



Naji Al Ali

Sixteen attacks occurred in the occupied West Bank, five in the occupied Gaza Strip, and seventeen in the area of Palestine occupied in 1948. Most noteworthy was the rise in the number of military operations carried out in 1948 occupied Palestine, which constituted almost half of all operations in July. This attests to the increased militant involvement of the Palestinians living in the Galilee and Triangle areas. It emphasizes the unity in struggle of all the Palestinian people, and their collective adherence to the strategic goal of liberating Palestine. It also exposes the falsity of the 'coexistence' slogan raised by the Zionist leadership from the time they occupied this part of Palestine 39 years ago.

#### METHODS OF STRUGGLE

Molotov cocktails were used in fifteen of the attacks in July. There were twelve explosions against Zionist military and economic targets. There were four stabbings and one shooting.

Flammable material was used in two operations. An Israeli car was burned in Gaza, while large areas of forest and grassland, belonging to the Jewish National Fund (JNF), were burned on four separate occasions in the last week of July, in the areas of Jerusalem, Houla and Afuleh (1948 occupied Palestine). These fires targeted a main instrument of the Zionist colonization of Palestine. Expropriated land turned over to the JNF becomes Jewish property permanently, never to be sold or disposed of, except by leasing. It is used exclusively for furthering Zionist settlement and Judaization. The fires of July swept through 3,500 dunums of forest and grassland near Jerusalem, and also destroyed about 2,000 dunums in the Afuleh and Houla prairies, causing an estimated \$2 million in damages.

«Restoring the damage takes 25 years»

According to the Israeli daily *Haaretz*, there have been 400 fires this

year. These have destroyed 4,000 dunums of forests and 30,000 dunums of grassland, causing damages double those of last year. Some of these fires affected Israeli military and economic installations. At first, the occupation authorities tried to conceal the causes of the blazes, but recently there were admissions that they were ignited for political reasons. Also, three Palestinians from the Galilee were arrested while trying to start a fire near Afuleh.

A JNF spokesman acknowledged that «these are deliberate fires ignited by anti-occupation forces.» Describing the damage around Jerusalem, he said, «We have to wait 25 years for restoring what has been damaged.» The JNF had supervised the planting of almost fifteen million trees on the hills surrounding Jerusalem over the past forty years. The losses are estimated in the millions of dollars, given that the cost of a dunum of forest is \$600, and \$300 for a dunum of grassland. ►