



The Islamic meeting in Damascus

in order to normalize the situation in West Beirut. Yet their vanguard forces remain alert in case of fascist instigations. The security plan did not demilitarize the frontline facing the fascist forces in East Beirut. Nor did it include the southern outskirts of Beirut where the Amal militiamen predominate.

Flashpoints

There are other flashpoints from which the Lebanese situation could explode. Pitched battles raged in Tripoli in the North as the Muslim leaders met in Damascus; these continued and can always be ignited by reactionaries who oppose reconciliation. In South Lebanon, the crisis of Jezzine remains boiling because Lahd's South Lebanese Army has refused to withdraw from the city. The «security zone», nominally patrolled by the SLA, is still under Israeli occupation, a permanent launching pad for new aggression against civilians. In June alone, 16 people were killed by the SLA/IDF, while thousands fled their homes when the SLA shelled villages just across from the «security zone».

Israeli military presence in the «security zone» also makes it the base for continued Zionist-fascist coordination. Dany Chamoun of the Lebanese Front recently stated that the SLA is a necessary protection from the Israelis (sic) and that he will thus cooperate with the SLA. In early July, the SLA (i.e. IDF) began training 400 «Christians» so that they could attack the nationalist forces east of Saida, on the pretext of «Christians returning to their homes.»

The Israelis are also prepared for destabilization operations, their so-called «mobile defense». As the Muslim

The National Unity Front

Lebanese nationalist leaders met in Shtoura on August 6th, to establish the National Unity Front. In attendance at the founding conference of the Front were Progressive Socialist Party leader Walid Jumblatt, Amal leader Nabih Berri, Secretary General of the Lebanese Communist Party George Hawi, Syrian Social Nationalist Party Chairman Issam Mahairi, Regional Secretary of the Lebanese Baath Assem Kanso, Osama Saad of the Nasserite Organization in Saida, and members of

the Lebanese Parliament and other political parties.

The founding platform of the Front called for backing the national resistance in southern Lebanon to completely liberate the country from the Zionist occupation forces, strengthening relations with Syria and the Palestinian people, drawing up a new constitution to abolish the sectarian political system, rebuilding the Lebanese Army, and giving priority in reconstruction funds to areas ravaged by the civil war.

Phalange General Secretary Karamah: «A Christian president is the major guarantee for the Christian presence in Lebanon, and nothing will make us give up this guarantee.»



leaders met in Damascus, the Israeli air force staged a bombing raid on the Palestinian camps in North Lebanon, killing 31 and injuring 60, while dropping delayed action bombs to ensure further casualties. This was hardly credible as «retaliation» for the previous day's car bomb against their forces in the «security zone», for this heroic operation was claimed by the Syrian Social Nationalist Party. More probably it was intended to tell the Lebanese meeting in Damascus that they should hold the Palestinians in tow or face the consequences. A similar message was delivered in the night of July 23rd, when Israeli gunboats shelled Saida's harbor and surrounding hills, after chasing a ship laden with cement on the pretext that it was engaged in unspecified «suspicious activity.»

'Israel' has clear interests in any diversion from the main conflict as when Amal attacked the Palestinian camps of Beirut in May. The struggle to implement «The National Program» stands as a test of the nationalist forces ability to unite their ranks to protect Lebanon from the Zionist-fascist plans.