

Situation in Saida

Palestine National Salvation Front Initiative

No sooner had the war on the camps of Beirut ended via the Damascus agreement, than focus shifted to Saida, specifically the adjacent Palestinian refugee camp, Ain al Hilweh. Reports circulated about an impending explosion of the security situation. The insinuations were of expected Palestinian infighting and/or a Palestinian-Lebanese conflict.

Of course, there are forces that have interest in such an explosion. Prime among them is the Zionist-fascist alliance which has permanent interests in pitting Palestinians against Lebanese, in order to further divide Lebanon and destroy the Palestinian revolution. Also other forces have opted for a slightly modified sectarian solution in Lebanon, in order to bolster their own dominance.

As is obvious, such an explosion is anathema to the people of Ain al Hilweh, to Palestinian nationalist forces generally, to patriotic Saida and all Lebanon's progressive movement. Thus, extensive efforts have been made to reinforce Lebanese-Palestinian solidarity that has deep historical roots in the Saida area. Based on nationalist Lebanese-Palestinian cooperation, efforts have been made to end any practices or incidents that could be grabbed as a pretext by those wishing to explode the situation.

PNSF delegation

On the Palestinian side, the PNSF has been the active force in promoting these efforts. On two occasions, the PNSF has sent a delegation to the Saida area. The second of these visits occurred July 11-14th. The delegation met with Amal's leadership in Saida, the Nasserite Organization led by Mustafa Saad, the local Lebanese National Democratic Front leadership, the National Political Council of Saida and the Islamic Groups. The delegation also visited Shiite villages in the surrounding area, accompanied by representatives of Amal and Saida's nationalist forces.

The delegation naturally also visited Ain al Hilweh camp, and met with the local PNSF branch. Comrade Abu Maher Yamani, Secretary of the PNSF Secretariat and PFLP representative in the PNSF leadership, met with political

and military cadres loyal to Fatah's Central Committee. This was in line with efforts to coordinate with Fatah members who oppose the right-wing leadership's policy and violations which might be taken as a pretext by some to start a battle. The majority of Fatah members in Ain al Hilweh are determined to avoid an explosion, whereby political differences in the PLO would be manipulated to the disadvantage of all.

In all these meetings, the focus was on finding practical means to avert an explosion of the security situation, and to dispell the atmosphere of tension and fear of such an outbreak. Ways were discussed of avoiding inter-Palestinian or Lebanese-Palestinian fighting. Strict measures were decided upon against the infiltration of collaborators and provocaters. The discussions were held in a spirit of building on points of unity, in order to avoid problems that would divert

from the struggle against the Israeli occupiers and their puppets, Lahd's SLA. Generally speaking, the response of all forces contacted was positive.

The PNSF delegation stressed that the struggle against the deviation of the Palestinian right should be conducted solely by democratic means (political education, dialogue and activities) and never by force of arms which should be applied only against the main enemy: the Zionist and fascist forces.

To implement all this, there should be regular meetings between the PNSF and Saida's nationalist forces. Violations from any side should be dealt with in a spirit of solidarity, not confrontation. The PNSF emphasized the need for formalizing cooperation so that it develops beyond responding to the problems that arise, to lead to an overall strengthening of the common struggle.

PNSF Condemns Assassinations

Communique, July 27th

After the criminal assassination of four Palestinian fighters from Ain al Hilweh camp near Saida, a spokesman for the Palestine National Salvation Front declared:

Suspicious forces in the city of Saida are continuing acts of provocation aimed at exploding the security situation. Yesterday they committed an ugly, new crime by assassinating four Palestinian fighters near Ain al Hilweh camp. While strongly condemning this crime, the Palestine National Salvation Front affirms its determination to:

1. Continue efforts to consolidate the national Lebanese-Palestinian relations and guarantee the security of Saida and the Palestinian camps against suspicious forces who aim to explode the situation by provoking a split between the Lebanese and Palestinian people.

2. Continue to work to strengthen and deepen Palestinian national unity in the area, in order to guarantee the security of the Palestinian camps and block the path of suspicious forces that seek to liquidate the Palestinians' armed role in Lebanon.

The Palestine National Salvation Front has confidence in the Palestinian masses' ability to overcome suspicious enemy plans, and calls upon all the Palestinian masses in the camps in South Lebanon, to be alert to face the danger of physical liquidation which would threaten the future of the revolution.

The Palestine National Salvation Front warns the suspicious forces against continuing their plans. At the same time, we call upon all nationalist personalities in Saida to uncover those behind the assassination and put an end to provocations against the Palestinian masses in the camps in South Lebanon.

Note: Those assassinated were members of the forces loyal to Fatah's Central Committee. Yet they were not among those being sent to Saida by the right-wing leadership for its own purposes; nor were they suspected of any violation. On the contrary, they were original residents of Ain al Hilweh camp and known for their struggle against the Zionist enemy. They were cooperating with the people of the camp and other organizations to avoid any explosion of the security situation.