an Islamic book fair was also stopped. Ironically, the university brought in a US pop band to play on Yarmouk Day (the day of the university's establishment) instead of allowing the students to organize their activities. In past years, the administration has used this method, hiring pop groups or television celebrities to perform, instead of allowing students to organize activities, for fear of the dimensions which independent student organization might take. The new regulation giving the dean of student affairs the right to dissolve any student society without prior warning, further portrays the administration's determination to exert dictatorial control.

Tension began to climb again with the spontaneous mass response to the US attack on Libya. Demonstrations were organized in Amman as well as Irbid, but were not allowed to get very far before the police clamped down and