

port was closed for eleven days in early March in a clear-cut case of collective punishment, after three consecutively timed bombs wounded eleven soldiers of an Israeli patrol entering the harbor, one of whom later died. The port was again closed April 3rd and 4th, for «unexplained reasons», i.e., more punishment for the steady mass and armed resistance to occupation.

In the context of the wide-spread protests, the Lebanese National Resistance Front made yet a further escalation of its military operations, that now average several daily. On April 1st, there were two attacks on Israeli patrols in the vicinity of Saida. In the center of the city, an explosion wounded three soldiers and wrecked an armored vehicle. The Israelis sprayed fire in all, directions, damaging ten buildings and fifteen cars.

Two days later, there was a roadside bomb against a patrol in the coastal highway near Saida, while a RPG attack in Nabatiyeh wounded seven Israelis and demobilized two of their armored vehicles. Three Israelis were wounded by an explosion at the Litani River bridge on the coastal highway the same day. On April 4th, an Israeli military vehicle was set on fire, causing a number of casualties. The next day, a grenade attack on an Israeli patrol in Saida,

injured at least one soldier seriously. The Israelis exploded a sound bomb to frighten the people and began firing indiscriminately, wounding seven civilians. Ten more residents of Saida were arrested, and all shops ordered closed. Earlier in the day, the IDF had evicted families from buildings around the place they use as a military intelligence and interrogation center, shooting to speed the eviction, damaging other houses nearby and cutting electricity lines.

Confrontation rises at the Beqaa frontlines

In a close cooperation between the Lebanese nationalist forces and revolutionary Palestinian organizations, attacks on the occupation troops in the southern Beqaa have been stepped up. In the last days of March, eight Israeli soldiers were wounded in a series of operations in this area. Then, on April 1st, the IDF moved tanks units forward and bombarded nationalist positions here for the first time in over a year. The following days were characterized by military build-up, intermittent exchanges of fire between the Syrian and Israeli forces, and frequent Israeli overflights of the Beqaa.

Fearing the revived war of attrition on this front, and its spill-over into the already resistant South, Israeli Minister of War Arens diverged from the Israeli opposition to UNIFIL in the South of Lebanon, to advocate the stationing of UN troops along the frontlines in the southern Beqaa. This attempt to neutralize Syrian support to the anti-occupation resistance coincides with the Zionist aim of partitioning Lebanon and isolating the South in order to annex at least its water resources.

However, like the Zionist terror campaign against the masses of the South, this plan will ultimately fail. The war of attrition against the occupiers has become an abiding mass phenomenon, linking Lebanese and Palestinian freedom fighters, linking the heroic struggle of small southern villages with the nationalist forces in the Beirut and Beqaa areas. On this basis, the Lebanese National Resistance Front can only continue to escalate its operations, inflicting ever heavier casualties in the Zionist ranks. The latest example is the daring explosion of an Israeli military headquarters in Deir Kanoun, northeast of Sour, where at least eight Zionists were killed and many others injured.

Mass resistance to occupation in the South

