

# Editorial

## How Long Will the War on the Camps Continue?

There is no doubt that the Syrian entry into West Beirut is the most outstanding event in the region at present. It continues to attract the attention of Palestinian, Lebanese, Arab and international political circles alike. All are watching the effects of the ongoing developments on the future identity and position of Lebanon, taking into consideration the close connection between the Lebanese problem, regional problems and the Arab-Zionist conflict, as well as the failure of all attempts to separate the Lebanese conflict from the Middle East conflict. An observation period is required for all concerned parties to explore the nature of the steps being taken and their effects on the present and future circumstances.

The Palestinian and Lebanese nationalist forces, along with all the Arab national liberation movement, are awaiting Syrian positions and moves that would restore the nationalist Palestinian-Lebanese-Syrian triangle of steadfastness to its true militancy and strength. Previously, this alliance facilitated the defeat of the Israeli, US, NATO and Phalangist forces in 1983-84, aborting the infamous May 17th accord after inflicting heavy losses on the enemy forces.

The Palestinian and Lebanese nationalist forces are also awaiting Syrian positions and moves supportive of the national democratic trend of resistance in Lebanon, which lost some of its strength as a result of the wars waged by Amal against it, in a marked deviation from the real battle against the fascist, sectarian trend. The sectarian trend that spread within Amal not only constitutes an obstacle to consolidating the nationalist program and continuing the war for liberation and democratic change. It has also weakened the nationalist alliance's confrontation of the aggression launched against the Arab liberation movement by the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary alliance, as a prelude to spreading Camp David in the region.

These are the aspirations of the Palestinian and Lebanese nationalist forces that are supported by progressive forces on the Arab and international levels. The aspirations of the Lebanese fascists, who are supported by the US and 'Israel', are entirely different. The fascist forces have publicly declared that they will resist the Syrian presence unless its main goal is to disarm the western sector of Beirut and hand it over to the Lebanese authorities, after being 'cleansed'. They insist that the Syrian forces work seriously for the release of foreign hostages and strike Islamic fundamentalists. The public positions of the Lebanese fascists, the US and 'Israel', are accompanied by a flood of direct and indirect threats that Syria will be drowned in the Lebanese quagmire if it does not deal with the situation in a manner acceptable to Washington, Tel Aviv and the Lebanese presidency. These very forces had all themselves failed to eliminate Palestinian-Lebanese nationalist armed presence over the preceding years, despite the application of massive aggression to that end.

In view of these facts, it is clear that the enemy forces are working to delay and ultimately avoid the measures proposed for political reform as a step towards resolving the Lebanese problem. At the same time, the enemy forces are waiting to see the steps taken and how these impact on the future of the Palestinian-Lebanese nationalist armed presence and the sectarian nature of the Lebanese regime. The Lebanese fascists

have waged a fierce war and joined the Zionists in their battle to eliminate the Palestinian revolution and the Lebanese national movement in order to impose their sectarian hegemony on Lebanon. All facts indicate that they have not changed their line or their relations with the enemy forces. On the contrary, the fascists are vigorously improving their relations with Tel Aviv, Washington and the Arab forces who are moving towards Camp David.

Thus, legitimate fears are harbored by the Lebanese and Palestinian nationalist forces who have shouldered the main burden in the battle against the fascists' plans and the attempts to transform Lebanon into a US-Zionist satellite. Their fears stem from the fact that they have not been part of the current discussions on the future of Lebanon, the political solutions being proposed and how these plans would safeguard the achievements made by Lebanese and Palestinian nationalists in the battle against the fascists. Based on their sacrifices, the Lebanese and Palestinian nationalist and democratic forces have the right to participate in decision-making and practical planning of the steps to be taken. Above all, they have the right to ask Syria to pressure Amal to stop its ugly practices against Lebanese nationalist cadres and leaders, and to lift the siege on the Palestinian camps. This would save the nationalist forces and allow for the unification of their capacities. If it is true that the Syrian entry into West Beirut has had immediate results, such as restoring security and stability to the courageous city which suffered greatly from Amal's war, it is also true that this entry has not yet forced Amal to lift the siege on Burj Al Barajneh and Shatila camps. The residents of these two camps are still trapped in daily suffering, despite the Syrian forces' deployment in West Beirut. The Syrian forces did help in a partial lifting of the blockade on food and medical supplies to the camps. Still, they have not yet taken the necessary steps to ensure the withdrawal of Amal and the Lebanese Army from the area surrounding the camps. Only this would ensure the cessation of the daily attacks on the besieged Palestinians.

The present conditions necessitate alertness to the known plans of the fascist forces and their regional and international allies. At the same time, these conditions require an immediate initiative to unify and consolidate the nationalist ranks, by stopping Amal's war against Lebanese and Palestinian nationalists. In the light of the intensification of Amal's siege of the camps, the question now being asked by the camp residents, and by Palestinian, Lebanese and Arab popular and political forces, is: Why is the camp war continuing, and for how long? This question is a legitimate one, since many thought that the Syrian forces' entry into West Beirut would facilitate a solution to the camps' problems.

The Palestinian people and revolution have confirmed their adherence to their nationalist armed presence in Lebanon. They are determined to uphold the achievements made through their struggle and sacrifices. At the same time, they are endeavoring to adhere to all the agreements reached with the Lebanese nationalist forces, under Syrian auspices, concerning the camps in Lebanon. We expect all sincere patriotic forces to take these things into account. ●