

ficers)...» As reported by AP, July 12th, Rabin estimated the Israeli military's expenses as a result of the uprising at 160 million dollars. Rabin also announced that the cost of combatting the uprising might hinder the current armament program of the army and military research, by imposing budget restrictions.

Equally significant was the worry expressed by Reserve General Menachem Meron, former director general of the Defense Ministry, that the Israeli army «will turn into experts at riot control at the expense of combat readiness» (AP, July 12th). As one example of this, the elite Givati Brigade had planned exercises in December, but these were postponed when the entire brigade was deployed against the uprising in the Gaza Strip. They finally held their exercises in July. In addition, by late June, 30 Israeli soldiers had been imprisoned for refusing to serve in the occupied territories.

Compounding the problems in the military field is the fact that the damages inflicted on the Israeli economy by the uprising are beginning to show their long-term impact. In June, the governor of the Israeli Central Bank admitted that the uprising is hitting the Israeli economy hard; growth in business may fall by 40% this year, cutting the 1987 growth rate of 6.9% to 4% or less (*New Worker*, June 24). Economy Minister Gad Yaacobi estimated that the uprising has cost 'Israel' over 600 million dollars, including losses in tourism, export and production revenues (AP, July 12th). On September 9th, Israeli radio reported that Prime Minister Shamir supported the Treasury Ministry's recommendations of major budget cuts, due to the added costs of the uprising.

Still, sectors of the Israeli political leadership feigned ignorance of the reality because it doesn't match their strategic expectations, as when Shamir termed the uprising a «bother» rather than a threat to the Israeli occupation. On July 12, Housing Minister David Levy inaugurated a new settlement in the West Bank, and vowed more would be built despite the uprising. On the other hand, Yoshe Beilin, director general for political affairs in the Foreign Ministry and Labor-oriented, admitted in mid-July that there is no military solution for the uprising. He added that nonetheless the methods of

force will continue to be applied as long as there is unrest, demonstrating Zionist unity of action against the uprising.

A political furor was created by the statements of Maj. Gen. Avraham Tamir, director-general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry; while in Washington, he said: «Everybody knows that the PLO is, for the Palestinians, for the Palestinian people, their national organization... So the question is not how to replace the PLO, but how to change it» (*International Herald Tribune*, September 3-4th). Tamir also said that 'Israel' would not negotiate with the PLO, and that he opposed a Palestinian state. Still, his acknowledgement of the PLO was enough to prompt Shamir to call for his dismissal.

At the same time, the Likud and other extreme rightist forces were calling for a change in the rules so that Israeli soldiers and civilians (settlers) could shoot to kill at stonethrowers. A battalion of 170 armored corps soldiers, ending reserve duty in the West Bank, signed a petition urging the army to allow soldiers to shoot more freely at demonstrators. The tank commander Gad Shlafkin said, «That way we won't come to the point where soldiers are humiliated in front of the rioters» (AP, September 2nd).

In any case, the upsurge in militant demonstrations in mid-July was vastly disconcerting for both wings of the Israeli government. This upsurge was in part the culmination of the battle of the schools.

THE BATTLE OF THE SCHOOLS

Since the first days of the uprising, the battle for education has been an integral part of this round of struggle, against the occupation. Depriving Palestinians of a meaningful education has always been a main thrust of Israeli occupation policy, and on the other hand, students have always been in the forefront of the mass struggle. Palestinian universities have repeatedly been closed for extended periods, while other schools suffered intermittent closures following protests. With the onset of the uprising and the entire Palestinian population's involvement in this, Israeli repression against educational institutions became more severe and systematic than ever. Virtually all West Bank schools were shut for the dura-

tion, while those in the Gaza Strip operated only off and on; 475,000 students were deprived of daily education.

Meanwhile, with the uprising's thrust towards Palestinians organizing their own affairs, steps were taken to organize popular education on the local level. The United National Leadership called for the formation of educational committees and for actions to protest the occupiers' use of schools as barracks for their soldiers.

Finally, with the school semester anyway nearing an end, the occupation authorities decided to open the schools in stages from mid-May, starting with East Jerusalem and kindergartens, and moving up and out. By June 6th, high schools in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip were opened, but universities remained closed. The occupation authorities hoped to use the opening as a device for 'normalizing' the situation. At the same time, they reasserted their intention to interfere in Palestinian educational affairs as evidenced by the statement of Brig. Gen. Shaike Erez, head of the West Bank military government, that «teachers who are connected with the rioting are not teachers anymore» (*International Herald Tribune*, May 24th).

The United National Leadership called for children to return to school, and Palestinians en masse asserted their right to education, while teachers worked to have the school year extended through the summer to make up for lost classes. But as could be expected, there was no normalization. Many students returned to schools which had been heavily damaged by the occupation troops; in one El Bireh school alone, 77 windows had been broken by the occupation troops stationed there. In addition, soldiers remained deployed in the vicinity of the schools.

The uprising having become a way of life, school pupils continued to participate in demonstrations and other activities, as on June 1st when thousands marched in protest of the occupation on the International Day of the Child. Within a week, the authorities were threatening to close the schools again. At the same time, they released 120 detainees of school age, a *de facto* admission that they had been arresting children, despite their denials. In the same period, the Hebrew press had printed several exposes about the