

the Phalangist Party. On the contrary, it was a method to expose the policy and behaviour of the Phalangists. We insist on a common life in a democratic Lebanon in which all citizens live with equal rights and duties, and are free to choose their political system, their representative and judicial institutions, and the power apparatus that serves this choice. We always emphasized that what has prevented this choice is the project of discriminatory, sectarian, one-group hegemony.

In order for the Lebanese people to live on the basis of national reconciliation, the first requirement is total defeat of the project of Phalangist hegemony, which we rightfully described as the project for the Zionization of Lebanon. The latest events have placed the country on the threshold of a solution which would enable our people to regain complete independence, confirm their Arab identity, guarantee democratic development and mobilize their potentials for the battle of liberating the territory occupied by the Israeli enemy. This means supporting the Lebanese National Resistance Front against the occupation, supporting the popular movement that has transformed the South into a permanent uprising against the occupation, with the participation of all social, political, nationalist and religious circles.

On the western media's reports about reservations of some parties in the National Salvation Front concerning Jumblatt's call for Amin Gemayel's resignation...

There is a desire on the part of the western and reactionary media that there be such a difference. Certainly, the disparity, which may exist about the method of getting rid of the Phalangist authority, is exaggerated. There is no difference on the principle of getting rid of it. This disparity stems from differing positions on how to combat the Phalangist hegemony. We see this disparity as tactical differences as to the method for salvation. We leave it up to experience on the one hand, and the balance of forces on the other, to determine the best approach for implementing the tasks agreed upon. Our conviction is that the development taking place in the field is the determining factor in resolving this question. Therefore, we should not be impressed by this media exaggeration which expresses the desires of its owners, more than expressing the facts.

On the current situation and its perspectives...

First, allow me to address what I consider to be the resurgence (of the national movement) in the present circumstances. The basic thing here is what is taking place in South Lebanon: the armed struggle against the occupation. The role of this struggle is determining the overall revolutionary process in Lebanon. Israel is the central, basic link in the chain of the enemy plan. Therefore, weakening this link will weaken the other links. The historic decision to resist the Israeli occupation by force of arms, and the historic initiative taken by our party in this respect, provided the major prelude to the process of resurgence taking place today in Beirut.

This is the main lever in the process of nationalist revival. It is also the real lever for a revolutionary Arab nationalist resurgence. We provide the start of a new phenomenon in the Arab national liberation movement and a heritage for all revolutionary traditions in the Palestinian revolution — (how to) develop it and avoid falling into the great error previously committed. I will not here characterize the role of all the nationalist forces participating in the heroic struggle of our people. However, I would like to emphasize the special role played by the PFLP in this context, by cooperating totally with us. This provides a distinguished example as to how relations between the Lebanese progressive and nationalist forces and the Palestinian revolution should be.

The uprising in Beirut achieved the first part of its tasks by liberating West Beirut from the army of the one-group authority and the control of the Phalangist Party. I want to note the important role of the patriotic soldiers and officers who refused to continue being used as a repressive tool against their own people, their relatives and the working masses in the southern suburbs and Beirut.

Concerning the Israeli occupation, withdrawal will inevitably be imposed, and the attempt to create a puppet mini-state for Israel in the South will fail, as the masses' avalanche continues, to liberate their land from the Israeli occupation and its lackeys, and consolidate nationalist control in the South. We are not for the army of the one-group authority returning to the South. We struggle under the slogan: The Land to Whoever Liberates It! The South is for the workers, peasants, revolutionary intellectuals, students, women and men of the South. The South is for the honorable militants of the Amal movement and our party, and all progressive and nationalist forces of the South.

In light of the tasks mentioned previously, two duties lie ahead of us: first, to abolish Phalangist control in the state; accordingly, we will work on the second: assembling the broadest forces from all political, religious and social trends in the broadest front (which already exists), irregardless of the organizational framework. We will work to recruit the broadest popular movement possible to wage all forms of struggle, without exception, in order to achieve this task, for in the final analysis, this is what is required to liberate Lebanon, unite it and guarantee its Arab identity. These tasks are connected and cannot be separated from each other.

On whether the regime and Phalangist Party will try to trap the opposition in a compromise...

We have to differentiate between compromises and compromises. The conflict and any dialogue revolve on major issues: first the political position towards the May 17th agreement and the Israeli occupation, its conditions and results. For our part, we will not make any compromises in this area. We stand for the absolute cancellation of this agreement, waging the battle for liberating the country unconditionally, implementing Security Council resolutions 508 and 509, and sufficing with the 1947 armistice agreement. Any compromises made by the authority below this line cannot deceive the active, influential nationalist forces. The struggle against the May 17th agreement is a struggle against all the political results of the Israeli occupation, a major one of these being the Phalangist authority. We will struggle to bring down the Phalangist project for hegemony.

Concerning compromises on other issues, we will not accept anything which allows for the continued presence of the US forces or the MNF in Lebanon. Any flexibility in tactics will not be at the expense of the principle decisions. We insist on the cancellation of political confessionalism and drawing up a schedule whereby the process of cancelling this will take place gradually. Our insistence on principles will be total, but there may be flexibility concerning the form of application.

The second issue, which does not tolerate partial concessions, is the enactment of a serious, democratic change in the popular representation in Lebanon, the parliament and the election law. We shall insist on the principle of change. As a working class party, we believe that there is no room for real democracy unless the power of the bourgeoisie is brought down. Yet we struggle for the highest degree of democracy possible in the framework of the bourgeois state. This will create an atmosphere conducive to developing our struggle for bringing down the bourgeoisie's control of the power.

The third major issue is the army. There is a decisive, united, nationalist position: Either a nationalist army to de-