

mine Palestinian subsistence. West Bank agricultural villages continue to be besieged and deprived of their water supply. In July, a series of villages south of Jerusalem were prohibited from selling their fruit crops. According to one resident, their fruit was rotting, for while 20% of the village produce could be marketed locally, 80% was usually exported through Jordan. The village was thus robbed of 90% of its annual income.

Suspension of services has been another Israeli economic weapon to threaten the population into stopping civil disobedience. On June 1st, the Israeli authorities announced the suspension of public services in the territories, due to the fall in tax revenues. Free treatment was abolished at government hospitals, a measure that hits everybody, but especially the injured of the uprising. Some specialized care is only available in Israeli hospitals, but the occupation authorities also closed this valve by requiring that Palestinians from the territories pay \$150 for admission to Israeli hospitals. Palestinian doctors, however, immediately said that they will disregard this new ruling, marking a new phase in the struggle for medical care.

In addition, the civil administration announced the dismissal of 1,000 of its 17,000 Palestinian employees, implying a cutback in both services, however minimal they may be, and in Palestinian incomes. In mid-July, the military authorities announced that Gazans will have to change the licenses on their vehicles and pay a new car tax, amounting to \$200-265 - about half an average worker's monthly wage.

WHO'S IN CONTROL

The question of who's in control has also been underscored by an increase in planned attacks on Israeli targets and collaborators. Starting in May, widespread fires brought the uprising into the heart of the Zionist enemy. By early June, the fire brigade in Upper Nazareth (Israeli settlement in the Galilee) had already expended its annual budget fighting fires set by Palestinian nationalists to burn the forests and other economic interests reserved for exclusive Jewish use. Later in the month, the Israeli police and military were on full alert, including air patrols, for the June 24th Day of Fire proclaimed by the United National Leadership. The many fires that day

included two in Israeli factories. In May and June as a whole, there were well over 400 fires, damaging over 40,000 acres, seven times the extent of destruction from fire in 'Israel' in the years 1974 to 1986.

The impact of the uprising has been brought home to the Israeli population in other ways as well. Within ten days in June, there was a firebomb attack on Tel Aviv's main mall; an explosion at Herzlia settlement, which injured a number of Zionist settlers; and an explosion in Bir Sheba, which injured three, while an Israeli settler was killed with a knife within the 'green line'. In early July, Israeli Police Commissioner Krauss reported that there had been over 1,000 protests in the preceding three months in what he considers 'Israel' - including 730 in the Jerusalem area, in addition to 51 firebomb attacks. He blamed Palestinian nationalists for the majority of fires plaguing the Zionist state, and reported the arrest of 900, 55 of them for arson.

The trend continued with the July 14th bomb explosion near Tel Aviv University, and the August 19th grenade attack that wounded 25 Israelis in Haifa. On August 21, Israeli radio reported a marked increase in tension in the Tel Aviv area, after three Palestinian workers were burned to death; in the ensuing days, there were a series of stonethrowing and petrolbomb attacks and attacks on settlers.

In mid-June, Defense Minister Rabin acknowledged the increase in violent protests. Firebomb attacks on Israeli soldiers had become a near daily phenomenon in the occupied territories, occurring even in West Jerusalem. Other methods were employed by the militants of the uprising, such as the mid-August sabotage of the water lines to a Zionist settlement in the Al Khalil (Hebron) area. Daring acts by the masses also posed the question of who controls the territories. One such incident occurred in East Jerusalem in mid-July when thirty Palestinians attacked six policemen with sharp objects in the courthouse, in an attempt to free a detainee. Similar daring was exhibited by a Palestinian while visiting a detained relative in the Gaza City prison; he drew a knife and stabbed and wounded an Israeli soldier. In late June, an Israeli settler was stabbed in the Hebron market. On August 12th, a group of Palestinians confronted an

Israeli patrol in the Gaza Strip with axes, chains and clubs.

The increase in armed attacks on the occupation troops was continuously bolstered by the ongoing mass action. Despite all the Zionists' repression, the people have continued to demonstrate and confront the occupation troops in the streets. To give an example from just one period, the English language weekly in the occupied territories, *Facts*, reported 114 major clashes in 62 locations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, between July 4th and 9th. While general strikes averaged six to seven per month in the preceding period, there were nine in August, after the United National Leadership called four strikes in the last week of the month in solidarity with the expelled and those killed in the Tel Aviv fire and by the Israeli troops shooting on hunger strikers in Ketziot prison.

The masses' daring and creativity is being exhibited daily. Here we can only name some examples such as on July 4th, when over 100 masked, uniformed Palestinian youth, armed with knives and iron bars and carrying Palestinian flags staged a 15 minute march in Nablus. In mid-August, the Gaza masses were faced with round-the-clock curfew and total sealing off of the Strip for the third time since the uprising began. They responded by repeatedly breaking the curfew to demonstrate, shouting: «We want a state.»

At the same time, the militant masses of the uprising continued to besiege all those who collaborate with the enemy. The June 7th attack on Hassan Al Tawil, appointed mayor of Al Bireh, showed the seriousness of the leadership's call for such officials to resign. In late August, five collaborators were attacked in three days in the Gaza Strip and West Bank; one of them was killed.

Call no. 24 issued by the United National Leadership on August 23rd urged more attacks to drive out the occupation troops, and more severe measures against those who don't heed the will of the masses. Most important, the call defied the Israeli ban on the popular committees by calling for redoubled efforts to build even more of them. «The people are the popular committees and will not abandon them,» said the leaflet. This in a nutshell, explains the success of the uprising so far and the reason it cannot be crushed, despite the Israeli terrorism against the masses and their leadership.