



Beirut camp in ruins

residents. About this time, Amal members started demanding 5,000 Lebanese pounds from each Palestinian family for facilitating their safe travel to Sidon.

In the first ten days of July, around 150 young Palestinian males and one hundred families fled to the Sidon area. By July 20th, 1,000 Palestinians had been expelled from the Tyre area. It was very difficult to house the increasing number of people who were arriving daily from the Tyre area. As a result, scores of Palestinian families were forced to sleep along Sidon's main streets, in schools or the entrances to buildings.

Amal also abducted a number of Palestinians from the Tyre area camps. The fate of many of them is still unknown. Such abductions are also intended to terrorize the Palestinians into leaving. A clear example of this was the abduction of Sheikh Mahmoud of Burj Al Shamali. He was heavily tortured and then dumped on a road where he was found. He had been returned alive to deliver a message to Burj Al Shamali residents that they would meet the same fate if they didn't leave.

Between September 1986 and July this year, Amal has arrested at least 190 Palestinians. The number of prisoners in Amal's jails rose dramatically during July as Amal has been arresting hundreds of Palestinians daily, releasing a few and detaining others. Therefore, no one is able to determine the exact number of prisoners at this point. Information from those who were released confirms that the prisoners are facing all methods of torture. They are not

allowed to contact their families. They are forced to perform hard labor, and many are suffering from serious diseases such as ulcers, kidney inflammation and skin infections. Many have been partially paralyzed as a result of torture. Amal is denying the prisoners medical treatment and preventing the International Red Cross from visiting them. Torture is being used to extract false confessions from the prisoners that Palestinians are responsible for the many assassinations committed by Amal members. A seventeen-year-old boy, who was accused of killing an Amal officer, died under torture. Amal spread rumors that he committed suicide by throwing himself from the window of his cell. They also refused to let doctors examine his body, lest their crime be discovered.

Selective assassination has also been used by Amal to spread fear among the Palestinians. Examples of those targeted are the UNRWA teacher, Omar Zakaria, and the popular committee member, Abu Yousef, and his son. At least forty Palestinians from the Tyre area camps have been murdered by Amal over the past year, in addition to those killed in the camp wars themselves.

To cover their crimes, Amal follows up each assassination by issuing a statement claiming that Palestinians are assassinating other Palestinians for the purpose of «provoking the security situation» and «to strike the state of

coexistence between the Palestinians and the Lebanese in the South»! When there were media reports about Palestinians being expelled from the Tyre camps, Daoud Daoud, Amal responsible in the South, claimed that the PLO had bought the media and was fabricating a media campaign to defame the Amal movement and agitate the Lebanese masses against Amal!

## BEIRUT: PROTESTING THE SIEGE

The situation in the Palestinian camps in Beirut is also desperate. Ten months of siege has created many socioeconomic problems that cannot be resolved as long as the camps continue to be blockaded. According to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, 95% of the houses in Shatila camp were completely destroyed in the foregoing camp wars; the rest are on the point of collapse and thus dangerous to live in. Last month a house collapsed on an eleven-year-old boy, killing him instantly. In Burj Al Barajneh, destruction is also widespread. The houses need to be rebuilt before the onset of winter, but Amal allows no building materials to be brought into the camps. Only women and children can leave and reenter the camps to bring food provisions. Even then, they are only allowed to bring in very small quantities of food provisions.

