

one entering the South from the Beqaa Valley.

Such measures are choking the Lebanese economy, but not the anti-occupation resistance. Military operations continue to average more than one daily. During April they escalated in the Nabatiyeh area in particular and were initiated in areas under UNIFIL supervision, where residents have grown tired of the lack of protection this affords. As noted in our last issue, attacks on Israeli troops in southern Beqaa continue to rise. May 27th witnessed a major attack on a Zionist patrol near Kamed al Loz. The Zionists admitted three soldiers killed and two seriously injured, but local sources estimated that losses were higher. The area has been blocked off since, but this did not prevent an Israeli convoy from hitting a mine on June 3rd. Students, however, were prevented from entering Kamed al Loz to attend school, and food was scarce due to the blockade. On June 8th, the Zionist forces encircled and raided Kamed al Loz, ransacking homes.

Another notable military operation occurred in Shabriha, near Sour, on May 30th, when Lebanese patriots engaged an Israeli patrol for fifteen minutes and burned an armored vehicle with soldiers inside.

Lahad Rejected

The Zionists' only claim to good relations with the southerners rests on the so-called South Lebanon Army, headed by Antoine Lahad. Yet the April 22nd strike throughout the South, protesting this army's assuming security duties, showed how little representative it is. This army's effectiveness is also dubious. It numbers about 1,500, as opposed to the 6,000 envisioned by the Israelis. Its manpower is 85% Christian in stark contrast to the overwhelmingly Shiite population of the South, i.e., it remains to be the left-overs of Saad Haddad's gang beefed up by the Phalangists. Moreover, the loyalty of some of its members is questionable. Recently, a 19 year old told a reporter that he had joined because the men in



Sour: tires burned in the Days of Rage

his village were given the choice of enlisting or being expelled from their home. He confided that he supports the anti-occupation resistance by turning a blind eye while on duty. These facts give credence to reports that the Israelis will assign 400 of their own men to lead Lahad's forces if they should withdraw. As it is, the South Lebanon Army's presence and operations are totally linked to Israeli posts and command. This is acknowledged by Lahad himself. Lebanese police tried to intervene when the South Lebanese Army occupied the Lebanese Army's radio station in Jezzine and expelled its staff on June 5th. The South Lebanese Army referred them to the Israeli liaison office in Dbayah as being solely responsible for this matter.

Days of rage

Popular resistance reached a high-point from June 4th on, as the second anniversary of the Zionist invasion was commemorated throughout nationalist areas and especially in the occupied South. West Beirut went on strike, and

thousands of Lebanese marched in one of the largest demonstrations ever seen in the city.

The Israeli army prepared for the Days of Rage by cutting off the South from the rest of the country and refusing permits to Lebanese wishing to enter. Patrols were increased, but the occupiers were unable to prevent strikes and demonstrations from being held throughout the South despite encircling and raiding villages.

Military operations escalated dramatically. From June 5th to 8th, there were 12 attacks on the occupiers in the Nabatiyeh region alone. In these same days, it was reported that two Israeli soldiers based in this area had deserted. Each day of this week of rage was marked by a minimum of three operations, covering all sectors of the South and western Beqaa Valley. The pace of resistance did not slack off, for on June 13th, four Israeli soldiers were wounded by an explosive charge east of Sour. In the foregoing 24 hours four attacks had occurred around Nabatiyeh, causing Israeli casualties and killing four collaborators of the local pro-Israeli militias. ●