

met its Waterloo in Beirut and Central Lebanon. Despite over a quarter billion dollars in imperialist aid over the past year, the Lebanese Army was simply not up to its task. Of course, the Reagan Administration took immediate measures to rectify this, deciding to up the present 100 US advisors training the army to several hundred. However, the fact of the matter is that what is left for the US in the way of coherent, local fighting forces is the fascists (their militias and the hard-core of the army), who have previously showed their incapacity to impose themselves beyond their own ghetto without outside help. Even more direct military involvement on the part of 'Israel' and/or the US's own forces is required, yet these options involve internal repercussions in the respective aggressor states. Moving the Marines to the Sixth Fleet and assigning greater firing prerogative to the warships can impose more destruction on Lebanon, as can the resumed Israeli air raids. Yet neither has proved capable of changing the minds of the Lebanese masses and nationalist forces. At this point, it is they who are deciding.

Echoes of victory

The repercussions of the nationalist victory echoed beyond Lebanon's borders, compounding the dilemma of Washington strategists. The enemy forces had mapped out Lebanon as the stage for breaking through the obstacle which Syrian steadfastness poses for Camp David. Quite the opposite occurred. By asserting predominance in the internal balance of forces, the Lebanese nationalists simultaneously highlighted the weight of Syria, which shares the Lebanese National Salvation Front's founding premise: rejection of the May 17th accord, or any similar capitulation to 'Israel'. Thus, the US failure to impose its wishes on Lebanon in turn exposes the weak points in its regional strategy, for one, its underestimation of the Syrian role.

The nationalist victory also opened new vistas for the Palestinian revolution. Revolutionary Palestinian organizations placed their forces under Lebanese nationalist command; Palestinian fighters confronted the US and fascist aggression alongside the Lebanese masses and militants. In late February, PFLP Politbureau member, Bassam Abu Sharif, issued a statement affirming that the PFLP's fighting forces are in Lebanon, not in Beirut, but mainly in the Beqaa Valley, side by side with the Lebanese nationalist and progressive forces: "We have put all our capacities at the disposal of the Lebanese nationalist forces and coordinate with them to resist the Israeli occupation of the South." Com-

rade Bassam explained that the Palestinian revolution has no plans to return to its old form of presence in Lebanon, but he stressed that the Palestinians in the camps have every right to freedom of political and social action.

The importance of the Palestinian revolution as a whole doing its utmost to consolidate its alliance with Syria and the nationalist Lebanese, on a correct basis, is underscored by the fact that the battle is not ended. Rather, a new chapter has been opened in the struggle to roll back imperialist-Zionist-reactionary dominance in the area. There are, moreover, concrete signs that the enemy forces will try to reverse their set-back.

Any US or Israeli attempt will of necessity rely on the medium of the Lebanese fascists. In this context, it is interesting to note the moves of the different components of the fascist Lebanese Front. On the one hand, we see Amin Gemayel desperately maneuvering to save his position, speaking of annulling the treaty with 'Israel' and putting out feelers for a reconciliation with Syria.

On the other, there are other, more basic indications of the fascist position: The Lebanese Front 'godfathers', Pierre Gemayel and Camille Chamoun, and their militia commander, Fadi Frem, have loudly declared that the treaty must not be cancelled. Efforts are being made for 'President' Gemayel to cement more open and binding relations with 'Israel'. The fascists know very well that the Lebanon they want is totally antagonistic to that being created by the Lebanese nationalist and progressive forces; they are preparing their alliances for a comeback.

Indeed, the contradictions between the fascists and the progressive nationalists run too deep, and are currently too intensified, to allow for easy compromise. It is indicative that in this round, the traditional Saudi mediating role has been rendered impotent. All indications point to continued conflict, and in this, we pledge our support to the heroic Lebanese national and progressive forces, for a free and democratic, Arab Lebanon. ●

The Israeli Response - South Lebanon

The nationalist forces' advance from West Beirut to Damour, only about ten miles from the occupation lines, compounded the Zionists' dilemma in South Lebanon. Their response was predictable: Top officials reaffirmed Zionist intentions to remain indefinitely in the South. The regular IDF patrols north of the Awali line multiplied in an effort to intimidate the national forces. All-out aggression was stepped up. On February 10th, Israeli bombers struck the mountains. On February 19th, Damour, as well as sites in the mountains, were hit. On February 21st, there was a new air raid on the Beirut-Damascus highway.

Actually, the Israeli cabinet had been deliberating further partial pull-backs in

order to escape the escalating attacks of the Lebanese National Resistance Front. In particular, they were considering a pull-out from Saida, having already transferred their headquarters to safer ground inland in a Phalangist barracks at Kfar Falous. This is a tribute to the heroes who have transformed Saida and the entire southern coast into a hell for the occupiers. According to Israeli radio, the Zionist troops were attacked 46 times in January on the coastal road alone. In the South as a whole, military operations were averaging 4-5 daily in the middle of the same month. To further enrage the Zionists, three Katyusha rockets fell at Metullah in northern Palestine on February 9th.

A Tale of Courage - Young and Old

On January 21st, the Israelis descended on the village of Hallusiyeh, just south of the Litani River. Due to the villagers' resistance, they were unable to capture the Shiite Sheikh, Abbas Harb, whom they had decided to hold responsible for recent military operations in the area. Later, an entire convoy raided the village and snatched Harb and nine others away by helicopter. Hallusiyeh and two nearby villages were clamped under siege.

The general strike called in the South due to the IDF's imposition of compulsory mourning for their fascist lackey, Saad

Haddad, grew into an uprising after the new arrests. Thus, on January 24th, the Israelis brought Harb to his village and instructed him to quiet the people. Instead he had the courage to urge them to resist. The Zionist soldiers beat him brutally and carried him away to an unknown destination, but they could not so easily silence the people: A battle ensued, and a fourteen year old son of the village opened fire on the soldiers, hitting five of them. He was instantly shot and killed, but his name, Ali Younis, will be remembered as one of the martyrs of the heroic Lebanese resistance.