

December Uprising

«WE WILL DIE FOR PALESTINE, WE WILL FIGHT TILL LIBERATION» - slogans at the Bir Zeit University memorial ceremony for the students martyred on December 4th.

The first half of December, occupied Palestine was vibrant with ongoing mass resistance to occupation, reminiscent of the sustained mass uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in spring 1982. Both these uprisings stemmed from the brutal Zionist occupation and the Palestinian people's consistent refusal to accept this. Both encompassed demonstrations, strikes, sit-ins and stoning of Zionist targets. And both were met with the old/new Zionist methods of repression - tear gas, arrests, curfews, school closures and outright murder. Six Palestinian youths were shot to death by Zionist troops in the space of eight days, and many others wounded. Bir Zeit University was partially closed for almost a month, Al Najah University for one week, and Bethlehem University for a day, after student demonstrations.

The latest uprising encompassed new themes as well. The breadth and militancy of the demonstrations showed clearly that the vast majority of Palestinians under occupation have no faith whatsoever in the Jordanian 'solution' which is based on undermining the PLO. Our people continue to adhere to the PLO and their national rights, knowing very well that the occupation will only be lifted by daily and strategic confrontation of the Zionist enemy. Another new, related theme of the uprising was solidarity with the besieged Palestinian camps in Lebanon. Palestinians under occupation are aware that the armed revolution outside is a much needed support to their own daily struggle. In fact, some attributed the uprising's militancy to the people's pride in the Palestinian revolution's heroic defense of the camps. Editor Ibrahim Kareem in Jerusalem, told reporters that the morale of youth «is higher today than at any other time since the Israeli invasion of Lebanon» (*International Herald Tribune*, December 10, 1986). Once again, the masses tore the mask off the false picture of the 'benign' occupation projected by 'Israel' and its supporters around the world. The leading Israeli daily *Haaretz* drew the logical conclusion, writing, «Israeli rule is no more acceptable to the Arabs of the administered territories than it was in 1967.» The UN Security Council, on December

8th, condemned the shooting of defenseless students at Bir Zeit, and urged 'Israel' to abide by the Geneva Convention for protecting civilians in time of war. This time, even the US found it inopportune to use its veto.

THE OUTBREAK

Although events took on the decided character of an uprising after the confrontation between Zionist troops and Palestinian students at Bir Zeit University on December 4th, there was a prior chain of mass resistance and Zionist terror. Tension had been high since mid-November, when Israelis went on a three-day rampage in Jerusalem, after a Zionist settler was killed. In scenes reminiscent of a pogrom, gangsters smashed the windows of shops and cars belonging to Palestinians, and threw petrol bombs into homes. Two Palestinians were wounded and there was extensive property damage. The Palestinians of Jerusalem protested with a general strike, and there were acts and

NEW EXPULSION

The Israeli occupation authorities renewed their policy of expelling Palestinians from their homeland by deporting Akram Haniyeh on December 28, 1986. Haniyeh is a Palestinian citizen of Ramallah, and editor in chief of the Jerusalem Arabic daily *Al Shaab*. He was arrested on November 3rd, accused of being a PLO official in the occupied territories. The military governor ordered him deported under the Emergency Regulations, contrary to the Geneva Convention which forbids the deportation of citizens from occupied territories. Haniyeh appealed the deportation order. However, as is usual in such cases, the appeal was sabotaged by the Israeli practice of keeping secret the specific charges against Haniyeh. Thus, despite having competent, progressive Israeli lawyers, Haniyeh was deprived of the right to defend himself. Seeing that the High Court hearing was but a travesty of justice, he withdrew his appeal and was deported as the price for his adherence to the PLO. Haniyeh is another victim of the joint Israeli-Jordanian policy for liquidating the PLO, in order to impose their joint rule over the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

statements of solidarity from other parts of occupied Palestine. At the end of the month, demonstrations were violently dispersed by the Zionist forces on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

On December 1st, students at the teachers' college in Ramallah organized demonstrations in the town and nearby Qalandia camp, expressing support for the besieged Palestinian camps in Lebanon. The demonstration spread to Bir Zeit University. There was a marked militancy: Israeli cars were stoned; residents barricaded roads and raised Palestinian flags high. The Zionist army replied in a way similar to its ally, the apartheid regime in South Africa. Soldiers opened fire on the demonstrators, injuring one student. Bir Zeit University was closed. Twelve were arrested and all gatherings were banned. New Israeli checkpoints were set up around the campus.

On December 3rd, Palestinian and progressive Jewish students at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem organized a mass demonstration in support of the people of East Jerusalem, who had been facing the Zionist settlers' terror.

STUDENTS MURDERED

The situation boiled over on December 4th, due to the occupation forces' murderous tactics. On that day, the students of Bir Zeit University had planned a sit-in to mark their support of the Palestinian revolution and the besieged camps in Lebanon. When students and teachers were stopped from entering the campus by the Zionist soldiers, they began their sit-in on the road. A military vehicle arrived, and the soldiers detained Dr. Salah Abdel Jawad, a teacher at the university, and dispersed the students with tear gas. This sparked a militant protest demonstration by the students. The Zionists used tear gas, rubber bullets and gunfire, killing two students, Jawad Abu Salmiyah and Saeb Suleiman Dahab, and injuring 25 others. Wafa (the PLO news agency) reported from London that one of the injured, Kamal Ghadi, died of his wounds afterwards. The students used the only weapon they had - stones, and two of the Zionist soldiers were injured.

The occupation troops blocked the entrance of journalists and ambulances, so the injured were taken by private cars to Ramallah. The Zionists then attacked the families of the injured who had gathered at Ramallah hospital to visit the injured; three people were injured. The hospital was sealed off, as was the Bir Zeit campus. To crown their crime, the Zionist soldiers robbed