

occupied territories. In short this is an attempt to split the Palestinians along class as well as political lines, breaking the national unity that has thwarted Camp David's 'autonomy', 'civil' administration, the village league scheme, etc. Instead a new Palestinian 'leadership' would be formed to preside over the 'development' of the occupied territories in line with US-Zionist interests. This would provide the prerequisite for the reactionary Arab regimes to enter negotiations with 'Israel' and expand Camp David.

Small carrots and big fists

The clearest proof that Israeli 'goodwill' is only intended to split the Palestinian position can be found in the treatment simultaneously meted out to nationalist leaders and the masses. Liberal supporters of the Zionist state would like to depict these gestures as a change from the Likud's iron fist. On the contrary, these gestures can and will only be made as an embellishment on the iron fist.

While Peres was breathing 'goodwill' in mid-October, the major nationalist leaders of the West Bank were being summoned by the military governor and warned against political activities, especially of reactivating the National Guidance Committee. While five Palestinians were allowed to travel to the New York capitalists' conference, the majority of nationalist leaders cannot leave the country without special permission in advance; some cannot leave their home or their town. Israeli patrols are again round-the-clock at the home of Bassam Shakaa, the elected mayor of Nablus, while the pro-Jordanian Thabet Masri, deputy mayor and head of the Nablus Chamber of Commerce, is now allowed to open a bank. The carrot now being offered to the select few is overshadowed by the iron fist still perched over the heads of the vast majority. Shakaa told *Al Fajr*, October 19th, that Shmuel Goren, the Israeli military coordinator for the occupied territories, threatened to «return the iron fist stronger than ever before» if the nationalists engage in politics.

Settler-state terrorism

The carrot has not reached into most Palestinian towns, much less the villages and camps. Life under occupation is much the same: Palestinian demonstrations countered by IDF tear gas and «shooting in the air», as happened when protests shook the West

Bank after Zionist terrorists launched a rocket attack on a bus near Jerusalem, killing one Palestinian and wounding ten others, on October 28th. Again the occupiers were out in force to attack demonstrations on November 2nd when Palestinians traditionally protest the Balfour declaration which gave British imperialist backing to the Zionist project in Palestine.

Settler provocations have become bolder under the national unity government with the fascist Kahane's parliamentary immunity being exploited to the hilt. The pattern established in Um al Fahm in the Galilee on August 29th has since been repeated with slight variations in Dheisheh camp, south of Bethlehem in early October, in Taibeh on October 12th, and Haifa on October 14th. In all cases, Palestinians mounted demonstrations against Kahane and his settlers' presence; in Haifa and Taibeh they were joined by anti-fascist Israeli Jews. In some cases, Kahane entered the targeted area; other times the Israeli police kept him out. But in all cases the provocation was used to crack down on Palestinians.

In the six weeks after Kahane tried to enter Um al Fahm, 300 residents were interrogated for their role in the demonstration. Police attacked the anti-Kahane demonstrations in both Taibeh and Haifa and made arrests. After 300 armed settlers had raided Dheisheh, and Kahane had prayed near the camp's mosque, the camp was curfewed; eight of its ten entrances were permanently sealed; forty residents were detained. Defense Minister Rabin approved the settlers' initiative to patrol the road in front of the camp. The settlers are also demanding that three rows of the camp houses closest to the road be demolished «to prevent stone-throwing». This has with good reason elicited fears among Dheisheh residents that the occupiers are considering abolishing the camp altogether. The refugee camps and their inhabitants have no place in the 'development' schemes for the occupied territories; to the enemy, they are a blemish constantly exposing that 'Israel' is built on stolen land; they are also a breeding ground for the fervent nationalism which the Zionist enemy aims to squash.

Aside from generally using Kahane's campaign for expelling the Palestinians from Palestine as an excuse for more repression, the clearest proof of the national unity government's support to settler violence came on

October 18th. On this evening, Al Khalil (Hebron) was placed under curfew to allow 7000 settlers to assemble in the city center. Purportedly this was to celebrate a Jewish feast, but the event was sponsored by the Committee for the Defense of Underground Settlers, i.e. Zionist terrorists. Slogans and posters lauding anti-Palestinian terror pervaded. Members of the Knesset were in attendance, and the rally was addressed by Minister of Industry and Commerce, Ariel Sharon, who pledged that next year the event would be celebrated in Nablus, the largest city of the West Bank. Defense Minister Rabin had refused requests by Peace Now, the Citizens' Rights Movement and Al Khalil's Mayor Natshe, to have the event cancelled.

The trap

Clearly the Zionist national unity government holds out no prospects of easing repression against our people. Rather it is setting a trap for the PLO. The Zionists are preparing for the anticipated reactivation of the US initiative in the area with Reagan's reelection. They are consciously seeking to exploit the situation created by Arafat's alliance with the Jordanian and Egyptian regimes, which threatens to split the PLO on the one hand, and gives the green light to collaborators on the other. This does not mean that the Zionists are ready to deal with Arafat, or that they are willing to give meaningful power to the Palestinian bourgeoisie under occupation. It does mean that they will try to exploit the disarray in the PLO to stabilize their own control over all the occupied territories in the context of imperialist 'peace' in the area. Once again, 'peace' initiatives which circumvent the Palestinians' legitimate rights are proven to be a cover for more Zionist expansion and aggression.

At this point we see the direct relation between the situation in occupied Palestine and the efforts being made, by the Democratic Alliance in particular, to reunite the PLO on the basis of the Aden-Algiers agreement with Fatah's Central Committee. Our masses under occupation need the backing of a strong, united PLO in resisting the enemy's new attempts to divide and squelch their struggle. In particular, the Aden-Algiers agreement's stress on rebuilding the Palestinian National Front, to lead the popular struggle against occupation, provides the means for resisting both the fraudulent Zionist carrot and the very real Zionist terror.