

Palestinians Expelled from South Lebanon

The war on the Palestinian camps in Lebanon took a dangerous new turn in July when the Amal movement embarked on an extensive campaign of expelling Palestinian families from South Lebanon.

In early July, the Amal gangs began a new series of expulsions, arrests, abductions and assassinations, aimed against Palestinians living in the camps around Tyre in particular. As a pretext, Amal raised the slogan of stopping «conspiratorial plans to substitute South Lebanon for Palestine» - falsely insinuating that the Palestinians want to resettle permanently in the South. The reality is Amal's attempt to terrorize the Palestinian masses into leaving their camps in the Tyre area forever. This is part of Amal's campaign to empty the South of Palestinians and Lebanese nationalists, in order to establish a sectarian canton under its own control. This would be a step towards providing security arrangements for the Zionist state. It would mean an expansion of the 'security zone' in South Lebanon, to protect the Israeli occupiers and Lahd's South Lebanon Army from the escalating Palestinian and Lebanese nationalist resistance. To further its goals, Amal is using methods reminiscent of the Zionist colonizers and Lebanese fascist forces.

TERRORIZING THE CAMPS

Amal has continued its old practices of restricting movement to and from the camps, searching residents at roadblocks and confiscating food and fuel provisions. In addition, Amal humiliates and tortures Palestinians at these roadblocks in the process of checking their ID's. All this aims to strangle the life in the camps and push people to leave. Since these old methods didn't prove to be effective, Amal started new, more savage practices, targeting the smaller Palestinian camps in the Tyre area: Burj Al Shamali, Al Bus, Shabriha, Jul Al Bahar, Qasmiyyeh and Abu Al Aswad, which was burned by Amal earlier this year. (Rashidiyeh, housing about 10,000 Palestinians, is the largest camp in the Tyre area).

On July 4th, for the third consecutive day, Amal stormed Burj Al Shamali, entering all the houses, plundering valuables, damaging property and spoiling foodstuffs, especially flour supplies for breadmaking. The camp residents were forced to load barrels of drinking water - the whole camp's supply - on trucks brought in especially for this purpose. Before the Amal gangs left the camp, they arrested scores of young men and boys. In contrast to the usual practice, that day Amal removed its roadblocks from around the camp to facilitate the people leaving.

Two days later, the same Amal group once more stormed the camp, repeating the same process and arresting more Palestinian men. This time they used loudspeakers to warn the Palestinian residents to evacuate the camp immediately. A few hundred Palestinians packed and left for Sidon.

On Saturday night, July 19th, a large group of Amal fighters entered the camp masked and carrying knives in addition to their usual weapons. They tried to imitate the speech of the Israelis. They stabbed people at random. Many Palestinians were injured and at least one man was martyred. The Amal group burned houses and attempted to rape some women after making all the camp residents come out

of their houses in their nightware. Before leaving, they warned the residents to evacuate before Tuesday. This created an atmosphere of hysteria; some packed their things and gathered in the camp square, ready to leave. Of those who left for Sidon, many were stopped at Amal's roadblocks. The men were arrested and the others were forced to turn back.

Amal also warned about a hundred families, who live along the road between Rashidiyeh and Al Bus camp, to evacuate the area within 24 hours or risk being killed. An Amal commander ordered these people to give him a list of all the residents of the area, including those who were temporarily away, and to tell Amal if any of them returned.

Using the same methods, Amal expelled forty Palestinian families from Mahallat Ras Al Ein, near Rashidiyeh, and one hundred families from the Jul Al Bahar industrial area. On July 19th, Amal was able to force 25 Palestinian families to leave their houses in the industrial area near Jabal Aamel. These families loaded their furniture on trucks, but were stopped at the Qasmiyyeh roadblock and forced to turn back, after being beaten and humiliated. When they returned home, Amal men stormed their homes again and threatened their lives if they didn't leave immediately.

At dawn on July 17th, Amal stormed Al Qasmiyyeh, burning houses and arresting many young men. The women of the camp threw stones at the Amal men, forcing them to withdraw, but not before they had shot several people. On the same day, both Al Bus and Jul Al Bahar were stormed once again by fifty Amal men who opened fire on the camp

Palestinian family expelled from the Tyre area arrives in Sidon.

