

The water, electricity and sewage systems were ruined to a great extent and need basic repair and maintenance work which is impossible in these conditions. Garbage has piled high in the alleys and squares of the camps, creating very unhealthy conditions, especially in the hot weather. Diseases such as typhus and polio have spread. Most of the local medical facilities have been destroyed, and no doctors or medications are allowed into the camps. Most schools in the camps have been destroyed, and students cannot attend school outside the camps because of the many incidents of arrest and abduction.

These inhuman conditions led the camp population to begin a sit-in in the main street of Shatila on August 11th. They declared that the sit-in would continue until their demands are fulfilled: lifting the siege, opening the roads to the camp, allowing all camp residents to move freely, allowing in food and building materials, repair of the electricity, and provision of drinking water. A similar sit-in has begun in Burj Al Barajneh. On the third day of the Shatila sit-in, Amal indiscriminately opened fire, causing chaos. The camp residents then organized a large demonstration inside Shatila.

PROVOKING A NEW WAR?

In mid-August, Amal and the «Army Supporters» (a new force created by Amal to support the Lebanese Army) provoked renewed clashes in East Sidon, near Ain Al Hilweh and Miyeh Miyeh camps. Added to terrorization of the Palestinian camps near Beirut and Tyre, Amal appears ready to ignite a new round of camp wars to try and exhaust the Palestinian revolution and eventually eliminate its presence in Lebanon. Amal continues to fortify its positions and concentrate troops in the Sidon area.

Amal is employing the newly formed Front for Liberation and Unification to lend legitimacy to its crimes. The article of this front's program, concerning Palestinian-Lebanese relations, is used by Amal to justify its war on the camps. Despite the results of the unifying PNC session, the program refers to the PLO leadership as being «deviationist and capitulationist». This is a tacit declaration of war on the PLO. The program

moreover calls for reigniting inter-Palestinian fighting in the name of confronting «the deviationist trend», calling for a «corrective move» in the Palestinian arena.

Objectively speaking, Amal's war on the Palestinian presence converges with the other attempts to subordinate Lebanon to the US-Israeli plan for the area, most recently: the assassination of Rashid Karami, the collapse of the Lebanese economy, the fascist forces' drive for partition and recurring Israeli aggression. Thus, it is in the interests of Lebanese as well as Palestinian progressive and nationalist forces to halt Amal's war on the Palestinians, as part of the struggle for an independent, unified Lebanon. Finally, the Palestinian revolution will not stand with arms folded in the face of Amal's attempt to expel Palestinians from the South. Rather, the Palestinian revolution is intent on a joint Palestinian-Lebanese struggle to end Israeli occupation, and the sectarian system. ●

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine issued a communique detailing Amal's campaign against the Palestinian camps in Lebanon. The Front called for November 29th this year to be a day of solidarity with the Palestinian masses in the camps in Lebanon.



Naji Al Ali