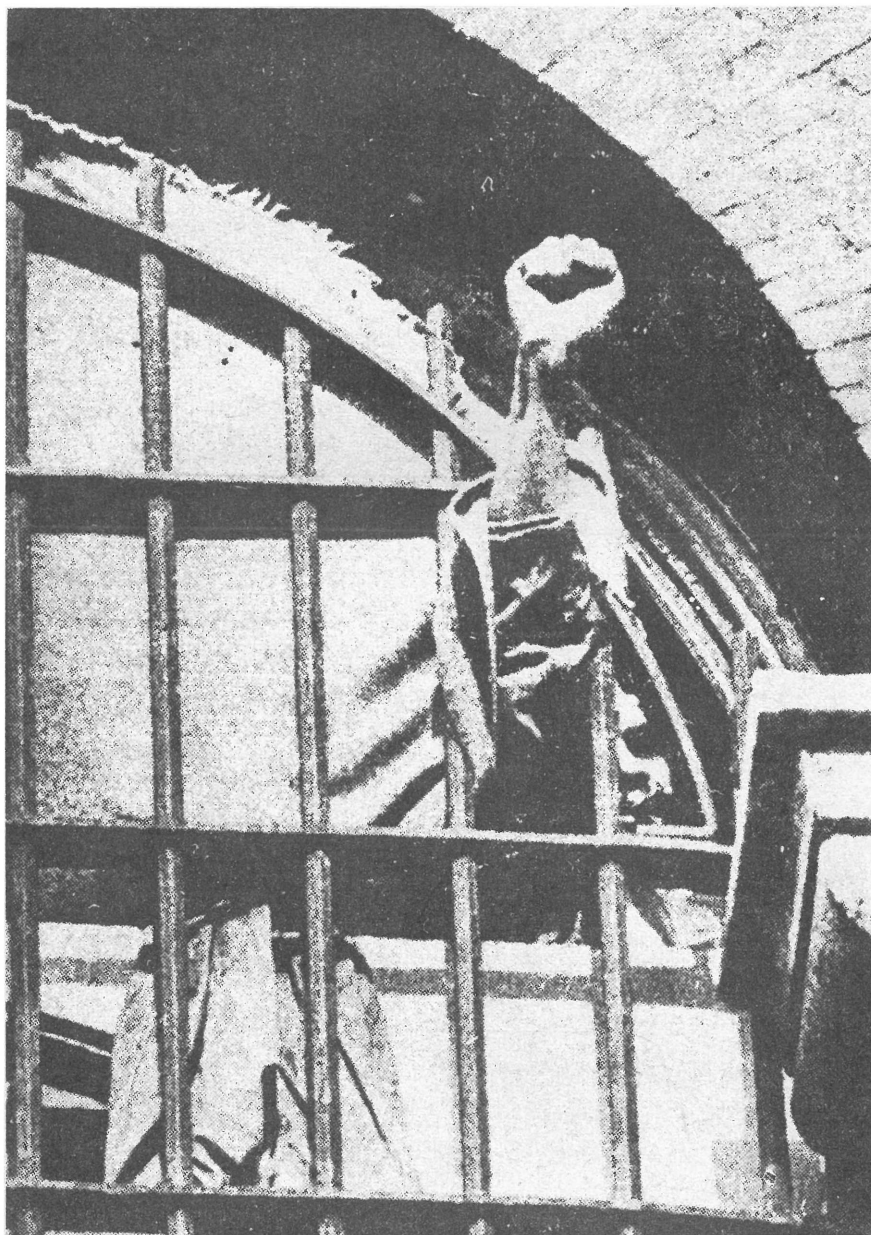


two choices: either to cover the financial deficit, or face demonstrations, strikes and perhaps widespread unrest, especially on the upcoming Day of the Land. While the government does not desire the second possibility, it would counter the Likud policy to make meaningful

concessions to the Palestinian municipalities. Moreover, the prevailing economic crisis in the Zionist entity, and the Likud's inability to find solutions, make fulfilling these demands a difficult task in any case.

## Prison Strikes



Since May 1983, a strike has been going on in Neve Tertza women's prison at Ramle. Twenty militant women prisoners refused to work, rejecting kitchen tasks and serving the prison warden, as well as work such as sewing. For several months, they refused to accept their visitors in order to call attention to the seriousness of their situation. The strike was initiated to protest the repression

enacted by the Israeli prison authorities. Later women in other prisons began solidarity strikes.

In the autumn, the Zionist authorities tried brute force in order to break the strike. Police raids into the prison were stepped up, and clubs and tear gas were used against the prisoners. This has been recurrent. In January, additional restrictions were imposed in a new attempt to

end the strike. This included the banning of radio and television viewing for the prisoners, and the confiscation of books and notebooks, as well as other personal property. Moreover, the sun break was limited to one hour daily; visits of relatives were cut to one every two months, and the prisoners were not allowed to correspond with their families through the Red Cross.

A series of demonstrations have been held in occupied Palestine to show solidarity with the women prisoners and to protest their ill-treatment at the hands of the Zionist authorities. Democratic Israeli Jews have joined in many of these manifestations. Most recently, a demonstration was held in front of the prison, called by the Women Prisoners Society in Nazareth, and attended by relatives of the prisoners, as well as by progressive Israelis from the Committee to Stop the War in Lebanon. Then on February 12th, the democratic Israeli organization, Women Against Occupation, picketed a meeting of the Tel Aviv police, protesting the treatment of the Palestinian women prisoners.

### Hebron jail strike

Prisoners in the jail at Hebron (Al Khalil) have been waging a similar strike since June 1983. They are protesting maltreatment by the prison authorities, who have isolated the prisoners into different sections and divided the only small yard into two.

These methods are common in the Zionist jails. In addition, many prisoners are subject to being constantly transferred from one prison to another, whereby the Zionist authorities try to create a state of confusion and instability among them.

In Damoun prison for teenagers, bad conditions of another sort prevail. There, political prisoners are mixed with criminals. In so doing, the prison authorities try to infect the political prisoners with harmful social phenomena - drugs, theft, immoral practices, collaborationist tendencies, etc., in order to break their will and develop more collaborators. These prisoners are also forced to do hard labor for long hours. This aims at destroying their youth, wearing them down physically as a way of eroding their will to resist, and their national identity and aspirations.

The conditions facing political prisoners in the Zionist jails must be further exposed. All democratic forces, including international organizations concerned with human rights, must raise their voices to condemn the suppressive acts of the Israelis, and express solidarity with the prisoners' courageous resistance.