

the males to the SLA's jail in Jezzine. Khiam, the main prison, holds hundreds of patriots, and reports continued to leak out of the terrible conditions and torture there. The January 12th edition of the Lebanese daily *Al Safir* contained the following facts: SLA guards put detainees outside for hours with scanty clothing in cold and rain. The detainees are then beaten before being returned to overcrowded cells. Before releasing persons who have been accused of involvement in resistance operations, Israeli intelligence officers give them drugs which cause paralysis and amnesia. A case in point is the citizen Labib Abu Raida from Hasbaya, who suffered from amnesia so badly that he had to go abroad for treatment. Fayez Abu Rafa from Ain Khunai suffered a fractured spine as a result of severe beating. A citizen from Kfar Kala lost an eye from being hit by a rifle butt. In early January, the detainees in Khiam staged a hunger strike, but the SLA and Israeli occupiers persisted in their refusal to give the International Red Cross access to the detention center.

Expressing the population's deep hatred of the detention center, Lebanese patriots attempted to assassinate Ghazi Adouwi, the SLA security officer at Khiam, on January 28th. An SLA patrol, of which he was a member, was ambushed. One SLA man was killed and two others wounded, though Adouwi escaped. A 200-man force of Israelis and SLA besieged the town of Khiam and imposed a curfew. They raided 75 homes and detained 25 young men, some of whom had previously worked with the Israeli-established National Guard, showing that the Israelis no longer know who they can rely on.

Some of the Israeli/SLA harassment of the southern population can only be termed thuggery. A case in point was the double murder of Qassam Mustafa Naibeh, 35, and his wife, Naja Hussein Khalil, 25, while they were tending their sheep in mid-January. Their seven year old son escaped from the criminals to tell the story. According to the Lebanese police, SLA thugs had first robbed the couple. Equally heinous was the SLA's assault on four people tending their sheep near Barashit later in

the month. The thugs killed one of them, a forty year old woman, and took the three males to an SLA post for detention. In the Hasbaya area, Israeli intelligence men and SLA thugs blew up the house of a sergeant in the Lebanese police force, who now resides in Sidon. The explosion damaged no less than 15 nearby homes.

UNIFIL THREATENED

With all the aggression directed against the southern Lebanese population, it is not surprising that UNIFIL also took a blow or two. On December 6th, an Irish soldier was killed by mortar bombs from an Israeli/SLA post, while on duty in Majdel Selim. Another Irish soldier died on January 11th, when an Israeli tank fired on the UNIFIL position near Barachit. The killings, in addition to a number of injuries to UN soldiers, seemed in fact quite deliberate. UNIFIL commander Haeglund commented, «Since early December, firing at or close to UNIFIL by the Israeli forces or the SLA has increased dramatically.» UNIFIL had several times asked the Israelis to withdraw from the post near Barachit, for it had fired on UNIFIL positions 60 times. The Irish Defense Minister rejected as 'ludicrous' the Israeli claim that the soldier was killed by accident. It seems that besides wanting to expell the southerners, the Zionists also want to eliminate any neutral force that might serve as an international witness to their atrocities in the South. The acts and attitude of the Zionists can only lead one to anticipate even greater aggression in the future.

THE PARTITIONISTS

No account of the Zionists' policy in Lebanon is complete without a look at their fascist counterparts in the North - the Lebanese Forces. The Lebanese fascists have still not recovered from the crushing defeat of their strategic project for controlling all Lebanon. Nor have they totally overcome the internal divisions plaguing their ranks. In an attempt to remedy this situation, the Lebanese Forces recently took several steps towards partitioning Lebanon, coinciding with the Zionist plan to keep the country weak and divided as long as it cannot be controlled.

In December, the Lebanese Forces replaced their executive committee with a new Command Council, packed with all the familiar fascist faces of the former body. The Phalangists have the most seats(13), followed by 'independents'(7) and the smaller fascist organizations: the Organization(4), the National Liberal Party(2), and the Guardians of the Cedars(2). The only thing new about this body is that it is to function as a shadow cabinet, divided into 'ministries' to administer the fascist-controlled areas, in an open challenge to the Karami government.

The Lebanese Forces have also renewed their demand for opening a new airport in Halat, as part of their striving to create a parallel infrastructure. Under the pretext of serving the population in their areas, the Lebanese Forces have made this their battlecry. In late January, Lebanese Forces chief Samir Geagea expressed willingness to take the country to the brink of civil war again over the question of Halat. What is really involved is the threat of partition in Lebanon, in addition to manifold, vested business interests of prominent fascists such as Dany Chamoun, leader of the National Liberal Party, who has already established his own air company, along with other rightist financiers. Clearly the fascists aim to undermine the Beirut International Airport and Middle East Airlines which, despite all, have remained functioning institutions and symbols of Lebanon's unity.

The convergence of the Lebanese Forces' acts with the plans of imperialism and Zionism was obvious in early February. With the hostage 'crisis' and threats of US and Zionist intervention hanging over Lebanon, the Lebanese Forces enacted a general strike in East Beirut to demand the opening of Halat. The next day, Middle East Airlines, already plagued by the refusal of foreign companies to insure its flights, suspended operations after receiving a threat implying that the Lebanese Forces would shell the airport, as they had done several times in the recent past. The Lebanese Forces' blackmail and their coordination with the Zionist-imperialist threats, could hardly be more obvious.