

Jordan

Security Forces Attack Political Prisoners

The regime in Jordan continues to escalate repression and terror against our people and the nationalist forces in Jordan. The authorities' barbaric attack on the political prisoners in Al Mahattah, on August 6th, was a criminal act, contrary to all humanitarian principles. It confirms, once again, the regime's insistence on continuing its bloody policies in order to tame the masses, and impose acceptance of direct negotiations with the Zionist enemy and liquidation of the Palestinian cause, contrary to the national interests of the Jordanian people.

The Ifran meeting between Morocco's King Hassan II and the Zionist prime minister, Peres, was an exploratory step to prepare for King Hussein's moving from secret to open negotiations with the Zionist enemy. In order to make his big step, the king has to prepare the domestic situation in Jordan by bridling all active mass opposition that would be an obstacle in his path. This duplicates the Zionists' policy in occupied Palestine, aimed at subduing our people into accepting an alternative to the PLO, one that will not conflict with their liquidationist plans and the infamous Reagan plan.

The barbaric attack on the political prisoners, like the closure of PLO offices in Jordan, and the approval of the economic 'development' plan for the occupied territories, are all steps to prepare for the king's big step!

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE COMMITTEES FOR THE DEFENSE OF DEMOCRATIC FREEDOMS IN JORDAN (IN EXCERPT)

The Committee for the Defense of Democratic Freedoms in Jordan published the following report on the details of the attack, in order to alert international and Arab public opinion, and committees concerned with defending human rights, to the continuous and escalating terrorist practices of the security forces against the masses and the political and national forces in Jordan. Recent examples of this terror include the bloody attack on Yarmouk University on May 15th, to suppress the students; the open interference in the elections in Irbid province on June 19th, and then the terror campaign against the political prisoners in Al Mahattah on August 6th.

The recent attack against the militants of the Jordanian national move-

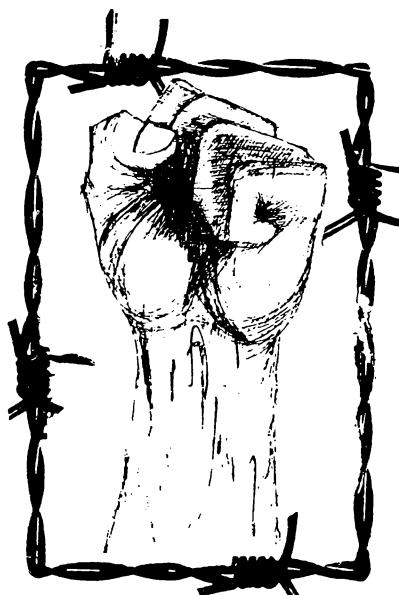
ment and the Palestinian revolution, in Al Mahattah prison, is part and parcel of the general policy aimed at terrorizing the Jordanian masses and repressing the militant forces. It aims at depriving the political prisoners of the legitimate rights which they have won by hard struggle, beginning in the early seventies.

The Committees for the Defense of Democratic Freedoms call on public opinion and international and Arab humanitarian and democratic institutions, to act immediately to alleviate the terror against the political prisoners; to have the prisoners' rights restored; to condemn the cruel attack of the Jordanian security forces against the prisoners of the national movement and the Palestinian revolution; and to demand improvement of their conditions in prison.

Below are the details of the attack on the prisoners in Al Mahattah, as reported to the Committee for the Defense of Democratic Freedoms in Jordan:

On August 6th, at 5:30 p.m., a joint security force, estimated to be a whole brigade of the special forces, invaded Al Mahattah central prison in Amman. They searched the cells, and humiliated and tortured the political prisoners. The search continued for 12 hours, ending at 6 a.m. the next day.

The force searched the cells in a provocative manner. They destroyed all the kitchen utensils and other equipment, and confiscated all the prisoners' possessions such as books, radios and



foodstuffs. They also ruined facilities that serve the prisoners, such as the cafeteria. They destroyed the tools used by many of the prisoners to make handicrafts, the sale of which is the only source of income for them and their families. The attackers even ruined plants and all the facilities that the prisoners had been able to gain, by many years of struggle, to improve their living conditions.

During the search, which was supposedly for weapons, the prisoners were humiliated and barbarically beaten. Many were injured and two were transferred to the hospital. The eardrum of one of the prisoners was punctured due to beating. Another prisoner almost strangled after being pulled around the prison with a rope around his neck.

Over 1,500 books were confiscated from the prisoners. Fifty thousand Jordanian dinars worth of personal possessions were ruined. These losses, though, are insignificant compared to the dangers posed to the health of the political prisoners. Very little food is given to them, not to mention the quality. The prison kitchen is equipped to prepare food for 100, whereas there are now over 1,000 prisoners in Al Mahattah. Moreover, the prisoners are not allowed to receive food from their families.

After the incident, the prison administration imposed restrictions on the prisoners' visitors. The prisoners' families and friends undergo a strict search in three stages. They are humiliated and not allowed to bring food, clothes or books to the prisoners.

The prisoners submitted memorandums to the president and members of parliament, to the prime minister and to the International Red Cross and other humanitarian institutions, condemning this terrorist attack against them, and demanding that their possessions be replaced and their conditions improved. The prisoners also decided to stop receiving visitors as a protest, until their demands are met.

It is noteworthy that the attackers were the same forces that invaded Yarmouk University in May. The attack on Al Mahattah prison was led by the vice-director of the general security and former head of the general intelligence, Mohammed Obeidat, in addition to 12 colonels of the special forces and general security.

The Committees for the Defense of Democratic Freedoms in Jordan call on the International Red Cross, Amnesty International, the Arab Organization for Human Rights and the Arab Lawyers' Union, to send representatives to meet with the political prisoners in Al Mahattah prison, to witness their inhuman conditions and publish the facts.