



Starving the Palestinian Camps

Amal's Last Resort

Nearly twenty weeks have passed since the Palestinian camps in Lebanon were first subjected to the dirty war waged by Amal and the sectarian Lebanese Army, with the situation worsening every day. Palestinians living in the camps of Rashidiya near Tyre, and Burj Al Barajneh and Shatila in Beirut, have not only faced the horrors of Amal's firepower, but also the horrors of starvation.

From the first days of February, there were persistent reports of hunger spreading in Burj Al Barajneh camp in particular. On February 8th, the France Press Agency reported from Beirut that «escaped refugees (from Burj Al Barajneh) have reported dire conditions, with little food, no electricity and little shelter from shelling.» Al Bourj popular committee asked Moslem clergymen in Lebanon for a *fatwa*, or special religious decree, permitting the besieged Palestinians in the camp «to eat, for their survival, the flesh of those who no longer had the strength to live» (*International Herald Tribune*,

February 9, 1987). The committee's message added that «We have no alternative as there are no dogs or cats left.»

As a result of the continuous siege imposed on the camps, the new enemy threatening the lives of Palestinian children is called starvation. This proves that Amal's intentions are not only to disarm the Palestinians in the camps, but also to starve them to death, in order to accomplish its goals and those of its supporters. However, history has taught all that when Golda Meir denied the very existence of the Palestinians, she was proven dead wrong. Likewise,

the attempt of Amal and its backers to deny life to the Palestinians will be discredited.

The last half of January was a continuation of the heavy, destructive shelling directed against the camps in Beirut and Tyre, using all the weapons available in the arsenals of Amal and the sectarian army: mortars, rockets, cannons, tanks, heavy machine guns and sniping rifles. Added to this was a clear projection of support for Amal by the Zionist state that intervened with air raids in mid-January, to aid Amal's war of attrition on Palestinian presence in Lebanon.

Palestinian women in Yarmouk camp, Syria, sit-in at a mosque to protest the siege of the camps

