

fighters managed to ambush a Zionist patrol in the middle of Nabatiyeh market, killing one and injuring four enemy soldiers. This was a few days after squadrons of Israeli jets had attempted to terrorize the southerners by staging a 30-minute air exercise, dropping smoke bombs in repeated mock assaults on the Nabatiyeh area.

Economic disruption is practiced in other ways than closing the bridges. On a mid-December morning, Israeli soldiers raided Nabatiyeh's market, firing over the heads of the crowd. They just happened to choose a Monday, the day when people come from all over the South to buy and sell. More permanently damaging has been the prohibition against fishing beyond 4km offshore. On Dec. 11th, 300 Lebanese fishermen demonstrated against this in Saida; a group of them seized a truckload of fish brought in from 'Israel'. The occupation forces tried to absorb the popular rage by pledging to lift the restrictions. The next day, when the fishermen went out, their boats were rammed by Israeli gunboats, and they were forced back to shore after their nets were destroyed.

## New arrests and terror

Arrests continue to be a source of friction between the occupied and the occupiers. No sooner were the Zionists forced to empty Ansar in order to reclaim their captured soldiers, than they began to collect new political detainees. Between November 24th, when Ansar was emptied, and Dec. 1st, at least 70 residents of the South were arrested; about seven were those just released. In the week following the release, the Phalangists kidnapped about 70 Palestinians and Lebanese, also including former Ansar detainees, in different parts of the South. Though some were later released, others have joined the ranks of the 'disappeared'. The vast majority of the released have been called in and warned by the IDF. The enemy was not happy about releasing the heroes of Ansar, and even less so when over 3,000 chose to remain in their homes or camps in South Lebanon. Renewed Zionist-fascist terror aims to intimidate them into leaving the South.

Arrests in the Saida area in mid-December led to clashes with local villagers, notably in Kfar Melki, where the people held a strike and sit-in in their mosque. This followed an anti-occupation sit-in in Saida's main mosque the week before. On Dec. 29th, Saida went on strike to protest the arrest of religious leaders and the killing of three Lebanese civilians by



One of Saida's 500 underemployed fishermen.

the IDF in the course of their arrest campaign. The next day sit-ins were held in Sunni and Shiite mosques throughout Lebanon, with religious leaders calling for all forms of resistance to the occupation. Again, the Israelis closed the Awali crossings.

## Zionist dilemma widens as collaborators dwindle

With continuing occupation of the South, the Zionists have locked themselves in a dilemma. While reaping great benefits in terms of trade and new water resources, they pay heavy economic and social costs for maintaining the occupation troops. The loss of Israeli lives contributes constantly to the simmering social crisis in the Zionist entity. Yet every repressive measure, aimed at reducing these losses, elicits broader mass resentment in Lebanon, in turn improving conditions for more attacks on the IDF.

The Zionists had hoped to escape this vicious circle by handing over more and more of the tasks of controlling the population to local collaborators. Since Saad Haddad's fascist militias are rightfully known as no more than an extension of the IDF, the Israelis set up and armed the so-called national guards in southern villages and camps. However, these units have generally remained small and isolated, especially as mass resentment of the occupation has grown. The Amal movement's boycott

of all forms of collaboration played a significant role in crystallizing mass sentiment against the 'national guards'. Also the LNRF has played an active role in limiting collaboration; at least half a dozen 'national guard' figures have been liquidated, which served as a warning to others.

The crisis of the Zionist policy for creating surrogate security forces became public on Nov. 30th. Abu Sateh, commander of the nucleus of an Israeli-planned 'Shiite army' in the South, announced in West Beirut that he had disbanded his 120 man unit, most of whom then fled the South; he pledged allegiance to Amal. Abu Sateh explained how he had been drawn into cooperation with the Israelis to "save us from sectarian militias" (Saad Haddad and the Phalangists), but later realized that "This army would not be under our command, but under orders from the Israeli army to ensure sectarian fighting in the south similar to what happened in the mountains." He revealed that the Israelis had told him that the 'Shiite army' would eventually number 14,000 and provide security as called for in the Lebanese-Israeli accord. Abu Sateh's changed position not only brings to an end one of the largest groups organized by the Israelis. It also signifies that fewer Lebanese are susceptible to the Zionist's divide and rule policy of arming collaborators under the pretext of providing defense from the fascists when, in fact, the real intention is to use them to suppress their own people.