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Starving
the Camps
Will Not Halt
Palestinian
Resistance



Democratic Palestine is an English language magazine published with the following aims:

- Conveying the political line of progressive Palestinian and Arab forces;
- Providing current information and analysis pertinent to the Palestinian liberation struggle, as well as developments on the Arab and international levels;
- Serving as a forum for building relations of mutual solidarity between the Palestinian revolution and progressive organizations, parties, national liberation movements and countries around the world.

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Letters

Dear Editor:

I must tell you that I'm a great fan of your magazine and a devout reader. I am, and this comes from my heart, an absolute defender of the Palestinian people. I'm currently a graduate student at the University of California-Berkeley. My field is international relations specializing in the Middle East. I undertook to write an essay on terrorism which I'm sending to you, to negate the mythological perspective which the American media presents. I would be most honored if you would be so kind as to publish this humble attempt to present a perspective that is closer to reality.

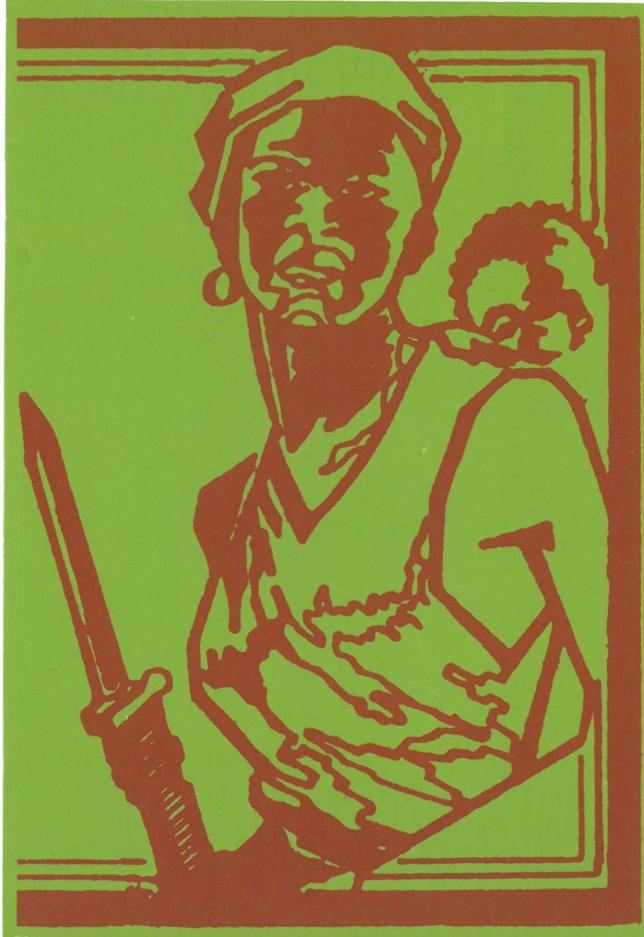
Thank you,
Raafat Georgy

We will print Raafat Georgy's article in our next issue

Table of Contents

- 3 Editorial: Amal's War on the Camps Aims at Imposing Sectarian Solutions in All Lebanon
- 4 Occupied Palestine: Continuing Mass Uprising
- 7 Military Operations - January 1987
- 8 Bir Zeit University Elections
- 9 Palestinian Writers' and Journalists' Union Reunited
- 10 Assessing Palestinian Armed Struggle: July-December 1986
- 12 Starving the Palestinian Camps - Amal's Last Resort
- 15 Lebanese Communist Party Congress
- 17 Zionist Aggression on Lebanon
- 21 The Shuttles of Murphy and Co.
- 23 New Wave of Arrests in Jordan - Housecleaning for Reagan
- 25 Marathon to the Death: The Iraq-Iran War
- 27 The Free Trade Area Agreement - US Escape Hatch for 'Israel'
- 30 Palestinians Are Harassed in Los Angeles
- 31 Democratic Republic of Afghanistan - Fighting for Peace
- 34 Hussein Mroweh - Communist Philosopher Assassinated

We print this graphic for International Women's Day which we will cover in our next issue.



Editorial

AMAL'S WAR ON THE CAMPS AIMS AT IMPOSING SECTARIAN SOLUTIONS IN ALL LEBANON

Facts are accumulating to indicate the true nature of the sectarian Amal movement and of the schemes it aims to implement in Lebanon. The most prominent indication is Amal's continuing war against the Palestinian people and revolution in Lebanon. Another major indication is the war unleashed by Amal against the Lebanese Communist Party and other patriotic forces in West Beirut. Still another indication is found in the statements of Israeli leaders about their contacts with Amal responsibles in South Lebanon, to encourage Amal to prevent any attacks against 'Israel' from the South. Clinton Bailey, a leading Israeli Arabist and responsible for contacts with Amal, has explained: «There are Shiite leaders in South Lebanon who realize that in the long run, they and we are natural allies to an extent because both of us want peace and stability in South Lebanon» (Newsweek, February 16, 1987).

What Amal has been doing against the Palestinian revolution and civilians in Lebanon can only be explained in one way: Amal wants to prove itself capable of preserving the security of 'Israel' from southern Lebanon. As a result, Amal would be assigned to represent the southerners without being challenged by the South Lebanese Army or any other Israeli proxies. Having achieved this, it would be easier for Amal's leadership to ask for more leading posts in the Lebanese state hierarchy, without any change in this state's sectarian nature. Clearly, fulfilling this aim of Amal would be at the expense of all the struggle and blood shed by Lebanese patriots for the sake of building a new, progressive Lebanon to replace the present unjust, sectarian system.

Amal's leaders, of course, say that they are fighting Yasir Arafat's men in order to prevent him from implementing his capitulationist policies using Lebanon as a base. It is insulting to human intelligence to listen to these claims, because even idiots know that the Palestinian revolution consists of factions other than that led by Arafat. By now, even idiots have become familiar with the fact that Amal's war against the Palestinian camps is directed against every living creature in these camps. For what other reason has Amal deprived the camps of food, water, and medical supplies for almost five consecutive months, while continuing, day and night, to shell and burn these camps?

Who in the world would believe that infants less than one year old are implementing «Arafat's capitulationist policies» and thus deserve to be starved to death by Amal's siege? What mind can understand or imagine the horror created by Amal in Palestinian mothers, which drives them to burn their children and themselves to avoid the slow death imposed by Amal's starvation of the camps?

After more than two months of siege against Rashidiya camp, the Palestinian fighters launched their operation in Maghdousheh, to defend the camps. From that time Amal has

said it will not lift the siege unless the Palestinian forces withdraw from Maghdousheh. When the Palestinians withdrew from Maghdousheh, Amal intensified its shelling of the camps and tightened the siege.

A few days ago, Amal launched a new, dirty war against the Lebanese Communist Party and other patriotic forces in West Beirut. Amal leader Nabih Berri did not hesitate to again use the timeworn pretext of 'Arafat'. Speaking from Damascus, he claimed that the reason for this offensive against the Lebanese communists was that their general secretary, George Hawi, had missed Arafat, and wanted to bring him back to Beirut! Berri's comment is so stupid that it doesn't deserve comment. However, what does require comment is the reason behind Amal's latest war against Lebanese patriots. It is significant that this war broke out immediately after the spread of rumors that a deal is being secretly prepared between the Phalangist President of Lebanon, Amin Gemayel, and the Amal leaders. For the Amal leaders to prove themselves capable partners to the fascists and their imperialist and Zionist masters, their militiamen had to 'clean' West Beirut of all patriotic forces, especially the Lebanese communists.

The specific reasons behind Amal's war on Lebanese patriots and progressives are the following: First, by dominating the western side of the capital, Amal aspires to become the decisive political power there, as the fascists did by spreading their hegemony over East Beirut. Second, Amal is striving to gain credibility in the eyes of the imperialists by fighting the communists and other anti-imperialist forces. This is a parallel to Amal's attempt to gain credibility in the eyes of the Zionists by fighting the Palestinians.

The question is whether Amal's leadership is aware of the lessons of history, most particularly in Lebanon. Are they aware of what the Zionists did when they were invited into Lebanon by the Phalangists? Didn't the Israelis arrange their occupation in Lebanon as they wanted, regardless of the Phalangists' ambitions? Didn't Begin summon Bashir Gemayel and demand that he sign a 'peace' treaty to legalize Israeli hegemony in Lebanon, even though Bashir felt this contradictory to his plans as president of Lebanon?

What will prevent the Zionist leadership from renegeing on their promises to Amal after the latter has done their dirty work for them? What will prevent US imperialism and the fascists in East Beirut from doing the same? Amal risks to be drained in its own dirty wars, and weakened to the point that it cannot impose its ambitions on its supposed partners. Most importantly, did the Amal leadership ask itself whether it is any longer accepted by any sector of the Lebanese patriotic masses? Amal's failure around the camps and in West Beirut generally provides the answer.

The disastrous results of Amal's attempts at hegemony, for Palestinians and Lebanese alike, only prove certain truths that were known in advance by the revolutionary forces. More than ever it is clear that the key to solving the Lebanese crisis, while simultaneously restoring Lebanese-Palestinian relations, is unity in struggle against the plans of imperialism, Zionism and the fascist forces. This requires Palestinian-Lebanese coordination, based on a clear nationalist program, for rebuilding Lebanon on a non-sectarian basis, while furthering the Palestinian struggle for a democratic state in Palestine.

Occupied Palestine

Continuing Mass Uprising

Despite the wave of arrests that continued after December's mass uprising, Palestinians persisted in expressing their rejection of the Zionist occupation, and their solidarity with their brothers in the besieged camps in Lebanon. By February, a full-scale mass uprising had again spread throughout the occupied territories.

On January 16th, the national institutions in Duheisheh camp in the occupied West Bank issued a statement denouncing the occupation forces' harassment of their camp which they said had become a «military base and a closed ghetto.» The statement noted that the occupation authorities had arrested thirty people in the three preceding weeks. Many were arrested, held for the customary 18 days, then released, only to be rearrested. The statement described how the occupation army had brutalized the camp residents by rounding up men between the ages of 12 and 60 in the camp's center and forcing them to stand naked with their hands in the air. This situation continued; four Duheisheh youth were snatched from their homes and arrested, with no reason given, on January 23rd.

The same harassment was going on in other places, as scores of youth were arrested, usually without any explanation, during the month of January. Students were especially hard hit. Around 20 Bir Zeit University students were taken from their homes in the night and placed under arrest without reason in the weeks preceding the student council elections. In late 1986, the Zionist authorities had announced the opening of a new detention center for youth, in the occupied Gaza Strip, dubbed Ansar II. In January, reports of torture began to leak out, promising that this center was to be the counterpart of Al Faraah in the West Bank, notorious as a torture factory for churning out confessions, having been established to quell the revolutionary spirit of Palestinian youth under occupation.

PROTESTING DEPORTATION

Regardless of the tightened iron fist, there were intermittent demonstrations

in January. Mass anger reached a height in the Gaza Strip on January 24th, after the expulsion by the Israeli authorities of Mohammad Dahlan, 26 year old resident of Rafah refugee camp near Khan Younis, and history student at the Islamic University in Gaza. There was a general strike in Khan Younis, closing all shops and secondary schools. Demonstrators stormed the municipal building and post office. The occupation forces reinforced their ranks and opened fire on the demonstrators, while spraying tear gas to disperse them. Shopowners who did not reopen were threatened with imprisonment.

At a press conference called in occupied Jerusalem by the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist, to protest the deportation, Attorney Khalid Al Kidri explained that the Zionist authorities had not had substantial evidence against Dahlan to merit conviction in the Gaza military court, for which reason they had earlier released him. The attorney voiced his suspicions that Dahlan had dropped his appeal of the deportation order under pressure from the security forces. The same misgivings had been expressed by the progressive Israeli lawyer, Lea Tsemel, before the deportation, while Dahlan was detained in the solitary confinement cells of Ashkelon prison, usually used by the Shin Bet for interrogation.

Schools and national institutions in the Gaza Strip continued to strike in protest of the deportation, and the masses repeatedly took to the streets in the succeeding days. On January 25th, a military vehicle was destroyed by demonstrators. Israeli troops again opened fire on the people. On January 29th, Israeli soldiers fired on a demonstration in Khan Younis, injuring three Palestinians. The Israeli army claimed that only one of them was shot by its own forces and that the other two injuries came from an «unknown

source». One of the three, a 17 year old, later died from his wounds. Again on February 1st, these «unknowns»-be they the occupation army, armed Zionist settlers or Shin Bet agents, were on the move. Twelve Palestinian girls were injured when masked men sprayed acid inside a Gaza high school.

On February 2nd, the occupation authorities closed Deir Al Balah secondary school for three days after demonstrations protesting Israeli oppression. In Khan Younis, shops closed as demonstrators raised the Palestinian flag on a post in front of the mosque. The occupation army was highly visible in the streets throughout the Gaza Strip.

AL NAJAH CLOSED AGAIN

On February 9th, residents of Balata refugee camp near Nablus, in the occupied West Bank, staged a large demonstration against the Israeli iron fist policy. Palestinians waved their flag of red, green and black - forbidden colors under occupation - while others burned tires and threw stones at the occupation troops. The camp was besieged and a curfew imposed after the Zionist forces had fired into the crowds indiscriminantly, injuring four camp residents. One of them was a 13 year old girl, who was shot in the back, another a 14 year old boy.

The same day in Nablus, hundreds of students at Al Najah University demonstrated in protest of the Amal gangs' siege of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon. The students erected roadblocks to keep the occupation troops out of their campus, and threw stones at the encroaching military patrols. Six students were wounded when the Zionists opened fire. Al Najah was ordered closed for one month by the military government, having only been reopened in mid-January after closures due to the mass uprising in

December and then the Zionists' fear of demonstrations for the January 1st anniversary of the Palestinian revolution. Following the Israeli response to the uprising, it becomes abundantly clear that the occupiers not only intend to punish students for expressing their Palestinian identity, but also to deprive them of an education altogether. As if to drive this point to the extreme, a few days later the Zionist authorities closed an elementary school in the Gaza Strip.

Unnerved by the mounting mass resistance all around them, the Zionist forces stormed a house in Shu'fat near Jerusalem. According to Israeli radio, this was because it housed a secret cable-television which was sending out pro-PLO transmissions. However, if the Zionists had imagined to destroy the communications network prompting the demonstrations, they were

disappointed. In the ensuing days, the Palestinian masses showed that they need no prompting other than their own determination to resist the occupation of their homeland.

Demonstrations on February 10th were even more widespread, protesting the occupation and Amal's massacres against the Palestinians in Lebanon. In demonstrations in Nablus, Ramallah, Hebron, Khan Younis and Bureij refugee camp (Gaza Strip), Palestinian flags were waved and stones thrown against Israeli military patrols. Shops in Nablus closed down in solidarity with the demonstrators. Students in West Bank schools went on strike. The occupation army besieged the Islamic College in Hebron and clashed with the students, opening fire on the demonstration and causing numerous casualties. Vast areas of the northern

West Bank were besieged as well, while the siege imposed on Balata continued.

On February 11th, the uprising continued with demonstrations in many towns, camps and villages. In Qalandia camp, north of Jerusalem, Palestinian militants threw five molotov cocktails at Israeli military vehicles. The occupation forces opened fire on the camp residents. In Hebron, Palestinians confronted the Zionist forces with stones, while the army opened fire on the demonstrators, injuring several people. A curfew was imposed on the city. At the Islamic College, students staged a sit-in, declaring they would not leave until the occupation forces left the premises. The Zionists' first response was spraying tear gas on the students. The students asked the Red Cross to observe the situation and later left the college after the occupation authorities pledged not to interfere.

In Nablus, the occupation forces closed down Al Rawda college after a student demonstration and the stoning of Israeli vehicles. The occupation authorities arrested 20 male students and 60 female students. Women seemed to have been singled out for wearing their national dress. They continued singing nationalist songs, and calling for intensified struggle against the occupation, as they were pushed into military vehicles and driven away.

The siege of Balata continued, the camp having been declared a 'military zone'. Foreign journalists were forbidden to enter and all the camp's schools were closed down. Associated Press reported that hundreds of youth were seen stoning the occupation forces who in turn fired on the youth. The women of the camp gathered in a protest rally and headed towards Nablus, where they staged a sit-in protesting the arrest of 50 camp residents the previous day. The occupation authorities said that nine of those detained would be held in accordance with the infamous Emergency Regulation, which the Zionists adopted from the British colonial mandate. These regulations allow for six months of detention without trial. The nine were charged with organizing resistance operations against the occupation.

On the same day, there were also demonstrations in the town of Anabta and in Al Ain camp near Nablus, where the residents stoned passing cars carrying Zionist settlers.

February 13th was the fourth con-

Three Israeli security agents attack a Palestinian youth in Ramallah, while making arrests during a demonstration.



secutive day of mass demonstrations protesting the occupation and Amal's siege of the camps in Lebanon. There was a large demonstration in Ramallah, which the occupation troops tried to disperse by firing rubber bullets, real bullets and tear gas into the crowds. The demonstrators were also fired on by Zionist settlers. Meanwhile, Bir Zeit University students staged a hunger strike protesting Zionist repression.

In Nablus, Palestinian youth stoned a passing Israeli car, as people joined in demonstrations. The demonstrators clashed with the occupation troops, and a Palestinian boy was injured. Israeli troops continued to surround the cities and camps of the West Bank and Gaza Strip; there were widespread arrests.

In the Strip, a Palestinian youth was wounded by gunshot during a demonstration in Al Maghazi camp near Khan Younis. A Zionist military spokesman said that the bullet that had hit the boy was - you guessed it - from an «unknown» source! Settlers' cars were stoned while passing the camp, and the settlers blocked the road leading to the camp. There were also demonstrations and stoning of enemy vehicles in Deir Al Balah camp, and in the West Bank camps of Jalazon, Al Amari, Qalandia and Balata.

JERUSALEM RALLY

Hundreds of Palestinians gathered for a rally in Jerusalem on February 13th, in solidarity with the besieged Palestinians in Lebanon, and protesting Zionist oppression. (At the same time in Amman, Jordan, Palestinian women had gathered at the Red Cross office, to sit in protesting the starvation of the Palestinians in the camps of Lebanon).

On February 14th, demonstrations continued for the sixth day straight in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, as mass protests also broke out in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights.

In Ramallah, Nablus, Hebron, Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Gaza, there were large demonstrations. The people stoned the Zionist terror forces and clashed with them. The Zionist troops sprayed tear gas and real bullets at the demonstrators. A Zionist military spokesman reported the injury of an army officer by stones in Ramallah. He also announced the arrest of 18 demonstrators and 10 students at the Islamic College in Hebron, who had put up road blocks, burned tires and stoned the Israeli forces.

Students in Ramallah and Jerusalem boycotted school. In Nablus, the occupation forces arrested three demonstrators. Demonstrations also continued in Jalazon and Al Amari camps in the West Bank. As demonstrations continued in the Gaza Strip, families staged a sit-in at the International Red Cross office, protesting the continued siege of Palestinian camps in Lebanon.

Demonstrations continued on February 15th. Seven Zionist soldiers were injured when stones hit the bus they were riding in north of Jerusalem. There was a large demonstration in Nablus. In Gaza, molotov cocktails were thrown at an Israeli Egged bus. The next day, there were demonstrations in Ramallah, Jenin, Nablus, Bethlehem, Jerusalem and nearby Jalazon camp, and in the Gaza Strip. The university in Gaza was closed, bringing to three the number of universities closed in a week, not to mention colleges, and a number of secondary schools.

Also on February 15th, the Israeli authorities closed down the Alternative Information Office in Jerusalem, where progressive Israelis had issued bulletins about events in occupied Palestine. The pretext was that this office is purportedly supporting the PFLP, but the real reason is that the Zionists cannot tolerate that Israeli Jews reject Zionism and broadcast the truth about the Israeli occupation of Palestine.

On February 17th, demonstrations continued many places in the occupied territories for the ninth day in a row. A girl was wounded by Zionist gunshot in Gaza, while the occupation troops closed an elementary school there. Three Israelis were injured by stonethrowing. On February 19th, as demonstrations continued for the eleventh day straight, two Palestinians were wounded by the Zionist occupiers. One of them was a 12 year old girl.

GOLAN DEMONSTRATIONS

February 14th marked the fifth anniversary of the Israeli annexation of the occupied Syrian Golan Heights, and broad demonstrations were staged in Majdal Shams and other towns. In many places, the Syrian flag was raised and the Israeli flag burned. Army and police reinforcements were despatched to the Heights. Clashes ensued with the Golan residents in a number of places. Three Israeli soldiers were

wounded in a clash in Majdal Shams, while six policemen and border guards were injured in clashes with the residents of Masaada. According to the Palestinian Press Office in Jerusalem, two Israeli soldiers were wounded in Majdal Shams after they meddled with a girl from the town. The Israeli authorities imposed a curfew on Majdal Shams. They tore down the Syrian flags and closed down the hill where Golan Heights residents shout through megaphones to converse with their relatives in Syria.

On February 20th, Golan residents in Majdal Shams and Masaada again clashed with Israeli forces who had come to make arrests.

PRISONERS' STRUGGLE

The Palestinian prisoners have not remained silent while their compatriots rose up. In mid-January, political prisoners at Kfar Yuna jail in 1948 occupied Palestine staged a hunger strike for basic demands to improve the deteriorating conditions, such as removal of the metal sheets over the windows, adequate ventilation and lighting, lot of water, better food, visiting between cells and access to newspapers, etc. They were joined in solidarity by their comrades in Shatta jail.

In the same period, Ramleh prisoners staged a two-day hunger strike to protest the wardens' brutality, denial of medical treatment, and the transfer of political prisoners to criminal sections of the prison.

In Jnайд prison, near Nablus, the political prisoners include 40 Palestinians who are under six-month administrative detention orders. From the beginning of 1987, the prison authorities have computer-screened visitors, preventing the entry of those who had been sentenced for 'security' offenses in the past. This is no minor matter since over one-fourth of West Bank and Gaza Strip Palestinians have served a sentence in Israeli jails since the 1967 occupation. Scores of friends and relatives were turned away from Jnайд. The family of a 22 year old blind prisoner in solitary confinement, Mohammad Hussein Al Farrarjeh, from Duheisheh camp, have not been allowed to visit him since his arrest in December.

Conditions for the prisoners in Jnайд are generally deteriorating. This was highlighted in a letter sent to the Israeli prison authorities by the Prisoners'

Friends Association in Nazareth. The letter noted the maltreatment of prisoners by prison guards, and the punitive measures taken after the last hunger strike. It called on the prison authorities to remove the metal sheets on the windows of the cells, improve the food and stop the confiscation of the prisoners' personal belongings.

In an attempt to redress the accumulation of grievances, political prisoners in Jnайд went on a hunger strike on January 25th, sparked by the unprovoked teargassing of prisoners in their cells. One of the administrative detainees, who suffers from heart disease, had to be rushed to the hospital. Palestinian newspapers in the

occupied homeland published the letter of this prisoner's family, asking for human rights organizations to intervene to free him, as his life is in danger.

On February 2nd, Palestinian political prisoners in the Hebron jail began a hunger strike, to protest the harassment and torture to which they are submitted. ●

Military Operations

The military operations in occupied Palestine assume particular significance in the current situation with the intensification of the enemy alliance's maneuvers to halt the liberation process in the region. In January 1987, Palestinian freedom fighters carried out more operations than in the previous month.

In January, anti-occupation operations were upgraded qualitatively and quantitatively. The Zionist enemy acknowledged the occurrence of 43 military operations, as opposed to 24 in December 1986. Sixteen operations were carried out in the part of Palestine occupied in 1948: the Galilee, Triangle and Naqab. Four of these were in Tel Aviv, four in Bir Sheeba, two in Jaffa, and one each in Haifa, Acca and Ramleh. In addition, two Zionist settlements, Dan and Metulla, in the upper Galilee, were heavily shelled.

In the occupied West Bank, there were 21 military operations against Zionist targets. Nine of these occurred in Jerusalem, six in Nablus, two in Hebron, one in Jenin, and one in Tulkarem. The other two attacks were against the Zionist settlements of Jeolim and Hatikva in the northern West Bank.

There were six operations in the occupied Gaza Strip: four in Gaza city and Shatti camp, one in Rafah, and one in Khan Younis.

TYPES OF OPERATIONS

The armed struggle of Palestinian revolutionaries assumed a variety of forms. There were 14 bombs against Zionist military and economic targets and transportation centers. There were 18 fire bomb attacks against Israeli

patrols, and four instances of Israeli hotels and armored personnel carriers being burned. On two occasions, Palestinian militants stabbed Zionist settlers. Another attack was carried out using an axe. An Israeli train was derailed, causing injury to the driver and a mechanic. Zionist military sources suspected that this was an anti-occupation attack. There were three instances of shelling of Zionist settlements in the Galilee.

The anti-occupation operations in January exhibited increased self-reliance by revolutionaries in occupied Palestine, in terms of securing arms and other materials needed for the armed struggle. Zionist sources confirm this tendency, and express concern that an increasing amount of weaponry is being stolen from Israeli army arsenals and channeled to Palestinian resistance fighters.

EXCEPTIONAL OPERATIONS

On January 1st, there were three major operations. An Israeli armored personnel carrier was attacked with fire bombs, as it went from the central station west of Jerusalem to Neve Yacoub settlement on the road to Ramallah. On the same day, a bomb exploded as a Zionist sapper was trying to detonate it. Another bomb exploded in Kafr Saba,

in 1948 occupied Palestine, destroying a number of buses and causing heavy casualties.

On January 2nd, a bomb exploded in the central market of Tel Aviv, and a 12-storey building was burned, devastating four floors. Seven Zionists were injured. On January 6th, a hotel was burned in Beit Hatikva; four Zionists were killed and 18 wounded. The next day, there was a fire bomb attack on a lorry station in Jenin. On January 8th, a bomb attached to the car of a Zionist intelligence officer, exploded in Tel Aviv. There was a fire bomb attack on a border patrol vehicle in the center of Gaza on January 10th, and another on a Zionist patrol in Hebron.

In Jerusalem, two Zionists were stabbed and seriously injured on January 17th. The next day, a hotel in Carmel was burned, causing the destruction of the main hall and one floor. Another Zionist was stabbed in Jerusalem on January 28th. On January 24th, a Zionist contractor was attacked with an axe while he was supervising the construction of highway in Nablus, part of the Israeli road grill aimed to fragment the Palestinian towns of the West Bank.

According to a Zionist military spokesman, anti-occupation operations in January resulted in the death of five Israelis and the injury of 36. This is an underestimation considering the number and type of the operations. Such underestimation is not new. Many casualties of military operations are written off as victims of car accidents. This month, the Zionists invented a new cover-up. On January 9th, a Zionist spokesman referred to four deaths caused by extreme cold and the victims not wearing winter clothes! ●

Bir Zeit University Elections

In the January 22nd elections of a new student council at Bir Zeit University in occupied Palestine, nationalist forces won over the Islamic list. However, these elections should also be evaluated in terms of how well they reflected national unity in the field, which is sorely needed in the current phase of the Palestinian struggle.

In terms of Palestinian student politics, the Bir Zeit University elections were held on the backdrop of the October 1986 elections at Bethlehem University. These had embodied the slogan of unity in the field, which is raised by most democratic and nationalist forces, mass organizations and nationalist figures in the occupied homeland. As a result, the National Unity list won the elections. This guaranteed the participation in the student council of all four major nationalist student blocs in the occupied territories: the Palestinian Student Action Front (3 seats), the Student Youth Bloc (3 seats), the Student Unity Bloc (1 seat), and the Progressive Student Bloc (2 seats).

In the election campaign, these four blocs consolidated their unity in the field and behaved in a democratic manner, adhering as closely as possible to the principle of proportional representation among themselves. This unified conduct led to the election defeat of suspicious religious forces that are always seeking to detract from the student movement's positive nationalist role.

Bir Zeit University's new campus

The results of the Bethlehem elections were welcomed by all Palestinian nationalist forces in occupied Palestine and in exile. It was hoped that this heralded a new phase of greater coordination among the nationalist student blocs, increasing the effectiveness of the Palestinian student movement in the occupied territories. This is very important during this period in particular, as the dangers threatening the Palestinian people and cause are intensifying. This applies in the occupied territories with the increase of Jordanian-Israeli coordination, pushing forward the joint condominium plan for the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This situation means greater oppression of the Palestinian nationalist forces, including the student movement, as Jordan and 'Israel' work to bolster their own stooges. Outside the occupied territories as well, unity in the field is demanded in order to foil the plan of Amal and its supporters, to eliminate the Palestinian nationalist armed presence in Lebanon.

ELECTIONS AT BIR ZEIT

What happened in the elections at Bir Zeit University was contradictory to

what is required of the Palestinian nationalist forces in the current political situation where comprehensive national unity in the PLO has not yet become a reality. Let's look at what actually occurred...

In the elections, there were three lists: (1) the Martyrs of Maghdousheh list consisting of the Student Youth Bloc, the Student Unity Bloc and the Progressive Student Bloc; (2) the Martyr Ghassan Kanafani list of the Progressive Student Action Front; and (3) the Islamic list.

According to information from occupied Palestine, several rounds of discussions preceded the elections, aimed at uniting the four nationalist student blocs on a single list. There was agreement on adhering to two principles for distributing the seats in the student council among the blocs: (1) participation of all nationalist student forces in the coalition to be formed; and (2) distributing the council seats in accordance with proportional representation as much as possible.

In the light of these two principles, the Progressive Student Action Front presented the following formula: five seats for the Student Youth Bloc, two



for itself, one for the Student Unity Bloc and one for the Progressive Student Bloc. The Progressive Student Action Front's weight among Bir Zeit students is actually sufficient to ask for more representation in accordance with proportional representation. However, the Progressive Student Action Front presented this formula in a desire to protect unity in the field and renew the experience of Bethlehem University where all the nationalist student blocs were guaranteed representation in the student council.

This was clear to all. Still, the Student Unity Bloc, which had a prior bilateral agreement with the Student Youth Bloc, proposed the following: five seats for the Student Youth Bloc, two for itself, one each for the Progressive Student Action Front and the Progressive Student Bloc. This formula contradicted the two agreed-upon principles and moreover neglected the true weight of the Progressive Student Action Front. However, there was insistence on this formula, forcing the Progressive Student Action Front to participate in the elections on an independent list. This would serve to prove the real weight of the various student forces, and expose to the student movement the selfish methods and considerations that dominate the conduct of some student blocs, contrary to the demands of unity in the field and proportional representation.

The voting results were as follows: (1) the Martyrs of Maghdousheh list got 797 votes; (2) the Martyr Ghassan Kanafani list got 471 votes; and the Islamic list got 651 votes. With 42% of the votes, the Maghdousheh list won all the seats on the student council. However, the results served to reveal the real weight of the various student blocs at Bir Zeit University. The Progressive Student Action Front gained 24% of the total vote, showing the injustice of the formula proposed by the Student Unity Bloc, and how clearly it contradicted the principle of proportional representation.

LESSONS TO BE DRAWN

All Palestinian nationalist forces are called on to draw the lessons of the Bir Zeit elections in the interests of supporting the nationalist student movement in the occupied homeland, consolidating its unity and enhancing its effectiveness in the unionist and national struggle against the policies of

the Zionist occupation and the Jordanian regime. The main lessons are:

One: The necessity of practicing unity in the field which is called for in theory by most democratic and nationalist forces. In a situation that demands utmost unified action to defeat the enemy's plans, it is not acceptable that an essential nationalist force be deprived of active participation and representation.

Two: Failure to achieve unified action has negative effects on the capacity of the nationalist forces in confronting the enemy plans. It creates gaps in the Palestinian nationalist position, which in turn leaves space for strengthening the influence of reactionary, religious and suspicious elements. Last year at Bir Zeit University, the Islamic list obtained 25% of the votes. This year it received 34%. In the context of the Israeli-Jordanian policy for promoting such elements, the failure of the nationalist forces to achieve full unity in the field allowed for this increase in the Islamic list's votes.

Three: Cooperation among the democratic forces is the cornerstone for Palestinian national unity in the field. Consolidating the cooperation among the democratic forces requires that all organizations put aside selfish considerations and bias. This is needed in the democratic forces' battle against the right-wing deviationist trend in the Palestinian arena, which tries to monopolize the Palestinian union movement. The Bir Zeit elections reveal that cooperation among the democratic student forces is weak, since some

forces put their own gains above the interests of the democratic and progressive students as a whole.

Four: The Bir Zeit elections reaffirmed the need to struggle consistently for practicing the principle of proportional representation in the Palestinian union movement, so that all parties can be represented justly in a correct, democratic manner.

Five: Insisting on false estimations of the weight of other forces only weakens the credibility of those using this method. It makes it impossible for the nationalist forces to agree in the union work. In contrast, adhering to the facts and giving each force its due weight would consolidate the practice of proportional representation and national unity in the field.

Six: The election results confirmed that the Progressive Student Action Front is a force to be reckoned with. Running alone, it gained 24% of the total votes. This is more than half the number of votes gained by the three nationalist student blocs together in the Maghdousheh list. Its actual weight as shown in the elections was more than the representation it had proposed for itself in the interests of achieving its main goal of unity in the field, putting aside selfish considerations.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that the Progressive Student Action Front declared its wishes of success for the newly elected student council, and its readiness to put its weight in the service of the nationalist student movement, regardless of not being represented in the council. ●

Palestinian Writers' and Journalists' Union Reunited

From February 8th to 11th, the unifying conference of the General Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists was held in Algiers, ending the situation of division and dispersal that the Palestinian cultural movement has been suffering the last three years. In itself, the convening of the unifying conference was a positive nationalist move. Failure to consider that point would only consecrate Palestinian division.

The conference arrived at results constituting a common nationalist basis between the Palestinian nationalist and progressive organizations in attendance. The political communique

issued at the conference's end called for official cancellation of the Amman accord with the Jordan regime. It condemned the war on the Palestinian camps in Lebanon.

The convening of this conference, considering the critical conditions that the Palestinian people are living through, gave it a significance far beyond its importance as a union conference. All Palestinian nationalist and progressive journalists and writers are called upon to support and consolidate the union's unity, in order to consolidate its role in defending the Palestinian people and revolution.

Assessing Palestinian Armed Struggle

July-December 1986

The article below assesses Palestinian military operations against the Zionist occupation forces in Palestine in the latter half of 1986.

In the four decades of Palestine's occupation by the Zionists, a number of basic facts have been established. One of these is that the Palestinian national liberation struggle depends on both the struggle of our people in the occupied homeland, and the struggle of our people in exile. It is also an established fact that the basic form of struggle for confronting the Zionist state is armed struggle, both based inside occupied Palestine and launched across the borders, and at times attacking specified targets in other parts of the world. It is also clear that due to the nature of the Zionist state and its organic relation with world imperialism, the only solution to the conflict lies in the negation of this state.

In the light of these facts, one can assess the revolutionary armed struggle in occupied Palestine. Due to the particular nature of the Palestinian-Zionist conflict, armed struggle is an essential component of the liberation struggle at all stages. The strategic aim of armed operations is developing into a popular liberation war which will culminate in liberating Palestine. The last four decades have definitively proven that the vitality of the Palestinian cause is directly related to the level of the armed struggle.

Besides striking blows to the Zionist military forces, the immediate effects of armed struggle on the Israeli settler society are apparent. Deteriorating security is one of the main causes of Zionist emigration from 'Israel', as has been reflected in a number of polls. The armed struggle also plays an important role in reducing the Zionist state's income from tourism. In relation to the Palestinian population under occupation, armed anti-occupation operations have a visible effect on their morale. Armed struggle plays a vanguard role in relation to mass uprisings and daily resistance.

In assessing armed operations against the Zionist state in the last half of 1986, one should bear in mind that

during much of this period the Palestinian revolution outside the occupied homeland was preoccupied with defending the Palestinian people in Lebanon, and their right to bear arms, against Amal's war on the camps. Of course, this detracted from overall military operations against the Zionist forces, in terms of quantity and quality.

In reviewing the armed operations of this period, we have used the figures admitted by Israeli sources. It is important to note that these are conservative figures, as 'Israel' constantly plays down the effectiveness of the Palestinian military struggle for obvious reasons.

In the second half of 1986, there were 205 military operations in occupied Palestine, resulting in the death of 26 Israelis and the injury of 243. This compares with 220 operations in the first half of the year, which resulted in 20 dead and 200 injured. These figures reflect two facts: One, the reduction in

the number of operations reflects the revolution's preoccupation with self-defense in Lebanon. Two, the increase in Zionist casualties, despite a decrease in the number of operations, points to improvement in the quality of the operations carried out by the Palestinian freedom fighters.

METHODS OF STRUGGLE

In the second half of 1986, two new methods were initiated. One was ramming vehicles, especially trucks, into gatherings of Zionists. The other was that women revolutionaries started using their 'charm' to lure Zionists into an attack. Four Zionists were stabbed by women militants during this period. Remote-control explosions became increasingly common in this period; there were seven such operations. Stabbing Zionists became something of a mass phenomenon; 18 such operations were carried out. Table no. 1 lists the operations according to type.

Table 1

Type of operation	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
explosives	11	13	9	14	9	7	63
molotov cocktails	6	10	14	13	7	5	55
hand grenades	3	4	1	6	1	3	18
firearm attacks	3		3	3			9
attacks with hand grenades, molotovs	2	2			1	2	7
ambushes	1	1					2
armed combat			1	1			2
attacks with tools	1						1
land mines under vehicles		1		1			2
stabblings		2	4	4	5	3	18
marine landings	1						1
burning Zionist property	3	1	1	2	4	3	14
abducting soldiers and settlers			1	1	1		3
hitting soldiers and injuring them			1	1			2
attempts to storm barricades				1		1	2
resisting soldiers with knives during arrests					1		1
appropriating soldiers' weapons						1	1
axe-killing						1	1
attempted bus hijacking					1		1
ramming soldiers with truck					1		1
execution of collaborators					1		1
Total	31	34	36	50	30	24	

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

The occurrence of military operations in all different parts of Palestine clearly shows the failure of the Zionist state to provide security for its settlers. In the parts of Palestine occupied in 1948, there were 58 operations in the latter half of 1986. This is 28.2% of the total. It is noteworthy that in Tel Aviv, the city which the Zionists try to present as one of the safest areas in Palestine, 16 operations were carried out.

The West Bank continued to be the center of anti-occupation attacks due to the fact that the Palestinian people still constitute the overwhelming majority of the population there. This gives Palestinian militants a greater margin of maneuverability in terms of hiding, transporting arms and escape. In the West Bank, there were 104 operations, 50.73% of the total. In the city of Jerusalem alone, 52 operations, or 25.44% of the total, were carried out. This is partially due to the special significance of Jerusalem in the Palestinian national struggle. It is also due to the fact that in East Jerusalem, there are 90,000 Zionist settlers, i.e., a high concentration of targets, in comparison to the West Bank where there are about 50,000 settlers.

In the occupied Gaza Strip, there were 43 military operations, or 20.98% of the total.

TIMING

Analyzing military activities over the last six months of 1986 clearly shows the relation between the armed struggle and mass uprisings. October was a month of heightened mass activities and also the month in which military operations reached a peak. The mass uprising reached its peak in December, whereas the number of military operations was relatively low. This is because of the increased security measures of the Zionist state taken in the light of the actual mass uprising and the upcoming anniversary of the Palestinian revolution on January 1st. See graph showing the distribution of operations by month.

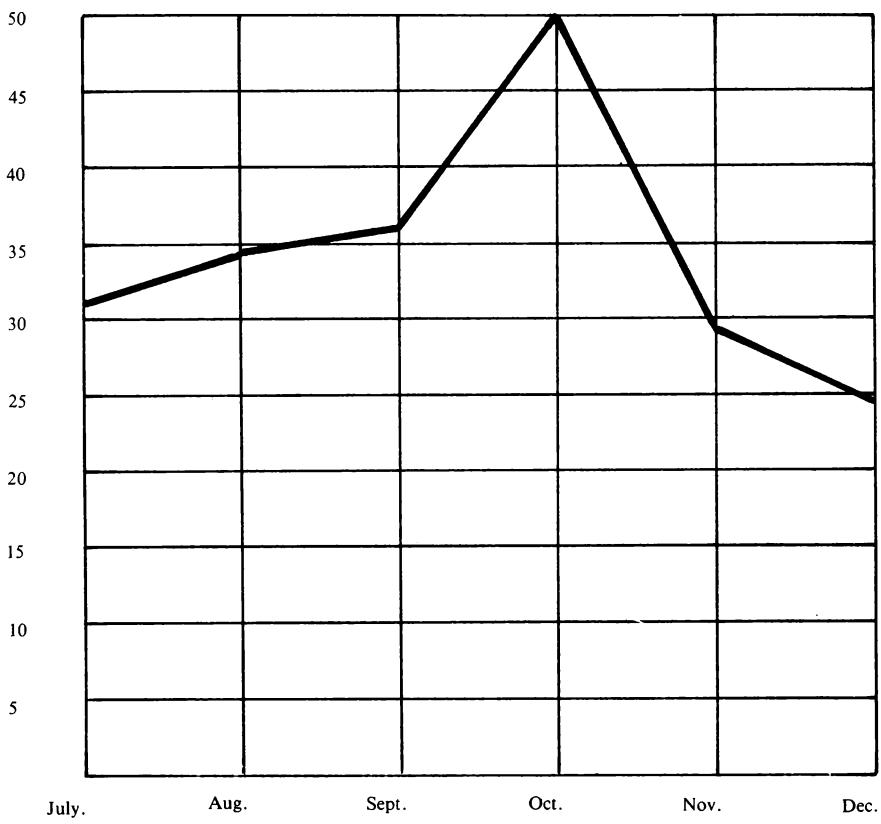
OUTSTANDING OPERATIONS

In the last half of 1986, three operations in particular distinguished themselves in terms of quality and scope. One of these was the Naharia

Geographical Distribution

Area	Operations	%
West Bank	104	50.73
Gaza Strip	43	20.98
1948 occupied territories	58	28.29
Total	205	100.00

operation carried out jointly by the PFLP and the Syrian Social National Party. The freedom fighters went by sea, landing in Naharia in North Palestine and engaging the Zionist forces in battle for 12 hours. The Zionist state was forced to use its navy,



helicopters and army to confront this attack.

Another outstanding operation occurred on July 26th in Jericho, when a group of Zionists touring the city on bicycles was attacked by hand grenades. Five of them were killed and 17 injured.

On October 15th, Palestinian militants in Jerusalem attacked a graduation ceremony for new recruits to the elite Givati Brigades of the Israeli occupation army. Seventy Zionists were killed or injured.

It is also noteworthy that Palestinian freedom fighters launched several attacks against the Jordanian regime's lackeys. The economic assets of Rashad Shawwa of Gaza, the most prominent traitor in occupied Palestine, were targeted several times. His citrus packaging plant was burned, as was his car dealership.





Starving
the Camps
Will Not Halt
Palestinian
Resistance

Starving the Palestinian Camps

Amal's Last Resort

Nearly twenty weeks have passed since the Palestinian camps in Lebanon were first subjected to the dirty war waged by Amal and the sectarian Lebanese Army, with the situation worsening every day. Palestinians living in the camps of Rashidiya near Tyre, and Burj Al Barajneh and Shatila in Beirut, have not only faced the horrors of Amal's firepower, but also the horrors of starvation.

From the first days of February, there were persistent reports of hunger spreading in Burj Al Barajneh camp in particular. On February 8th, the France Press Agency reported from Beirut that «escaped refugees (from Burj Al Barajneh) have reported dire conditions, with little food, no electricity and little shelter from shelling.» Al Bourj popular committee asked Moslem clergymen in Lebanon for a *fatwa*, or special religious decree, permitting the besieged Palestinians in the camp «to eat, for their survival, the flesh of those who no longer had the strength to live» (*International Herald Tribune*,

February 9, 1987). The committee's message added that «We have no alternative as there are no dogs or cats left.»

As a result of the continuous siege imposed on the camps, the new enemy threatening the lives of Palestinian children is called starvation. This proves that Amal's intentions are not only to disarm the Palestinians in the camps, but also to starve them to death, in order to accomplish its goals and those of its supporters. However, history has taught all that when Golda Meir denied the very existence of the Palestinians, she was proven dead wrong. Likewise,

the attempt of Amal and its backers to deny life to the Palestinians will be discredited.

The last half of January was a continuation of the heavy, destructive shelling directed against the camps in Beirut and Tyre, using all the weapons available in the arsenals of Amal and the sectarian army: mortars, rockets, cannons, tanks, heavy machine guns and sniping rifles. Added to this was a clear projection of support for Amal by the Zionist state that intervened with air raids in mid-January, to aid Amal's war of attrition on Palestinian presence in Lebanon.

Palestinian women in Yarmouk camp, Syria, sit-in at a mosque to protest the siege of the camps



On January 9th, six Zionist fighter planes raided three Palestinian positions east of Sidon. In seven minutes, 10 rockets, weighing 500-1000 pounds, were fired on the area, resulting in great material damage; three Palestinians were martyred and five others injured. Less than 72 hours after the first raid, Israeli planes, on January 12th, again raided the area east of Sidon, inflicting heavy material damage; two persons were killed and several injured. Twenty-four hours later, Israeli planes raided a Palestinian position in the Yanta area of the western Bekaa Valley. Two people were martyred and eleven injured, while there was heavy material damage.

AMAL OBSTRUCTS A SOLUTION

On January 28th, Palestinian fighters completed their withdrawal from positions in Maghdousheh, to be replaced by the forces of the Popular Nasserite Organization of Sidon. This was an effort to foil any attempt by Amal to extend the siege and war on the camps under the pretext of fighting the «Palestinian occupation» of Maghdousheh. It was also intended to counter attempts to incite inter-Palestinian fighting. However, Amal continued the war of attrition against the Palestinian camps after the withdrawal, only proving that this war did not stem from November 24, 1986, when Palestinian fighters entered Maghdousheh in a move to defend the besieged camps. Amal's actions also proved that this war will not end when Palestinian defenders withdraw from Maghdousheh. As in the past, Amal's plan is to eliminate the Palestinian nationalist presence in Lebanon, as a step towards creating a sectarian canton and imposing its hegemony on the entire Lebanese nationalist bloc.

After the Palestinian withdrawal, Amal's new pretext was that this «withdrawal was a conspiracy»! Amal also insisted that its own forces - and no others - should replace the withdrawing Palestinians. And during all these who-should-replace-whom deliberations, the primary victims were the Palestinians still living under siege. Once again, the goals lurking behind Amal's rhetoric were exposed.

On February 3rd, a ceasefire agreement was reached between Palestinian organizations and Amal, but Amal's definition of the word *ceasefire* has always been that the other party holds its fire, but not Amal. Thus, one day after reaching the agreement, Amal thugs escalated the heavy, destructive shelling of Burj Al Barajneh and Shatila camps.

INHUMAN CONDITIONS

The suffering of the Palestinian residents of Rashidiya, Burj Al Barajneh and Shatila camps reached a peak in February. Aside from the devastation of the camps, besieged Palestinians are facing the atrocity of death by starvation. Food supplies have run out; there is no electricity or clean water.



Palestinian mother and her children from Shatila

These daily sufferings threaten another kind of death besides being shot. The following covers only a few examples of the suffering that the camp Palestinians are now enduring daily, in addition to the fact that Palestinian children and youth are missing a whole school year due to this dirty war.

On February 11th, a statement issued by Rashidiya's popular committee told how some of the camp residents tried to gather grass from the nearby Al Shawakir area, to feed themselves. Amal's gangs fired at them, leaving several people injured.

On February 14th, Dr. Pauline Cutting, a British surgeon working at Burj Al Barajneh's Haifa clinic, said that refugees were beginning to die «directly or indirectly because of malnutrition.»

She told reporters by radio that «a Dutch nurse has seen five children cooking a rat and eating it hungrily.» Dr. Cutting is one of four foreigners on the medical staff of this clinic where the top floors have been destroyed by bombardment. The medical staff has confirmed that people were starting to eat dogs and cats. A few days later, there were no more dogs and cats.

On February 14th, a Palestinian woman burned herself and her four children in Burj Al Barajneh, rather than face death by starvation.

The most horrifying aspect of the war of attrition against the Palestinians was seen in the dispensation sought by the residents of Burj Al Barajneh to eat human flesh. Responding to these calls, Nabih Berri, calmly sitting in his luxurious apartment, said in an interview with the Voice of the South radio station: «As long as Yasir Arafat does not want to reconcile, let the Palestinians eat their flesh; we will not allow them to occupy Lebanon.»

Upon mounting international and Arab protest over the human tragedy occurring in the Palestinian camps, Amal pretended to allow a food convoy to enter Burj Al Barajneh. This was later proven to be a trick. Dr. Cutting said that «seven people lost both their legs because of bombing during the time when the trucks were due to come into the camp... six people were killed and 24 wounded.»

On February 15th, Amal announced a partial lifting of the siege on Rashidiya camp. Refugees were allowed to leave the camp for five hours to buy food. On February 17th, Nabih Berri said that the siege around Burj Al Barajneh would be totally lifted. Ironically, this statement was made as fierce battles erupted between Amal militiamen on one side and the fighters of the Lebanese Communist Party and the Progressive Socialist Party on the other. Berri attempted to cover up his dirty tactics by saying that his decision to lift the siege was «taken secretly two days ago,» i.e., before these battles. Despite this promise, the siege continued, as did heavy shelling.

AMAL'S NEW WAR

The sectarian Amal movement has evolved into a force complementary to ▶

the Phalangists' plans for Lebanon. Amal's fascist character is being manifested daily, not only through its savage war against the Palestinians, but also as its covert war against the Lebanese nationalist and progressive forces has become overt.

On February 18th, there was an assassination attempt against the distinguished nationalist leader, Mustafa Saad, leader of the Popular

Nasserite Organization of Sidon. The same day, there was an attempt to assassinate the central security officer of the Progressive Socialist Party. In both cases, the intended victims were passing through an Amal-controlled area. Amal later tried to play down the seriousness of these attempts by claiming that they were only unfortunate misunderstandings. Another pre-meditated 'misunderstanding' was

the murder of Hussein Mroweh, Central Committee member of the Lebanese Communist Party (see article in this issue). It is clear that these crimes are part of Amal's efforts to impose its hegemony on the nationalist arena, ultimately imposing itself as the representative of the Lebanese nationalist forces, in the hope of gaining the lion's share in a new sectarian redvision of power. It is no secret that other nationalist forces, such as the Progressive Socialist Party and the Popular Nasserite Organization, pose real obstacles for the imposition of such plans.

Amal has long been launching provocations against the nationalist and progressive forces. The latest attempt by Amal to curtail the influence of the nationalist and progressive forces in West Beirut, was its war against the Lebanese Communist Party and others, which erupted on February 17th.

Amal's war of attrition against Palestinian national presence in Lebanon, like its war on Lebanese communists, progressives and nationalists, are preliminary moves to project its own willingness to comply with the current moves to impose sectarian projects in Beirut, and a division of labor with 'Israel' in the South.

In conclusion, it is important to reaffirm the basics for facing this war of attrition on the Palestinian and Lebanese levels. All Palestinian nationalist forces should safeguard the unity in the field achieved in defending the camps, to prevent any inter-Palestinian fighting. Parallel to this is working to restore the PLO's unity on a correct political and organizational basis; this begins with the official cancellation of the Amman accord and ending relations with the Egyptian regime. Relations with the Lebanese nationalist and progressive forces must be consolidated on the basis of safeguarding the right of the Palestinians to nationalist armed presence in Lebanon. All nationalist and progressive forces must intensify their efforts to end Amal's bloody war on the camps. The campaigns of solidarity with the Palestinians in the besieged camps must be intensified on the Arab and international levels.

Palestinian mother hugs her siege-starved child.



Lebanese Communist Party

Congress

In late January, the Lebanese Communist Party held its fifth congress in the town of Ba'kleen in the Shouf mountains, the fortress of the national movement in Lebanon.

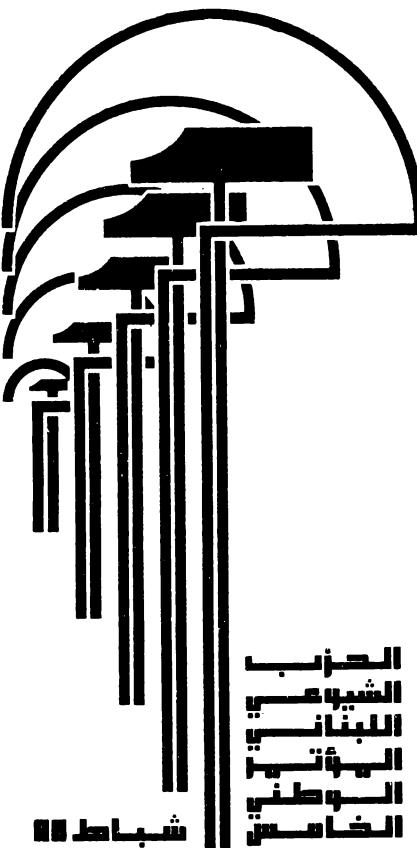
The Shouf mountains provided a fitting location for the communists' congress for a number of reasons. In these mountains, armed presence is strictly that of progressive nationalists, at a time when these forces are threatened other places in Lebanon. The mountains stand as a symbol of the unity of the Palestinian and Lebanese nationalist struggles. They are the site of high-level Lebanese-Palestinian coordination. The mountains represent the vanguard struggle against fascism, where the Phalangists were pushed out in 1983. In the mountains of Kamal and now Walid Jumblatt, the mountains of the Progressive Socialist Party, the Lebanese communists' congress could be held as a demonstration of democracy, a demonstration against sectarian domination and the murderous war waged on the camps. The congress was a demonstration of the line for directing all guns against the imperialist-Zionist-fascist enemy.

Three hundred and eighty-three elected delegates convened for the congress. In addition, 57 representatives of other Lebanese and Arab parties, and parties from abroad, were in attendance. Congress preparations date back one year, and the Central Committee's report and the party program had been discussed and evaluated at all levels of the party prior to the congress. The 5th congress distinguished itself by providing an example of courage in practicing criticism and self-criticism, to be emulated by all revolutionary democratic and communist forces.

On the second day, the congress and the guest delegations joined together in calling for an end to the camp war and lifting the siege of the camps. The congress ended with the election of a new central committee. Comrade George Hawi was reelected general secretary of

the party. Two deputy general secretaries were elected: Comrades Karim Mroweh and Nadim Abdul Samad.

Below we print excerpts of the speeches delivered at the congress by LCP General Secretary George Hawi,



Symbol of the LCP's 5th congress

PSP President Walid Jumblatt, and PFLP General Secretary George Habash.

GEORGE HAWI

General Secretary George Hawi addressed the congress with an analysis of the Lebanese situation, since the previous congress in 1979. He noted

that after the Zionist invasion (1982), the dominant section of the Lebanese bourgeoisie had moved from «its choice of the fascist trend, supported by imperialism and Zionism, to overt national treason, becoming part of the external aggression directed against Lebanon.» He spoke of the heroic steadfastness of the Lebanese and Palestinian people, supported by Syria, explaining that the Lebanese National Resistance was the historical reply to the historical treason of the Lebanese bourgeoisie that collaborated with the occupation.

Comrade Hawi reviewed the attempts of the Zionist occupation to fuel sectarian strife in Lebanon, in order to mask the real contradictions. He then made a critical assessment of the accomplishments of the nationalist forces: the battle to liberate the mountains from the Phalangists, the February 6th uprising to liberate West Beirut from the sectarian army, and the forced withdrawal of the US and NATO forces. Comrade Hawi evaluated the Arab position on Lebanon and explained the failure of the Arab regimes to confront the Zionist invasion of Lebanon.

Comrade Hawi said, «The revolutionary movement faces two tasks: the nationalist task and the democratic task. Priorities are not the same at all times... Sometimes the nationalist task predominates, with the democratic task receding, and sometimes the democratic aspect comes to the fore.» During the occupation, the nationalist task predominated. After the nationalist victory, it was no longer a question of foreign occupation pure and simple. In the nationalist arena, the different class, social, sectarian, ideological and political forces began to have secondary contradictions among

themselves. These differences were elevated to the position of a primary contradiction. Comrade Hawi reaffirmed that the solution to the Lebanese crisis did not lie in rearranging the sectarian system, but in seeking a national democratic solution.

Outlining the framework within which the congress evaluated and criticized the party's positions and work, Comrade Hawi said that in facing a constantly changing, complicated situation, as in Lebanon, the party risked making daily, tactical mistakes, and even strategic mistakes. He pointed out that if the party stresses unity among all the nationalist forces to the absolute, it risks losing its independence, neglecting its historical tasks and program, and subordinating itself to the program of the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, putting too much stress on secondary contradictions could destroy the unity of the national forces, and leave the communist party isolated, prone to extreme 'leftism' and unable to use all opportunities. This would give the main enemy greater chances to strike the revolutionary forces.

THE PARTY OF PALESTINE

Comrade Hawi spoke of the PLO and its division, saying that the nationalist trend had participated in all the battles against the enemy alliance, while the capitulationist trend was betting on imperialist solutions. He noted that the role of the official PLO leadership «became a negative factor in the conflict in Lebanon.» He said that though the establishment of the Palestine National Salvation Front represented an important development, it had weak aspects from the start. According to Comrade Hawi, these weaknesses include insufficient seriousness about charting an alternative revolutionary trend, and deficiencies in the ongoing work to rally the Palestinian masses to confront the deviationist trend and the dangers it entails, especially in the camps in Lebanon.

Comrade Hawi said: «Our understanding is that we are a party of Palestine and the Palestinian cause. We are part of the militant Arab people's movement and one of its revolutionary

contingents. From this position, we ally with or contradict and disagree with other contingents of the Palestinian revolution, not from a different or antagonistic position. We don't think it strange that we sometimes adhere to the Palestinian cause, which is a pan-Arab national liberation cause, more strongly than some Palestinian contingents.»

Comrade Hawi called for an end to the camp war, rejecting this war and the call for disarming the Palestinians, a call which originated with the Israelis. At the same time, he warned against the right-wing leadership of the PLO using Lebanon to serve its deviationist trend.

The speech of Comrade Hawi also included an analysis of the Arab and international situation, and the organizational tasks of the party.

WALID JUMBLATT

Comrade Walid Jumblatt, leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, and symbol of the Lebanese national movement, delivered a courageous speech assessing the current situation. After saluting the Lebanese Communist Party, he posed the question: «Are we on the threshold of a new political settlement similar to that of 1976? At that time, the Lebanese National Movement, the movement of Kamal Jumblatt, was deprived of achieving victory... the isolationism of the Phalangist Party was considered cancelled, although its suspicious ties to the US and 'Israel' were not cancelled.» Comrade Jumblatt rejected all sectarian solutions and attempts to whitewash the Phalangist President Amin Gemayel, as happened at the Islamic conference.

About the camp war, Comrade Jumblatt suggested that for once one should differentiate between Arafat and the Palestinian people. «Let us give the Palestinian nationalist forces the real role (in defeating Arafat), or do we have to continue this mad fighting under the slogan of refusal to return to the pre-1982 situation? Why is it demanded to rid the Palestinians in Lebanon of their weapons, instead of solidifying the militant relations between Lebanese and Palestinian nationalists facing Israel in the South and in the North (a reference to the Lebanese fascists)?

Comrade Jumblatt concluded his speech by expressing determination to continue consolidating the relations between the Progressive Socialist Party and the Lebanese Communist Party, and struggling for the national democratic program in Lebanon and the defense of the Palestinian cause.

GEORGE HABASH

General Secretary George Habash headed the PFLP's delegation to the congress. Observers noted that he was one of the most distinguished and warmly welcomed guests. As Comrade Habash entered the congress hall, he was hailed by chants of solidarity, reflecting the special, historical relations between the PFLP and the Lebanese Communist Party.

Comrade Habash began by speaking about the Lebanese Communist Party: «Through your history of struggle... you were able to play an important role in the course of the class and national struggle of the fraternal Lebanese people... Your party has been an example for vanguards of the Arab working class. In a creative way, your party applies the dialectical relationship between the national cause in each Arab country and the pan-Arab cause... I am convinced that your party will continue the armed struggle not only to liberate the remaining occupied land in south Lebanon, but also to participate actively until the liberation of Palestine.»

Concerning the Palestinian situation, Comrade Habash said: «The enemies' plan (especially that of Jordan and 'Israel') is capitalizing on the current division in the PLO, which was caused by the destructive political line of counting on US solutions, adopted by the current PLO leadership after 1982.» He emphasized the danger of liquidation that the Palestinian revolution is facing in Lebanon, as seen in the camp war. Comrade Habash stressed that the Palestinian revolution in Lebanon is with the national democratic program, confronting all forms of sectarian solutions. He spoke about the basis for reuniting the PLO: official cancellation of the Amman accord, severing ties with the Camp David regime in Egypt, and establishing a democratic, collective leadership for the PLO.

Zionist Aggression on Lebanon

In late January, US officials declared readiness to undertake air strikes in Lebanon in the event hostages were killed. While such statements clearly aim to divert public attention away from the 'Irangate/contras' fiasco, they must also be taken seriously in view of the Reagan Administration's record of aggression in the Middle East and elsewhere. In reality, this threat may be the result of the mid-January visit to Lebanon of April Glasby, chief of the State Department's Lebanon, Syria and Jordan desk. The reported motivation of her trip was US concern about the increase of Palestinian armed presence in Lebanon.

Already the US Sixth Fleet, led by the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Nimitz, had been moved closer to Lebanon's shores after having staged the biggest military maneuvers in the Mediterranean for over a year. Then, on February 2nd, Israeli radio quoted Prime Minister Shamir as saying that 'Israel' would consider helping the US in a military operation in Lebanon if asked. These imperialist-Zionist threats give an even more serious dimension to the ongoing Israeli aggression against Lebanon, which is the main subject of this article.

Despite the recurring camp wars and friction in the nationalist ranks, ongoing events reaffirm that the basic contradiction ruling developments in Lebanon is that between the US-supported Israeli occupiers and the patriotic masses. This is seen in the escalation of Israeli air raids, the naval blockade of the Lebanese coast and ongoing terror attacks against southern villages. From the other side, it is seen in the continuing attacks of the Lebanese National Resistance Front against the occupiers and their lackeys, Lahd's South Lebanese Army (SLA).

AIR—AND—SEA WAR

Even before the turn of the year, the Zionist leadership had ordered an escalation of overt aggression against Lebanon. In 1986, the Israeli forces

staged a total of 19 bombing raids on Lebanese territory, 18 of them aimed against Palestinian targets. According to Lebanon's UN representative, these air raids caused 35 deaths, 130 injuries and extensive material damage. To this must be added the scores of people in South Lebanon who have been killed or injured by the shelling and thuggery of the Israeli-SLA forces.

All this is a continuation of the historical Zionist policy of aggression against Lebanon. At the same time, it has specific reasons, related to current developments in Lebanon. In particular, the Zionists are disturbed by the reassertion of the Palestinian revolution's strength as seen in the heroic defense of the camps against Amal's attacks. The Israelis are also plagued by the continuing attacks of Palestinian and Lebanese patriots against their forces and proxies in South Lebanon.

For a time, the Israelis gloated over the camp war, hoping that the Amal movement would succeed in disarming the Palestinians and at the same time devoid itself of any nationalist role. An article in the *International Herald Tribune* of November 1-2, 1986, quoted a senior Israeli military source as saying, «The security zone is quiet, because the Lebanese and Palestinians are all involved in killing each other.» At first this relieved the pressure on the Israelis caused by the upsurge of attacks on the 'security zone' in August-September last year. However, the author of the article quoted above, Thomas L. Friedman, reporting from Jerusalem, noted: «On the other hand, Israeli officials say they were deeply concerned by the relatively poor showing that the Shiite Amal militia has made on the battlefield against the Palestinians.»

On the background of this concern, six of the 19 Israeli air raids in 1986 were staged against Palestinian positions in November alone, as the Palestinians successfully staged the Maghdousheh operation to defend the refugee camps. Israeli pursuance of the

Palestinians reached to North Lebanon on December 11, 1986, with an air strike against Nahr Al Bared refugee camp, that killed some 15 people and wounded 22, mostly civilians and including Lebanese citizens. Some of the civilian deaths were caused by a delayed action rocket that cruelly exploded after the initial attack. In January, Israeli fighter bombers struck three times in Lebanon. On January 9th, Palestinian positions east of Sidon were bombed, killing three and wounding seven. The same area was targeted on January 12th, resulting in three deaths and thirteen injuries. On the next day, an Israeli air strike hit areas in the Bekaa Valley. On January 19th, Israeli gunboats shelled Palestinian positions east of Saida, wounding four.

Meanwhile, the Israeli forces imposed a naval blockade on the Lebanese coast, from the North to Tyre, intercepting ships going and coming. Numerous Cypriot ferries were turned back before docking in Lebanon. A Lebanese cargo ship was diverted to 'Israel'. The captain and crew were held for an extended period without explanation. Above official Cypriot protests, Israeli Chief of Staff General Moshe Levi arrogantly declared, «We told ship captains we would stop their line if they don't stop transporting terrorists...»

FOCUS ON THE SOUTH— RESURGENCE OF RESISTANCE

A series of daring anti-occupation operations, starting in the last days of 1986, jolted the SLA and their Israeli backers. On January 7th, Israeli radio reported that 13 SLA militiamen had been killed in a week. The real count is probably much higher as is confirmed by examining the single operations. Eight SLA men were killed and 17 injured on one day alone, when Lebanese patriots attacked SLA posts at Barachit and Beit Yahoun, north of Bint Jbail, in the central part of the occupied

border zone. The resistance fighters took total control of these posts and held them for a number of hours. Several military vehicles were destroyed, while the resistance fighters took with them a tank, ammunition and light weapons when they withdrew. Reports from South Lebanon revealed that the Israeli occupiers didn't dare return to the Barachit post until hours after the guerrillas had left. Lahd's men flatly refused to go back at all.

On January 5th, according to Israeli admission, five SLA men died in a roadside bomb explosion near Markaba, northeast of Bint Jbail. Two SLA militiamen were killed and three injured in a resistance attack near Rihan in the north-central part of the occupied zone, on January 7th. More than 10 other resistance attacks occurred in the same week.

In January, the Lebanese National Resistance Front staged a total of 80 attacks on the Israeli occupation forces and the SLA, averaging between two and three attacks daily, in all parts of the occupied border zone, but most concentrated in the central and eastern areas around Bint Jbail, Marjeyoun and Hasbaya. The most frequent type of operation was attacks on enemy patrols and posts, using rockets and other weapons. There were also many explosions against enemy posts and patrols, as well as a number of ambushes and direct clashes with the enemy forces. In January, Katyusha rockets were also directed against Zionist settlements in northern Palestine on four different occasions, as if to reemphasize the failure of the Israelis' 1982 invasion of Lebanon under the false slogan of «Peace for the Galilee».

ENEMY DEMORALIZATION

Signs of demoralization were rampant among the SLA militiamen in early January. Reports from South Lebanon told of rising friction between the Israeli occupation army and the SLA. One SLA officer told his Israeli commander that the Israelis promise to support them, but actually only laugh at them. Calling on his forty soldiers to resign, the SLA officer said he no longer trusted the Israeli army or its promises. Families of SLA men killed

in attacks refused to receive the Israeli soldiers who came to pay condolences. According to Lebanese security sources, 115 militiamen in the Bint Jbail area applied to resign from the SLA in the first week of January.

All this indicates a partial backfire for the Israeli policy of putting reactionary or ignorant Lebanese in the frontline posts controlling their occupied zone, in order to save Israeli lives. In truth, it is the SLA that takes the brunt of the casualties. Over 100 have been killed and 200 wounded since the Israelis withdrew to their self-proclaimed 'security zone' in June 1984. About one-third of these SLA casualties have occurred in the past few months, bringing the situation to a peak. According to the Israelis, over 300 SLA militiamen have deserted since September 1986. The Israelis term this a 10% desertion rate for they claim the SLA numbers over 2,500. However, independent observers estimate the SLA at about 1,500, which makes the desertion rate closer to 20%.

'Israel' is now paying SLA salaries in dollars in an attempt to avoid desertions and recruit new members. However, pure monetary incentive has proved to be insufficient even in crisis-ridden Lebanon, and much harsher measures are also enforced. In the eastern sector of the occupied zone, Israeli intelligence officers threatened the mayor of Shabaa that 50-70 youth from the town must join the SLA, or Shabaa would face a food blockade. In the western sector of the occupied zone, the Israeli occupation army imposed compulsory SLA service on the youth in Naqoura. Otherwise, they must pay 360,000 Lebanese pounds annually, to cover the salary of a militiaman. This made some Naqoura families decide to leave, because their sons did not want to join the SLA, but the Israelis then blocked them from travelling.

Following the mid-January visit of a high-level Israeli military delegation to the 'security zone', SLA positions in the central and western sectors were reinforced with tanks. More Israeli soldiers were placed alongside the SLA in posts along the dividing line between liberated and occupied Lebanon. New strategic outposts were set up on the northern edge of the occupied zone,

supervised by the Israelis at night and the SLA in the day. However, reports continued of SLA militiamen refusing to man certain posts where the Lebanese National Resistance Front had made attacks.

WAR ZONE

The real extent of the Israelis' attempt to 'boost' the SLA, in order to save their own occupation, is seen in their horrendous treatment of the civilian population of South Lebanon. This only serves to reemphasize that it is not at all a 'security zone' that the Israelis have established, but a real war zone for continuing their policy of scorched earth, attrition and collective punishment against the southern villagers. The gross violations of human rights summarized below show clearly that the Zionists aim to empty the occupied zone of all patriots, if not all inhabitants - and even the UNIFIL - in order to keep it as a launching pad for their aggression against Lebanon as a whole.

Shelling is the favorite SLA/Israeli form of collective punishment. Hardly a day passes without the bombardment of villages and agricultural land, especially along the dividing line between liberated and occupied Lebanon. In January, there were 57 instances of such shelling, hitting over 40 different villages and towns, killing over twenty citizens, and destroying houses and crops. Some places were repeatedly hit. Maidoun, Jbaa and Jarjouh, lying north of major Israeli/SLA positions in the central and eastern parts of the occupied zone, were each shelled three to five times, as was Barachit, farther south.

On five different occasions in January, Israeli helicopter gunships raided villages, firing rockets and strafing with machine guns. Early in the month, two Israeli helicopters raided a village north of Shabaa. This was accompanied by a mini-invasion where a large force of the Israeli occupation army crossed the 'security' line, advanced eight kilometers and shelled areas where grapevines were planted. On January 4th, six Cobra helicopters spewed rockets on Qabrika and Kirbet Salim villages, north of Bint Jbail, wounding fifteen persons and

destroying fifteen houses and a mosque. The next day, helicopters raided the area around Maidoun. On January 8th, Cobras strafed Barachit and Hadatha towns. On January 11th, Israeli helicopters strafed a 5-km stretch from Haris to Taire. On January 28th, phosphorus shells were dropped on Barachit, followed by shelling. Then the helicopters returned and shot rockets at the town's outskirts. One civilian was killed by the shelling and a number were hospitalized.

THE WAR OF HUNGER

A dozen or so villages were besieged and subjected to food blockades in January, to punish the people for their compatriots' heroic resistance to occupation. Houla, close to the border

with occupied Palestine, was for all practical purposes under siege the entire month. In the initial phase, 15 citizens were detained, including women and elderly. Food supplies were also held back from Markaba and two nearby villages, as the occupation forces tried to starve the population into revealing the names of patriots who had participated in operations. A row of villages on the northern edge of the 'security zone' were blockaded for the first two weeks of the month. Shopkeepers in the area noted that the food blockades coincided with an influx of Israeli goods.

In late January, Dafala in the eastern sector, was twice besieged. In the second instance, tanks were stationed around the town, and the Israeli forces entered, shooting indiscriminately to

terrorize the citizens. For three long hours, homes were searched, as helicopters buzzed overhead. In the same period, Jbaa was besieged, shelled and deprived of food. Also Yohmor was surrounded and stormed by Israeli troops; all citizens were gathered in the square and two were arrested. Before withdrawing, the Israeli occupation forces destroyed the village's water reservoir.

TORTURE AND THUGGERY

In January, like every month of the occupation, dozens of citizens were taken for interrogation and detention. In one instance, on January 11th, the Israeli intelligence and the SLA arrested 17 women and girls, and 20 men in the village of Roum. The females were taken to Khiam detention center, and



This map does not show all the villages of the South, but is only intended as a guide to locating the places mentioned in the article.

the males to the SLA's jail in Jezzine. Khiam, the main prison, holds hundreds of patriots, and reports continued to leak out of the terrible conditions and torture there. The January 12th edition of the Lebanese daily *Al Safir* contained the following facts: SLA guards put detainees outside for hours with scanty clothing in cold and rain. The detainees are then beaten before being returned to overcrowded cells. Before releasing persons who have been accused of involvement in resistance operations, Israeli intelligence officers give them drugs which cause paralysis and amnesia. A case in point is the citizen Labib Abu Raida from Hasbaya, who suffered from amnesia so badly that he had to go abroad for treatment. Fayez Abu Rafa from Ain Khunai suffered a fractured spine as a result of severe beating. A citizen from Kfar Kala lost an eye from being hit by a rifle butt. In early January, the detainees in Khiam staged a hunger strike, but the SLA and Israeli occupiers persisted in their refusal to give the International Red Cross access to the detention center.

Expressing the population's deep hatred of the detention center, Lebanese patriots attempted to assassinate Ghazi Adouwi, the SLA security officer at Khiam, on January 28th. An SLA patrol, of which he was a member, was ambushed. One SLA man was killed and two others wounded, though Adouwi escaped. A 200-man force of Israelis and SLA besieged the town of Khiam and imposed a curfew. They raided 75 homes and detained 25 young men, some of whom had previously worked with the Israeli-established National Guard, showing that the Israelis no longer know who they can rely on.

Some of the Israeli/SLA harassment of the southern population can only be termed thuggery. A case in point was the double murder of Qassam Mustafa Naibeh, 35, and his wife, Naja Hussein Khalil, 25, while they were tending their sheep in mid-January. Their seven year old son escaped from the criminals to tell the story. According to the Lebanese police, SLA thugs had first robbed the couple. Equally heinous was the SLA's assault on four people tending their sheep near Barashit later in

the month. The thugs killed one of them, a forty year old woman, and took the three males to an SLA post for detention. In the Hasbaya area, Israeli intelligence men and SLA thugs blew up the house of a sergeant in the Lebanese police force, who now resides in Sidon. The explosion damaged no less than 15 nearby homes.

UNIFIL THREATENED

With all the aggression directed against the southern Lebanese population, it is not surprising that UNIFIL also took a blow or two. On December 6th, an Irish soldier was killed by mortar bombs from an Israeli/SLA post, while on duty in Majdel Selim. Another Irish soldier died on January 11th, when an Israeli tank fired on the UNIFIL position near Barachit. The killings, in addition to a number of injuries to UN soldiers, seemed in fact quite deliberate. UNIFIL commander Haeglund commented, «Since early December, firing at or close to UNIFIL by the Israeli forces or the SLA has increased dramatically.» UNIFIL had several times asked the Israelis to withdraw from the post near Barachit, for it had fired on UNIFIL positions 60 times. The Irish Defense Minister rejected as 'ludicrous' the Israeli claim that the soldier was killed by accident. It seems that besides wanting to expell the southerners, the Zionists also want to eliminate any neutral force that might serve as an international witness to their atrocities in the South. The acts and attitude of the Zionists can only lead one to anticipate even greater aggression in the future.

THE PARTITIONISTS

No account of the Zionists' policy in Lebanon is complete without a look at their fascist counterparts in the North - the Lebanese Forces. The Lebanese fascists have still not recovered from the crushing defeat of their strategic project for controlling all Lebanon. Nor have they totally overcome the internal divisions plaguing their ranks. In an attempt to remedy this situation, the Lebanese Forces recently took several steps towards partitioning Lebanon, coinciding with the Zionist plan to keep the country weak and divided as long as it cannot be controlled.

In December, the Lebanese Forces replaced their executive committee with a new Command Council, packed with all the familiar fascist faces of the former body. The Phalangists have the most seats(13), followed by 'independents'(7) and the smaller fascist organizations: the Organization(4), the National Liberal Party(2), and the Guardians of the Cedars(2). The only thing new about this body is that it is to function as a shadow cabinet, divided into 'ministries' to administer the fascist-controlled areas, in an open challenge to the Karami government.

The Lebanese Forces have also renewed their demand for opening a new airport in Halat, as part of their striving to create a parallel infrastructure. Under the pretext of serving the population in their areas, the Lebanese Forces have made this their battlecry. In late January, Lebanese Forces chief Samir Geagea expressed willingness to take the country to the brink of civil war again over the question of Halat. What is really involved is the threat of partition in Lebanon, in addition to manifold, vested business interests of prominent fascists such as Dany Chamoun, leader of the National Liberal Party, who has already established his own air company, along with other rightist financiers. Clearly the fascists aim to undermine the Beirut International Airport and Middle East Airlines which, despite all, have remained functioning institutions and symbols of Lebanon's unity.

The convergence of the Lebanese Forces' acts with the plans of imperialism and Zionism was obvious in early February. With the hostage 'crisis' and threats of US and Zionist intervention hanging over Lebanon, the Lebanese Forces enacted a general strike in East Beirut to demand the opening of Halat. The next day, Middle East Airlines, already plagued by the refusal of foreign companies to insure its flights, suspended operations after receiving a threat implying that the Lebanese Forces would shell the airport, as they had done several times in the recent past. The Lebanese Forces' blackmail and their coordination with the Zionist-imperialist threats, could hardly be more obvious.

The Shuttles of Murphy and Co.

The visits of US, Italian, French and Australian officials to the Middle East, like the European tours of Jordan's King Hussein and Israeli Foreign Minister Peres, all converge on a single point: imposing the US 'peaceful' settlement at the expense of the Palestinian people's rights and revolution. Most concretely, these shuttles have functioned as a forum for covert Israeli-Jordanian negotiations.

Recently, some reactionary Arab leaders 'discovered' that the US's credibility «is starting to deteriorate» as a result of its sale of weapons to Iran via 'Israel'. Of course, this 'discovery' -that the US has no credibility at all -was made long ago by progressive forces all over the world. However, Arab reaction naturally stopped short of saying how the US's credibility is deteriorating, and instead returned to business as usual.

In early January, the US sent its envoy, Assistant Secretary of State Richard W. Murphy, to the Middle East to 'clarify' and polish its image in the Arab world, that is, for Arab reaction. State Department officials acknowledged that Murphy's Mideast trip aimed at repolishing America's image. As was scheduled and announced, Murphy's shuttle was to include Jordan, 'Israel' and Egypt.

ARAB REACTION AND US CREDIBILITY

Murphy's first stop was in Jordan where he met with King Hussein and other high-ranking Jordanian officials. Upon arrival, Murphy said that the aim of his trip was to «discuss prospects for peace» in the area and bilateral relations. In a clearly insulting and forget-about-it tone, Murphy said, «The US does not see value in an international conference» to discuss the Middle East problem, thus reiterating the US stand and echoing the Israeli one as well. Both states reject an international conference as a substitute for the direct negotiations they insist upon. A few days before Murphy's visit, Israeli prime Minister Shamir had stated that 'Israel' would not accept the principle of an international conference, would refuse exchanging the West Bank and

Gaza Strip for peace, and would not sacrifice «one gram of its rights.»

Murphy's visit had also been preceded by active moves on the part of Arab reaction. Egypt's President Mubarak had visited Jordan to coordinate moves with King Hussein before Murphy's visit, the Islamic Conference and Peres' pending visit to Cairo. It is worth noting the Mubarak's political adviser, Osama Al Baz, came back from Tunis only hours before Murphy's visit to Cairo, having met with the rightist PLO leadership.



Richard W. Murphy

Murphy's next stop was 'Israel' where he met Shamir and Peres. Two days later, Murphy returned to Jordan to inform King Hussein of the results of his talks with the Israeli leaders.

Murphy's third (now fourth) stop was Egypt where he met Mubarak and other Egyptian officials. Murphy described the talks as «very fruitful.» Then, in a surprise move, Murphy visited Saudi Arabia which was not on

his shuttle schedule, and met with King Fahd and other high-level Saudi officials.

At the end of his visit, Murphy called on all parties concerned, except the Palestinians naturally, to pursue «quiet diplomacy» in the region. This «quiet» diplomacy aims mainly at bringing Jordan and 'Israel' closer together through «quiet» negotiations that would make «quiet» normalization a *de facto*, before signing a formal treaty. In the end, all this aims at a «quiet», or rather capitulationist, settlement between 'Israel' and Jordan, without any Palestinian national role. Naturally, such a «quiet» procedure requires the «quietening» of all objecting voices. Thus, Murphy's visit coincided with an intense arrest campaign in Jordan, the continuation of the Israeli iron fist policy in occupied Palestine, and stepped-up aggression against Palestinians in Lebanon.

Murphy will resume his shuttling in February, after the visits of Mubarak and Shamir to Washington. This visit was intended to achieve several aims. One was repolishing the US's image in the eyes of Arab reaction. One can gage the results in King Hussein's interview with *Expresso* magazine while visiting Italy. Hussein said, «Washington has to promote an initiative between the Arabs and Israel if it wants to keep its credibility.» Notice the word *keep* coming from the same person who, when 'Irangate' first emerged, said that «Washington's credibility is deteriorating.» Hussein's statement also relates to Murphy's second goal which was exploring the prospects for pushing forward the US 'solution' in the region. According to Peres, Murphy's mission met positive responses in both Jordan and 'Israel'. Another, related aim of Murphy's visit was pushing for Egypt's official return to the Arab League, or at least improvement in its relations with other Arab countries. This was obviously accomplished at the ensuing Islamic Conference. Last, but not least, Murphy came to discuss Egypt's debt problem.

Murphy's visits have always yielded a new round of dreaming about US efforts to establish 'peace' in the region, all the while the US is fueling the fires of conflict. 'Irangate', and the deployment of US warships in the Mediterranean and Gulf, are but recent examples of the US's 'peaceful' efforts. The US's definition of credibility is its own interests, and these are much more important to it than the concerns of its Arab followers.

HUSSEIN'S PILGRIMAGE

Arab reaction's pilgrimage to western Europe opened this year with King Hussein's January 12th-18th trip to France, Italy and the Vatican. Most observers of Hussein's visits pointed out that his main goal was to convince the EEC governments to support the Jordanian five-year plan for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, ridiculously called the 'development' plan. However, the political aspect of the King's trip, of which the 'development' plan is an important part, was apparent. In a speech at the dinner party held for the Italian President Cosiga, the King stressed that the plan «would have good results not only on the economic level, but also in terms of stability in the region.» This statement was in itself incriminating, for the Jordanian regime still claims that the plan has no political goals, but only aims at 'improving the quality of life' in the occupied territories.

Thus far, the only EEC country to support the Jordanian 'development' plan is Britain which contributed £2.5 million. However, Hussein's trip to Italy may have produced some results. During the dinner party, Cosiga stated, «We look positively to the five-year development plan...» Italy's prime minister, Bettino Craxi, said, «...Italy has always supported such plans aiming at improving living conditions.»

Hussein's 'French' trip may, however, not have steered his way. The French government reportedly told him that France prefers sending its financial aid directly to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, not to the Jordanian government.

Yet the Jordanian regime's efforts to gain support for the plan did not halt despite the not so promising results of the king's trip. On January 19th,

Crown Prince Hassan visited London in a continuation of the regime's efforts to gain unanimous EEC support for the plan. Accommodating these efforts are the US's attempts to bring the EEC governments to a consensus on the Jordanian plan.

PERES' SHUTTLE

'Israel' is also showing its support for the so-called development plan. Peres visited Italy just before Hussein, and left a message there for the king. Spadolini, Italy's defense minister, said that this «message supports the Jordanian development plan and expresses hope that western countries will show support as well.» In Brussels, headquarters of the EEC, Peres appealed for aid to 'moderate' Arab states in order to draw them into direct negotiations with the Zionist state. Only in this perspective can one understand the call for an international conference, which Peres issued on his return from Britain. The international conference which Peres is promoting, and which Thatcher's Britain endorsed, is so full of conditions as to be a replica of the consistent US-Israeli stand, not a 'breakthrough' as projected by some.

According to Peres, an international conference should not be a substitute for direct negotiations; it should not include parties who have no diplomatic relations with 'Israel' - aimed at keeping the Soviet Union out. Obviously, Peres' international conference is only a decoy designed to draw Arab reaction, especially Jordan, into direct negotiations with 'Israel'. Mainly this aims at negating the PLO's role as representative of the Palestinian people who are the party most concerned in any discussions about the future of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, not to mention the Arab-Zionist conflict as such. The seemingly contradictory statements of Shamir are but a part of the internal power play in the Zionist state, reflecting tactical differences as to how Israeli interests can best be promoted.

This castrated version of an international conference is also in line with US thinking, as was clear in the statement of Pickering, US ambassador to 'Israel', in mid-February, that the US

might be for an international conference if it were a way to draw King Hussein to the negotiations table, echoing an earlier statement by US Secretary of State Schultz. Nor is Hussein opposed. In his interview with *Espresso*, Hussein stated that «in case of organizing an international conference, the issue of Palestinian representation would not be an obstacle.» This shows Hussein's basic agreement with Zionism and imperialism on the necessity of putting aside the PLO, and finding substitutes in order to push forward the imperialist 'peace' efforts.

EUROPE JOINS THE SHUTTLE

Some European states are becoming more obvious in their role as go-between for the sake of promoting imperialist stability in the Middle East. Thus, it was noticeable that French envoys were dispatched to 'Israel' to brief Peres on Mitterrand's talks with Hussein. Similarly, Italian Defense Minister Spadolini visited 'Israel' after Hussein's stay in his country.

Spadolini shuttled between Jordan, 'Israel' and Egypt in mid-January, following Murphy's path. According to Spadolini, his was a «thought-gathering mission» concerning the 'peaceful' settlement. It seemed strange that Spadolini came to the region to gather thoughts when he had already met with Jordan's king and the foreign minister of 'Israel'.

The Tunisian daily, *Assabah*, published a statement on January 19th, made by Spadolini, saying that «Israel is the source of the difficulties obstructing the idea of an international conference... These difficulties stem from Tel Aviv's condition that the USSR restore relations with it and solve the Soviet Jews' immigration problem... There is also a difficulty in the issue of Palestinian representation... Therefore, there should be a solution to the Palestinian representation in the conference.»

This statement seems unbelievable coming from Spadolini, the most distinguished friend of 'Israel' in Italy. Yet when read carefully, it becomes clearer. What is actually being demanded in order to have an interna-

tional conference is solving the problems of Soviet Jewry and finding a substitute for the PLO!!!

About the Jordanian 'development' plan, Spadolini said that «despite its economic nature, it is connected with an international conference.» This uncovered Spadolini's real goals, since the basic thrust of the 'development' plan is negating the PLO's role and finding substitutes.

STICK AND CARROT

The flood of western 'thought and fact gatherers' continued. Australia's prime minister, Bob Hawke, visited the region on January 23rd. His visit included Jordan, 'Israel' and Egypt, where else?

Earlier in the same month, the Australian government had strongly objected to hosting a UN-sponsored international forum to discuss the

Palestinian problem, refusing to allow a PLO delegation to attend. Still, Hawke followed in the path of the other western diplomatic brokers. In line with the stick-and-carrot policy, he said that «Australia is willing to recognize the PLO if the PLO recognizes Israel's right to exist.» Hawke also expressed his approval of the Jordanian 'development' plan, showing that he adheres to the imperialist consensus on negating the PLO's role.

After meeting in Alexandria with Peres in September 1986, Mubarak predicted that 1987 would be the year of 'peace'. In imperialist-reactionary jargon, this was no mere slip of the tongue. Imperialism's effort to impose a capitulationist settlement in the region has steadily escalated, especially seeing that there are Arab regimes fully willing to cooperate. In this effort to

impose US hegemony in the Middle East, the role of other western states is obvious, as are the disputes in 'Israel' about an international conference. All this attempts to spread illusions about the nature of the settlement being promoted, and to lure more Arab partners into negotiations with the Zionist enemy. This is the carrot, all the while the US Sixth Fleet is threatening Lebanon and the Gulf, enacting the stick part of the US's policy.

In contrast to the dreams of Arab reaction, peace in the region cannot be achieved by following the lies and conspiracies of the US, or by accepting the imperialist-Zionist conditions. Genuine peace will only be achieved by ending the secondary conflicts that now divide the anti-imperialist forces, enabling stronger resistance of the enemy plans, and escalating the struggle against US-Zionist control of the region. ●

New Wave of Arrests in Jordan

'Housecleaning' for Reagan

The arrest of comrade Azmi Al Khawaja (Abu Issam), and other nationalist and democratic militants in Jordan, coincided with the end of Richard Murphy's visit to the region. The purpose of Murphy's trip was to dictate the US administration's conditions for a capitulationist solution to the Palestinian issue, by making Jordan participate in direct negotiations with the Zionists. On this basis, the Jordanian regime directed its activities to reorganize the internal situation, escalating its campaign against nationalist and democratic persons and organizations. At the same time, the regime continues with the division of functions policy with the Zionist entity to impose joint Israeli-Jordanian rule on the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. This policy is seen in the appointment of mayors, the Jordanian development plan and the opening of branches of Jordanian banks in the occupied territories. All this means a policy of normalizing relations between Jordan and 'Israel' prior to the signing of a formal peace treaty. The arrest and

oppression campaign is the Jordanian regime's certificate of 'good conduct' for its American masters.

Below is an account of the Jordanian regime's most recent repressive campaign as was issued in a memorandum by the General Secretariat of the Committees for the Defense of Democratic Freedoms in Jordan:

The days and weeks since the start of this year have been characterized by an increase in the severity of oppression and civil rights' violations. This was apparent in the authorities' broad campaign arresting citizens from the various popular and syndical circles, affecting unionists and nationalist leaders in particular. In addition, several detained political and union activists were brought before the military court and tyrannically sentenced to jail terms of varying lengths. The security forces expanded the scope of their interference in the work of the workers' unions and student organizations. There were added restrictions on the press and journalists, and other such human rights' violations.

ARRESTS

Concerning the authorities' wide arrest campaign, the main incident was the arrest of Mr. Azmi Al Khawaja, member of the PFLP's Politbureau, the Palestinian National Council and the Jordanian Peace and Solidarity Committee. The General Intelligence arrested Mr. Khawaja on January 12, 1987, in his home in Amman. He was put in solitary confinement where he is currently subjected to savage torture and humiliating treatment. It is worth mentioning that Mr. Khawaja is 50 years old, married and has four sons, and suffers severe diseases in his stomach and kidneys due to successive long-term detentions in Jordanian jails. He once spent 30 continual months in solitary confinement without the minimal health and humanitarian conditions.

At the beginning of this year, the authorities arrested the known union activist, Mr. Ali Abdel Malek, former president of the executive committee of the UNRWA teachers' council in Jordan, and present member of the council's executive committee. The authorities have refused to disclose why ►

or where Mr. Abdel Malek is being detained. They refused the request of the International Red Cross to meet him and see the circumstances of his detention. It is noteworthy that Ali Abdel Malek was arrested several times before, most recently at the end of March 1983.

On January 19th, the authorities arrested the student militant, Luai Ahmad Dabbagh, former member of the executive committee of the General Union of Jordanian Students. He is married and has two daughters.

On January 6th, the authorities detained Dr. Said Mustafa Zyab, member of the Jordanian Doctors' Union, after savagely searching his home and clinic. Dr. Zyab has heart problems; he is married.

On January 10th, the authorities detained Mr. Mahmoud Fakhry Assalhi, member of the administrative committee of the youth center in Al Hussein camp.

On January 8th, the authorities arrested the citizen, Abdel Aziz Mahmoud Naeem.

The security forces also arrested scores of other citizens, among them: the militant, Yousef Al Rajoub, who had been exiled from the occupied territories (Palestine), lawyer Salah Bader, and writer Omar Shabbanah, member of the Jordanian Writers' League.

CONVICTIONS

A military court sentenced Mrs. Huda Ahmad Oqla to three years in jail on charges of membership in the Democratic Front's organization in Jordan. Mrs. Huda Oqla was arrested on November 26, 1986. She is the first woman to be arrested and convicted on political charges. The Committees for the Defense of Democratic Freedoms in Jordan are informed that she was subjected to torture and humiliation by the investigators from the moment of her detention and during her interrogation at the Irbid branch of the General Intelligence. Mrs. Oqla is married and the mother of seven children.

The military court sentenced the student union activist Mazin Abdel Wahid Al Asaad under martial law to three years of imprisonment on charges of being a member of an 'illegal organization'. This student militant

was detained in October 1985, as a result of the regime's terrorist campaign against the Jordanian universities. This is the second time he has been convicted on the same charge, which is contradictory to Jordanian law. A military court previously sentenced him to five years imprisonment which ended in early 1983.

A military court, under martial law, also sentenced Amer Kerdasha, a medical student at the Jordanian University, to three years imprisonment. Mr. Kerdasha has been detained several times before by the General Intelligence: In April 1985, he spent several months in the intelligence jails, and then was rearrested in October 1985. After his release, he was once again arrested in late 1986 and brought to trial early this year.

Several other political and union militants were brought to military courts. Recently the trial of Hasan Annajjar and Munier Yousef started, on charges of being 'members of an illegal organization'. The trials of other citizens in military courts on the same charges has ended. Hasan Abu Zied, Fayed Al Sharif and Ahmad Al Muhseiry are awaiting the military court's decision to impose imprisonment on them.

SILENCING THE PRESS, PARLIAMENT AND YOUTH

As for other human rights' violations, the Jordanian authorities continue to breach freedom of the press and to intervene illegally in the functioning of unions. The authorities lately issued a decree whereby several journalists were prevented from writing in newspapers. Among them are: Abdel Rahim Omar, Fahd Al Rimawi, Tareq Masarwah, Khalid Mhadin, Rakan Al Majali and Fahd Al Fank. The authorities also issued a decision to discharge the journalist Mohammad Said Madhyah from his post at *Saut Al Shaab* newspaper on a tyrannical pretext - that he was absent from his job for no reason, knowing in fact that he was detained at the time. Security forces are also conducting a pursuit and terror campaign against Jordanian journalists who work for foreign news agencies and newspapers, whenever they publish reports that are not in ac-

cordance with the trend of the official policy.

There have also been violations of parliamentary rights. The government forbade parliament members from publishing a statement of solidarity (with Syria after Britain cut relations) in the Jordanian press. This led to a forceful argument between representative Leith Al Shablani and Information Minister Mohammad Al Khatib. The argument ended in a closed meeting between Prime Minister Zeid Al Rifa'i and 25 members of parliament. The prime minister talked about the utmost necessity of restraining the political activities of the Representative Council. The results later became apparent when the government forbade representatives from sending memoranda condemning the continuation of the war of the camps in Lebanon, and calling for its immediate halt.

In another field, the Jordanian authorities continued their campaign against the 12 UNRWA youth clubs and centers in Jordan. After joining these centers to the Youth Ministry, the Jordanian security authorities disbanded the elected administrative committees of some of these centers and appointed new administrative committees.

At Yarmouk University, where there was a savage massacre of students by the security forces last May, the university administration, with counsel from the security authorities, formed a committee to investigate a number of students on charges of «violating honor and dignity.» This was after the students staged a peaceful sit-in at the university in solidarity with the besieged Palestinian camps in Lebanon, and with the students at Bir Zeit University in occupied Palestine.

The Committee for the Defense of Democratic Freedoms in Jordan called on all to express their solidarity by issuing press statements, writing about and discussing this matter in media circles, and contacting the Jordanian government, demanding that it stop its violations of human rights and release all political prisoners, especially the distinguished nationalist leader, Azmi Al Khawaja.

Marathon to the Death

The Iraq-Iran War

At the end of 1986, the ongoing blood-sucking tragedy, known as the Iran-Iraq war, entered a dangerous phase manifested by Iran's new offensives: Kerbala-4, directed against the Iraqi positions east of Basra, and Kerbala-5 against fortified Iraqi positions west of Fish Lake, along the Dual Canal and west of the Jasim River, also east of Basra.

Iran's Kerbala-4 offensive was aborted in fierce fighting that lasted over 36 hours. Then Iraq declared that it had pushed back the Iranian offensive and regained control of the strategic Um Al Rasas island and three other small islands in the Shatt Al Arab waterway.

As it has been throughout six and a half bloody years of war, the two sides issued conflicting reports of casualties. After the obvious failure of Kerbala-4, Iran said it had been a «limited operation» and that «less than 6,000 soldiers had participated in it,» in the words of the spokesman for the Iranian war information center, who strongly denied reports that tens of thousands of Iranians had been killed. The Iraqi regime, for its part, exaggerated the Iranian casualty toll and the intensity of the offensive.

However, Iran's attempt to play down the level of the offensive did not hide the real goals it was seeking to achieve, politically and militarily. The Iranians' success at the start of Kerbala-4, in penetrating the massive Iraqi defenses and occupying Um Al Rasas and other islands, proves the broad scope of the operation which demanded huge numbers of soldiers and weaponry - not 6,000 soldiers. Iran's attempt to station its troops on the western bank of the Shatt Al Arab waterway indicates the strategic nature of Kerbala-4. Had the operation been successful, it would have paved the way for the Iranians to break through the Iraqi defense lines around Basra, occupy the city, cut Iraq in two, and ultimately isolate it from the Gulf states.

Thus it is clear that Kerbala-4 had strategic objectives. This was evidenced by Iranian officials' statements just 48 hours before the offensive began. Iranian President Ali Khamenei said that «the Iranian forces are concluding preparations for the final and decisive attack!»

On the other hand, the Iraqi regime's attempt to exaggerate the intensity and bulk of the Iranian offensive was aimed at convincing the Gulf states that Iraq is capable of aborting Iranian attacks. Thus, the Iraqi regime sought to eliminate the fears of the Gulf states as a result of the growing Iranian force, and to abort any attempts on their part to reestablish relations with Iran. Such attempts had been apparent during the latest OPEC meeting.

The Iraqi exaggerations may also have been a final attempt to convince the Saudi government, which was paid a sudden visit by Saddam Hussein, to continue its support of the Iraqi regime against Iran, in particular after the disclosure of the Saudi role in 'Iran/contragate'.

Two weeks after the failure of the Kerbala-4 offensive, Iran staged another Kerbala, this time no. 5, on January 8th, in a three-pronged attack east of Basra. A Pasadaran (Revolutionary Guards) commander hinted that «Iran's Kerbala-5 attack was made from the northeast through flooded areas, using small boats and light pontoon bridges» (*Financial Times*,

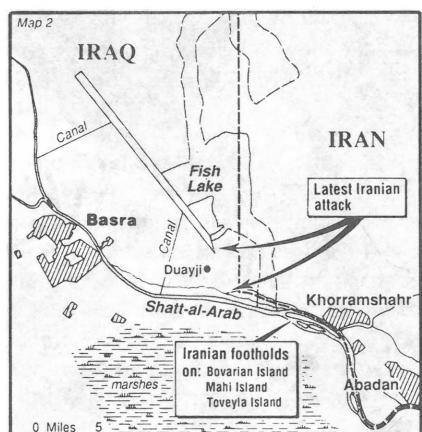
January 27th). «A feature of the latest offensive,» reported the *Financial Times*, was that Iran's airforce «has been in evidence.» The Iranians infiltrated Iraqi territories, controlling more than four kilometers, while some units managed to infiltrate into areas less than 15 kilometers away from Basra, the second largest city in Iraq. However, Iran still has to overcome Iraqi defense obstacles before it can reach the outskirts of Basra.

By most accounts, Kerbala-5 has already cost the Iranians some 30,000 dead and wounded, and the Iraqis about 10,000. These tragic casualty figures, added to previous ones, bring the total of dead, wounded and handicapped to the hundreds of thousands, as a result of this senseless and 'Israel-the-victor' war. As long as cannon fodder is available on both sides, the war will go on.

On February 1st, Iraq said that its forces had pushed back Iranian troops at Fish Lake and at the Jasim River on the southern front of the war, reporting

as usual - tremendous Iranian casualties. At the same time, Iraqi air raids against Iranian cities, and Iran's surface-to-surface missiles against Baghdad, Iraq's capital, add to the human tragedy of this pointless war.

Regardless of whether or not Iraq is successful in aborting this new Iranian offensive, Iranian leaders still insist that Kerbala-5 does not mark the beginning of the final offensive. At the





same time, they reaffirm their promises to deliver a military victory by the Iranian New Year on March 21st. This only means that the coming days and weeks will witness more fierce fighting and casualties, in a way that brings about very dangerous consequences.

IMPERIALISM BENEFITS

In 1980, then US President Carter said that an attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Gulf would be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the West. Since then, the US has established an option for military intervention in the region (the Rapid Deployment Force, now the Central Command).

On January 29th of this year, the US ordered two aircraft carriers to remain on station in the eastern Mediterranean, and moved its warships in the Gulf further north in an apparent «gesture of support to Arab countries alarmed by Iranian success in the Gulf war» (*Financial Times*, January 30th). The escalation of the political and military situation in the Gulf, along with the intimidating US warships' movements, constitute a source of grave concern for the progressive and nationalist forces in the region. Ever since the Iraqi regime's unjustified ignition of this war, and Iran's continued unreasonable demands and rejection of peace efforts, the progressive and nationalist forces have called for an immediate halt to this destructive war.

The Iraq-Iran war, entering its seventh year, constitutes a destructive and tragic direction, conducive to a Camp David type of settlement in the eastern region. It is a qualitative deviation from the main battle, for it replaces the fight against Zionism and imperialism with a secondary battle. Both Iraq's and Iran's capabilities are directed in a wrong and unjustified direction. The continuation of this bloody war would ultimately lead to US hegemony in the whole region.

Unfortunately, calls to end the war have not yet materialized. Thousands of innocent Iraqi and Iranian people are being butchered in this human inferno, with no hope of ending the suffering in sight.

FTA—US Escape Hatch for 'Israel'

This is the continuation of the study we printed in previous issues of *Democratic Palestine*, on the US-Israeli relationship, as seen from US imperialism's vantage point.



The rise of popular liberation movements, the spread of socialism, the importance of the Gulf oil, and the presence of three major naval chokepoints in the region (the Suez Canal, Strait of Hormuz and Bab Al Mandib) - all these factors necessitate the reinforcement of the US's most faithful ally in the region, the Zionist entity. According to General George Crist, commander in chief of the US Central Command, responsible for the Gulf area, «We have two overriding interests in the Gulf. One is keeping the Soviets out... The other is guaranteeing access to the oil resources of the region. The Gulf's importance is obscured by the present petroleum glut, but all the experts predict that by the mid-1990s we will again be very dependent on that region for oil...» (*U.S. News and World Report*, April 21, 1986).

The 1980s have witnessed unprecedented strategic agreements between the US and the Zionist entity on the economic and military level. This intensified relationship has manifested itself most particularly in the Free Trade Area agreement (FTA) and Israeli participation in Reagan's SDI (Strategic Defense Initiative). Through these agreements, the US-Israeli relationship has been restructured to realize imperialist ambitions in the region in terms of current and future contingencies. These changes took place most tangibly in the wake of the Israeli economic crisis which reached its peak in the mid-1980s.

The FTA is a pact between the US and the Zionist entity, designed to end all tariffs on all trade between the two countries over a period of 10 years. Under article XXIV of the GATT (the international General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), two signatories to that agreement may create a free trade area, provided that there is an elimination of duties and other restrictive regulations of commerce on all trade between the two countries undertaking the arrangement, and that this is accomplished in a reasonable length of time.

Officially, the FTA has been effective since September

1,1985. 'Israel' had been pressing for such an agreement since the 1970s, but the idea first became a concrete proposal in November 1983 - not surprisingly, at the height of the Israeli economic crisis. «The agreement to set up a free trade zone between the two... was reached at a time when Israel was looking to the US for a shot in the arm for its economy» (*Washington Post*, May 8, 1985). The credit standing of 'Israel' was being questioned on the world market; external debt exceeded \$7,000 per capita - one of the highest in the world; annual debt servicing amounted to 33% of the country's debt; and foreign loans stood at \$7 billion. Direct and immediate US involvement was an imperative.

One alternative was dollarization of the Israeli economy. However, with the Zionist entity already being a faithful executor of US imperialist policies on all levels, nothing would have been left to distinguish it from being in actuality a 51st state. The solution resorted to was a large injection of financial aid to bail 'Israel' out of its economic crisis, restructuring the industrial base, raising the slogan of «export or expire», and implementing a free trade agreement. This agreement aims to facilitate trade so as to provide 'Israel' with an income which in the long run would relieve the US of having to pump in large aid sums, while at the same time providing 'Israel' with a large measure of financial self-sufficiency.

Under the FTA, the Israeli government's subsidy program would gradually be phased out, some of it on the spot and some later, but all of it by 1991. According to US Secretary of State Schultz, «To promote economic growth, the government must get out of business.» Thus, a large number of Israeli government-owned enterprises are selling out to private companies. This should release the Israeli government from its role as subsidizer of economic projects, leaving it free to play a more effective military and political role, instead of swallowing up aid money to rectify economic crises. «The government should run foreign affairs, try to achieve peace and maintain security,» according to Schultz (*Jerusalem Post*, April 4, 1986). ▶

The FTA is intended to maintain the rigorous economic reforms brought about under the guardianship of Reagan who said, «I am confident that as this agreement is implemented, the US—Israel FTA will prove to be one of the cornerstones of Israel's future economic development program.»

An alternative to dollarizing the Israeli economy was to base the shekel on the currencies of the five imperialist industrial giants: the US, Japan, France, the UK and West Germany. This step was taken after the dollar-linked shekel lost ground against European currencies, making imports from Europe more expensive for 'Israel'. It will create greater stability in the Zionist state's foreign trade and prevent extreme fluctuations from occurring as a result of changes in the exchange rates of foreign currencies.

FTA: OVER AND BEYOND

The US had previously enacted more limited free-trade arrangements such as the one-way, duty-free trade established by the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (CBI) and the sectoral free trade agreement with Canada in the automotive sector. The FTA, however, goes even beyond the existing US—Israeli Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation, by stipulating that no requirements to export or purchase domestic goods or services be made a condition for investment or for receiving investment incentives. A former high trade official, Herald Malmgren, noted the exceptional nature of the FTA: Ever since 1947, the US has adhered to a multilateral, most-favored nation (MFN) policy, whereby trade concessions made to one nation are automatically applied to all MFN members. The bilateral FTA with 'Israel' violates this long-standing policy by offering 'Israel' privileges not extended to any other nation.

On the other hand, ever since the mid-seventies, about 90% of Israeli exports have been duty-free, enjoying tariff exemption under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). Under this 140-nation United Nations agreement, the US and other industrial countries eliminate duties on products from developing countries. The GSP was, however, scheduled to expire at the end of 1984, leaving Israeli exports exposed to an uncertain future. The FTA would have protected them had the GSP not been renewed. More importantly, the GSP imposes constraints. If the export of a product to the US exceeds \$57 million or 50% of the US import of that product from all sources, the tariff exemption may be revoked. This constraint is bypassed in the FTA.

Finally the FTA is different because it covers a full range of services as well as goods. Both parties are to open their markets to the other's service industries, providing the same treatment as is extended to domestic companies, and making information on laws and regulations readily accessible. Until the conclusion of the FTA, only large Israeli companies had the strength and manpower to maintain warehouses and service facilities in the US, in addition to sales offices.

Passage of the FTA overrode every other consideration, sailing through the US Congress despite the growing protectionist trend there. Still, the clamor of objections and fears from major US industries and labor unions could not simply be waved away. The most prominent opponents of the FTA came from the American Textile Manufacturers' Institute, the Leather Products Coalition, Manufacturing Jewelers and

Silversmiths of America, and the California-Arizona Citrus League, among others. In California, 28 agricultural representatives submitted a petition demanding that farm products be protected from Israeli «dumping». Opposition was temporarily appeased by categorizing Israeli export products which would threaten US suppliers and compete price- and quality-wise, as super-sensitive. This meant they would be subject to a more drawn-out process of tariff reduction, to begin in 1990.

Due to its own priorities, the Reagan Administration promoted the FTA with a vengeance, despite the fact that it endangers domestic jobs and even some capitalist concerns. After all, anti-labor policies are a hallmark of this administration which consistently champions the most powerful sectors of monopoly capitalism, especially the military-industrial complex. In this policy framework, the US's strategic alliance with the Zionist state is vastly more important than jobs or consumer industries. This is especially true today when the FTA's economic arrangements are to be combined with the technological and military advances to be made with the SDI. The expected result is an enormous boosting of the US's overall economic and military prowess.

The recategorizing of some Israeli products as supersensitive did not entail any real disadvantages for the Zionist state. These products comprise only 6% of the total Israeli exports to the US; 2/3 of that is gold necklaces and the rest mainly citrus and tomato products. On the other hand, the bulk of Israeli agricultural exports (95%) have been going to the European Economic Community, but this export market is now being threatened by two new competitive agricultural exporters entering the EEC - Spain and Portugal. Jeopardized Israeli agricultural products will find an outlet in the US market, and by the time, tariffs will have been completely phased out.

For purposes of duty elimination, the products of both countries are divided into four areas of sensitivity:

- (1) products on which duties will be eliminated immediately upon the FTA agreement coming into force;
- (2) products on which duties will be eliminated in several stages by January 1, 1989;
- (3) products on which duties will be eliminated in eight stages over a ten-year period;
- (4) products on which duties will not be reduced for a five-year period, after which advice will be sought from the US International Trade Commission, and elimination of tariffs enacted based on this advice.

THE EUROPEAN CONNECTION

It would be interesting to shed further light on this division. Under the first category are included transportation equipment, electric machinery and all non-metallic minerals, except fuels, among other related products. What is significant about these products is that they include the types of goods which the US and EEC countries compete to sell on the \$8 billion Israeli market. This category accounts for 1/4 of Israeli imports from the US. Israeli tariffs on US goods were scaled down to the European level as soon as the FTA came into force. In 1987, they will be pared down in parallel with European products by 60%, to be nullified by 1989 (the same date that the tariff phasing-out process of the free trade agreement between the EEC and 'Israel' will be completed). US companies already export \$2 billion in non-military goods to 'Israel' each year,

but this is only about half the market share enjoyed by EEC nations.

Looking at the fourth category, textiles and clothing have been classified as super-sensitive and thus subject to the longest tariff-reduction process. In the ten years up to 1983, the US increased its import of apparel by an average of 6% a year on a volume basis. In 1983, apparel imports rose by 25%; in 1984, by 32%. According to some estimates, by 1984 one-third of all apparel sold in the US was foreign-made. These leaps in clothing imports obviously posed problems in terms of domestic unemployment in the US, since 10% of the total manufacturing labor force is engaged in the fiber, textile and apparel industry.

The tariff-reduction timetable is as follows: a 20% reduction as soon as the treaty comes into force, after which there will be a further 10% cut each year until 1990. At this time, tariffs will be down to 30% of the original level. The elimination of the final 30% will then be spread over the years 1990-1995. Despite the fact that the super-sensitive category of Israeli exports does not enjoy free entry under the GSP, it comprises only 0.4% of all exports to the US, and therefore the restrictive effect is minimal.

Whatever the case, by the 1990s the Zionist entity will be enjoying tariff-free entry into both the US and EEC countries. On the other hand, the Zionist entity will serve as a springboard for US goods into European countries. US goods destined for the EEC will be assembled in 'Israel'. One of the first US companies to take advantage was Anheuser-Busch, benefitting from the lower labor costs in 'Israel'. Beer is made in 'Israel' and shipped to Europe. To prevent other countries from trying to pass off their products as Israeli-made, thus profiting from tariff-free entry into the US, the FTA requires that: (1) 35% of the product's value must be estimated to be Israeli; (2) the product must be shipped directly from 'Israel' to the US.

The FTA therefore insures that the US does not suffer from a tariff disadvantage with the EEC countries, as well as facilitating US firms' penetration of the European market. Many US companies had formerly been unable to sell their products directly to the EEC's market of 260 million people. Imports from the US often have to enter a specific country only through a small, out-of-the-way port, adding extra transportation costs of the tariffs. This situation had long been a thorn in the side of US companies. Speaking at a conference of the European Council of American Chambers of Commerce, Bruce Smart, US Undersecretary of Commerce for International Trade, clearly expressed US annoyance at the measures to keep US exports out: «Japan may be the country on which much of US anger is showered, but plenty is left over for the European countries.» It seems ironic that European trade ties with 'Israel' should rub the US the wrong way since, according to *New York Times* analyst Clyde Farnsworth, «Washington is undertaking today exactly what it chided the Common Market for doing in the 1960s and 1970s, when the Europeans established their own system of bilateral trade preferences with Mediterranean and African countries to reinforce political ties.»

FTA FORGING AHEAD

Under the FTA, US corporations have opened plants in 'Israel' or entered into joint ventures with Israeli companies. These produce electronic goods and other high-technology products, the bulk of which are for export. Since these are sold for hard currency, and the cost of incoming components are

paid for in foreign currency, inflation fluctuations will not affect these companies' profits.

Over the next five years, high-technology products will be in the forefront of Israeli exports to the US. Over the past decade, there has been a shift in Israeli production from agriculture to heavy industry. The clearest example of this trend is seen in the kibbutzim (communal settlements). These were founded almost exclusively to farm the occupied territories. During the past few years, they have turned more to high-tech industry. In 1983, kibbutz industry exports to the US were valued at \$50 million; in 1984, this rose by 50% to \$75 million (*Journal of Commerce*, February 28, 1985).

Moreover the needs of the military establishment have brought metalwork and electronics industries to a high-tech level. The know-how gained in developing military equipment will serve these industries in good stead in their export targets. The Zionist entity has always been geared towards having an advanced military edge over any combination of countries in the region, especially in the field of air warfare. It is notable that high-tech products are geared to promote this military advantage. Plans for increased export of aviation equipment, especially airborne communications equipment, are in the forefront (*Journal of Commerce*, February 28, 1985). Already the Israeli aircraft industry produces \$1 billion annually, in high-tech products, \$500 million for export. Under the FTA, these figures are bound to increase dramatically.

Ever since the implementation of the FTA, Israeli exports to the US have stepped up under the slogan of «export or expire». Israeli imports from North America dropped from 32% in 1980, to 28% in 1983. Through the FTA, Israeli exports to the US increased by roughly 25%. In 1983, exports from 'Israel' to the US were valued at \$1.329 billion, while in 1984, this rose to \$1.650 billion (*Journal of Commerce*, February 28, 1985). With a slower customs reduction process in 'Israel' than in the US, in the first four months of 1985, exports totalled \$612 million, as compared with \$460 million in the same period of 1984. In other words, Israeli exports to the US soared by 30% from 1984 to 1985, totalling approximately \$2 billion worth of products. Industrial products constituted 40% of the total, and included metal goods, electronics, medical equipment, chemicals, transport equipment, aircraft parts and computers.

To facilitate the Israeli export drive, US exports to 'Israel' had been kept relatively stable, to give the latter a chance to recover from the economic slump and benefit from the FTA to the maximum. During the first four months of 1984, US exports to 'Israel' were valued at \$570 million, rising to \$573 million during the same period in 1985, a 0.5% rise only. Israeli opponents of the FTA claim that 90% of Israeli products already enter duty-free under various accords, giving the impression that nothing is really in it for 'Israel' and that the US stands to gain most economically. This argument is misleading. Although it might be true for the value of Israeli goods formerly imported by the US, it does not take into consideration the increase in Israeli exports to the US, the substantial profits reaped by tariff cuts under the FTA in all areas of trade, or the fact that this trade is more high-tech oriented, based on a restructured industrial economy.

In addition to the specific strategic gains which motivate the US to support the Zionist entity, the FTA has opened new opportunities for the two allies. It has institutionalized the restructured relationship in accordance with the US's current, more broadly defined needs for protecting and expanding imperialist interests.

Palestinians Are Harassed in Los Angeles

Below we reprint an article from the *International Herald Tribune*, February 11, 1987, because it illustrates the increasingly overt role of the **Reagan** Administration in the iron fist policy to silence the Palestinian people. The current campaign reached a peak on January 26th, with the arrest of eight Palestinians and one Kenyan in Los Angeles, California, under the **McCarran-Walter Act**. This act, a remnant of the McCarthy era, provides for deportation of non-citizens who are alleged to be members or supporters of an organization that writes, prints or distributes material teaching «doctrines of world communism.» The full dimension of these arrests was revealed a week later with the leakage of a document of the Immigration and Naturalization Service entitled «Alien Terrorists and Undesirables: A Contingency Plan.» The contingencies include the creation of a network of detention camps for suspected 'terrorists' from among US residents who originate from Iran, Lebanon, Libya, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and Syria.

by Anthony Lewis

Boston-She is a 22-year-old woman, a student in San Diego, California. Born in Ramallah, in the West Bank, she came to the United States at the age of 3 and is an American citizen. On the telephone she sounds like California. I shall call her Evelyn Bitar, which is not her real name.

«I was studying alone in the school library on the night of Jan. 28. At about 8:30 a large man... came up and shoved a paper in front of me. It said 'subpoena' and had my name on it. He flashed what looked like a badge and said, 'Evelyn, we want you to come with us.' He had a gun in a holster at his waist. He took my left arm and handcuffed me to his right arm. Another man - he also showed a gun - came over and grabbed me roughly by the right arm. They took me out to a dark burgundy car, cuffed my hands in front of me and shoved me into the back seat.»

That was the beginning of a nightmare of 12 hours for Evelyn Bitar. I take her words from an affidavit that she drafted afterward, and from a telephone conversation with her.

What happened to her is related to her Palestinian origin. Two days before her experience, eight Palestinians (and one's Kenyan wife) had been arrested in the Los Angeles area by agents of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. She was a friend of one of them. But let us continue with her story.

«We drove for some time when they made me face backwards. In a residen-

tial area we drove into a garage and I was taken into the house, into a big bare room with a cement floor. There was a big metal desk. The room also had a metal pole set in the cement floor. It had a hook at the top, sort of like a tetherball pole. I was thrown into a grey metal chair, still handcuffed. The room was dimly lit, but with a bright fluorescent light coming at my face.

«They threw a picture down on the desk. It was a picture of me, my husband and X (the friend who had been arrested). They slapped it and said, 'Who is this man, identify him.'

«I refused and said what they were doing to me was illegal. One said, 'Honey, we are the law.' They kept throwing pictures on the desk. They were all picture from San Diego, some from the old Arabic club...

«It was after midnight by now. They uncuffed my right hand, then cuffed my left hand to hook on the top of the metal pole. My left arm was stretched up to reach it. Then they left the house and left me hanging there like that for over three hours. They came back around 3:30 with a third man. I asked if I could use the bathroom. I was desperate to go. They would not let me.

«They told me that my husband was in custody, that they had just picked him up. (That was false.) They said we could work out a deal, I could be a witness for the prosecution of X. If I would do that, they would let my husband go.

«When I still didn't respond, they said, 'At your rally you said, "Long Live Palestine." We'll show you what we think of your Palestine'.

«They took out a small Palestinian flag, about 3 by 5 inches [about 75 by 125 millimeters], and burned it.

«Then they took me out, back into the car. They stopped about two miles [about three kilometers] from my house. They said, 'Listen, Babe, when you least expect us, expect us. We'll always be around.' I looked at my watch. It was 8:30 A.M.»

Could that have happened in America? Readers will no doubt find it hard to believe, as I did. So did Evelyn Bitar. She was too frightened to talk, at first. But now she is ready to testify, using her real name, if her lawyers ask her to.

The eight Palestinians arrested in Los Angeles were taken at gunpoint in their homes at 7 A.M., then shackled in arm and leg irons. Each was shown photographs and offered advantages if he would testify against someone. There was no evidence that they had done or contemplated any act of violence. The charges had to do with reading or distributing Palestinian literature.

But that is another story of unconstitutional outrage. For the moment, it is enough to think about what happened to Evelyn Bitar. Is that America?

Realism requires us to recognize that it can happen. It has happened. But it is not too late to find out how; to punish the federal agents who behaved like totalitarian thugs. «When we speak out,» Mrs. Bitar said, «that's our only protection.» She still believes in America.

The New York Times.

Democratic Republic of Afghanistan

In the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA), 1987 was ushered in with a bold, new peace initiative. Comrade Najib, General Secretary of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), announced detailed steps for national reconciliation. He proposed a ceasefire starting January 15th and initially lasting six months, wherein the DRA armed forces would halt offensive actions and return to their regular barracks. Along with this was an offer of amnesty for detained counterrevolutionaries and those who return to the country and agree to stop fighting. There would be guaranteed safe conduct and no persecution for former political activities.

Confirming that «the revolutionary process is irreversible,» Comrade Najib expressed the DRA's readiness to enter into negotiations with the opposition that responded to the call to lay down arms, aimed at the formation of a broad, coalition-type government of national unity on the principle of «just representation for all in the political structure and economic life.»

Clearly the DRA's proposals are in the interests of the Afghani revolution and people as a whole, and this was confirmed by the popular response. A Reuters dispatch from the capital, Kabul, on January 17th, told of «dancing in the houses of ordinary people at the prospect of an end to the fighting.» It also quoted a western diplomat as saying, «I think even rebel supporters have been advising them (the rebel leaders) to take the government at its word.»

Within a week about 5,000 people had laid down arms. Negotiations began with 500 groups, representing about 40,000 people in border provinces, who have left the counterrevolution and are now defending the revolution. Some of them have been promoted to officers in the army. Moreover, 500 people convened for the first meeting of the National Reconciliation Commission on January 3rd. This commission has been given great responsibilities by the government in dispensing aid to the population, solving local problems, etc. Adoption of a new constitution has been delayed to

Fighting for Peace

allow oppositional groups to express their views. If the ceasefire works, all these efforts will culminate in elections for the National Assembly, in which the opposition is welcomed to participate (excerpts from the account of Comrade M.H. Mokammil, Charge d'Affairs at the DRA embassy in London, upon his return from Kabul, as printed in *The New Worker* newspaper, January 30th).

Nonetheless, the brotherly hand extended by Comrade Najib was rejected without consideration by most of the Pakistan-based counterrevolutionary groups who branded anyone who accepts the ceasefire as a «Soviet or Kabul agent» infiltrated into their ranks. Their lack of concern for their own people was reconfirmed at a rally in Peshawar, Pakistan, on January 17th. In the first display of unity ever mustered by the counterrevolutionaries, leaders of seven major groups vowed to continue the war. Though it was the first time these seven had appeared together in public, they claimed to have agreed on principles for an interim government *after* the defeat of the Soviet and Afghani government forces. However, with all political and military realities indicating that their goal has become an impossibility, this rejection may not be the last word on the subject.

There are other wild cards in the deck. In particular, the position of Pakistan, host of the counterrevolution, is not so clear-cut as in the past, mainly due to domestic opposition. An equally if not more decisive factor is the US administration which, as the major financier of the counterrevolutionaries and the Pakistani regime, can in the last analysis impose its position by blackmail. The Reagan Administration has no qualms about keeping the Afghani people divided and war-ridden as long as this serves its purpose of trying to undermine the DRA and sap Soviet strength. While the US has tried to appear as though it is coordinating its response with Pakistan, Defense Secretary Weinberger's arrogant de-

mand that the Soviets must withdraw in six months, indicates the Reagan Administration's obstructionist stance towards the DRA's peace drive.

OBJECTIVE BACKGROUND FOR PEACE

Although the Pakistan-based chieftans ordered an escalation of attacks, Comrade Najib reaffirmed the DRA's national reconciliation policy the day after the infamous Peshawar rally, pointing out that many of the refugees in the camps in Pakistan oppose these chieftans. The ceasefire had in fact gone into effect as scheduled, but unilaterally.

The DRA's peace initiative will most probably dominate events in and around Afghanistan this year, because it is based on a set of interrelated political and military realities. Among these is the PDPA's sincere desire to end the war which drains resources that could better be used for advancing the national democratic revolution and raising the people's standard of living. The party is in a good position to enact national reconciliation because of its augmented maturity, strength and unity, as was demonstrated by a number of events this past year. Comrade Najib's replacing Comrade Babrak Karmal as PDPA General Secretary in May, occurred in a smooth and democratic manner. Comrade Najib has dynamically continued the DRA's designated course for extending democracy through elections on all levels. He has put great emphasis on upgrading the party's activities and ties with the masses, especially work among the youth, peasants and tribes. At the same time, he has sharply criticized corruption, favoritism and bureaucratism, and called for greater collective accountability for implementing decisions, all aiming to increase the party's efficiency and broaden its mass base even further.

It has always been the policy of the DRA to try and end the war which was imposed on the new revolutionary government by imperialist interference and support to counterrevolutionary forces. The Soviet troops entered Afghanistan at the request of the DRA, ►



DRA women join the struggle.

in order to counteract imperialist interference. It has also been a shared DRA-Soviet position that the latter's troops would withdraw when foreign interference in Afghanistan's affairs ended. This position was reiterated innumerable times over the past year. It was clear in Comrade Gorbachev's address at the CPSU congress in February, wherein he declared Soviet commitment to a troop withdrawal «in the nearest possible time.» The Soviet Union's tremendous peace efforts aim not only at avoiding nuclear war in the world, but also at ending the 'small' wars that sap the strength and resources of the peoples struggling for liberation and progress.

In early 1986, the DRA and the Soviet Union agreed on a timetable for Soviet withdrawal if it was possible to halt foreign aggression against Afghanistan. In May, Comrade Najib called for «vigorous efforts to achieve the speediest settlement» and invited refugees to return home to an «honorable life in peace and tranquili-

ty.» In the 19th plenum of the PDPA Central Committee, held in July 1986, Comrade Najib promised the end of the war by the 10th anniversary of the revolution (April 1988). The DRA's commitment to a political solution was reiterated at the Harare Non-aligned Summit, the 41st UN session and other international forums. Last autumn, six Soviet regiments withdrew from Afghanistan as a good will sign which also attests to the growing ability of the DRA to shoulder its own self-defense.

Due to the DRA and Soviet efforts, substantial progress was accomplished in the UN-sponsored Geneva talks (which have been conducted indirectly between Pakistan and Afghanistan for over four years, due to Pakistan's refusal to recognize the DRA). In May, the two sides agreed on the principle that Soviet withdrawal would occur simultaneously with the end of external interference in Afghanistan. In August, there was agreement on international guarantees for a settlement and the return of refugees to Afghanistan.

However, the talks were suspended without agreement on the time framework for the Soviet withdrawal and the means of monitoring the cut-off of aid from Pakistan to the counterrevolutionaries.

VICTORIES IN THE FIELD

The PDPA's correct political line has impacted on the military situation as well. Comrade Najib's speech at the 20th plenum of the Central Committee reported: «Our state organs throughout the country, without waiting for reciprocal steps, carry on talks with tens of ringleaders of the counterrevolutionary bands every day. So far such talks have taken place with hundreds of bands. In the course of one year's time, tens of thousands of people have joined the side of revolution (*DRA Foreign Affairs Bulletin*, November 1986). Parallel to the political progress, the army has been strengthened as have the popular militias, not least by incorporating



DRA popular militias

Afghanis who were formerly with the counterrevolution.

In April 1986, the DRA army abolished the counterrevolutionaries' complex at Zhawar, in the east of Afghanistan, bordering Pakistan. This was the climax of a previously begun campaign to cut the counterrevolutionaries' supply and communications lines with Pakistan, in order to bring an end to their sabotage. *Jane's Defence Weekly*, which can hardly be considered sympathetic to the revolutionary government in Afghanistan, commented in its August 2, 1986 issue, that the destruction of the Zhawar complex «may turn out to be a turning point in the war in Afghanistan, bringing the suppression of the Afghani resistance closer.» *Jane's* also noted the important contribution of the militias alongside the DRA army, noting that the militias contained many former «resistance fighters» who know the territory and the ways of the counterrevolutionary bands. *Jane's* also verified the fact that the locally-based

counterrevolutionaries have tended to cease fighting and «concentrated on revival of the social and economic infrastructure,» which is exactly what the DRA wants and needs.

The victory in Zhawar was followed a few months later by a victory in Herat, in the west, close to the Iranian borders. Added to the Pashtun tribes' closing their territory to the counterrevolutionaries in 1985, these two victories have effectively sealed the borders. By summer, numerous press reports affirmed the recognition of western political and intelligence circles that the counterrevolutionaries were increasingly on the defensive. Their customary «December offensive» was notable this year only by its absence. Enlightened voices in the western press have pointed out that the US is now faced with two alternatives: either to negotiate seriously with the Soviets on Afghanistan, or to greatly escalate support, perhaps to the point of providing troops, to the counterrevolutionaries.

US support to the counterrevolutionaries via Pakistan is «the largest expenditure in a covert CIA operation since the Vietnam war» (*Los Angeles Times*, May 24, 1986.) This is an investment that the US administration may not easily let default. Nor do current events indicate a lessening of the Reagan Administration's hostility to peace, the Soviet Union and newly independent countries. On the contrary, the 'Irangate/contras' affair shows the proportions which CIA operations can assume under a retrograde administration like that of Reagan, in trying to reverse the tide of history. The results of 'Irangate', on the other hand, may serve to limit the Reagan Administration's ability to carry out its most aggressive plans. It is only deplorable that there has been so little domestic opposition in the US itself to the CIA's 'Afhangate'. Now is the time for a broad international campaign supporting the DRA's peace initiative in order to bring stability and progress to the Afghani people. ●

Hussein Mroweh

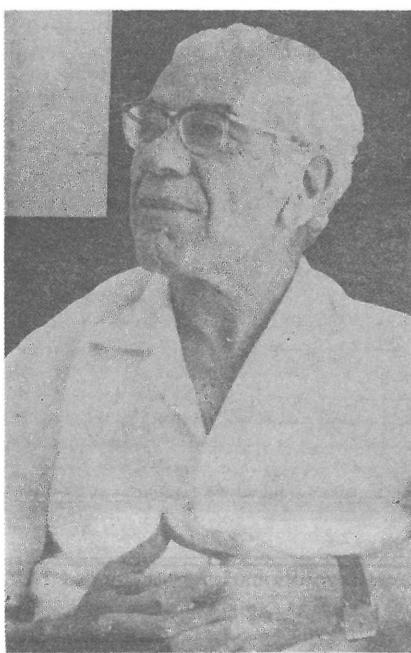
Communist Philosopher Assassinated

On February 17th, as battles raged between the Lebanese progressive forces and the reactionary Amal movement, thugs entered the West Beirut apartment of Comrade Hussein Mroweh. Their weapons equipped with silencers, these criminals murdered the 77 year old communist philosopher in cold blood, in front of his wife and sons. The Lebanese Communist Party held Amal responsible for this assassination which follows other killings of communists and patriots.

With the assassination of Hussein Mroweh, a severe blow was dealt to Arab culture, thought and knowledge. A brief look at the life and works of Comrade Mroweh gives ample testimony to this.

Hussein Mroweh was born in 1910, in the town of Hadatha in the Bint Jbail district of South Lebanon, now part of the occupied border zone. His father was a prominent Shiite sheikh. In 1924, Hussein went to Al Najaf in Iraq, to study Islamic philosophy; he graduated in 1938. From the days of his youth, he wrote literary and philosophical articles for several magazines and newspapers. While in Iraq, he participated in the 1948 mass uprising against British colonialism and the monarchy. After the restoration of the treacherous government of Nouri Al Said, he was deported to Lebanon. Here he participated in establishing several progressive magazines and newspapers.

In the fifties, Hussein's nationalist sentiments developed further and he adopted communist thought. He joined the Lebanese Communist Party in 1956. Later, in 1964, he was elected a member of the party's central committee, a position he retained until his martyrdom. He wrote regularly for the party's theoretical journal, *Al Tariq* (*The Path*), and became its chief manager, a position he held until his death. Hussein Mroweh was also one of the founders of the Lebanese Writers' Union and the Arab Writers' Union. He was a member of the Afro-Asian Writers' Union and the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee. He was active in the World Peace Council, and one of the founders of the Lebanese-Soviet



Friendship Society. Through his writings, he played an active, militant role during the siege of Beirut.

MAJOR WORKS

The literary, philosophical and analytical writings of Comrade Hussein Mroweh have made important contributions to Arab thinking. Among his writings are: *With the Caravan*, 1958, about literature and life; *The Iraqi Revolution*, 1958, a study; and *Literary Issues*, 1956, studies which contributed to the establishment of a new trend in Arab literary critique. Comrade Mroweh used the Marxist thinking he adopted in his works, such as *Critique Studies in the Light of the Objective Method*, 1965, and his contribution to *Studies of Islam*, 1979.

In 1948, he published *New Titles For*

Old Issues, a research in Arab and Islamic heritage, and in 1985, *Our Heritage and How To Know It*. His great work, *Material Trends in Arab and Islamic Philosophy*, two volumes of 2,000 pages, was published in 1978. This was a breakthrough in the field of modern research, that provided scientific understanding of the Arab and Islamic philosophical heritage in relation to the development of the society.

Comrade Hussein Mroweh was awarded numerous prizes for his works. Among these was the Friends of the Book Society prize in 1965 for his *Critique Study*, and the Lotus prize of the Afro-Asian Writers' Union in 1980. He was then elected as a member of the international committee that awards the latter prize. He was awarded a medal of literature and art by the Presidium of the People's Council of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. In 1985, the Union of Arab Writers awarded him the Beirut prize for his intellectual role in the siege of Beirut. Upon his receiving the Beirut prize, the nationalist Education Minister of Lebanon, Dr. Selim Hoss, awarded Hussein Mroweh the Golden Medal of Knowledge of the first order.

HUSSEIN MROWEH'S IDEAS LIVE ON

The Lebanese Communist Party has announced that it holds the Amal movement responsible for the assassination of Hussein Mroweh. In their heinous crime, the Amal gangsters made a serious miscalculation. While they succeeded in murdering one of the most distinguished figures of progressive Arab thought and a prominent Lebanese patriot, their bullets will not succeed in silencing Hussein Mroweh's ideas and principles. These will live on and be spread even more widely by all those who have read his books and witnessed his life of progressive struggle. As a martyr, as in life, Hussein Mroweh stands as an example of the growing progressive tradition in the Arab national liberation movement. His assassination serves to further accentuate the need for all progressive and nationalist forces to unite in opposing the reactionary project Amal is trying to impose in Lebanon.



Freedom to Azmi Al Khawaja and All Political Prisoners in Jordan

On January 12th, the Jordanian authorities raided and searched the home of the distinguished nationalist leader, Mr. Azmi Al Khawaja, member of the PFLP's Politbureau, the Palestinian National Council and the Jordanian Peace and Solidarity Committee. He was arrested and placed in solitary confinement at the General Intelligence jail in Amman. This repressive act against Azmi Al Khawaja (Abu Issam) is part of the broad arrest campaign enacted by the Jordanian security forces over the past month.

Azmi Abdul Aziz Khawaja was born in Ramallah, Palestine in 1936. He has a B.S. in Business from Cairo University. He worked as a teacher in the Ramallah area schools until the 1967 occupation of the West Bank. He suffers from kidney and stomach diseases which make the fact of his detention an especially dangerous matter. He has been arrested by the Jordanian authorities three times before and held for varying periods: once for three years, another time for two years, and the third time from September 1981 until June 7, 1982.

The General Secretariat of the Committees for the Defense of Democratic Freedoms in Jordan issued a communique upon Abu Issam's arrest, strongly condemning this oppressive measure, and calling on international organizations and all democratic, juridical and humanitarian institutions to issue statements of condemnation and to contact the Jordanian government, demanding the release of Abu Issam and all political prisoners in Jordan's jails.

