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Editorial

The historical opportunity of the present stage; transition from the stage of steadfastness to that of confrontation.

With the departure of the last French soldier from Beirut on March 20th, a new stage of the struggle in Lebanon, and that of the whole area, commences. The struggle opens to possibilities - positive and negative. Though the alteration in the balance of forces gives more possibilities to a positive development, negative trends must be analyzed and overcome in order to transfer from the stage of steadfastness to one of confrontation.

The nationalist triangle represented by Syria, the Lebanese National Forces and the Palestinian Revolution, is surrounded by objective conditions which allow these forces to advance and by directing a powerful blow, change the balance of forces in the area in their common favour. Yet, due to a number of obstacles within the triangle itself, gaps exist through which the enemy could penetrate.

The great victory achieved by the Lebanese National Forces against the ruling fascist authorities, directly supported by US forces, the multi-national forces and Israel, was a turning point in two senses. It defeated the view that the 1982 invasion meant a total collapse and required complete submission

to the American, fascist and Zionist plans, and confirmed the view that mass resurgence against the forces of invasion can free Lebanon from occupation and exploitation. It changed the balance of forces from the fascists preparing to dominate Lebanon and oppressing the nationalist forces totally - through the May 17th agreement, a Camp David solution for Lebanon, to the cancellation of this agreement due to the struggle of the Nationalist Forces, thereby being able to impose their own just demands.

The Lebanese National Forces, backed by Syria and supported by the Palestinian Revolution forced US to pull out, and the US was not able to return through the United Nation's forces. Prior to this, the US administration had rejected to make any compromises on the May 17th agreement, or even discuss any amendments to it, while the Israelis considered the agreement the price for their 1982 invasion.

Israel now faces two options - both difficult. Either it keeps its forces in South Lebanon, which will be costly politically and economically as the daily average loss in the Zionist forces, due to the heroic operations of the armed popular resistance, ►