

which targeted most of the camp. More houses were destroyed. The shelling stopped for that day and sniping resumed. As expected, shelling started again in the evening, lasting until the early hours of the morning. The next day, Oct. 6th, Amal snipers were active. This pattern was repeated for the next two days-heavy shelling at night and sniping during the day.

Early on Oct. 7th, a joint delegation, including representatives from Amal, the PNSF and Syrian observers, headed for Tyre in an attempt to reinforce the ceasefire. The delegation met with leaders of Amal, who agreed to a complete ceasefire, in order to facilitate the implementation of the previously signed agreement. However, on the same day, Amal escalated the shelling of the camp for two hours, using all types of mortars. One Palestinian was martyred, and two others were injured.

ARRESTS AND BANISHMENT

On the same day, Amal gangs launched a campaign of arrests in the Tyre area. Hundreds of Palestinian families were warned to leave the camps within 48 hours. These families have lived in the villages and camps of the South for years, in many cases since 1948. Spurred by the necessity of putting a stop to this harassment, the joint committee, including representatives of the PNSF, Amal and Syrian observers, met in Tyre, to implement the Sept. 15th agreement, signed in Damascus. Tension lessened temporarily as a result of the intense political and mass activities. Reports from the camp said that since Sept. 30th, there had been 36 injured, 6 of them critically, and 4 martyrs, in addition to unidentified bodies scattered in the fields.

Amal did not wait more than 24 hours to start the shelling again, from the night of Oct. 8th until daylight. Sniping went on the whole day until the joint committee arrived and met with the popular committee and later with the PNSF. While the joint committee was in the camp, the injured were evacuated. Immediately after the committee left the camp, at 2 a.m. on Oct. 9th, Amal's fire started again, and went on until morning, when sniping started. Amal's snipers murdered one civilian and injured four others, despite the fact that the Palestinian fighters were completely committed to the ceasefire agreement. Amal's violations forced the joint committee to return to Rashidiya on the 12th, taking a decision to stay there lest the situation erupt again. A messenger carried a letter to Damascus, to inform the Syrian leadership of the situation, and ask them to exert more pressure on Amal to abide by the agreement, especially to

allow foodstuffs into the camp and release the prisoners.

The next day, the joint committee and the popular committee met with Amal's leadership in Tyre. Amal's leadership demanded that all weapons in the camp be surrendered, saying that until then they would continue to besiege the camp. They claimed that the popular committee was unable to restrict the Palestinians in the camp, holding it responsible for the eruption of the situation! The popular committee answered that its function is services, and the issue of weapons is outside its jurisdiction. The popular committee demanded that Amal restrict its own people. At the end of the meeting, the Amal leadership agreed to the following points:

1. total ceasefire from both sides;
2. prohibiting the carrying of arms in public;
3. holding seminars in the camp, emphasizing brotherhood between the two sides;
4. allowing the popular committee to take charge of the camp;
5. a joint military operations room.

Amal also promised to allow students in the camp to go to school and to release the prisoners immediately. Based on the popular committee's demands, Amal agreed to allow women to go in and out of the camp to bring foodstuffs.

The next day, Oct. 14th, Amal's leadership confirmed its commitment to the ceasefire agreement, and allowed four Red Cross vehicles to enter the camp, but the prisoners were not released.

CEASEFIRE VIOLATED AGAIN

On Oct. 15th, as soon as the joint committee left the camps, Amal elements violated the agreement by setting up new sandbag barricades around the camp, allowing only six cars to leave, and confiscating foodstuffs at the roadblocks. Moreover, at the roadblocks, Amal elements beat and humiliated Palestinians, threatening their lives if they did not leave the camps. Sniping started, murdering one Palestinian. The next day, Amal built more barricades, closed all the roads, and prevented civilians from bringing fuel for their oil stoves.

On Oct. 21st, the camp woke up to the sound of shelling. Soon after, the PNSF contacted Nabih Berri to inform him of the situation in Rashidiya. Berri in turn called a meeting early the next day with the PNSF, the Lebanese nationalist forces and the Syrians. Meanwhile Amal escalated the shelling and destroyed several houses in the camp. No meetings managed to stop Amal this time. The shelling continued for two days, which led the Palestinians

to launch a military attack on an Amal post in the Shawakir area of Tyre. The Palestinians were able to completely destroy the post, and cause Amal 17 casualties. One Palestinian fighter was injured. Later the same day, another military operation was launched against an Amal post in Ras Al Ein. An Amal fighter was killed, and many were injured.

Those two military operations silenced Amal for one night, but Amal reinforced their ranks and started shelling the next day, killing civilians and destroying many houses. Reports from the camp on Oct. 24th, said that thousands of Amal gangsters were being mobilized in all areas of the South in preparation for a massive attack on the camp. This was accompanied by a broad campaign of arrests. When their jails could not accommodate more prisoners, Amal used schools to detain Palestinians. Amal forced hundreds of families to leave, and toured the camp with loudspeakers agitating for «Jihad» (holy war) and «the war of revenge for Hussein» (a Shiite prophet). Reports from the camp said that the war has reached its most dangerous climax, and that the guarantees given by Amal were no more than ploys for gaining time.

A group of Palestinians loyal to Arafat mobilized a large force on Oct. 25th, and advanced to take two Amal posts without meeting any resistance. The same group took over Amal posts near Maghdoosha, a Lebanese village south of Ain Al Hilweh, after a fierce battle. The Palestinian groups took some prisoners and captured some weapons.

In retaliation, Amal barbarically shelled Rashidiya all night on Oct. 25th. The next day, Amal launched a counterattack to recover their posts, but the attempt failed, after a battle so fierce that some of Amal's shells fell on the city of Tyre. Eleven Palestinians were martyred, and thirteen injured.

As a result of a meeting between Mustafa Sa'ad, general secretary of the Nasserite Popular Organization, Dr. Nazeeh Bizree, head of the Political Council of Sidon, Lieutenant Colonel Zyad, head of the Syrian observers, members of the PNSF leadership in the South and Amal, the Palestinian fighters had to withdraw from the posts they had taken within one week. However, Amal was not satisfied. These latest attacks provided Amal with an excuse to open fire on Rashidiya again. One civilian was injured. Moreover, the ceasefire agreement gave Amal time to mobilize its forces in preparation to attack, in order to restore its posts. Amal distributed leaflets calling upon the Lebanese masses to fight on its side.