

the appointment of the four mayors in the West Bank, and intends to give financial aid to these municipalities." He said he had discussed the issue with the prime minister of Jordan.

The Jordanian regime knows full well that these moves will elicit mass opposition, which is why it is presenting the political poison with a financial sugar-coating. There is also a lot of fear among those proposed for appointment, because they realize the fate that awaits those who collaborate with the enemies of the Palestinian revolution. The execution of Zafer Al Masri has not been forgotten. Even the right wing leadership of the PLO has expressed its opposition to these appointments, because this serves 'Israel' as was stated by Arafat's deputy, Abu Jihad.

All patriotic Palestinian organizations issued a statement warning of the dangers of this step and advising people not to become the instrument of the Zionist-Jordanian plans.

In Gaza, Rashad Shawwa, infamous for his collaboration with the occupation, has become more outspoken. He visited Jordan in mid-July, where he saluted "the role King Hussein plays in supporting the people in the occupied West Bank and Gaza... Jordan is the closest party that knows what is going on in the occupied territories." Shawwa praised Jordan's decision to grant passports to Gazans who reside in Jordan—a measure that he has advocated since 1970 in order to strengthen the King's claim to representing the Palestinians. Shawwa said that the PLO "should not enforce its position on the Palestinian people, but should hold a referendum." He expressed support to resolution 242, claiming it preserves the rights of the Palestinian people (*Al Ra'i* Jordanian daily, July 16th).

Shawwa is not naive. He knows full well the implications of proposing the PLO hold a referendum under the prevailing conditions of occupation. By seesawing between Cairo and Amman, he is trying to carve a place for himself in a condominium arrangement whereby the West Bank and Gaza Strip would be jointly administered by the Zionist state and Jordan. The right-wing leadership of the PLO bears part of the responsibility for Shawwa's moves, for it has dealt with him in a way that gave him a nationalist cover.

All Palestinian nationalist organizations issued statements condemning Shawwa's remarks which are in line with the Jordanian regime's efforts to find an alternative leadership for the Palestinian people. They condemned Shawwa's capitulationist position and warned all those collaborating with Jordan of the dangers of involvement in the Jordanian-Israeli conspiracy of 'self-rule' and condominium arrangements.

OFFICE CLOSURES

On July 8th, the Jordanian regime took a further step intended to weaken the PLO and its links with the Palestinians in the West Bank, and to increase pressure on the Arafat leadership. All 25 offices of Arafat's Fatah organization in Jordan were closed, including Arafat's own office. Abu Jihad, Arafat's deputy, was ordered to leave the country within 48 hours. Armored vehicles surrounded Palestinian offices.

Soon after these measures were announced, cheers of joy echoed in Zionist circles. In a comment to *Yediot Aharonot* Israeli daily, Prime Minister Peres praised King Hussein and his moves to encourage an alternative Palestinian leadership. Defense Minister Rabin called the Jordanian moves "a step in the right direction." An Israeli official, who declined to be identified, said that the closing of the offices will improve cooperation between 'Israel' and Jordan concerning the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In Washington, US officials commented positively on the Jordanian steps. One of them, speaking off the record, said that Hussein's aim was to put more pressure on Arafat (*Al Safir*, July 9th).

The Palestinian response was naturally quite the opposite. Students at West Bank universities demonstrated against the King's anti-PLO measures. In Jerusalem and Nablus, hundreds came out in the streets carrying the Palestinian flag, chanting slogans for the PLO, and condemning Hussein's moves. Palestinians also threatened to burn 1,000 Jordanian passports to show opposition to Jordanian policy.

Democratic and nationalist forces demanded that Arafat cancel the Amman accord to facilitate the possibility of reuniting the PLO. The PFLP, in a communique, termed the Jordanian decision "part of the steps taken by the Jordanian regime in the past period, aiming to eliminate the PLO and secure passage of the 'self-rule' plot in full coordination with the Zionist entity... We regret that despite the continuous blows dealt to the dominant leadership of the PLO by the Jordanian regime, this leadership is still avoiding fulfilling the demand of the masses for immediate cancellation of the Amman accord. This cancellation would be the prerequisite for Palestinian national dialogue which would enable the reuniting of the PLO on a solid basis, opposed to the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary alliance."

YARMOUK UNIVERSITY — UPDATE

Life did not return to normal at Yarmouk University in Irbid, northern Jordan. After the May 15th student protests which the regime's forces put down in a brutal massacre, checkpoints were set up around the campus, manned by police empowered to arrest any student suspected of being an activist. A state of semi-siege prevailed as King Hussein's special bedouin forces continued their encampment on the campus grounds. Students commemorated their dead colleagues by wearing black arm bands and gathering in the area where the May 15th clashes had occurred.

It is now estimated that 33 died in the clashes. Afterwards, 25 students remained in comas in intensive care wards. Many others were still missing. At the insistence of bereaved families, the intelligence service was forced to release information as to where their children had been buried by security men. The families reburied their children according to religious custom. A new candidate for president of Yarmouk University has been named, Dr. Adlouni, but he is reportedly hesitant to take up such a trouble-loaded post.

Repercussions of the uprising reached beyond Irbid. In the Palestinian refugee camp, Al Wahdat, in Amman, clashes broke out between camp resi-

dents and the special bedouin forces who had attacked homes searching for nationalist students studying at Yarmouk University. Many Jordanians have objected to the use of the bedouin forces against the students. They fear that this has sparked Palestinian-Jordanian enmity. (It is to be remembered that these bedouin forces were on the forefront when the regime attacked the Palestinian resistance and masses in 1970-71.)

The only positive aspect of the post-massacre period is the release of student detainees, and the fact the students and progressive forces continue their struggle for democratic freedoms. The high degree of solidarity among the students encouraged other sectors of the population, in other parts of Jordan, to exert pressure on the regime, leading it to release student detainees. Moreover, students formed a committee to pursue the following demands with the university administration, in addition to their original demands: (1) bringing to trial those responsible for the killings; (2) securing payment for students still being treated for injuries; and (3) halting harassment of students and releasing the remaining detainees. These demands are supported by the Jordanian nationalist parties and forces who have been active in distributing thousands of leaflets, exposing the regime's brutality and demanding democratic freedom for the people.