



Demonstrations at Ain Shams

in an Egyptian jail in January 1986. The demonstrators clashed with the police for over three hours, throwing stones, while the police fired gas bombs and arrested 30 people. Immediately after this incident, Egypt's interior minister issued a decree prohibiting demonstrations in all parts of Egypt.

Meanwhile, on the same day, over 200 Egyptian lawyers organized a sit-in in their guild headquarters. The building was surrounded by the security forces. On Feb 10th, many lawyers

were arrested after holding a press conference. On February 12th, thousands marched from the mosque after Friday prayers, chanting slogans in support of the Palestinian people, and demanding that the government abrogate the Camp David accords.

The Egyptian authorities also repressed a Palestinian demonstration in Canada camp, in the Egyptian half of Rafah. (This Palestinian town in the Gaza Strip, on the border with Egypt, was divided down the middle by the

provisions of the Camp David accords, whereby the Sinai was returned to Egypt. Rows of houses were bulldozed, leaving a no-man's-land, divided by barbed wire fences.) The authorities opened fire on the demonstrators who were trying to cross the barbed wire to take food to the besieged Palestinians on the other side. Many were injured. Moreover, the Egyptian authorities have restricted media coverage of the uprising. The main TV station broadcast short news, but without pictures, to avoid further inciting the Egyptian masses.

The uprising has caused the Egyptian regime a great deal of embarrassment. After the Amman Summit allowed Arab countries to resume relations with Egypt, Mubarak's regime was attempting to play a new role, reentering the political arena with a new settlement, in order to regain the leading role Egypt had lost. Then came the uprising, but Mubarak did not even withdraw the Egyptian ambassador from 'Israel' in protest of Zionist brutality. Instead, Mubarak forwarded a new initiative calling upon all parties to halt «acts of violence» for six months, and a moratorium on settlement-building in the same period, in order to begin the search for a solution to the Palestinian problem. The worst part of this initiative, reminiscent of the role of the Arab rulers in aborting the 1936 revolt in Palestine, was that it equated the mass revolt with the occupiers' brutality.

Mubarak flew to Washington to present his peace plan to the US government. In an interview on American television, Mubarak explained his plan. He did not mention an independent Palestinian state, but said that he wanted to «restore the pre-1967 situation in the occupied territories under the Jordanian administration... Other details will be discussed later on...» at an international conference. While trying to convince the US administration to accept his plan, Mubarak called for discarding the words *Camp David accords*, because these are not accepted by the Arabs. For «psychological» reasons, he suggest to use another title for the same formula. There is no doubt that his initiative was stillborn. It was rejected by