

DEMOCRATIC

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*US Aggression
Fails to Daunt Libya*

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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Table of Contents

- 1 Editorial: Yankee Terror Against Libya
- 2 Gulf of Tonkin Revisited
- 8 US Search for 'Peace'
- 9 Jordan's Iron Fist - Update
- 10 Occupied Palestine
 - The Palestinian Working Class
- 11 JDEC - A Political Issue
- 14 Armed Struggle: 1936 and 1986
- 15 Prisoners' Day
- 16 Day of the Land - PNSF Rally
 - Comrade Habash's Speech
- 19 Wadi' Haddad - True Internationalist
- 20 Lebanon
- 21 Ain al Hilweh - Ghassan Kanafani Kindergarten
- 23 Mass Interviews
- 27 Afghanistan
- 29 Reagan's Soldiers of Fortune
- 31 Athens Conference on Palestinian Culture

Letters

We received the following message and the drawing on this page from an internationalist friend of the Palestinian revolution, who is a political prisoner in Europe:

Dear friends and comrades,

Thanks a lot for sending «Democratic Palestine» regularly. Best wishes and special regards on the occasion of the 17th of April, «Prisoners' Day», to all the steadfast revolutionary men, women and children detained in Zionist jails.

April 2, 1986



Corrections

The last issue of *Democratic Palestine* which you received was actually no. 15. Unfortunately, we marked it number 16 by mistake. This issue is correctly numbered 16 in order to return to the correct order. By referring to the date on the cover, you can see which issue comes first. Another mistake occurred in the last issue in the article about the 1986 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, on page 17. The two paragraphs under the title «New Fascist Elite Troops» should have been shaded and enclosed in a box. The article itself continues from the middle of the center column to conclude on the third column. Our apologies for any confusion we may have caused you with these errors.

Editorial: Yankee Terror Against Libya

The April 15th US aggression against Libya leaves not a shadow of doubt as to the Reagan Administration's intention to overthrow the Libyan government and assassinate President Qaddafi. The only reason presented by Yankee imperialism, in justifying its attack, is Libyan aid for liberation movements and progressive governments around the globe.

Reagan and his administration consider Libyan aid to the revolutionary government in Nicaragua as an act of terror, but they consider their own support to the reactionary contras as a moral act in support of «freedom»! Reagan and his officials consider Libyan support to the people of New Caledonia as an act of terror, but they consider French colonisation of that country as an act of «freedom»! The Reagan Administration sees Libyan support to SWAPO as an act of terror, but they consider the practices of the apartheid regime in South Africa as legal acts to protect «law and order». The Reagan Administration regards Libyan support to the people of Chad as an act of terror, while considering French intervention and military presence there to be legal!

If we try to mention all of Yankee imperialism's military operations against other peoples, for «defending freedom», the list will be very long. The massive US intervention in Vietnam would not be the first on the list; nor will this list end with the most recent aggression against Libya. Such a list would include US support for the deposed Shah of Iran who was very famous for his «love of freedom»! It would also include the unlimited US support for «democratic» rulers such as Somoza, the former dictator of Nicaragua, Sadat of Egypt, Marcos of the Philippines and Batista of Cuba, not to mention ongoing US military support and economic aid to «very democratic» Latin American regimes, such as those of El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Columbia and Chile.

While noting US enthusiasm for defending these figures and their likes, we do not forget the US's fervent support for the Zionist rulers of 'Israel'. Isn't it the US government that stands almost alone in the UN, supporting and protecting 'Israel'? Wasn't it the US administration that vetoed the UN Security Council resolution condemning the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon? Wasn't it the US and its imperialist allies and proxies who voted against the UN General Assembly resolution which considered Zionism as a form of racism? Wasn't it the US administration that vetoed a UN Security Council resolution condemning the Israeli massacre of Palestinian and Lebanese civilians in Sabra and Shatila? Doesn't US economic and military aid to 'Israel' reach \$ 3.5 billion annually? Wasn't it US-made Israeli jets that bombed the Iraqi nuclear reactor near Baghdad, and the PLO headquarters in Tunisia, which is 3500 kilometers from 'Israel'?

Since all these aggressive acts are justified from the Reagan Administration's point of view, it is then not strange for US fleets and bombers to travel thousands of miles to hit Libya, even if young American pilots might be killed, their wives widowed and their children orphaned - in addition to the 39 Libyan civilians killed and over 90 wounded.

Condemning the US aggression

Before Reagan ordered the strike on Libya, he consulted his allies in the so-called free world, especially his Maggie in

Britain. Obviously, he did not consult the thousands of citizens of the 'free world' who poured into the streets to protest the US air strike - in Athens, Rome, Amsterdam, Ottawa, Dacca, San Jose (Costa Rica) and scores of other cities around the world. Nor had Thatcher created a national consensus for having the aggression launched from British soil. Besides heated debate in the parliament, 10,000 demonstrated in London, while thousands more gathered at military bases, including Lakenheath where the 18 US F-111 bombers started their murderous mission; over 150 demonstrators were arrested by the British police. The matter is highly sensitive, for the British people know that the arrangements, whereby the US gained clearance for launching its aggression from bases in Britain, are the same as those which govern the US's getting consent to fire the nuclear missiles installed on British soil. Polls indicated that the majority of British opposed the aggression, as did the majority of West Germans.

The Arab masses also showed their outrage. A US Embassy employee was shot in Khartoum the same day as the raid. Two British citizens were stabbed in Morocco. Over 10,000 Sudanese marched towards the US embassy in protest of US aggression. However, reactionary rulers curtailed the masses in several countries. Hundreds of Tunisians marched in protest but were prevented from reaching the US embassy; 20 citizens were arrested. Five opposition parties called for cutting relations with the USA. Palestinians demonstrated in protest, despite the occupation. In Amman, demonstrations on two different days were dispersed by the police and citizens were arrested. In Cairo, 100 lawyers gathered in their union to burn the US flag and issue a communique demanding a total boycott of the USA. There were three days of demonstrations staged by students and unionists; the police tried to disperse the protests and arrested 44.

We consider the US aggression against Libya extremely dangerous and call on progressive and peace-loving forces, all over the world, to raise their arms and voices against this aggression, demanding its halt before more innocent blood is shed and more damage inflicted.

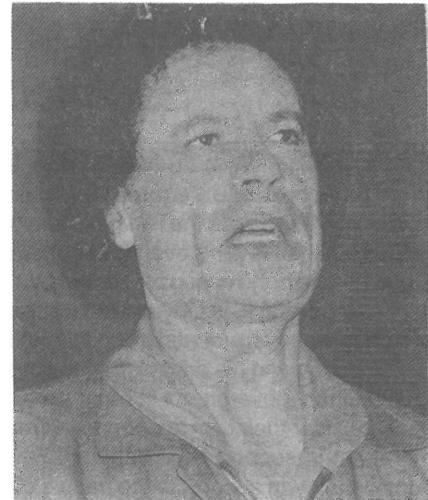
We received the following telex from the US on April 19th:

We, the General Union of Palestine Students in the US, are presently holding a peaceful sit-in at the offices of the League of Arab States in Washington D.C., to condemn the Reagan Administration's latest vicious attack on the Libyan Jamahiriya and its people. We demand the immediate cut-off of diplomatic relations between the Arab governments and the US. Furthermore, we condemn the recent arrest in Amman, Jordan, of Palestinian and Jordanian residents demonstrating in front of the American embassy to condemn the US aggression.

The New York, Dallas, Chicago, and San Francisco chapters of the General Union of Palestine Students are holding sit-ins and press conferences similar to that in Washington D.C. in the respective offices of the League of Arab States, to condemn the US aggression against Libya.

Gulf of Tonkin Revisited

*This article addresses
the questions of why the US has
singled out Libya as a target for aggression, and
why the US was cornered into doing its own dirty work.*



Due to his choice of allies and his daring, plus finances to back his principled positions, Qaddafi has constituted a real threat to imperialist interests in the region. His ambitious plans and achievements in the social and economic fields have earned him a popularity not easily eradicated by mudslinging or beefed-up CIA plots. Libya's US-backed neighbors have problems of their own, which would only be aggravated by any attack on Qaddafi. Western Europe has too much to lose economically to risk an all-out strike. Libyan opposition groups have proved impotent despite the millions of dollars showered on them. Added to this, the prevailing anti-US feeling in the Middle East and other parts of the world, has caused the most reactionary of regimes to hesitate before thinking of leveling a strike at Qaddafi. This is not to mention the unwavering support Libya receives from its socialist allies, particularly the Soviet Union.

So despite the negative lessons of direct military intervention in Vietnam and Lebanon, the US found itself cornered into doing its own dirty work. On April 15th, the Reagan Administration brazenly attacked Libya. Among the eight targets bombed in the air attack were civilian sites, a hospital, a school, and Qaddafi's own home. Cluster bombs were among the murderous weapons used. It would be naive to claim surprise at the attack since the US went out of its way to whip up cheap, psychotic hysteria against Qaddafi, as a pretext for military action against a country steering a course independent of imperialism's military-industrial complex.

However, even after the fatal bombing of Tripoli and Ben-ghazi, Qaddafi's enemies were unable to «lure (the Libyan leader) into some...exploit that would give...opponents in the Libyan military a chance to seize power;» nor were they able to «give one of Qaddafi's neighbors...a justification for responding to Qaddafi militarily» - the aims of the CIA plan as it was expounded in the *Washington Post* on November 3, 1985.

Revolution for the people.

The 1969 bloodless revolution which overthrew King Idris triggered a series of fundamental and far-reaching economic and cultural changes which even Qaddafi's critics have been forced to admit. There is no doubt that the Libyan people have benefitted from the revolution. Average yearly per capita income for Libyans is the highest in Africa, reaching \$ 6000-7000. At the time of independence it was about \$ 50. Before the revolution, illiteracy ran at about 80% and almost 100% among women; medical services were not available to the public except in the two major cities. This resulted in high infant

mortality, malnourishment and a short life expectancy.

Today education is free in Libya, and about 60% of the population are literate. Medical facilities have been made available to all. The gap between rural and urban incomes has been narrowed. Landlords have become a thing of the past after Qaddafi made it illegal to own more than one house. According to a western diplomat: «The people aren't starving; they have a massive building program and a reasonably high standard of living.» Even the World Bank in Washington says: «Libya has become one of the world's best-fed countries.» On a continent full of beggars, there is a striking absence in Libya. The birth rate has risen to 3.9%, one of the world's highest.

Libya has plans for a massive \$ 25 billion water pipeline and farm irrigation system which are going on as scheduled, despite the termination of US companies' involvement in the project. This project known as the Great Man-made River, involves the largest single civil engineering contract ever awarded in the Middle East. It consists of a series of massive pipelines intended to carry six million cubic meters of water a day from beneath the Sahara for consumption. In volume, the water flow would equal the world's entire daily oil production. In a country which is 90% desert, the prospects opened by the completion of such a project are fantastic. Undaunted by many an intervention and impediment, especially from the US, Qaddafi is pursuing plans for gaining access to nuclear projects. In 1982, the Tajura Centre was built and supplied with a small TMA-4 Tokamak Nuclear Fusion Facility. The plant is run by several hundred Libyans. Qaddafi has been bent on implementing radical changes in the society. Military training for high school girls is mandatory. Qaddafi, discerning the importance of women's participation, is bent on integrating them as active elements of society on all levels. The most prominent symbol of the drive to make women and men equal is the military academy which has trained 7000 women since it was opened in 1978. Qaddafi has made considerable strides in improving the status of women, challenging many a law and tradition in doing so. There has been a five-fold increase in the number of women enrolled in universities. Girls and boys attend primary and secondary schools in approximately equal numbers. Child marriage has been banned, and the minimum legal age for marriage has been set at 18.

Libya depends on oil for 99% of its revenues, and many would wish to claim that Qaddafi has been able to realize such achievements because of the oil wealth rather than because of political, social and economic policies. It would be instructive, however, to compare what Libya has done for its 3.5 million

people with what the immensely wealthy Saudi regime does with its \$ 30 billion annual income: Thousands of under-nourished, poverty-stricken, illiterate beggars line up along the streets of Mecca every year to testify to how the Saudi regime distributes its wealth.

Economic crisis or wishful thinking?

Like most countries, Libya has suffered an economic slump due to the world recession and the nosedive taken by oil prices. Yet, however blunted Libya's oil weapon may become, Libyan crude (light and low sulphur) is among the best quality oil in the world. No matter how much oil prices rise or fall, Libyan oil remains at the top of the chart. Moreover, transport costs are lower because of Libya's proximity to Europe (its biggest customer). More important still, Libyan oil costs about \$ 5 a barrel to produce. Thus, despite drastic dips in oil prices, Libya can still make more than 100% profit on oil sales.

Even though there are economic problems, these are not particular to Libya or related to the way Qaddafi has handled the internal situation. Long before the leaders of many other oil-producing states, Libya imposed austerity measures to keep spending in line with revenues, in a way that even the IMF found commendable in a confidential 1985 report. Implementation of the austerity program, designed to urge independence from foreign goods and labor, began with a decision to reduce the one million strong labor force to 600,000. Thirty-three military projects, costing \$ 700 million, were cancelled. Imports were cut by 25% in 1986, including consumer goods and machinery, mostly from European countries. The third reduction of foreign labor in 1985, following reductions in 1976 and 1980, was another factor which alleviated Libya's economic problems.

Much commotion accompanied Libya's laying off of foreign labor. The western media tried to capitalize on these events to feed into their anti-Qaddafi campaign, despite the fact that many a Gulf country has embarked on similar measures to relieve economic pressures. Thousands have been sent home by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in particular, to cut the expatriate work force, but reactionary and western media have not chosen to dance up a storm about those countries. The commotion raised about Libya's «inhumanity», as Mubarak put it, rises not from concern over the plight of the unemployed, but from fear of the exacerbation of the already deteriorating economic situation, especially in Tunisia and Egypt. Mubarak conveniently overlooks the fact that Egyptians are humiliated and strip-searched in Iraqi airports. Worse still, many have been coerced into serving in the Iraqi army to fight Iran.

The anti-imperialist network

Libya has provided more than just moral support to many anti-imperialist forces all over the world. Qaddafi's relations with Iran, Syria, Ethiopia, Nicaragua and the socialist countries, especially the Soviet Union, are well known. Libya's support for progressive groups in the Philippines, New Caledonia, Pakistan, Zaire, Guatemala, El Salvador, Chile, Columbia, the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, St. Lucia and Lebanon is only to mention a few on a much longer list. This is not to mention the support Qaddafi extends to anti-imperialist groups in Europe itself. More important still is Qaddafi's principled stand of support of the Palestinian cause, and his hard-line policy against Zionism and its allies. Indeed, it is because of his declared commitment to fight imperialism on all levels that Qaddafi has become a major target of CIA schemes.

Qaddafi has also been bold enough to throw his influence in the US's own territory. In a forty minute speech transmitted

live by satellite from Tripoli to Chicago, Qaddafi promised support to black US servicemen (totalling about 400,000) if they would mutiny. Another sensitive nerve is the US's fear of Qaddafi coming too near to Nicaragua, a hot spot for the White House these days. Over the last four years, Libya has given Nicaragua \$ 400 million in economic aid and \$ 15 million in petroleum. It is not surprising that the US considers Libya a threat to its interests.

Unmixable business and politics

It is not the purpose of this article to delve into Libya's international business ties, but we will cite some examples of how extensive they are. A great many countries, especially in western Europe, are linked to Libya not only by dependence on oil, but through multiple business interests as well. Considering how sizeable these are, it is no wonder that these imperialist countries have resisted US pressures to impose drastic sanctions on Libya. Libya has links with countries spanning from Surinam in South America to China.

Libya's ties with western Europe give a clear idea of how Qaddafi can deal with these capitalist countries economically without becoming vulnerable to political pressures. Greece is to supply Libya with military equipment worth \$ 1 billion over the next five years. Denmark and Sweden have won contracts for development projects worth millions of dollars. Ireland has recently negotiated a \$ 89 million cattle deal with Qaddafi, ignoring a US call for trade sanctions. France supplies spare parts for Libya's fleet of more than 100 Mirage jet fighters. (Although the US has confronted France with this, France continues to deny it.). Malta has flourishing ties with Libya. In 1984, it signed a friendship and defense accord. According to this, Libyans and Maltese can travel between the two countries without visas; they can work and buy property without special permits. Many Maltese seek job opportunities in Libya.

Although Britain has broken relations with Qaddafi, 8000 British are living in Libya. For many British, Libya constitutes a well of untapped potential for trade. Thatcher, however, has opted for loyalty to Reagan's policy rather than for national interest. Libyan institutions have for nine years been the biggest single shareholders in Fiat after the owning Agnelli family, and have two members on the company's board. Fiat also has a controlling interest in Italy's largest rocket and munitions company, Snia BPD, which is involved in US contracts. Fiat is also working with Rolls-Royce on the RB 199 engine for the new Tornado jet. Italian companies won a contract worth £ 136 million to manage a steel plant being built by the Libyan government at Misurata. Libya is also deeply involved in Italy's booming textile and hotel industry. The group also has



acquired control of a development company that plans to turn the Italian island of Pantelleria into a tourist paradise.

Cloak and dagger stumped

The US intentions towards Libya were most frankly stated by Secretary of State George Schultz during one of his staff meetings: «We have to put Qaddafi in a box and close the lid.» Despite the US intelligence community's having advised caution, the Reagan Administration has chosen an aggressive policy. Many a CIA plan has been formulated, trimmed to size and discretely 'leaked' to the press. Whether or not this was intentional, the US did hope that it would scare Libya into buckling under pressure. At the same time, this signalled to the western European states that the US meant business. Instead of denying these 'leaks', one US official said that these plans would go ahead anyway: «We went ahead with the world's most open covert operation against Nicaragua.» The US has for many months studied and prepared military plans that were said to be 'defensive' and of a 'precautionary nature'. Another official source said that the CIA had analyzed military options and did a detailed study of military targets that could be hit in Libya. A further development came in January 1986, when military advisers sifted through a Defense Department contingency list of bombing targets in Libya, ranging from government facilities to anti-aircraft sites. Pentagon officials termed the activity «prudent planning in case the president should ask us to do something.»

On January 8th, the State Department released several papers which were actually highly classified intelligence reports cut down to size. One of these was entitled «Chronology of Libyan Support for Terrorism, 1980-85.» It listed a total of 58 incidents; the US was only mentioned in two of these. The chronology lists 56 incidents in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, that in almost every case were directed against Libyan dissidents or anti-Qaddafi plotters. The report also stressed Libya's support for revolutionary movements in Latin America,

the Caribbean, Southeast Asia and the Philippines.

Another major CIA analysis classified 'secret' was a Special National Intelligence Estimate of March 1985, titled «Libya's Qaddafi: The Challenge to the United States and Western Interests.» This title reflects exactly the US fear of Libya's growing influence. Libya is supporting those very forces which western imperialism is spending millions to have crushed by its reactionary allies, especially in the Middle East and Africa. All reports, however, result in the same conclusion: «Essentially Qaddafi is not controllable.» This reflects the collective opinion of US intelligence agencies that diplomatic pressure and economic sanctions would have little or no impact. Reflecting this is a statement by Reagan in reference to the new economic sanctions of February 1986: «If these steps do not end Qaddafi's terrorism, I promise you that further steps will be taken» - thereby leaving the door open to the military option. Others were more skeptical, seeing no use in economic measures or even the military option. The retired Rear Admiral of the US Sixth Fleet, Eugene Caroll, in an interview with *The Guardian*, February 5th, acknowledged that «...Qaddafi isn't going to cry 'uncle' and I can't see what favorable outcome can come» from US military resolve to intimidate him.

Nevertheless, despite reservations on the part of CIA officials and calls for restraint from Europe, the US increased its aerial and electronic surveillance of Libya. The Sixth Fleet was alerted. US Navy pilots on the Coral Sea aircraft carrier stood by in Sigonella, Sicily. Britain's crack Special Air Services (SAS) regiment was alerted at Hereford, England, and France's quick reaction forces readied at bases in south France. Crete was transformed into a US base. Thousands of US troops arrived at Haifa port in occupied Palestine, aboard an aircraft carrier, a guided missile cruiser and a destroyer, while trigger-happy Zionist like Peres expressed eagerness to hit Libya. 'Israel', however, is still suffering from the aftermath of its intervention in Lebanon. The Zionist leaders cannot take lightly Qaddafi's warnings; they are not in a position to strike Libya as they did the PLO headquarters in Tunis. This is especially true due to the sticky situation that arose after the Zionists forced a Libyan executive jet to land in 'Israel'. (Although Israeli officials claimed not to take Qaddafi seriously, the Israeli Transport Ministry announced that an order had been issued to all airlines arriving or leaving 'Israel', to change their flight paths over the Mediterranean.)

Despite Reagan's ridiculous name-calling game, CIA estimates continue to refer to Qaddafi as «a judicious political calculator» who is «not living up to his madman image.» In any case, estimates do converge on one point: that Qaddafi is a threat to US and Western interests. CIA activities have concentrated on cutting Qaddafi down to size, indeed doing away with him totally, if they could, by either breeding pro-western substitutes for him, employing neighboring states against him, and/or cutting off his connections with Europe.

The US and Europe

The US has pursued an unsuccessful campaign of sanctions against Libya since 1981. Past efforts have been thwarted by the major European industrial powers' reluctance to give up economic ties which include access to Libya's crude oil, not to mention the billions of dollars worth of debts that Libya would be relieved from paying if Europe embarked on a drastic embargo. The largest purchasers of Libyan oil are Italy, West Germany, Spain, France and Turkey - all NATO members. Italy, Greece, France, West Germany, Britain and Japan





One of the missiles fired during U.S. aggression.

sell billions of dollars worth of goods to Libya annually. Moreover, 40,000 Europeans are living in Libya, as compared to some thousand US citizens. Over the years, US dependence on Libyan oil, as well as exports to Libya, have dropped. In 1979, US exports to Libya were worth \$ 860 million; by 1984, they had dropped to \$ 200 million, mostly pharmaceuticals, farm products and manufactured goods. On the other hand, Libyan oil sales to the US dropped from \$ 5 billion in 1979 to \$ 9 million in 1984. Economic sanctions would thus hurt US interests least, but western European interests most. Similar differences took place between the imperialist allies when the US came down on European countries, forbidding work on the Siberian pipeline.

West Germany, Greece, Austria, Italy and even the Vatican were among the most vehement opponents of economic sanctions. Reagan's special envoy to West Germany had proposed a four-step program to retaliate economically against Libya - reduction of oil imports, withholding West German technology, curtailing flights between the two countries and increasing security controls against Libya's embassy in Bonn. The plan was rejected. Austrian Bruno Kreisky told the *Vienna Kurier* newspaper that the bombings at Rome and Vienna airports were Reagan's pretext for his anti-Libyan moves. Greece even declared outright that Libya was not behind the airport attacks. According to Vittorio Zucconi of the Italian *La Repubblica*, «Economic sanctions make particularly little sense at a time when Europeans' main concern is to get payment for arms already delivered to Libya. (Libya's foreign debt is \$ 4 billion with payments badly in arrears.) An economic boycott would simply prevent Libya from paying its bills.» Even the Vatican ignored Washington's call for economic sanctions, entering into a joint venture with the state-owned Libyan Arab Bank and Italian investors.

John Whitehead had toured European capitals in January, to drum up support for Reagan's hard-line policy. He returned empty-handed from his eight-nation tour. The US had threatened to strike Libya if the Europeans didn't show more flexibility to US proposals. According to a senior US administration official, «The large-scale US air and naval exercises now underway off the coast of Libya were planned more than two weeks ago to take place if US allies failed to support its economic sanctions» (*Boston Globe*, January 25th). Zbigniew Brzezinski explained in a January interview that US military action against Qaddafi «would induce Europeans to embrace sanctions.» However, whatever perverse methods the US uses to coerce its European allies, the latter have remained adamantly opposed to economic sanctions. The US was, however, able to extract a pledge that they would not undercut its

sanctions against Libya, by taking over contracts or filling jobs vacated by Americans. Then under the impact of the US aggression, EEC countries moved to enforce mass expulsion of Libyan diplomats and others from Europe, not to mention strengthening intelligence cooperation between Europe and the US.

US double talk

However, despite Reagan's war drive, even US citizens obliged to leave Libya are dragging their feet. Oil employees earn up to \$ 100,000 a year, three times what they would earn in the same job in the US. Most of them have decided to take their chances and stay, while many more are trickling back into the country. In fact, the US administration came down much harder on individuals working in the oil field and their families living in Libya, than they did on the five major US oil companies operating there. «US citizens working in Libya are subject to 10 years in jail and a \$ 50,000 fine,» said Robert Oakley, director of the State Department office for 'counterterrorism' and emergency planning. Moreover, all purchases, including grocery shopping require a «prohibited transactions» permit from the US Treasury Department to be acquired at the Belgium embassy in Libya. Despite all measures, US citizens don't seem to be intimidated. One oil engineer, who wanted to remain anonymous, made the following statement to the *Journal of Commerce* on January 31st: «I am more afraid of remaining unemployed than of what Reagan can do to me.»

The five US companies with oil concessions in Libya are Occidental Petroleum, Amerada Hess, Marathon, Conoco and Grace. These suspended their oil liftings in February. However, the US administration left many loopholes in the measures taken against them, enabling them to preserve their interests in Libya through foreign subsidiaries of so-called unrelated foreign firms. These companies account for 20% of the country's total oil production which is 1.1 million barrels a day. Moreover, forty US oil service companies exist in Libya, which handle 33% of Libya's production to customers in Europe and elsewhere. A unit of Halliburton Company, Brown and Root, Inc. are managing a project to tap water underneath the Libyan desert. The project is estimated at \$ 20 billion. The Price Brothers Company of Dayton, Ohio, is providing the technology, machinery and equipment. For the US to simply walk out of Libya would mean losing \$ 150 million in annual income and \$ 2 billion in fixed assets, and many more millions from company projects. The US has therefore more to lose by imposing sanctions than Libya that can find many willing to fill the vacuum. Thus, although the US has pressured the Europeans all along to do just that, i.e., walk out, it has left wide escape clauses when legislating its own trade embargo. The embargo was *permitted* not required by replacing the word *shall* with *may*. The final bill signed by the president reads: «The President may prohibit any article grown, produced, extracted or manufactured in Libya from being imported to the US...»; a similar clause was included on exports.

According to a western oil executive, the action of US companies is having absolutely no effect on Libya's overall oil income. Realizing this, many companies and their employees have confirmed that they are likely to 'return under cover', to avoid losing their investments or livelihood which is tax-free. Even State Department spokesman, Charles Redman, indicated the futility of such sanctions, referring to them as «somewhat effective» but saying that at the same time, the US administration was «looking at other things (they) could do» (*Washington Post*, January 3rd). ▶

Libya's regional role

Libya's influence in Africa and the Middle East is extensive, supporting nationalist regimes and liberation movements in their confrontation of imperialism and reactionary regimes. Qaddafi's policy of 'calling a spade a spade', his political stands and the element of surprise woven into his tactics have not won the hearts of his pro-western neighbors, let alone their masters. His involvement in Chad and embarrassment of France on more than one occasion, his vehement opposition to the Camp David alliance and his opposition to the Tunisian regime have all contributed to his enemies' perturbation. Reagan's advisors are highly concerned about Libya's role in Africa. «He'll do all he can to get the Sudan to cut ties with us, condemn Egypt for seeking peace with Israel, and put people on trial for helping airlift the Falashas to Israel,» fretted one top Reagan advisor.

While dealing with hostile neighbors, Qaddafi has fortified Libya by contracting non-aggression pacts with neighboring states - Algeria, Sudan, Morocco, Malta. Nor does he limit his concern to the north. Qaddafi is a strong opponent of the apartheid regime in South Africa, and of Mobuto Sese Seko's regime in Zaire, as well as becoming involved in the ceasefire agreement between Mali and Bourkina Fasso.

Qaddafi is well known for his bold diplomacy. He has on several occasions made surprise visits to Arab countries to propose unity plans. While the media has made Qaddafi's moves appear as eccentric gestures, they have always resulted in agreements that were beneficial to Libya, while offering the other side equal advantage. At other times, such moves were calculated to embarrass and expose. During a visit to Saudi Arabia, Qaddafi led a crowd of pilgrims chanting slogans such as «Down with the US, enemy of Islam» and others against King Hussein and Husni Mubarak.

The African Triangle

In US intelligence summaries, two key points repeatedly emerge: (1) During the past ten years, Qaddafi's main attacks have been aimed almost exclusively at dissident Libyans in exile or reactionary Arab and African states. (2) Rarely has an attack been launched directly at US interests. The last such attack was in December 1979, when the US embassy in Tripoli was burned. Considering the number of US embassies attacked all over the world, the Reagan Administration could hardly rely on that pretext to attack Libya.

The US's best bet seemed to be hitting Libya through neighboring states to avoid direct involvement. The Egypt-Tunisia-Chad triangle has been the main focus of US attention, especially because of the influence the US commands there. Egypt is of special interest due to its involvement in Camp David and normalization of relations with the Zionist entity. This caused Qaddafi to take a principled stand against Sadat and then Mubarak's regime, a fact which caused Egypt and its western allies deep consternation. Since 1977, Egypt has served as a launching pad for anti-Libyan activities. A brief border war provoked by Egypt in 1977, served as a pretext for permanent troop deployment along Egypt's western borders. US AWACS radar planes have frequently operated over Egyptian territory to observe activities in Kufra, Libya's main military staging area near the borders of Chad, Sudan and Egypt.

Britain is also involved, refurbishing old Soviet-made tanks and artillery, and contributing intelligence expertise. As



Destruction from US attack on Libya.

an example, the Libyan «hitmen» captured in Cairo after the attempted assassination of a dissident, were interrogated by Scotland Yard experts flown in especially for the purpose. The French intelligence service is also working in liaison with the Egyptian secret service, having wanted to destabilize Libya since 1974.

US envoys have been in constant contact with Egypt to discuss possible military options against Libya. However, joint action by the US and its Middle East allies would be undertaken only if Qaddafi attacks a neighboring country. This has not been the case, despite repeated Egyptian and Tunisian attempts to goad Libya into such a fight. The US began to see the futility of such a plan after three attempts to involve Egypt were abandoned. (Egypt, for its own image purposes, declared that it had rejected the US overtures.) At the same time, the US was frustrated by lack of concrete evidence about the Libyan involvement it had claimed in any of the attacks.

Egypt, through its national security advisor, Osama al Baz, is exploring the possibility of forming a 'confrontation front' with Tunisia against Libya, but so far nothing has developed. Egypt is diligently trying to prove Libya's complicity in so-called terrorist activities, particularly the hijacking. Egypt itself bungled so badly, killing more passengers than the hijackers. The Egyptian regime, like the US, has been making constant assertions about «irrevocable evidence» and «clear connections», but the proof is yet to show. In any case, the Egyptian regime has latched upon a scapegoat which serves as a convenient 'exhibit A' to distract from Mubarak's domestic and foreign policy dilemmas. In the *Boston Globe*, December 1, 1985, some western diplomats had this to say about Egypt's intentions: «The Egyptians (are) trying to isolate Libya in the Arab world as a means of preparing public opinion at home and abroad for some future move.» After the conscripts' revolt and subsequent mass uprising in February, the deteriorating economic situation and the extension of emergency rule, Egypt does not seem a likely candidate for carrying out the US's dirty work against Libya at the moment.

Tunisia, Libya's western neighbor, is no less hostile to Qaddafi. Being one of the world's largest recipients of US aid, the regime is always careful to follow its western masters' instructions. The US, in return, has repeatedly confirmed its commitment to Bourguiba and would help any country 'threatened' by Libya. This scenario of Tunisia's anti-Qaddafi campaign is similar to that in Egypt: The army on alert at the borders, mudslinging, the expulsion of Libyan diplomats and closure of the consulates and cultural centers, access for anti-



Funeral for the victims of the US air strike.

Libyan elements to train and infiltrate over the Tunisian border, etc. Again, Qaddafi serves as a scapegoat for internal problems. Tunisia's 7 million inhabitants suffer from extensive unemployment. The US and its allies are also disturbed by Libya's broadcasts calling on the Tunisian people to rise up and kill the Zionists living in their midst, giving the addresses of Zionist Jews suspected of having CIA contacts. Nevertheless, Tunisia's hands are tied in terms of taking effective action against Libya, due to its shaky internal situation.

Qaddafi's involvement in Chad is also a thorn in the side of the US and France. There are 7000 Libyan troops aiding Goukouni Oueddei, who controls the northern half of the country, in the struggle against the US-installed Hussein Habre. Although the US and France are both backing Habre, the Reagan Administration has made it clear on more than one occasion that France has the primary role in this part of Africa. Although the US provides financial support, it will not send troops to Chad. The US's need for a French foothold in Chad has restrained Reagan from riding France too hard about confronting Libya on other levels. Mitterrand, addressing the summit of French-speaking African nations, said: «France will not permit the balance to be upset... (in) Chad.» Qaddafi, however, has repeatedly embarrassed the French government and shown that he is not to be intimidated by threats or force. Paris has, temporarily at least, «ruled out using French troops to drive out Oueddei's forces from Chad» (*Newsweek*, March 6th).

The US had hopes of using neighboring countries to do its dirty work, but estimates of this possibility show little chance of success and even an operation involving Libya's hostile neighbors could require up to six divisions or 90,000 US soldiers.

Boy Scouts

The anti-Libyan campaign dates back to the September 1, 1969 revolution when Qaddafi closed down the US's Wheelus airforce base in Libya. From that time on, the US administration has taken many ousted Libyan bourgeois under its wing, hoping to groom an opposition able to topple Qaddafi. The US has spent millions of dollars nourishing Libyan exile groups which are supposed to have launched several unsuccessful coup attempts. Yet these groups are not of the caliber to fulfill imperialist aims. One covert plan involving exile groups was blocked by the CIA's deputy director, John N. McMahon, on the grounds that the exiles were «boy scouts» - too weak to have a chance of success. Moreover, Libya's purge of anti-regime elements left little room for enemy maneuvering.

Another venture Washington invested in was the so-called National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NDSL), led by Mohammed Youssef Magarief, former auditor general in Libya and recommended to the CIA by the Saudis. It was no coincidence that the NDSL's birth came in the same period that a CIA search for «a surrogate organization that would overthrow Qaddafi by whatever means necessary» became known in 1981. The CIA trained NDSL leaders and recruits in western Europe, Sudan and Morocco, while Saudi Arabia supplied the funds. Mustafa bin Halim, former Libyan prime minister, now advisor to the Saudi monarchy, was the go-between with Magarief. Members of this group attempted to assassinate Qaddafi in May 1984, but failed and were captured. In May 1985, the NDSL was dealt another blow when Sudan deprived them of air time, but then Cairo radio obliged them.

Imperialism's ruffled feathers

With the escalation of imperialist aggression against Libya, the Soviet Union, Libya's staunchest ally, has stepped up its military support, sending advanced SAM-5 anti-aircraft missiles, launchers, radars and transporters. With a 200-mile range, these missiles give Libya an effective weapon to challenge US planes flying over the Gulf of Sidra. Although many imperialist quarters have expressed disdain for this «relatively old, slow-flying, ground-to-air» missile, it has not failed to ruffle their feathers. The missile can hit targets 95,000 feet in the air and can knock down US reconnaissance aircraft as well as the sophisticated AWACS. Thus, a shadow of doubt was cast over the abilities of even high-performance US fighters. Obviously, their attack on Libya in March was a provocation, designed to glean information on Libyan air defence. This was reflected in the new stand-off tactics used by the naval aircraft. Pilots stayed away from their targets to fire guided missiles at Libyan military installations. To a large extent, they depended on electronics to pinpoint targets, while using new aviation tactics that expose them to minimal risks. With its confidence restored, the US resumed its campaign, waiting for any pretext to strike Libya again. The April bombing of Libya can only be described as crazed, immoral brutality. The F-111 fighters blasted civilian sites, hospitals and government facilities. Despite repeated claims that they did not wish to assassinate Qaddafi, his residence was bombed as well, injuring his wife and sons, and killing his 16-month old daughter. Leaks from informed sources said that a press release had been prepared by the US administration, announcing the «unfortunate, accidental» death of Qaddafi.

If anything, Libya has shown that brute force cannot intimidate her. Arab nationalists and progressive forces around the world decried Reagan's infamous aggression. A delegation from the non-aligned countries visited Qaddafi to express their support. The Soviet Union cancelled the meeting between Soviet Foreign Minister Edward Shevardnadze and US Secretary of State Schultz. However, despite worldwide condemnation of its aggression, the US has shown no signs of restraint. Rather it threatens to escalate its aggression to a dangerous new pitch, with the move of a US nuclear warship into Mediterranean waters. Reagan has openly stated that the US would repeat its attack on Libya if the «need» arises. The US policy of brute force and aggression from the Bay of Tonkin in Vietnam to Grenada has been experienced by peoples all over the world. Imperialism has yet to discover that history will take its course. It has yet to discover the potential of the masses, and their determination to fight a life and death battle against oppression, hegemony and inhumanity.

US Search for Peace

Imperialist efforts continue to enforce a capitulationist settlement in the Middle East, based on negation of the Palestinian people's rights of return, self-determination and establishing an independent Palestinian state. In addition to imperialism and Zionism, the settlement efforts have gained the support of Arab and Palestinian reactionaries. The settlement includes different concepts for resolving the Palestinian issue. These range from 'autonomy' in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, with continued Zionist control, as specified in the Camp David accords and advocated by the Likud; to a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation under the control of king Hussein (the position of the Jordanian regime and the Arafat leadership).

Reaching an imperialist settlement is a cornerstone in the US's foreign policy, in order to consolidate the Zionist entity and its own domination of the Middle East. The US drive for imposing such a settlement is two-pronged. One prong is attacking and intimidating the nationalist forces as manifest in the US aggression on Libya and the US-Zionist threats against Syria. The Zionists' iron fist policy in occupied Palestine is another component of this policy. Since August 1985, 33 Palestinians have been deported and 125 remain under indefinite administrative detention. To this is added the Jordanian-Zionist attempts to find alternatives to the PLO - the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. These attempts include the efforts to appoint the municipal councils in the West Bank and the new Jordanian election law.

The other prong is reorganizing the Middle East in preparation for a settlement that would liquidate the Palestinian cause. To this end, US Vice-President George Bush and Undersecretary of State Richard Murphy visited the Middle East in the second week of April. Although Bush's statement, that the US was beginning a new 'peace' initiative, was denied by the State Department, another of his statements was more to the point. Bush said that one of the main reasons for the trip was «to survey the possibilities of moving the peace process forward.» It is well to remember that, to the US, the 'peace' process

means reaching at a settlement without the PLO, or with a non-effective PLO that has surrendered totally to the imperialist-Zionist conditions. This was the reason for the magnitude of the US-financed Zionist invasion of Lebanon, and the timing of the Reagan plan which was forwarded in September 1982, right after the withdrawal of the Palestinian revolution's forces from Beirut.

The settlement process gained momentum on the Arab level after the deviating PLO leadership broke the isolation of the Camp David regime in Egypt, and then signed the Amman accord with King Hussein. The Amman accord states that Jordan and the PLO will work jointly for 'peace' with a view towards a confederated Jordanian-Palestinian state. The process faced obstacles when King Hussein failed to get Arafat to give up his last card by recognizing Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 in accordance with US demands, without any assurance that the US would recognize the Palestinians' right to self-determination. Those tactical differences between Hussein and Arafat caused Hussein to announce the freezing of their coordination. This in turn caused alarm in the Arab reactionary camp. Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Iraq all offered their services to mediate between Arafat and Hussein. At the same time, King Hussein and the Zionist state failed in their efforts to find acceptable figures to act as an alternative leadership for the PLO, especially after the execution of the collaborator, Zafer al Masri. Afterwards, Hussein cooled down his overt attack on the PLO, while US State Department spokesman Charles Redman said, «It is obvious that we have embarked on a period of reflection on the part of all parties.»

Hussein opens a new front vs. the PLO

King Hussein changed his tactics in keeping with the essence of his strategy for absorbing the Palestinian cause. He worked to weaken the PLO through new methods. The new election law in Jordan is one of these efforts. This law is in contradiction with the Rabat summit decisions that the PLO is the sole legiti-

mate representative of the Palestinian people. The election law divides the seats in the Jordanian parliament into two equal categories: those for the West Bank and the Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan on the one hand, and those for the East Bank, i.e., Jordan, on the other. This is an attempt to give legitimacy to Jordanian claims to represent the Palestinians.

Hussein's other effort was sponsoring a mutiny among Arafat's military forces in Jordan. The leader of this split is Atallah Atallah (Abu al Zaim), well-known as a puppet of the Jordanian regime. One of the issues raised by the mutineers was blaming Arafat for the deteriorations of relations with Jordan, in a direct echo of King Hussein's February speech. Hussein is coupling these steps with an ongoing campaign of repression against democratic and even liberal forces. (See update on Jordan's iron fist.)

Arafat, however, has disregarded these facts, just as he disregards the hopes of the Palestinian people for the cancellation of the Amman accord.

Meanwhile, the reactionary Arab forces continue preparations for a settlement. The godfather of Camp David, King Hassan of Morocco, has repeatedly called for a meeting between an Arab leader selected by an Arab summit, and the Zionist prime minister Peres. This is part of the efforts to condition the Arab people into accepting the existence of the Zionist entity, as a precondition for enforcement of the capitulationist settlement.

Zionism's preparations

Preparations for a settlement also continue on the Israeli side. Polarization has become more apparent on the Israeli political scene. On the one hand, there are the extremist, vocally racist Zionists that refuse any possibility of giving even token concessions. This includes the majority of the Likud and small ultraconservative parties like Kach and Tehiya, who remind us of the Ku Klux Klan. On the other hand, there are the so-called moderate, but essentially no less racist Zionists who are more in tune with imperialist policy. This camp is mainly represented by the Labor Party

and its partners in the Labor Alignment. They envision the possibility of token military withdrawal from parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in return for economic and cultural occupation of the entire Middle East, and gaining historical legitimacy for the Zionist entity.

Recent polls show a clear increase in the popularity of Peres. This explains the Labor Party's continuing attempts to divide the national unity government with the Likud, and the calls for new elections. In an attempt to deceive public opinion, Peres has continued to make remarks about readiness to negotiate with Palestinians from the West Bank in the framework of a solution with Jordan.

In his opening speech to the Labor Party congress in early April, Peres said, «We want to say to the Palestinians that we recognize you as a people and it is not our intention to destroy you. We don't want to solve our disputes by force...The only way to solve the conflict is through dialogue between Israel and representatives of the Palestinians willing to work for a settlement.» This means Palestinians who have submitted totally to the Zionist conditions.

As quoted by the Zionist radio, the prime minister clarified that: «Israel will continue the transfer of local and municipal authority to the Arabs in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and will be ready

to transfer additional powers in that field. We will be ready to give all or part of these areas, like the Gaza Strip, self-rule as a first stage...Israel recognizes the fact that all inhabitants of the West Bank are Jordanian citizens...represented in the Jordanian parliament.»

These political developments in the Zionist entity are clear echos of US policy in the Middle East. There is nothing new in essence, just the Zionist poison being offered with a sugar coating. The US may, however, be faced with the need for resolving the political differences in the Zionist government in a way whereby the Labor Alignment takes the majority in the Knesset.

Jordan's Iron Fist — Update

The Jordanian authorities have continued the repressive campaign begun in November 1985, against the nationalist forces, trade unions and other mass organizations. Towards the end of January, they arrested the writer Subhi Taha, member of the Jordanian Writers Association and the General Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists. On January 26th, a military court sentenced Ali Hamdan Zayoudi to five years imprisonment on charges of belonging to the Jordanian Communist Party, without having provided him with a defense lawyer.

According to information received from the relatives of detainees, the authorities are in the process of bringing many other detainees to 'trial' in the military court. This ignores the calls of international human rights organizations, local politicians and trade unionists for the release of these detainees. It also ignores their calls for an end to the fierce campaign of arrests and military trials which violates all civil and democratic rights.

At the same time, the intelligence service has been repeatedly calling a number of citizens for interrogation. Three members of the elected administrative board of the youth center in the Hussein Palestinian refugee camp were summoned: Director Akram Habash, Majed Hamam and Musa Odeh. For a whole week, they were beaten, insulted and threatened, and had their passports confiscated, for no other reason than their membership in the board. In view of the regime's current efforts to make a deal with the Zionist enemy, bypassing

the PLO, it is imperative to silence the popular forces on all levels.

Member of parliament, Doctor Nawaiseh sent a protest to the parliament concerning the security forces' attempt to attack him while he was speaking to a group of citizens at the trade union building in Karak on February 24th. (Dr. Nawaiseh's subject was the new election law which increases the members of parliament, providing for more 'Palestinian' representatives, as part of the regime's plan to act as their political spokesman.) As Dr. Nawaiseh was speaking, a large group of policemen and security officers barged into the trade union building; they ordered him to be silent and to disperse the audience. They surrounded him, pointing their automatic rifles in his face, when he tried to discuss the matter reasonably. In the face of what he called this «democracy at gunpoint», he deemed it better to ask the audience to leave and end the speech.

More recently, the Jordanian authorities moved to silence cultural and journalistic circles. A number of writers were banned from writing in local papers, including: Khaled Mahadin, Bader Abdel Haq and Ziad Al Shilah of *Al Rai*, Abdul Raheem Omar and Tawfiq al Abed of *Saut al Shaab*, and Lamis Andone of *Jordan Times*. Previously, the authorities had banned the famous journalist, Fahd Al Remawi, from writing in *Al Ra'i*.

Solidarity with political prisoners

Several local and international

organizations have begun a solidarity campaign with the militant, Breik al Hadid, who has served eight years in Jordanian jails. They are demanding his immediate release. On February 18th, Hadid began a hunger strike to protest his continued detention. Other political prisoners in the same jail joined in the strike. Hadid's health is deteriorating and the Committee for the Defense of Democratic Freedoms in Jordan issued an urgent appeal for efforts to save his life.

On March 14th, the General Assembly of Insurance, Bank and Accounting Workers sent a warm greeting to their fellow unionist, the militant Abdul Razaq Saed, secretary of the union, who is serving a five-year sentence, passed by the military court, for charges of membership in the PFLP.

How King Hussein 'celebrated' Land Day

The real indication of the Jordanian regime's respect for Palestinian land and rights came in its crack-down on activities held in Jordan for the occasion of the Day of the Land. The authorities stormed the headquarters of the Bank Workers' Union and forbid a planned conference for the Day of the Land. The following members of the administrative council of the union were interrogated by the intelligence forces: Hayder Rasheed, Mohammad Kasem, Musa Kwidil. Another member of the union was detained. The security authorities also forced the dismissal of three members of the administrative council of Zarqa camp's youth center, and three of Wehdat camp's youth center. A number of youth were interrogated on the Day of the Land.

Occupied Palestine

The Palestinian Working Class

On the occasion of May 1st, International Workers' Day, we begin an article about the Palestinian working class in occupied Palestine.

The vast majority of Palestinian workers today live and work in the occupied homeland. There they are subject to double-edged oppression - national as well as class. The Palestinian working class, like any working class, was formed by capitalism's development. In Palestine, this occurred primarily via Zionist settler-colonialism. This means that the class oppression suffered by Palestinian workers can hardly be disengaged from the national oppression exercised by the Zionist occupation against the Palestinian people as a whole.

Zionist occupation policy partitioned Palestinian workers into various categories: those living in the area of Palestine occupied in 1948, renamed 'Israel'; those from the 1967 occupied territories who commute daily to work for Israeli employers, some with permits and some illegally; and those who work for Palestinian employers, themselves hard pressed by Zionism's strangulation of the Palestinian national economy. Cutting across these categories are

women who are accorded an especially low status on the labor market.

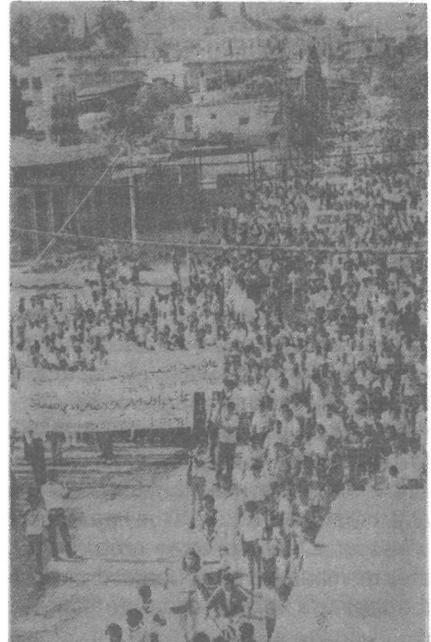
Regardless of these categories, certain common realities stand out. In general, Palestinians were driven to work in Israeli enterprises due to Zionism's land confiscation and monopolization of the economic structures. Short of creating a pure Jewish state, Zionism's invasion served to mold those Palestinians who were not expelled from the homeland into a cheap, mobile, labor reserve - assigned to menial labor scorned by Jews, deprived of social benefits and forbidden to unionize. Zionism sought in fact to create an Arab lumpenproletariat. The extent to which this succeeded on the economic level can be seen in the following figures: «The average per capita income for the West Bank is one-third of the Israeli average, for the Gaza Strip, it is one-sixth» (*Al Fajr*, May 20, 1983). However, this Zionist aim did not succeed in political terms. Palestinians' determination to preserve their national identity and resist the occupation, has

not been undermined by the fact that large sectors were driven into the Israeli labor market. Palestinian workers under occupation can better be described as semiproletarianized. Due to adherence to the land - a political as well as economic question - many remain living in villages and join their families in tilling what is left of their land between periods of wage labor employment. Their wage labor serves to sustain their families under the steadily worsening conditions of occupation, which is in itself a form of steadfastness.

Unionization

The unionization of Palestinian workers is also to a high degree a political matter. This is true both in the 1948 and 1967 occupied territories, although conditions vary. The original Palestinian trade union movement, which grew rapidly in the period of the British Mandate, was banned with the establishment of the Zionist state; its cadres were dispersed and exiled. The Histadrut (originally the General Federation of Hebrew workers) was founded as part of

Nazareth workers demonstrate against unemployment and inflation.



the Zionist colonial enterprise. One of its original tasks was enforcing the slogan «Jewish labor only». Not until 1966 did it open its membership to the Palestinians who were considered Israeli citizens after 1948. Even then it has done nothing to protect their rights. Of course, eligible Palestinians began to join the Histadrut nonetheless, as the only means of securing health and employment insurance. After almost twenty years, this had a perceivable impact: In the May 1985 Histadrut elections, the dominant Zionist Labor Party lost ground in 46 Palestinian Arab communities to the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality which got 50% of the Palestinian vote in 22 communities and 30% in 24 others. Given Histadrut's nature, this will not lead to any dramatic change in its policy. Rather it shows something about Palestinian workers' political sentiments. It is a result of the struggle to defend their rights against all odds, employing the structures available to them. More important, it is part of the trend of more overt politicization marked by the 1976 Day of the Land uprising and local elections that brought Democratic Front for Peace and Equality candidates into Galilee and Triangle townhalls.

In the West Bank, the Palestinian trade union movement was severely repressed, first under Jordanian rule, (1948-67), then under Israeli military rule. In the Gaza Strip, the General Federation of Trade Unions was banned with the 1967 occupation, and only allowed to reopen in 1980 under a local capitalist appointed by the occupation authorities; it is forbidden to recruit new members. This is no coincidence, for the Strip is the most extreme example of Zionism's super exploitation of Palestinian labor, due to its small size, high population density and the fact the two-thirds of the residents are refugees. These factors, combined with Israeli restrictions on local industry and fishing, make it almost impossible for the Gaza Palestinians to sustain themselves independently.

The West Bank General Federation of Trade Unions functions despite severe repression against its leaders, cadres and component unions - arrests and house/town arrests, closure of locales, etc. In addition, several labor blocs have been formed in close affiliation to Palestinian resistance organizations and progressive parties. Their activity resulted in the opening of many new unions for previously unorganized workers in the early eighties. This reacti-

vation of the trade union movement cannot be separated from the overall escalation of the Palestinian mass movement in the same period, resisting occupation and especially the plans of Camp David and 'autonomy'.

Zionist policy has severely hampered the trade unions from fulfilling their specific role. Approximately 49% of the active West Bank labor force has been driven to work in 'Israel', but West Bank trade unions are not recognized by the Israeli authorities and therefore lack negotiating rights. Concerning those who work for Palestinian employers, the national question interjects itself. Zionist policy aims to undermine the Palestinian national economy as a whole. It would therefore be counterproductive, economically as well as politically, for Palestinian workers to wage labor disputes against the Palestinian employers to the extent of contributing to this undermining. West Bank trade unions therefore chart a careful course of defending workers' interests in the context of preserving what is left of the local economy, for its further destruction would leave the entire population even more vulnerable to Zionism's exploitation. An increase in strikes was, however, noted in the West Bank from early 1985, as Palestinian workers refused austerity measures imposed as a result of the Israeli economic crisis being shoved into the occupied territories. Workers in some

enterprises have been successful in gearing their struggle against the national and class enemy. The best example is the workers at the Jerusalem District Electric Company who have defended themselves and the national company against Israeli and royal Jordanian encroachments. Another example was the Hotel Workers Union strike in October 1985, protesting the decision of owner Samia Maroun to sell the Shepherds Hotel, in the Jerusalem district, to the Jewish National Fund.

An important component of the West Bank trade unions' work is socially oriented. Projects such as consumer cooperatives aim to meet the needs of laborers and their families in the absence of other social security programs. This work is closely linked to political mobilization and aims to bolster Palestinian steadfastness, national identity and resistance to the occupation, and assert the role of the working class in this struggle. As a result of their effective work in this field, trade unionists have figured prominently among the political activists targeted by the Israeli occupation's iron fist.

Racist discrimination

An Israeli education minister in the fifties once said that he preferred to see Arabs as «woodcutters and gardeners only.» This kind of thinking determined how the Palestinians who remained in ►

Slave market - Palestinians line up for day labor.



the Zionist state after the 1948 occupation, were 'integrated' into the Israeli labor force. Segregation would be a more correct description. Racist discrimination barred them from many white collar jobs, while security pretexts ruled out employment in military and other industries considered strategic by the Zionist leadership. Other forms of discrimination mitigated against the Palestinians forming a stable, concentrated industrial proletariat. Industry was not established in Palestinian communities. Rather, Palestinians had to commute to work sites placed according to Israeli socioeconomic needs.

The Histadrut played a pivotal role in this official policy. It controls 25% of Israeli industry, but has not established a single factory in Palestinian communities. Though it runs hundreds of vocational schools for Jews, there are only two for Palestinian Arabs, showing the intention to keep the latter in unskilled jobs. These discrepancies are obvious in the Galilee: Nazareth is the home of 28,000 Palestinian workers, but has no factories; 61% must commute to work. In contrast, the nearby Jewish settlement, Upper Nazareth, has a work force of only 11,000, but 160 workplaces and factories (*Al Fajr*, June 21, 1985).

Institutionalized discrimination occurs under many guises. Though Palestinian workers in the Zionist state can now hold health and unemployment insurance, they are cut off from many other benefits (especially in child sup-

port and housing) which are reserved for those who have served in the Israeli occupation army. No Palestinians live in the 150,000 flats built by the Histadrut. Palestinians are also subject to arbitrary treatment when seeking to use benefits to which they are entitled, due to the racism of the Israeli officials and civil servants.

Pay is patently unequal. A reportage in *Al Fajr*, May 20, 1983, related a typical pattern: «A young worker described a situation in the Kitane factory in Beit Shan, inside the 'green line'. All the employees who worked there manufacturing curtains were Israeli citizens, half were Arabs with Israeli citizenship. Men and women, both Arabs and Jews, worked side by side at the same machines but it was commonplace that wages for Jewish men were the highest, followed by Palestinian men, then Jewish women and finally, at the bottom of the heap one again - Palestinian women...Following a series of labor disputes led by Palestinians, and at the insistence of the predominantly Jewish workers' council of the Histadrut, it was decided that rather than bus in Arab villagers, the unemployed locals, all Jewish, should have priority.»

That Palestinians in the Zionist state are used as a cheap labor reserve is seen even more clearly under the impact of the economic crisis. By January 1985, Nazareth's unemployment was at 25%, among the highest in 'Israel'. The number of unemployed in

Um al Fahm rose from 160 to 250 workers from November to December 1984 alone. The head of the local council, Hisham Mkhmid, protested that people were being dismissed «merely because they are Arabs.» Hundreds of Palestinian Druze in Galilee villages are unemployed after completing military service, although the Zionist authorities have tried to make the Druze community feel privileged, in an attempt to divide the Palestinians. 1985 was full of dismissals of Palestinians, some long-time employees. The Histadrut doesn't fight such firings. On the contrary, it complies in efforts to alleviate the economic crisis without impinging on the privileged status of Jewish workers.

The slogan «Jewish labor only» was discarded in practice some time ago, due to the needs of Israeli capitalist growth, but with the economic crisis, it was resurrected as a way of disciplining Palestinian workers. Besides Kach's violent attacks on Arab workers, this tendency is supported by Israeli officials, such as Nasim Narah, head of the Israeli National Insurance Association. In October 1985, he declared that Palestinian Arab workers in Tiberius restaurants should be dismissed and replaced by Jews.

To be continued...The next issue of «Democratic Palestine» will contain the conclusion of this article, focusing on Palestinian workers in the 1967 occupied territories. ●

JDEC — A Political Issue

With the Zionist occupation of the remainder of Palestinian lands in 1967, the authorities launched a campaign aimed at destroying the Palestinian economic infrastructure. In recent years, the Jerusalem District Electric Company (JDEC) has been targeted for liquidation.

Most recently, the IREC (Israeli Regional Electric Company) has taken legal measures to collect an \$ 11 million debt owed by the JDEC. If the Jerusalem company doesn't pay its debt within the next several weeks, it will be passed into the hands of a court-appointed receiver. This would mean confiscation of all its funds in Israeli banks and the auctioning off of other properties to pay the IREC.

In 1980, a similar attempt was made when the occupation authorities de-

clared their intentions to liquidate the JDEC once and for all, by purchasing all its concessions. However, under the pressure of local and international protest, the Israeli High Court was forced to modify the court order, allowing the Ministry of Energy to purchase concessions only for areas officially annexed to the Zionist entity. The West Bank was thus off limits.

Ever since the June 28, 1967 anne-

xation of Jerusalem to the Zionist entity, the occupation authorities have worked on a plan to take over the JDEC, along with all Palestinian national institutions. They started by confiscating the shares in the company held by the Jerusalem municipal council prior to the occupation, which amounted to 8.3% of the total shares. This was followed by the deportation of the president of the JDEC's administrative council, Rouhi al Khatib, to Jordan. Two new members were

appointed to the council as representatives of Teddy Kolleck, the Israeli mayor of Jerusalem.

Forced to supply settlements

In 1969, the JDEC was obliged to supply electric current to the rapidly rising settlements which fell within the boundaries of its concession. This new demand for increased amounts of electricity constituted a burden on the old, diesel-operated generators. Repeated applications to purchase new generators were, however, refused by the Zionist authorities. This rejection was obviously intended to dishearten the JDEC management and force it to give up the company to the IREC. Not wishing to supply the Israelis with an easy pretext for take-over, the JDEC pursued a policy of rationing electricity, but this sparked off much discontent and provided Zionist settlers with an excuse to launch a campaign against the company. This left the JDEC with two alternatives: (1) to sell out to the IREC; or (2) to preserve its independence as a Palestinian national institution and buy additional current from the IREC. With the rapid spread of settlements in the Jerusalem district, the company found itself drawing up to 90% of its electricity from the IREC to supply its 100,000 consumers, 30,000 of which were Israelis.

Israeli harassment, delays, debts and losses spell out the factors which led to the JDEC's current dilemma. The JDEC is obliged by the occupation authorities to sell electricity at a 7% profit margin, although at least a 50% profit margin is needed to balance the budget. The company supplies street lighting for all Zionist settlements and public places free of charge, which contributes to a 17% monthly operational loss. Although the Zionist authorities officially consider the Jerusalem district as a part of the Zionist entity, which entitles the JDEC to subsidies which would cover deficits, the company receives nothing. On the other hand, subsidies cover the deficit of the IREC.

Israeli harassment takes other forms as well. There are deliberate delays in supplying the oil needed for operating the generators which require 300 kilograms of oil daily. There have been repeated transgressions in the areas of the JDEC's concession, as when hundreds of electricity poles were bulldozed in the Shu'fat area on the pretext of paving new roads. There are constant incidents of vandalism by Zionists against JDEC property. Exorbitant fees

and taxes must be paid to the occupation authorities. Once the IREC even attempted to collect payments due the JDEC, by distributing a court memorandum to a number of hotels and institutions in Jerusalem.

Royal Hashemite responsibility

As of March 1986, the company's total debt ran into \$ 15 million. The JDEC's concession expires in late 1987. If the company does not come up with the money soon, it will pass into court-appointed receivership which is as good as passing it into Zionist hands. Many a delegation has gone to meet the Jordanian-Palestinian Joint Committee, to put the case of the JDEC forward and attain funds from this committee which was formed explicitly for the purpose of supporting national institutions in the occupied territories. The last JDEC delegation, however, was not only unable to obtain funds, but was also prohibited from even meeting the joint committee. Instead, Jordanian government officials met the JDEC delegation and presented a list of conditions to be met prior to any financial support.

The Hashemite court has so far been very generous with crocodile tears and verbal denunciations of the Zionist measures to sabotage the national institutions of our people under occupation. Yet the Palestinians under occupation have seen almost nothing of the millions of dollars being poured into the treasury of the Jordanian-Palestinian Joint Committee. They have the right-wing leadership of Arafat to thank for so generously placing them at the mercy of their Jordanian 'godfather'. The Jordanian regime instructed the JDEC to meet the following conditions if they want to be bailed out:

1. cancellation of the JDEC's employees' benefits;
2. reduction of staff by 200, to be replaced by new employees who go through the royal Jordanian sieve for approval;
3. 40% reduction of wages;
4. registration of the JDEC's debts in the Jerusalem Waqf which is historically affiliated to the Jordanian Waqf;
5. reduction of the price of electric current purchased from the IREC, which the JDEC was unable to achieve in the past.
6. renewal of the JDEC's concessions, which depends on the Zionist authorities' whim.

Publicly, King Hussein justifies his hesitancy to support the JDEC with

claims that the company is «unable to implement efficiency programs, trim itself down and save money.» The truth remains, however, that Hussein is not about to release \$ 15 million, which is rightfully the company's, to keep the JDEC operating under the control of Palestinians who have always challenged and rebuffed both Zionist and reactionary attempts to dominate it. Other factors which play into this are the break in coordination between Hussein and Arafat, and the new rift in the Palestinian rightist ranks, which leaves the Jordanian-Palestinian Joint Committee more at the mercy of the monarchy than ever.

Workers' role

Abed Abu Diab, leader of the JDEC workers' union, challenged the Jordanian conditions. Along with other unionists, he rejected them, saying that the JDEC employees «have paid their dues by merely remaining steadfast in the troubled company and in occupied Jerusalem.» The austerity measures demanded by the Jordanian regime would furthermore save only 20,000 Jordanian dinars monthly, leaving a monthly deficit of 180,000 dinars. The conditions are clearly designed more to pressure the JDEC to buckle under to Jordanian dominance, than to bail the company out. Moreover, they are not very different from the designs of the Zionist authorities.

The employees of the JDEC have always risen to meet threats to the company. They have always believed in it as a symbol of national identity, rather than just a source of pay. On more than one occasion of crisis, they have worked overtime or on holidays without pay. They previously rejected the Energy Minister's attempt to appoint Zionist employees. They follow up on all decisions concerning the company, realizing full well the political implications behind the vicious campaign against it. In short, they have foiled many a plot in the course of their struggle.

In contrast, the deviationist PLO leadership is held directly responsible for allowing the funds of the Jordanian-Palestinian Joint Committee, intended to support our people's steadfastness, to be redirected into the pockets of those who collaborate with Jordan. It is the responsibility of all concerned with the Palestinian national cause to act now to save the largest remaining national economic institution in the occupied territories.

Armed Struggle in Occupied Palestine

This spring, on the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the 1936-39 revolt in Palestine, Palestinian freedom fighters continue to escalate armed attacks against the Zionist occupation forces.

On the night of April 15, 1936, three Arab militants attacked a Zionist convoy near Nablus, killing two Zionists and wounding a third. It was later known that the three were from the secret revolutionary cells formed by Ez Al Din Al Qassam and led by Sheikh Farhan Al Saadi, who was in his eighties. The next day, Zionist settlers killed two Palestinian citizens, and tension mounted throughout the country. On the morning of April 20th, the city of Jaffa woke up to a general strike. In the following days, this spread throughout Palestine to become the beginning of the 1936-39 Palestinian revolt. The general strike lasted six months, and was accompanied by other forms of mass resistance and widespread armed action which continued until 1939, against the Zionist settlers and British colonialists.

The 1936-39 revolt and its lessons rank high among the proud traditions of Palestinian national struggle, which are still very much alive and being daily developed by our masses under occupation. A new escalation in military operations was noted this year, just after King Hussein's speech which attempted to undermine the Palestinian people's unity and sole representation. According to Israeli sources, quoted in early March, there were 76 acts of resistance in the two weeks following this speech, as compared to 43 in the two preceding weeks. This shows that the Palestinian masses still place their faith in continuing the revolution, not in joint maneuvers with reactionary regimes.

March 1986

In March, military operations against the Zionist occupiers averaged more than one a day. Two hand grenade attacks on Israeli soldiers, and eight explosions against targets such as settlements, factories and military posts, were reported in the part of Palestine occupied in 1948. On March 24th, a Zionist soldier was stabbed near Nazareth and dispossessed of his Uzi machine gun. On March 6th, two Israeli intelligence officers were stabbed to death, one in Bir Sabe (South Palestine) and the other in Jerusalem.

Jerusalem was the site of other daring attacks. On March 7th, an American Zionist was seriously wounded by gunfire. The next day, an Israeli soldier was stabbed and seriously wounded. On March 18th, a Mossad agent was killed and three others wounded by a remote control bomb.

On March 2nd, a Zionist soldier was killed and four others wounded in two separate attacks in the occupied Gaza Strip. On March 5th, Palestinian freedom fighters successfully detonated a remote control explosion, the first in the Strip, against a motorized Zionist patrol. On March 10th, an Israeli soldier was wounded in a clash between a group of Palestinian militants and a Zionist military patrol in the Strip. There were moreover numerous firebombs and stones thrown against the occupiers in various parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

March 30th, the Day of the Land, witnessed numerous military operations and acts of mass resistance. A car bomb exploded at the entrance of an Israeli intelligence office in French Hill, Jerusalem, destroying cars and damaging buildings. In Jericho, a mine exploded under an Israeli military truck, causing casualties among the soldiers riding in it; another military truck was attacked with firebombs, and a patrol car came under heavy machine gun fire. In Jenin, a firebomb was hurled at a Zionist military truck. Near Bethlehem, residents of Duheisha camp attacked an Israeli military vehicle with stones, injuring the driver.

April 1986

On April 1st, two bus stations were hit by bombs in Jerusalem. This brings to 29 the number of bus stations that have been burned or otherwise destroyed in the last few months.

The PFLP announced three successful operations in early April: The unit of the martyr, Ghassan Kanafani, attacked a Zionist military convoy with firebombs in Jerusalem; ten soldiers were injured, three of them seriously. Another attack was launched against a

Zionist patrol in Gaza, wounding several soldiers. In Nablus, the unit of the martyr, Samir Al Dubbi, attacked a Zionist patrol with bombs and machine guns, causing extensive casualties among the soldiers.

A Zionist military spokesman noted that 14 attacks had been carried out in the Gaza Strip in late March and early April, including the stabbing of settlers, remote control explosives, hand grenade attacks and stone-throwing. In April, in the Strip, hand grenades were thrown at Zionist patrol cars, and at the Gaza police station. Firebombs were thrown at military jeeps near Shatti camp, and many Zionist vehicles were attacked by stone-throwers. Freedom fighters also carried out attacks near Nseirat camp and near the theology college in Gaza.

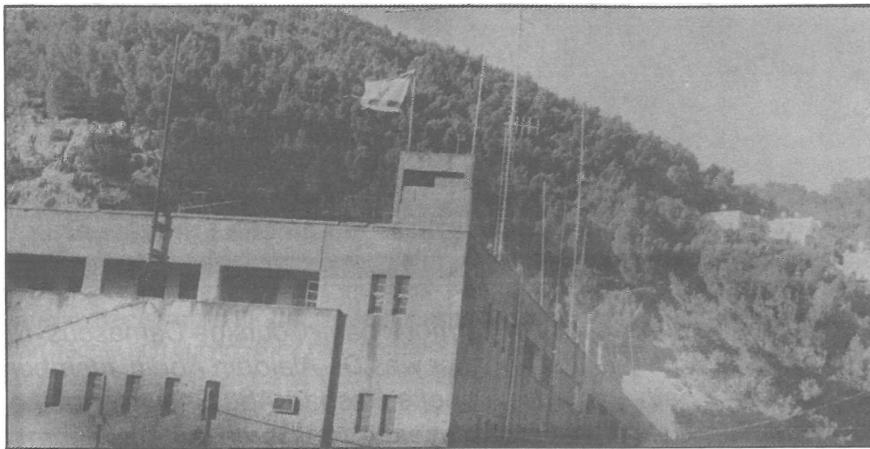
In the occupied West Bank, four hand grenade attacks were launched at military vehicles, north of Jerusalem, in the first half of April. There were two firebomb attacks on the Coca Cola factory in the same area. In mid-April, the driver of a bus carrying Zionist settlers was shot dead and the bus was attacked with firebombs. In Khalil, an Israeli bus was destroyed by fire, and a settler from Kiryat Arba was stabbed. There were three firebomb attacks on police cars near Qalandia camp, north of Jerusalem. There was a hand grenade attack on a military car near Nablus, and a clash between freedom fighters and Zionist soldiers near Balata camp in the same area.

In the part of Palestine occupied in 1948, the inspector general of the Zionist police said during a press conference that an increasing number of Palestinians within the 'green line', especially in the Galilee and Triangle, were coming into possession of ammunition and weapons. He said, «There is no need for the Palestinian organizations to smuggle in weapons from outside... (when) they can obtain them from soldiers or Israeli arsenals.» The escalation of military operations was also reflected in Police Minister Haim Bar Lev's words, that alert had been declared 86,000 times during 1985.

On April 8th, two bombs exploded, one in Afula, the other in Haifa; Zionist radio admitted several casualties. A Zionist patrol car was attacked by firebomb near Tireh, and another near Kafr Qasim, northeast of Tel Aviv. Moreover, scores of Katyusha rockets were fired on Zionist settlements from the southern border of Lebanon.

Prisoners' Day

In mid-April, there were demonstrations, school strikes and public meetings throughout occupied Palestine, in solidarity with the political prisoners in the Zionist jails. Over 2000 Palestinian prisoners and detainees went on a one-day hunger strike, while youth in camps and villages threw stones at the occupation troops.



Zionist jail

On the occasion of Prisoners' Day, the Committee for the Defense of Palestinian Political Prisoners in Israeli Jails issued a memorandum. Following are some basic and current facts about the Zionist occupation's policy of imprisoning Palestinian citizens, as stressed in the memorandum:

* Since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, over 320,000 Palestinian citizens have been subject to interrogation and detainment. This included men, women, children and old people. The period of their detention ranged from a few months to life imprisonment. The occupation authorities acknowledge only 170,000 detentions, as stated by Rafi Suissa, head of the Israeli prison administration, to *Al Hamishmar* newspaper in December 1985.

* The number of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails is, on an average, 3,500 at any given time. This does not include administrative detainees, or those arrested for preventive detention. This number usually multiplies in periods of mass uprisings.

* In most of the world, a sentence of life imprisonment is counted as 20-30 years. However, according to the Israeli law, it is 99 years for political prisoners.

* According to official Israeli figures, the number of those detained during the first six months of 1984, on charges of stone-

throwing, was 800.

* In September 1985 alone, 102 persons were detained. In November and December of 1985, prison sentences and fines were passed on 388 citizens. The sentences ranged from a few months to life imprisonment, while the fines imposed totalled 73.5 million Israeli shekels. In January 1986, fines were imposed on 151 citizens, totalling 14.7 million shekels. In February 1986, this number rose to 185 citizens with fines totalling 17 million shekels. This indicates the escalation of the oppressive measures taken by the occupation authorities against Palestinian citizens.

* In the light of the problem of overcrowding in the jails, Amnon Shahak, commander of the central region, issued an order in July 1985, to build a temporary prison of tents on a hill near Jnaid prison in Nablus, to accommodate new prisoners. Shahak issued a similar order, for making a tent prison for children, near Al Fara'a.

On July 24, 1985, the Israeli newspaper *Davar* reported that the Israeli Prison Administration is building a new prison for Arabs arrested for the first time, whose sentences exceed five years. In August 1985, the Ministry of Police and the Prison Administration applied for additional funds for building more prisons, because the current ones cannot absorb the increasing number of

political prisoners.

On January 13, 1986, Israeli radio reported that the prison administration is currently considering moving 500 Palestinian prisoners to special sections in the army's military prisons. This would be in tents, aiming at absorbing 1000 Palestinian prisoners who make the prisons overcrowded. It was also reported that a new prison will soon be built in northern Palestine.

Israeli «law and order»

In the summer of 1985, the occupation authorities again began applying the law of administrative detention which is based on the British Emergency Laws of 1945. This law permits the military authorities to detain any citizen for six months, renewable any number of times, without specifying charges. There were more than 120 administrative detentions from June to September 1985, according to official Israeli reports, but the real number is much higher.

On March 21, 1986, the Israeli newspaper *Hadashot* wrote about the arrest of children, from 12 to 18 years of age, whereby they are faced with the worst kinds of torture. It is reported that there are now approximately 200 Palestinian youngsters in Al Fara'a alone. The newspaper added that, according to the military laws in force in the occupied territories, it is possible for a military judge to impose a sentence of six months on anyone aged 12 to 14, and one year for those aged 14 to 16, while there are no limits for sentences passed on those above this age.

Earlier a law was issued, known as the Tamir law, which stipulates that a conviction can be made on the basis of the testimony of witnesses, in the absence of a confession from the accused, regardless of the fact that the witnesses might be children, police or soldiers in the occupation army.

81 dead under torture

The memorandum also enumerated the new methods of torture being practiced by the Zionist interrogators, and the prisoners' demands for improvement of their drastically deteriorating conditions. (See *Democratic Palestine* no. 14.) The memorandum concluded with the names of 81 Palestinian martyrs who have died under torture in Zionist jails, been shot on the pretext that they were trying to escape, or murdered slowly by deprivation of needed medical treatment, since the 1967 occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

PNSF Mass Rally

Day of the Land



The Palestine National Salvation Front convened a mass rally in Yarmouk camp, outside Damascus, to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Day of the Land. The first speaker was Dr. Aliaiddin Abdin, member of the Central Committee of the Arab Socialist Baath Party. Next spoke Rashad Abu Shawwer of the Palestinian Writers and Journalists Union. The Salvation Front's speech, delivered by Dr. George Habash, General Secretary of the PFLP, is printed below.

In these days, ten years ago, the land of Palestine exploded in a stormy uprising, confronting occupation. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian citizens in the land that was occupied in 1948, rose up on the morning of March 30, 1976. They said *no* to the Zionist plans to seize Palestinian land. They said a loud, daring *no* to the conspiracy of containing and cancelling their Palestinian national identity. They emphatically declared that they are an inseparable part of the Palestinian people. It was the same with our people in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, despite the occupation's might and all the attempts to impose the colonialist Israeli identity...Hundreds of thousands of Palestinian citizens answered the call of the mayors and local councils to hold a general strike and demonstrate on March 30, 1976. They marched in the streets of Nazareth, Taibeh, Sakhnin, the villages of the Galilee and Triangle, and in all the West Bank and Gaza cities, towns and camps. They embodied the solid unity of the Palestinian people, wherever they may be, under the banner of the PLO, leader of our people's struggle and their sole, legitimate representative.

I need not speak at length about the Day of the Land, for it has been emblazoned in the minds of every Palestinian man, woman and child. It is the story of fierce struggle to defend Palestinian land...It is the story of the martyrs who confronted the most powerful military force in the region with their bare hands...Rather, I will highlight the lessons of that heroic confrontation...to learn from them in our future struggle:

First lesson: Adherence to the land

The Palestinian people adhere to their land and will spare no effort to defend it...It is they who are most concerned about the land and cause, for it is theirs. It is they, along with the Arab

masses, who have given their lives to liberate the land from the taint of the unjust Zionist occupation. Those who have given martyrs don't need lectures about the land and how to save it, from those who have squandered this land and sold it cheaply. Yet we see that King Hussein and his like are not ashamed to cry crocodile tears over the land and the people.

Second lesson: Unity

The Palestinian people are all one people and allow of no division. This has been seen at many turning points in the history of our cause and revolution. On the Day of the Land, our people again proved the depth of their national unity and genuineness. The mass uprising in 1948 occupied Palestine was accompanied by similar uprisings in Gaza and the West Bank...Our people in the camps in exile were mobilized in solidarity, despite the regimes and their oppression. Of course, this mass uprising would not have assumed such proportions were it not for the successes achieved by the PLO.

Third lesson: Two bases

The Day of the Land uprising materially stressed that the contemporary Palestinian revolution relies on two essential, complementary bases. The first is the struggle of our people in the occupied homeland and their steadfastness against the Zionist enemy's policies of land seizure, settlement-building, expulsion, 'civil' administration and 'autonomy'. The second is the struggle of our people outside, the role of the Palestinian revolution in terms of armed, political and mass struggle.

Experience has shown the interrelation between these two bases and the extent to which they influence one another. Without the PLO's achievements on the Arab and international

level, including the 1974 Rabat resolutions and the UN General Assembly resolutions of 1975-76, the Day of the Land uprising and the ensuing broad, popular uprisings would not have been possible. By the same token, the Palestinian revolution could not have been so steadfast against the liquidationist projects, especially Camp David and 'autonomy', without the heroic steadfastness of our masses in occupied Palestine. Because of struggle, they were able to bury these projects and isolate those who collaborated with the Jordanian, Egyptian and Zionist regimes in campaigning for these projects.

When Sadat signed the Camp David accords, the Egyptian regime made intense attempts to use some collaborators in the Gaza Strip and West Bank to say yes to these projects...A delegation of collaborators went to Cairo to support Sadat, but the Palestinian, whose knife pierced the traitor Khazandar, put an end to these attempts. The unity of the Palestinian people is reinforced by the unity of the two bases of our people's contemporary struggle, inside and outside occupied Palestine.

Fourth lesson: Land as the central issue

Even before establishing its state in Palestine, the Zionist enemy constantly emphasized the land. This is the central issue in executing the Zionist project for expelling the Palestinian people and burying their national identity, in order to build the Zionist entity on our ruins. This was adopted as the official policy of the Israeli state, whereby successive governments have worked to seize the land and expel our people, using the most horrible methods. The Day of the Land was to confront the enemy plan to seize 21,000 dunums of land in the Galilee and Triangle...Zionism's viciousness in seizing the land is apparent to all. How is it then possible for any sane person to imagine that the Zionist enemy might leave the Palestinian land other than by force. Today, there are those who bemoan the loss of the land. Instead, they should tell us how they can regain the land. They are the ones who tied their fate to the enemy and put all their cards on the table of US solutions.

Fifth lesson: Struggle

In order to preserve their land and retrieve it from the occupation, the Palestinian people have no choice but stubborn, protracted struggle by all means, especially armed struggle. This is the way forward - not running after the mirage of settlements that will only result in damaging the revolution, the PLO, the people and the cause. To those pessimists who are whispering about defeat and surrender, we say: Learn from the experience of the Day of the Land. Our unarmed masses rose up to resist the seizure of the land. They demonstrated, held sit-ins and formed committees to defend the land. Not one method was left untried and thus they set a precedent...

The current conspiracy

This, the 10th anniversary of the Day of the Land, occurs as the Palestinian cause is facing a new chapter in the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary conspiracy which targets the land, the people, the cause, the revolution and the PLO. This chapter is a question of life or death. The future of our struggle depends on how we confront this conspiracy - whether we will be able to harvest the fruits of more than twenty years of struggle in the contemporary Palestinian revolution.

This chapter of the conspiracy has a new political title: Cancelling the PLO to ease the way for a US-Zionist-reactionary settlement of the Palestinian cause, avoiding anything called the PLO. The criminally mistaken, deviating policy fol-

lowed by the PLO leadership after departing from Beirut, especially the divisive Amman PNC and the February 11th accord with King Hussein, led to the PLO's current state of division and weakness. This allowed the enemy camp to hope for complete cancellation of the PLO. This explains King Hussein's February 19th speech and the Israeli authorities' steps to enforce 'autonomy' in one way or another...(Comrade Habash went on to analyze King Hussein's speech and intentions as in his speech on Martyrs' Day, printed in the last issue of *Democratic Palestine*.)

The lessons of the Day of the Land are a practical retort to the Jordanian regime's policies. This experience proved that the land is an essential part of the Palestinian cause, which our people of all national classes and groups, inside and outside Palestine, will rise up to protect. The land, in this context, is not a geographical dimension. This is only for those who want to reduce the Arab-Zionist conflict to a border dispute. The land is the pillar of the Palestinian national identity...It is the foundation for building our independent Palestinian state...

The response to the current situation (after Hussein froze cooperation with the PLO) is reunifying the PLO and restoring it to the national line. The masses can judge every leader and organization by the position they take at this moment of destiny. We cannot possibly restore the PLO to the national line, or reunify it, without cancelling the Amman accord. Yet what was the response of the dominating rightist leadership after King Hussein's speech?...I am sorry to say that their response served to stress their continuation in the same deviating path. Much later, the statement from Tunis came, stressing once again the *la'am* policy of yes and no - the same ambiguity which harmed the Palestinian arena and led it to the traps of deviation and division...Instead of responding to Hussein's all-out war on the Palestinian people and the PLO...the rightist leadership announced adherence to the Amman accord which is the basis for dealing with the US solution. This encouraged the king to take more actions against our people and revolution. Instead of focusing on national unity and the natural alliances of the Palestinian revolution, the rightist leadership resorted to the mediation of the Camp David regime in Egypt, and worked to reestablish links to the Jordanian regime...

Palestinian national unity, which was dealt a severe blow by the deviating right wing when it signed the Amman accord, can only be restored by cancelling this accord, and critically and responsibly reviewing the previous stage and the dangerous, deviating policy. This aims at punishing those responsible and establishing a national program corresponding to the tasks which currently face our people and revolution. This program must be executed by a trustworthy collective leadership...

The struggle for restoring the PLO to the national line remains the concern of the Palestinian national and democratic forces...Today, on the tenth anniversary of the Day of the Land and the first anniversary of the establishment of the Palestine National Salvation Front, we renew the call for a broad national coalition encompassing all Palestinian national forces, organizations and personalities. Such a front should be formed on the basis of cancelling the Amman accord...and restoring the PLO to the national line, hostile to imperialism and Zionism, based on the national consensus platform and the resolutions of the PNC in its legitimate sessions. There must be decisive confrontation to foil the proposed US solutions, and to halt the agents of this plan, inside and outside occupied Palestine. This is the immediate task... ▶



Comrades Abu Maher and George Habash with PLO Executive Committee member Abu Maizer.

The US attack on Libya

This year's Day of the Land comes as the imperialist Zionist attack on the Arab region is escalating, taking the form of direct military aggression and blatant interference by US imperialism. This attack targets not only the Palestinian revolution, but also Libya, Syria and the Lebanese nationalist forces. Nor does it exclude Algeria and Democratic Yemen. Over the last months, US imperialism has assembled its fleet off Libya's shores. It launched a massive international campaign against Libya's revolution. Then, a few days ago, it deliberately and directly attacked...aiming to bring Libya to its knees and prevent it from continuing its supportive role in the ranks of the Arab liberation movement, especially its support to the Syrian-Lebanese-Palestinian triangle of steadfastness. This attack aims at preventing Libya from practicing a policy hostile to imperialism, Zionism and reaction.

Reagan claims that his campaign aims at preventing Libya from fueling what he calls «terrorism». This is a big lie. A year ago, I read a cover article in *Newsweek* magazine...This was before the Rome and Vienna attacks, when the campaign against Libya escalated. The article was about the US administration's approach to getting rid of President Qaddafi. Is this because the US, as it claims, wants to put an end to terrorism? If so, the US would have stopped Israeli terrorism in South Lebanon, and the iron fist policy in occupied Palestine. What the US actually wants is to threaten Libya in order to divert it from supporting the Palestinian revolution, and the Arab and other liberation movements. I therefore declare our absolute solidarity with the steadfastness of the Libyan Jamahiria in facing US arrogance. We salute our brother, Colonel Moamer Qaddafi, for his heroic stand facing Washington's threats. We salute the people, leadership and revolution of Libya.

In the light of our political reading of the current imperialist attack and its aims, we also salute Syria's steadfastness under the leadership of President Hafez al Assad. There are consecutive Zionist threats aimed at escalating tension and the threat of war, in order to make Syria kneel and divert it from its primary role in confronting US policy in the region. Right now, 1,800 Israeli tanks are amassed in the Golan Heights. Why? 'Israel' follows a policy of preemptive war. If 'Israel' fears that an Arab state is rallying its forces for confronting Israeli aggression and restoring Arab rights, then 'Israel' deems it best to initiate the aggression in order to weaken the Arab force in

question. Based on our understanding of the dialectical link between the Palestinian revolution and the Arab national liberation movement, we in the Palestine National Salvation Front declare that Libya's battle is our battle. Syria's battle is our battle. We will join in this battle with all our capacity. These threats and attacks indicate a new phase in the enemy alliance's aggression on the region. After the dead end reached by the enemy efforts, especially on the Lebanese front with the cancellation of the May 17th accord, and on the Palestinian-Jordanian front, the imperialist-Zionist alliance is escalating its aggression and resorting to acts of piracy.

Lebanon

In Lebanon, there are serious attempts to destroy the nationalist project which made great accomplishments in 1984 and early 1985. The enemy forces are using Lebanon as a gateway for conspiring against Syria in order to drown it in the Lebanese quicksand, as the western media puts it. Lebanon is being used as a gateway for attacking the steadfast Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian nationalist forces. After attacking the tripartite agreement (for political reform), 'Israel' and its agents escalated their military actions and presence in South Lebanon. On this occasion, we renew our absolute support to the struggle of the Lebanese national and democratic forces for a national democratic solution to the Lebanese crisis...

In view of the nature of the conflict in Lebanon, which targets Syria and the Lebanese nationalists, I was as sorry as you to hear about the fighting which erupted around Sabra and Shatila camps in the last two days...The only available solution for these contradictions is abiding by the June 1985 agreement which ended the tragic camp war. We demand precise implementation of this agreement. I call on all our brothers and comrades, the fighters in Sabra and Shatila and all the camps in Lebanon, to fully sense the great responsibility of protecting the Palestinian armed struggle which must remain in Lebanon in alliance with Syria and the Lebanese national movement to assume their responsibility towards this distressing situation.

The battle

The battle waged by imperialism, Zionism and reaction against the people and national forces in the Arab region is becoming more comprehensive and assuming the form of direct military intervention. This serious threat aims to break the nationalist forces and spread the US option, Camp David, throughout the region. Yet despite the dangers of this battle, despite Palestinian division and the crisis of the Arab national liberation movement and despite the conspiring of the Arab regimes, the Palestinian and Arab masses' potentials will be strong enough to change this gloomy picture. There is evidence of this possibility in the escalation of political, mass and military resistance in occupied Palestine. The Lebanese National Resistance's success in confronting the Zionist-fascist project is also evidence of this possibility. We find evidence in the continuing resistance of the people of Golan, confronting the Zionist enemy and rejecting the plans of Zionization. The heroic February uprising in Egypt, challenging Camp David and its social, political and economic consequences, may be the best evidence of the potentials of the Arab nation. Our Palestinian people, relying on the forces of liberation, peace, progress and socialism, especially our great friend, the Soviet Union, and in joint struggle with the Arab masses, will be able to foil the imperialist-Zionist plan and win their right to liberation, independence, progress, socialism and unity.

True Internationalist

In March, the PFLP commemorated the martyrdom of the great Palestinian revolutionary, Wadi' Haddad.



On March 27th, 1978, Comrade George Habash, with tears in his eyes, announced the martyrdom of Wadi' Haddad, one of the great leaders of the Palestinian revolution, with the following words: *Comrades of Wadi', Palestinian revolutionaries, our steadfast people in Palestine, brothers and sisters in every camp and place of exile, our Arab masses, progressive comrades around the world...With a heart full of love and pain, sorrow and determination to continue the struggle to victory, I announce the martyrdom of our comrade in life and struggle, Wadi' Haddad. I announce to you the martyrdom of Wadi' of the camps, Wadi' of the oppressed, Wadi' of the confrontation against the Zionist invasion and the reactionary Jordanian plots.*

Wadi' Haddad graduated from the

American University in Beirut in 1952. During his school years, he combined studying and politics, and was distinguished in both. After graduating as a medical doctor, he devoted his efforts to the poor and the refugee camp population. He was among the initiators of the Arab Nationalist Movement, helping to build its first armed cells in the West Bank and Jordan, with the aim of liberating all of Palestine from Zionism. He was active in building the mass movement in the mid-fifties.

As a result of his revolutionary activities, Wadi' was imprisoned in Jordan in 1957, and served three years. In 1960, he was expelled from Jordan. In 1967, he was one of the founding members of the PFLP, and a leader in organizing armed struggle, based on belief in the peoples' war as the only way

to liberate Palestine. Wadi' stressed the importance of destroying the superman image of the enemy camp. He raised and practiced the slogan: *Pursue the enemy everywhere*. Wadi' was in charge of the PFLP's international operations which were a major factor in forcing western public opinion to acknowledge the existence of the Palestinian cause in the early seventies. In coordination with internationalist militants, the tables were turned: From being pursued by imperialist and Mossad agents, revolutionaries went on the offensive, pursuing the enemy in the international arena. This caused the enemy camp to designate our comrade, Wadi', as the number one terrorist in the world at that time.

In reality, Wadi' was far from being a terrorist. He was a sensitive humanist who cried upon seeing the suffering of children. He was always searching for the lost childhood of which Zionism had robbed him. Wadi' was a humble person who refused cameras and publicity. He disliked big, complicated words. He did not enjoy engaging in lengthy political discussions, because for him, things were quite clear: He was ready to give his life for Palestine and the Arab revolution, and he would fight the enemy camp to his last breath. His moral code was simple: What gets us closer to Palestine is good, and what moves us farther from Palestine is bad.

Wadi' never lost his optimism. In his last days of sickness, he kept up with the political developments. His friends say that when he talked, one felt that we were returning to Palestine the next day. Wadi' was a revolutionary humanitarian who hated evil, and whose role in our area can be compared to that of Che Guevara. Because of his search for his lost playgrounds in Safad, his place of birth in the Galilee, they called him a terrorist. We, on the contrary, will always remember his great role as a creative revolutionary. We will struggle until we liberate every inch of Palestine, and can name a playground in Safad after Wadi' Haddad.

Avoiding Rifts in the Nationalist Ranks

Events in Lebanon continue to underscore how crucial it is for the nationalist forces, Lebanese and Palestinian, to exercise clear vision in their struggle.

The Phalangist Party and their President, Amin Gemayel, continue to oppose political reform. It is their intention to keep the Lebanese crisis boiling until a time when Israeli or imperialist military backing is forthcoming. They would then act to ignite another round of war, hoping to reassert their lost dominance. Moreover, US imperialism's dramatic escalation of tension in the whole Middle East, by attacking Libya, will not leave Lebanon untouched. In the enemy forces' scenario, any rift among the nationalist forces will be exploited to the hilt.

On this backdrop, one can fully grasp the extreme danger spelled out by the fighting around the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Beirut, which began on March 29th, between Palestinians and the Amal movement. The tragedy goes even beyond the fact that 35 people were killed, others injured and scores displaced from their homes - some for the umteenth time. The danger is seen in the fact that this fighting lasted for over two weeks, although from the first days the Palestine National Salvation Front (PNSF) called for a meeting with the Amal leadership to resolve the situation peacefully. The fighting also continued despite an agreement on April 9th among Amal, the PNSF and the Lebanese National Unity Front, on concrete measures to insure a ceasefire. Coming after the attacks on Lebanese communists in Beirut and South Lebanon earlier this year, these clashes paint a grim picture.

The fighting at Sabra and Shatila did stop by April 16th, when a 200 man buffer force deployed around the camps, composed of members of the Progressive Socialist Party, the Syrian Social Nationalist Party, the Lebanese Communist Party and the Lebanese Baath Party. The ceasefire agreement stipulates that this force help the PNSF control security in the camps. Amal and the Palestinians would eliminate all «points

of tension» under the joint supervision of Syrian observers, and Amal and PNSF officials. All barricades should be removed to facilitate movement in and to the camps.

The ceasefire agreement allowed for evacuation of the dead and wounded from the camps. As such, it came none too soon. «If the fighting had continued for two or three days more, we could have had a real medical crisis,» said Amal Masri, an official in a Palestinian women's organization. A camp resident described the situation as follows: «The fighting was hell. Our homes were shelled with mortars. We must now recover those who fled, evacuate our injured and rebuild our homes.»

Who benefits?

While the deployment of the buffer force stopped all-out fighting, some tension has remained. The week after the ceasefire went into effect, two observers - one Palestinian and one Lebanese, from Amal - were killed by snipers. This only underscored the main point: Neither Amal, the PNSF, nor any nationalist Lebanese or Palestinian, stands to gain from such fighting. Rather there is a whole array of other forces that do.

On the political and mass level, the Palestinian right wing can draw benefits. Clashes in the nationalist ranks spread an atmosphere of despair and confusion as to who the real enemy is. This can be exploited by the right wing in its search for any political solution which, under the current balance of forces, means submitting to the US conditions.

It is the PNSF that has stood against these plans, and it deserves the support of all in the Lebanese nationalist camp, for thwarting an imperialist solution of the Palestinian cause is a prerequisite for ending the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon. Since 1982, new precedents have been set for the behavior of the Palestinian revolutionary

forces in Lebanon. Revolutionary Palestinians have fought alongside Lebanese patriots against the Israeli occupation, US intervention and fascist terror, for these battles cannot be separated from the Palestinian liberation struggle. It is inconceivable that any Lebanese force, aspiring to an independent and democratic Lebanon, should stand in the way of the Palestinian revolution's armed presence in Lebanon - to protect the refugee camps, to attack the Israeli occupation forces and join the war against fascist dominance.

It was to maintain this right, for the benefit of Palestinian and Lebanese national struggle, that the PNSF signed the agreement in Damascus last summer with the Amal movement, to end the 1985 camp war. The PNSF has adhered strictly to this agreement, and the outbreaks of fighting since show the importance of all cosigners taking the letter and spirit of this agreement seriously. If this does not happen, the full range of the enemy alliance stands to benefit, beginning with the Lebanese fascists and ranging to the Israeli occupiers and imperialist forces.

The battle at hand

In urging solid unity among the nationalist forces, we can point to several possible contingencies: One is a new round in the Lebanese civil war. Another is a US and/or Zionist attack on Syria, whether via Lebanon or otherwise. The latter possibility can never be entirely ruled out in view of Syria's steadfastness against the spread of Camp David in the area. The probability of such action seems enhanced by the US's openly declared intention of changing the map of Arab politics by toppling President Qaddafi.

Such possibilities obviously posit the need for solid Syrian-Palestinian-Lebanese nationalist alliance. There is another possibility that makes this need, if anything, more acute. In view of past failure to control Lebanon through outright intervention, US imperialism and 'Israel' may judge it best to refrain from all-out military action, instead continuing the present war of attrition, hoping to wear down the nerves and morale of the masses. We have already seen this tendency, which is full of localized aggressive acts.

In February, the Israeli occupation army staged a new week-long invasion north of its self-proclaimed 'security zone' - killing 17 Lebanese citizens, terrorizing over 20 villages and detaining over 2000 southerners. The Israeli air force has staged three bombing raids in 1986, against Ain al Hilweh and Miye Miyeh, outside of Saida. The most recent, on April 7th, was particularly massive with six US-made jets making six bombing runs, dropping 220 kg high-explosive bombs and firing air-to-ground missiles. The Zionists declared that the targets were «terrorist bases», but

among the 10 people injured were an eight year old girl and a six year old boy.

Saida itself has been hit by several car bombs - on February 5th and another on April 10th which killed three citizens and injured 35. Another car bomb exploded in Ain al Hilweh, killing four schoolchildren and three other people. Local sources thought that it was actually headed for Saida's center, but was stopped early and exploded in the camp. These attacks are in addition to continued shelling of southern villages by the Israeli and South Lebanon Army forces, and the ongoing battle bet-

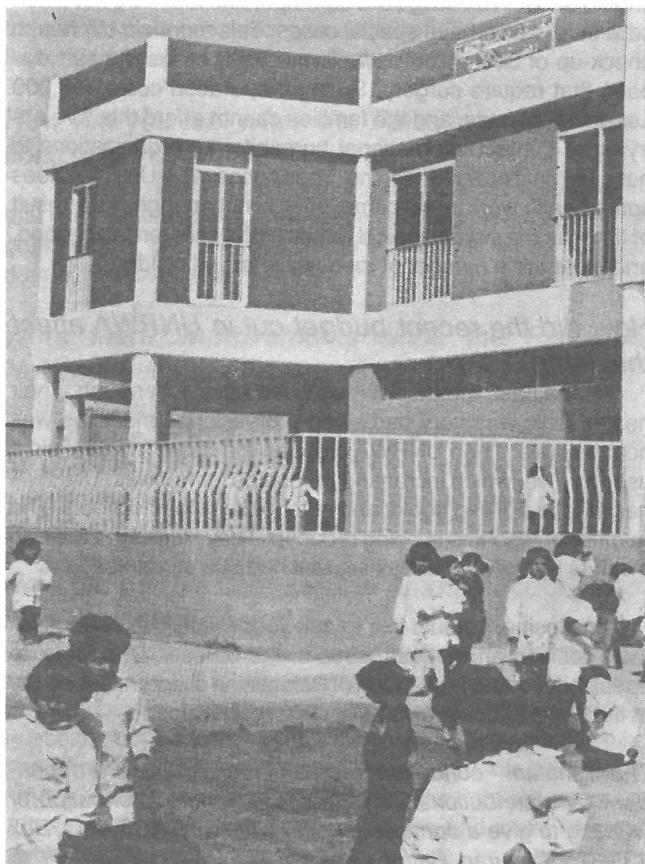
ween nationalists and fascists at the frontline between Jezzine and Saida.

In the face of all this actual and anticipated aggression, there is no reason and no room for internal Lebanese nationalist, or Lebanese-Palestinian battles. A free and democratic Lebanon can only be achieved by the national and democratic forces' struggle against the opponents of this goal. It will never be achieved by squabbling among the national forces, each trying to improve its own position at the expense of others.

Visit to Ain al Hilweh

In late February, a member of the «Democratic Palestine» staff visited Saida and the two nearby Palestinian camps, Ain al Hilweh and Miye Miyeh. Following are interviews with residents of the camps and activists involved in various forms of mass work.

Ghassan Kanafani Kindergarten



Um Nizar, director of the Ghassan Kanafani kindergarten in Ain al Hilweh, is a 35 year old Palestinian woman, mother of four children, ages 10 to 18. For many years she has worked in the Ghassan Kanafani Cultural Foundation. We interviewed her in Ain al Hilweh in late February.

Will you give us an idea about the Kanafani Foundation and the kindergarten?

After the martyrdom of Ghassan Kanafani in 1972, his Danish wife and his friends established a cultural foundation in his name. In particular, they had the Palestinian children in mind, since Ghassan had great love for children and wrote many stories for them. In 1972, the first kindergarten of the foundation was set up in the Badawi camp (North Lebanon). It was very simple and served 100 children. The second kindergarten was set up in Ain al Hilweh with 50 children. Later several other kindergartens were started in other camps.

In Ain al Hilweh, we started with a small rented house, then expanded until reaching our current state. Today we have a building designed especially as a kindergarten. It is in the shape of a hexagon on an area of 1500 m². We have 300 children, divided in two shifts - morning and afternoon. We have six rooms with 25 children in each. Our staff consists of 16 educational personnel and a supervisor, three cleaning ladies, a bus driver and a gardener. Activities include free play outdoors and indoors, science lessons, story reading, music and dramatics. We give a full nutritious meal with every shift. We attend to the health of our children. There is a monthly health check-up and we make sure that the children have been vaccinated. We take care of the social and psychological aspects as well. We become like the children's second parents and try to give them a better life than is possible at home.

How do you select the children?

We have an application to be filled out by the children's parents or guardians, which focuses on the child's social environment. We accept 200 children every year, but we receive about 600 applications. It is a difficult job to choose whom to accept. We give priority to those from the poorest families, children of martyrs and orphans.

What are the qualifications of the educational personnel?

High school graduation is the minimum requirement for our teachers. For the first year, she would be an assistant in a class with another teacher. We also have an annual 15-day training course. For the last five years, all the Kanafani Foundation's teachers have been sent to Beirut College for specialization in education. During the training year, a close watch is kept on the new teacher to see her development. Sometimes we have to extend the training period for an extra year.

Do you give the children a patriotic education?

We educate our children about their surroundings and about their homeland, Palestine. We explain to them that they are only here temporarily, because their families were forced to leave Palestine. We tie everything we teach to Palestine, like lemons and oranges. We talk about Palestinian tradition. With such work, we make the kindergarten a revolutionary center where children grow up knowing about their people and country.

What days do you celebrate in the school?

We observe all national occasions and religious holidays (Moslem and Christian). On days like Martyrs' Day and Land Day, we have a program for drawing Palestinian flags and singing nationalist songs. The children dress in the colors of the Palestinian flag, and we send cards to their families.

How is your relationship with the children's families? Do you relate the education at the kindergarten with the education at home?

Visiting the families is part of our educational program. We believe that without a positive attitude at home, we cannot be successful in our work. Every two months we have a general family meeting. We discuss the psychological conditions of the children, and our educational approach. We have strong relations with the families.

Is there follow-up on the children after they leave the kindergarten?

That is also part of our program. Every year 100 children leave the kindergarten and enter elementary school. At mid-year we visit these schools and get reports on the children. This is important for us, because it is how we see the results of our educational work. We notice that most of our children are top students in school and have an interest in continuing their education.

Do you have plans to expand?

We are preparing to have a school for handicapped children. We have nearly completed three rooms on top of the kindergarten. It will be opened in March. Every year we notice that we have a small number of slightly handicapped children. The families consider them normal, but they are not. With the help

of a Norwegian organization that covered the costs, we decided to start this project. Ragerding expansion like building new schools, that is very difficult because we had many losses during the 1982 Zionist invasion and the 1985 camp war in Beirut. First we are going to renew what we had in the past.

What happened with this kindergarten during the 1982 Israeli invasion?

The kindergarten was heavily bombed. The top floor of our building was destroyed. We had to work in the basement. We contacted those children who were in a very bad situation, whose homes were destroyed, or whose fathers were in Ansar concentration camp. We took an extra 100 children over our capacity, because we felt it was our duty. Then the Phalangists and Saad Haddad's army occupied our building. We are a legally recognized institution, so we were able to reopen after a lot of struggle. We were harassed several times by the Israeli army and its Lebanese lackeys. Once a doctor came to check the children, but he had to go back to his clinic to get something. He left his bag with the stethoscope in the kindergarten. Within minutes, the kindergarten was surrounded by Israeli tanks and troops. They wanted to know what was left in the school. I told them what was in the bag, but they entered the classrooms and terrorized the children and teachers. Even foreign delegations who visited us were subjected to harassment and interrogation.

What are the conditions for children in the camp?

From our work with families, we see that the Palestinian children live a very difficult life. There are not enough schools; families have financial difficulties because of inflation and lack of jobs. Palestinian families are large, so the mother cannot give enough attention to each child. Health care is not as it should be. Skin diseases are common, and teeth are not taken care of. We also have special cases. This month in our health check-up of 300 children, we found eight cases of heart disease that require surgery. Such an operation costs 150,000 Lebanese pounds, and the families cannot afford this. We are trying to contact international humanitarian organizations to help, but until now we have not been successful. UNRWA does some health work in the camp, but it is not enough. As a result of the war, the psychological health of the children is not good, and there are a number of mentally retarded children.

How did the recent budget cut in UNRWA affect the camp?

In the past, the UNRWA services were not enough. Their health clinic was very bad - non-professional; medicine was not available. Then UNRWA stopped the basic financial aid it used to give, which increased hardships for families. UNRWA has stopped giving books and notebooks in their schools. The number of teachers is being reduced. They closed the Sibleen Institute for vocational training that had 500 students.

In closing, I would like to ask your readers to strengthen their position on the just cause of the Palestinian people, to speak out about the situation of Palestinian children, especially in the camps, and to give us at least moral support.

The Kanafani Foundation and its kindergartens are dependent on contributions. Anyone wishing more information or wanting to give a donation, should write to: GKCF, P.O. Box 135/375, Chouran, Beirut, Lebanon.

Mass Interviews



Ain al Hilweh
residents

«Israel cannot destroy the revolution.»

Abu Hussein is 51 years old and has one daughter who is studying.

How was life under Israeli occupation?

I stayed in the camp during that period. The Zionists were very brutal; they broke into houses, broke doors, climbed the walls. They terrorized the people though more than 80% (of the camp's male population) was in prison. They used to throw flour, rice and oil on the ground in their searches.

How did you feel when the Palestinian organizations returned?

We were not surprised by this return. We had a great belief that this would happen, and we are very happy. I consider it a great victory and a proof to the world that 'Israel' cannot destroy the revolution.

Were there improvements since the Palestine National Salvation Front took charge of Palestinian affairs here?

After the withdrawal of the Zionist forces, there was a period of chaos, but after the establishment of the PNSF, there was a small step in the correct direction. We salute the PNSF for that, and we expect further movement forward.

How did people here see the Amman accord and King Hussein's speech?

The Palestinian people are not politically ignorant. They can clearly see the falsification and misguiding of the rightist PLO leadership. A small number, who draw benefits from King Hussein, support that line, but the majority are against Hussein's line and the line of cooperating with him. We believe the Amman accord should be cancelled by the rightist leadership if it wants to return to the nationalist line and make national unity possible.

«We were able to raise our heads again.»

Um Hussein is 55 years old, the mother of nine children - some married, some studying abroad and some still at home. Her husband was a member of the PFLP who was martyred in 1980.

How are living conditions?

The situation is very bad. The money we get is not enough. Everything is more expensive. UNRWA doesn't give me anything. They recently cut the help I used to get. I don't know why they only give to their friends and not to people who need it. Our youth have no opportunities for work. This is the life we live. I tried to get work but I couldn't find a job. I am responsible for five children.

How was life under occupation?

It was worse than now in all ways. We could not move about and finding jobs was even harder then. It was like a continuous nightmare.

How did you experience the return of the revolution?

We were able to raise our heads again. Even with no money, we feel more secure and the revolution did help to make life easier. The situation is better; we can sleep in security and we have our pride.

What did you think of the leaflet the Zionists dropped, warning against cooperating with the resistance?

We are not afraid of the Zionists. We did not care.

Are there any security problems now?

Yes, with Arafat people; they are very undisciplined. The PFLP members are the best disciplined. I cannot say how good they are and how much we like them.

What do you want from the revolution?

We want more arms to defend ourselves, from Lahd's forces in particular.

How are relations with the Lebanese in Sidon?

They are very good. My son-in-law is from Sidon.

Um Hussein's son-in-law was present and intervened at this point: I am from Sidon and a member of the Popular Nassarite Organization. Our relations are very strong because we have the same aim, the same enemy - we are the same people. We also have a special view of the PFLP members.

Do you want your daughters to work when they finish school?

I don't mind. I would prefer they work with the PFLP.

«We cannot liberate Palestine with negotiations.»

Ahmad Muhammad Abu Karsh is 75 years old and the father of fourteen children. He had to leave one of his sons in Palestine in 1948.

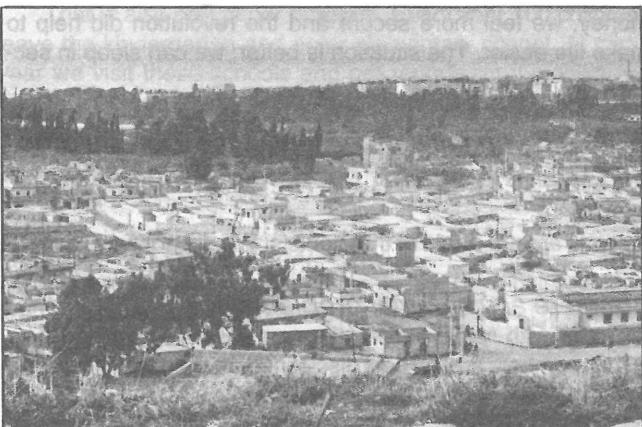
Did your situation improve after the return of the revolution?

Of course. The Phalangists had taken our house and terrorized us. We had to leave. My son, Walid, who was one of the fiercest fighters against the Zionist invaders, was taken by them on June 13, 1982. We stayed in Jiyah (town on the coast north of Sidon) until September 9th. The Phalangists kidnapped my other son who was a teacher. I could only return here when the revolution returned. I think the situation would be better if the revolution was united.

How can we liberate Palestine?

I was in the 1936 revolt in Palestine with Ez Al Din Al Qassam, and I fought against the British and against the Zionists. There were two trends prior to 1948. One was that of Haj Amin, refusing the partition of Palestine and wanting an independent state. The other was that of collaborating with the British and joining the Jordanian kingdom. We will liberate Palestine with Islam and on that basis, fight Zionism. We cannot liberate Palestine with negotiations; it is impossible. I am from Safouria in the Western Galilee which the Zionists took in 1948. The only way for me to go back to my home is by war - if the Arab governments are sincere about defeating 'Israel'. That's how we liberate Palestine.

Ain al Hilweh



Popular Committee

Interview with Abu Atef Rezek, member of the camp's popular committee

Could you give us an idea of the popular committee - how it was formed and its work?

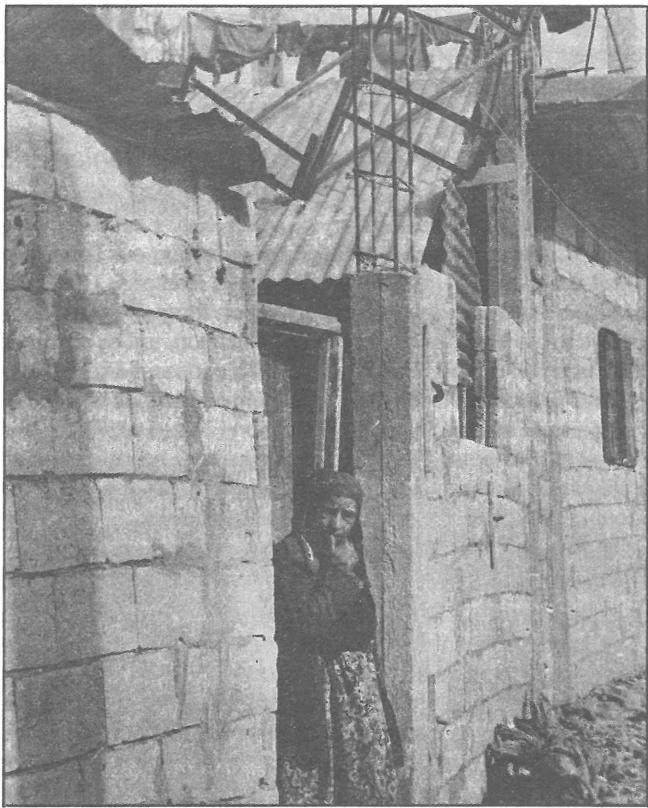
After we returned from Ansar, we found committees established by the Zionist occupation forces in the camp. Heading these committees was a group of Palestinian collaborators. We started to think of how we could confront these collaborators who had been oppressing our masses. Contacts started between nationalist figures in Ain al Hilweh, Miye and Sidon. The popular committee was established on June 2, 1984, with the full support of the masses. We started working publicly by providing services for the masses. The committee represents all the masses with some representation of the Palestinian revolutionary organizations. We started to face the problems resulting from the occupation, especially the need to rebuild homes and other vital institutions that had been destroyed.

We had difficulties with UNRWA. We had to pressure UNRWA to continue providing the assistance and services they are supposed to provide, like health and education, but UNRWA policy was to cut back services. The popular committee had to struggle for two years to get UNRWA to fix the roads and the sewer system. We try to solve other problems, like the masses' economic problems. The occupation destroyed agriculture in the area, where a great percentage of our people were employed. Palestinians still cannot move freely outside the Sidon area to search for work. This problem can only be solved with great efforts to build production institutions. There is some positive work now in the camp, like the hospital named for Dr. Wadi' Haddad, and the cooperative that the PFLP is building. I can say that the PFLP is the most serious organization when it comes to dealing with these problems. The PFLP is thinking seriously of building a workshop for women because of conviction in the importance of women being productive in our society.

What was the effect of Palestinian organizations' returning to work openly in the camp?

Our masses were not surprised by the return of the revolution. After the invasion, people started organizing military and mass resistance against the Zionist army, although most men were in Ansar. The area was under the control of the fascist Lebanese Front and Zionist army, but the mass struggle grew. The demolished camp was rebuilt through the efforts of women, children and elderly. Military operations began against the Zionists right after the invasion. I mention these facts to clarify that we were not surprised by the return of the revolutionary organizations. This public return was the culmination of our struggle under the occupation.

After the forced withdrawal of the Zionist army, we started to increase our military abilities, especially during the fascist Geagea's war against our people and camp (in April 1985). Generally, our masses and the Lebanese masses were happy about the return of disciplined Palestinian armed presence to the area. Our masses are the revolution, and the revolution is their dignity. In this period, we want new behaviour and discipline, without the mistakes of the pre-1982 period. This is what the Palestine National Salvation Front is stressing in the security forces.



Have the Palestinian organizations helped ease socio-economic problems?

We didn't see that yet. I am speaking specifically of the Palestinian National Fund, which has the money of the Palestinian people, but only provided four million Lebanese pounds. This didn't cover one percent of the need. Here we have refugees from camps that were wiped out. We asked all parties to help build housing. We asked the Palestinian National Fund with no reply. We asked the Palestine National Salvation Front, and they said wait until after the rebuilding of Sabra and Shatila. There is no serious planning. We need projects. There are projects carried out by the PFLP and the Palestinian Workers Union, but these are not enough.

There are two reasons for this situation. The first is the Palestinian division. One side has the money and that is Arafat. He wants our people to agree with his policy of capitulation before releasing the funds. Secondly, Arafat gives money according to certain lists, without the recipients working. This is positive in terms of solving immediate economic problems, but it tends to make our people lazy and unproductive. The alternative is to build productive projects. Our people fought the Israeli army without anything in return. They don't want money without producing anything. We expect our leadership to have productive plans.

What about the relations between the camp and the people of Sidon?

After the Zionist invasion and the presence of the Lebanese Front fascists in 1982, relations improved dramatically between the people of the camp and of Sidon. This was especially so with the policy initiated by the Palestine National Salvation Front, to support and not control the Lebanese national movement. The Popular Nasserite Organization, led by the militant comrade Mustafa Saad, played a special role in developing the excellent relations we have today.

How does the current war between the Zionist-backed South Lebanon Army and the Lebanese nationalist-Palestinian forces, affect the camp?

The war in South Lebanon is part of the overall situation in Lebanon. Whenever the nationalist side makes gains, we see the interference of 'Israel' and the US. We participate in the conflict and fight the fascists.

How did the masses react to the leaflets dropped by the Zionists, warning against cooperation with the revolution, after the bombing of the camps?

We are used to receiving blows from the Zionist enemy. The Zionist policy is to create a gap between the Palestinian people and the revolution. This is known. This psychological warfare has no effects on our people. As long as we carry guns, 'Israel' will attack, so that will continue because we cannot make peace with the enemy. Our duty is to answer by building more shelters for the masses. That would make a million Israeli threats worthless.

Would you comment on the new directive forbidding UNRWA employees from expressing their political views?

UNRWA is acting like a security agency. Anybody who talks about nationalist issues is thrown out of work. The Zionists fight us with air raids. UNRWA fights us with our bread. This is part of their policy of trying to destroy our identity. We have a meeting tomorrow about this very issue. UNRWA's rules and regulations permit political work, so we are going to fight those responsible for this new policy.

How did people react to Hussein's speech?

All our people know that Hussein wants to cancel the role of the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinians. He is pressuring Arafat even if Arafat agrees to his plans. People refuse that, even those who get salaries from Arafat.

Women's Work

Amal, head of the Palestinian Women's Organization in the Saida area.

Comrade Amal is 28 years old and has two children. She has been in the revolution for ten years, working with women in the camps.

What is the nature of your work?

The Palestinian Women's Organization is a fraternal organization of the PFLP. Our work is to solve the problems of women in the camps and to educate them in general and politically. Palestinian women suffer terribly because of the conditions of life in the camps. These conditions worsened after the 1982 Israeli invasion and the imprisonment of most of the men in Ansar concentration camp. In that difficult period, women had to work directly against the occupation; it was easier for them to move than for men. Women had a big role in the ►

absence of the imprisoned men. They had to work to provide for their families. The majority of women were ready to work secretly for the revolution. Women carried messages, money and weapons. Most women, regardless of their age, participated in this. They were very effective and ready to die in the fight against the enemy. They distributed leaflets and carried letters to the leadership. Women were the lifeline of the revolution.

What is the present situation of women in the camp?

After the return of the revolution, it is much better. The revolution helps in solving economic difficulties to some extent, but not totally due to the skyrocketing inflation. Women also want to give more to the revolution, but those who are not educated don't know how. That's where the role of women cadres comes in. We work by involving ourselves in the problems of the women and providing the most effective solutions. Generally, more Palestinian women are ready to enter the labor market now, to help the men provide for the family, because of inflation. I would like to mention that the rightist leadership's corruption of our people, by giving them money without their working, serves to keep women inactive. Most educated women don't participate in that corruptive policy; they want to be productive.

What importance does the PFLP put on women's work and how do people react?

The PFLP stresses the importance of work among women and their role in the revolution. The Palestinian Women's Organization, as a mass organization, is a manifestation of that policy. The PFLP puts a lot of efforts and resources into furthering women's role and organizing. The PFLP's women comrades enjoy a great deal of respect among the masses. They represent the educated women who are concerned with the active women supporters in the camp.

What problems do you face in your work?

The most common problem is widespread illiteracy among Palestinian women. We try to solve this by mass literacy campaigns organized by the Palestinian Women's Organization. Another problem is the limited education young Palestinian women receive because of backward traditions in our society. Another common problem is the oppression of women by men. Some men forbid their wives and sisters to go out and participate in activities.

What was the reaction to the Zionists' leaflets warning the masses not to cooperate with the revolution?

This was a form of psychological warfare against our people. The women generally understand this and are not afraid of these methods. The majority of our women have stressed the importance of keeping the revolution's offices in the camps and among the people.

On the Frontlines

Abu Galeb, PFLP military commander in the Sidon area, member of the Palestine National Salvation

Front's military leadership in the South and liaison officer between the Palestinian forces and the Lebanese nationalist forces.

How are the relations between the Palestinian and Lebanese nationalist forces in the area?

The relationship here is a model one, based on clear designation of the tasks of the Palestinian forces. The Sidon area is the ideal of Palestinian-Lebanese relations. This is the result of clear awareness, especially on the part of our comrades in the Popular Nasserite Organization, led by comrade Mustafa Saad. There is fully organized cooperation, with joint committees for political, military, security and mass affairs, between the Palestine National Salvation Front (PNSF) and the Lebanese National Unity Front. We have a common understanding. We stress our satisfaction with the level and form of cooperation.

What is the situation on the front lines facing the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army?

These front lines, especially the axis at Kfar Falous, are directly tied to the overall political solution. In view of the enemy plans for sectarian division in Lebanon, the Jezzine area has vital importance, because most of the people who live there are our Christian brothers. Jezzine's importance is the reason for the status quo on the front lines; there is ongoing fighting, but without any decisive change in the military situation. This area is a card that 'Israel' holds on to through its puppet Lahd of the SLA. Sometimes the clashes are escalated, and the nationalist areas are shelled, like Sidon. The front lines heat up when the enemy tries to reduce pressure on the fascist forces of Gemayel in East Beirut.

This front ranges from Ain al Meer to Kamkha, facing the enemy from Kfar Falous to Jezzine. The nationalist side of the front lines is controlled by the Popular Liberation Army (Forces of the Martyr Marouf Saad), with the support of the PNSF forces. We have given a great deal of sacrifices on this front. We have been expecting that the Israelis would push Lahd to occupy the coastal road. That's why our forces are on alert. We are satisfied with our military preparedness. 'Israel' and its puppets will have a different battle from what they have been used to.

How is the security situation in Ain al Hilweh?

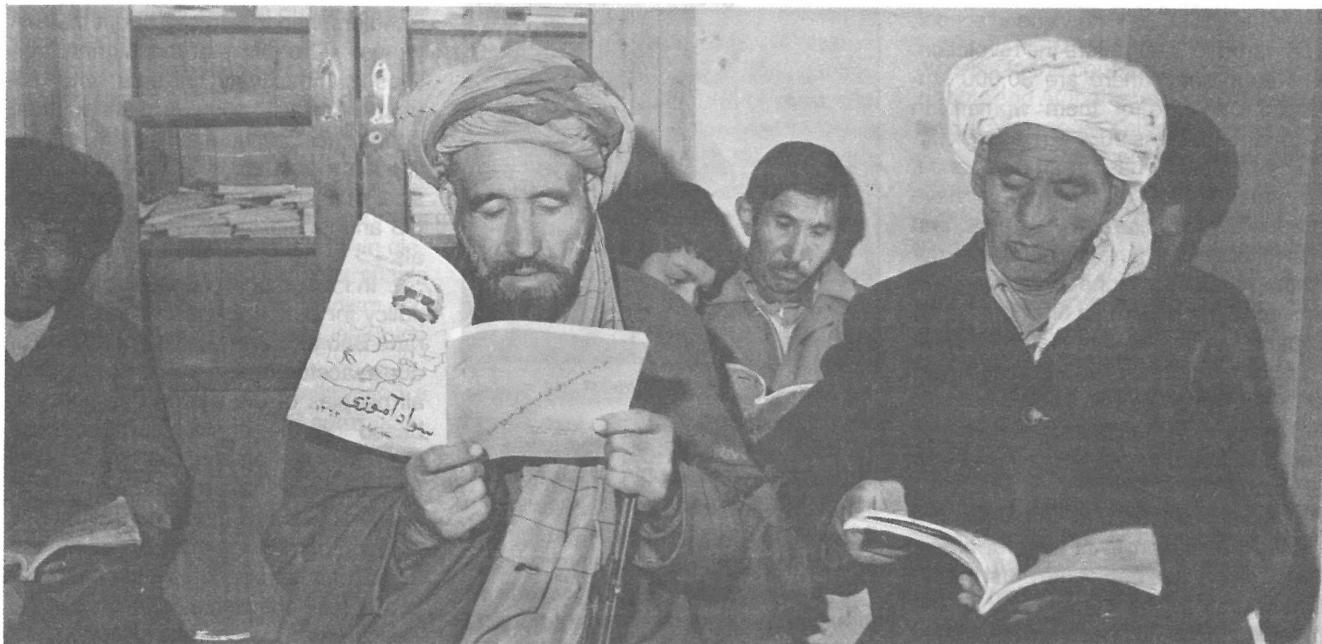
This issue has not been completely solved, but the security situation in the camp is acceptable. It is stable which fulfills the demand of our people in the camp. There are several reasons for the delay in solving the security issue to our satisfaction. After the forced withdrawal of the Zionist army, we were faced by the fascists in the area (specifically Geagea's April 1985 attack.) We had to concentrate a big force to defend the camps, and we entered a battle that we won. Another reason is the situation in the camps in Beirut. We must also mention that Arafat's rightist leadership doesn't want us to attain optimal security. They try to ignite the situation. Still, the PNSF has control over the situation in the camps in the Sidon area. We have a project for establishing a deterrent force responsible for security in the camp. This force is nearly ready and will be on the ground before the end of March. Also, the PNSF has a security committee to solve problems and close gaps. It is working well.



Afghanistan

8 Years After the April Revolution

On April 27th, progressive forces around the world celebrate the anniversary of the Afghani revolution of 1978. That date marks the success of the Afghani people's struggle, led by the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), in toppling the reactionary feudalist regime of Mohammad Daud.



Literacy campaign

The young Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) faced a wide range of internal and external enemies. Internally, the revolution was faced with the objective condition of underdevelopment, which increased the power of reactionary forces. Added to this were the gravely wrong policies of Amin, the second premier. This latter problem was corrected on December 27, 1979, when Amin was removed and Comrade Babrak Karmal was appointed Secretary General of the PDPA, President of the Revolutionary Council and Prime Minister of the new government.

From the start, the DRA faced external aggression sponsored by forces ranging from US imperialism, Britain and West Germany, to China, Pakistan, Iran, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the Zionist state. US imperialism is the main financer and organizer of gangs of Afghani counterrevolutionaries that try to sabotage the development programs and stability of the DRA. These gangs

engage in attacking women, children and elderly. They burn schools and hospitals. Using the banner of Islam, they try to cover up their US sponsorship. The US Congress allocated \$ 470 million for 1986 alone for these mercenaries. There are also reports that \$ 300 million was approved by Congress as a supplement for the next two years. Since the start of this undeclared war against the DRA, the total amount of covert US assistance to these gangs has been \$ 1.5 billion.

In cooperation with the US, the military dictatorship in Pakistan provides bases for the gangs to launch their aggression, despite strong opposition among the masses in Pakistan, especially among the Baluch and Pashtun tribes on the borders, that have pledged support for the DRA. The US instructed its puppets in the Gulf, especially Saudi Arabia, to give assistance to the gangs. NATO is also involved. West Germany, for example, established a radio station

called «Free Afghanistan» to spread disinformation manufactured by the CIA. Iran attempted to start a sectarian war by mobilizing the Shiite sect in Afghanistan. China has also provided support to the gangs.

This range of external aggression directed against the DRA is reminiscent of the imperialist aggression directed against the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in its early years. The DRA lacked the resources to face such a massive attack alone. Thus, the revolutionary government requested assistance from the Soviet Union, based on the 1919 friendship treaty between the two countries. In accordance with the principle of proletarian internationalism, the Soviet Union agreed to the DRA's request and sent a limited number of troops to defend the young revolution.

Steady progress

Despite the concerted counter-revolutionary attempts, the Afghani

people are achieving substantial progress under the PDPA's leadership. The security and military situation is improving. Daily victories are scored by the DRA's army, assisted by Soviet troops. Many people who were misled to join the terrorist gangs are returning to their homes and changing sides.

Accomplishments on the economic, social and political levels are also great. In the field of education, the DRA has repaired 50% of the 1800 schools that had been burnt by the gangs. Thirty new schools have been built and 20 are under construction. Of school-age children and youth, 80% now attend school, compared to 30% before the revolution. In Kabul alone, there are 30,000 students, one-third of them women. In a country that was 90% illiterate, the literacy campaign has great importance. At present, 1.5 million people have graduated from literacy programs, and half a million are currently enrolled. Prior to the revolution, higher education was limited to the rich, most of whom fled to capitalist countries with their money. In this context, higher education assumes strategic importance in the DRA. There are now 10,000 Afghanis studying in socialist countries. All education is free of charge.

More than 84% of Afghanistan's settled population lives in rural areas. Land reform was one of the most important issues in the country. Since the revolution, 700,000 hectares have been distributed among 320,000 landless peasants. There are 64,700 peasants farming in cooperatives. More than 34,500 peasants acquired land in 1985 alone.

In the field of industry, out of 213 projects built or planned with the help of the Soviet Union, there are more than 100 projects operating successfully; 40 of these were built after 1978. Sixty percent of industrial products are from institutions built with the assistance of the Soviet Union. The hydroelectric station in Najlo is one of the biggest projects, producing 100,000 kilowatt electricity. There is also a big prefab housing factory in Kabul. Research is underway for building the first railway network in Afghanistan. In the north of the country, a large fertilizer plant is functioning well, producing enough fertilizer to cover all the needs of the country.

Last year, agricultural products increased by 7.7%, while industrial products increased by 4.5%. In the last five years, the gross national product increased by 11%; electricity production



Afghani textile worker

by 48%; and cement production by 10%. The five-year plan which starts in March 1986 projects a 25% increase in the GNP; 28% in industrial production; and 15% in agricultural production.

In the social field, hundreds of thousands of square meters of housing space have been distributed to poor workers since the revolution. The situation of women has improved dramatically in the last eight years. The cooperative movement is growing; there are now 556 agricultural, consumer and craft cooperatives and 200 cooperative stores. There are 125,000 people involved in the cooperative movement.

The PDPA is also growing. At the beginning of the revolution, it had 19,000 members. There are now 140,000 members in the party. The trade union movement has 200,000 members. The Youth Organization has 150,000 members. The National Fatherland Front has more than 700,000 members.

The DRA is a popular democracy. People are encouraged to participate in governing themselves. People's councils, called jirgahs, have spread to all areas of the country. The Great National Council, which is a tradition in Afghanistan, plays a big role in the government. It is composed of members of the previous council, tribal chiefs, representatives of the different nationalities and respected

personalities. The majority of the council members are not PDPA members, but the council has supported the party's policy and the assistance of the Soviet troops. The Revolutionary Council recently expanded its membership by 79, most of them non-party members. The policy of democracy has solidified the PDPA as the vanguard of the masses and the revolution. The army and the popular militias are more motivated than ever to smash the CIA-backed gangs. Even Islamic leaders support the revolution. Mawlawi Mohammad Hashim, head of the Association of Religious Scholars, had this to say about the CIA gangs: «The fact that the Afghan fugitives clandestinely infiltrate into Afghanistan, kill people, plunder their goods, destroy houses and mosques, indicates that their deeds are not for the sake of Islam, but in the interests of the US and its mercenary Pakistani generals.»

In foreign policy, the DRA follows a policy for peace as described by Comrade Babrak Karmal: «The principles of our peaceful foreign policy are clear to all peoples of the world. This policy is based on the principles of peaceful coexistence, non-alignment, patriotism and internationalism. In international relations, we are in support of mutual respect, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and consolidation of relations with all countries of the world. The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, being a peace-loving country, is actively defending peace, security and detente in the region and the world and is against all kinds of wars, either nuclear or non-nuclear.»

The DRA has a clear policy of support to the Palestinian people and revolution, and supports progressive forces internationally. 1986 is a year of escalating US aggression and Afghanistan is one target of this aggression. A position in support of the DRA is an imperative for all progressive forces. No one can be neutral.

As we were going to press, we received news that the Central Committee of the PDPA had elected comrade Mohammed Najeeballah as General Secretary, after the resignation of comrade Babrak Karmal, due to health reasons. Comrade Karmal retains his posts in the PDPA Politbureau and as President of the Revolutionary Council.

Reagan's Soldiers of Fortune

Though situated on three different continents, Nicaragua, Afghanistan and Angola have much in common. Most prominently, they are led by relatively new, revolutionary governments that have embarked on a development process to pull their people out of poverty and backwardness. All three have sought and acquired the support of progressive forces around the world, especially the socialist community. For exactly these reasons, all are targeted by a special brand of imperialist aggression: CIA-directed, indigenous counterrevolutionary forces. This is a main element in the Reagan Administration's global crusade against communism and the right of the peoples to determine their own future.

The turn of the year witnessed a marked escalation of the US administration's open support to counterrevolution. There was a flood of demagogic to justify aiding forces that are little more than paid saboteurs. In his State of the Union address, Reagan pledged «moral and material assistance» to «freedom fighters» in Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Angola and Cambodia. On January 21st, the administration announced plans to seek \$100 million, the bulk of it (\$70 million) military aid, for the contras, almost four times what the US Congress approved last year, after considerable squabbling.

Also in late January, the administration spoke of seeking funds for UNITA, chief agent in the undeclared war on Angola. UNITA leader Savimbi arrived in Washington to the type of welcome usually reserved for heads of state - a pat on the head for ten years of service to the CIA and the apartheid regime of South Africa. Reagan assured Savimbi: «Your cause is our cause.» Public aid proposals were only outlined for the contras however. Apparently, the Reagan administration thinks that covert funding of UNITA and the counterrevolutionaries in Afghanistan will do for the time being, while it concentrates on a propaganda campaign to make more overt support feasible in the future.

Reagan devoted special speeches to alleged Soviet «atrocities» in Afghanistan. This was his way of responding to indications that the Afghani gov-

ernment and the Soviet Union are interested in a peaceful settlement, if there are guarantees that all foreign interference is halted. This is now a realistic possibility in view of the military setbacks suffered by the counterrevolutionaries, and the increasing number of Afghani refugees in Pakistan, who have responded to the government's call for their return. (A main task for the counterrevolutionaries today is preventing their return.) The last thing the Reagan Administration wants is a negotiated solution, for this would remove a major pivot in its secret war on the Soviet Union. US Attorney General Edwin Meese made a late March pilgrimage to the frontlines - almost. Actually he stayed safely inside Pakistan where the counterrevolutionaries are based, and exhorted to more struggle against «the Soviet empire.»

Margaret Thatcher, who has steered clear of genuine freedom fighters like the PLO and ANC, joined Reagan's drive to lend credibility to the Afghani mercenaries. On March 11th, she and the British foreign minister received Abdul Haq, military commander of Hezbi Islami (Islamic Party) which, *inter alia*, claimed the September 1984 bomb in Kabul airport in which 28 per-

sons died, 12 of them family members bidding farewell to children travelling to study abroad. Some airport attacks, it seems, are legitimate - if only 'third world' citizens die!

The Reagan Administration has moreover upped the military ante by covertly supplying Stinger surface-to-air missiles to the counterrevolutionaries in Angola and Afghanistan - and reportedly also in Nicaragua. This sets a precedent as the US has previously supplied Soviet or Chinese-made arms purchased on the international arms market. In April 1985, the contras received SAM7s from the US, a clear escalation as it is the first time irregular forces on the continent have been supplied with surface-to-air missiles (*Barricada Internacional*, December 12, 1985).

Mercenaries

Despite US officials' talk about «freedom fighters», the counterrevolutionaries operating against Nicaragua, Afghanistan and Angola are, in the last analysis, mercenaries. As if to prove the point, the leader of one Afghani gang, Habibullah Mayar, was a guest speaker at the most recent convention held in Las Vegas by *Soldiers of* ►

Demonstration in Nicaragua against the US attack on Libya and funding to the contras.



Fortune - the US magazine of an international mercenary network. Other Afghani contras have visited *Soldiers of Fortune*, such as Ratmatullah Safi, former colonel in the king's special forces when Afghanistan was a monarchy, now special forces training commander for Reagan's «freedom fighters».

None of these counterrevolutionary forces have been a military match for the revolutionary governments they aim to subvert. Instead they are reduced to terrorizing civilians and sabotaging economic and social institutions and infrastructure. This is the truly dirty aspect of US imperialism's war, and it is quite deliberate. The Reagan Administration knows that it would take much more massive aid, and ultimately the commitment of US or other imperialist troops, to actually challenge the Sandinistas', MPLA's or PDPA's hold on state power. The chosen alternative is sabotage, so that the revolutionary governments' development plans falter. This aims at eroding popular support to these governments, forcing them to negotiate power with the mercenaries, i.e., rolling back the revolution. Short of succeeding in this, the CIA's covert wars are used by the Reagan Administration to pressure the Soviet Union, Cuba and other progressive forces.

Proxy wars and direct US intervention

The reason for the viciousness of the Reagan Administration's attack on Nicaragua, is to be found in the field. The Sandinistas' evaluation of 1985 noted that «the counterrevolution entered into a process of strategic decline; the economy was sustained despite attempts to devastate it» (*Barricada Internacional*, January 16, 1986). Defense Minister Humberto Ortega, in an interview in the same newspaper, pointed out that the setbacks suffered by the contras drove them to remote areas or outside the country, rendering them incapable of launching significant actions: «The trend in 1986, therefore, will be toward the shifting of the war to the border zones, with the objective of generating tension with neighboring countries and increasing interventionist pressures. This is the option kept open by the United States should the counterrevolution fail. Toward this end, it has supplied tons and tons of munitions in recent months to the mercenaries based in Honduras and Costa Rica.»

US aid to counterrevolutionary

bands actually paves the way to broader intervention and all-out war. One angle of this is igniting local wars where military regimes, like Honduras and Pakistan, would serve as the US's proxies in attacking Nicaragua and Afghanistan respectively. This is having 'third world' peoples fight each other, the policy developed after the US defeat in Vietnam, to avoid war deployment of American soldiers. Today, with US imperialism's resurgent aggressiveness and drive for global military presence, such proxy wars don't necessarily replace direct US intervention. They can just as well be the prelude to sending the Marines.

To this end, US imperialism has turned Honduras into its own military base. Most recently, the US administration fabricated a story about a «large-scale Nicaraguan invasion» of Honduras to draw the latter into the battle, while securing passage of the contras aid bill in the US Senate. Another indication of this trend is the administration's announced intention to send dozens of Green Berets to train the contras, a job that has previously been done on the sly. Other signs of the US's bent towards war are its continued sabotage of the Contadora group's peace proposals for Central America, and the designation of Philip Habib as a special envoy to the area. One has only to remember how his shuttle diplomacy served as a smoke screen during the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The growing unwillingness of the Honduran military to be dragged into carrying out all the US plans, which are at the expense of Honduran interests and sovereignty, is another reason why the US may ultimately stage its own invasion of Central America.

Pakistan is assigned a similar role vis-a-vis Afghanistan, and the US has therefore made sure Zia ul Haq's military dictatorship does not enter negotiations with Kabul on a peaceful solution. Pakistan's military provides the infrastructure for the counterrevolutionaries' attacks on Afghanistan, and lately it has taken an even more open, aggressive role. Pashtun and Baluch tribes, sympathetic to revolutionary Afghanistan, have blocked the gangs from crossing the border in their territory. In response, the Pakistani army engaged in a genocidal operation against the tribal areas in the north: Artillery, tanks and planes were employed, and whole villages bulldozed to the ground, as reported by the Campaign for the Restoration of Human Rights in Pakistan (*New Worker*, Feb-

ruary 7 1986). The tribes responded with a general strike, and confronted the troops sent to quell this, signalling that the regime's support to counterrevolution may only increase its own internal problems.

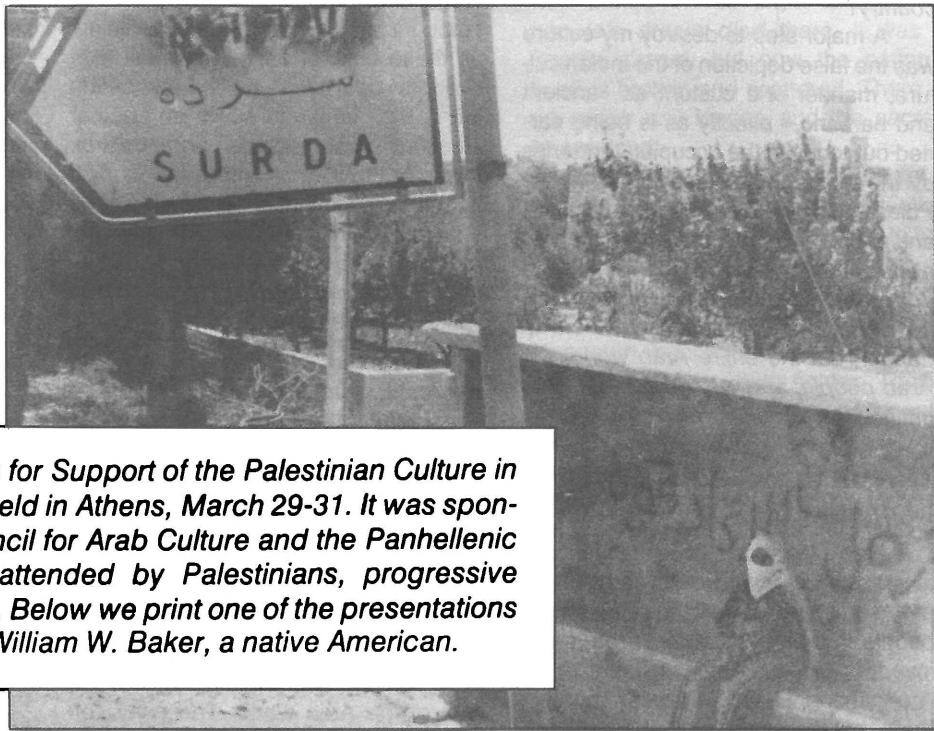
Combating US-sponsored terrorism

In the USA, there is a broad movement opposing intervention in Central America, and the antiapartheid movement has made opposition to funding UNITA a part of its agenda. Unfortunately, however, opposition to US interference in Afghanistan is much less widespread, although the issue is essentially the same. The reasons are varied, starting with Afghanistan's distance to distorted news coverage. British journalist Jonathan Steele, writing in *The Guardian* on March 10, 1986, relates how most western reporters take their information from the US and British embassies in Delhi and Islamabad. He cites several instances of how the information, especially at the US embassies, was in direct contradiction with the reality he himself had seen in the field. Most journalists, however, do little about this and simply repeat the fabricated stories, for «when no western forces are directly involved and the 'enemy' is the Soviet Union, distinctions between hard news, soft news and outright propaganda seem to lose all validity.»

The Reagan Administration is now busy reshuffling its definitions of dictatorship, freedom fighters and terrorists, in order to meet new contingencies, and justify support to mercenaries and attacks on Libya and other independent countries. As an example, Secretary of State Schultz correctly labeled the Pinochet regime in Chile as a dictatorship, but only in order to lump it together with Paraguay, Cuba and Nicaragua! Facing this psychological warfare, progressive forces must clearly define whom they support and why, in order to effectively oppose direct and indirect US intervention wherever it occurs. Reagan is raising the spectre of the Soviet Union taking over Central - and then South - America, to justify attacks on Nicaragua. Yet the US sent its troops south of its borders numerous times before the advent of the Soviet Union. Similarly, the US attack on Soviet presence in Afghanistan is only a 'cover for imperialism's drive to maintain strategic control, in order to continue exploiting the peoples and resources of the world.

Athens Conference on Palestinian Culture

Palestinians have marked out the Hebrew name for their village, Surda, in the occupied West Bank.



The International Congress for Support of the Palestinian Culture in the Occupied Lands was held in Athens, March 29-31. It was sponsored by the National Council for Arab Culture and the Panhellenic Cultural Movement, and attended by Palestinians, progressive Arabs and internationalists. Below we print one of the presentations to the congress, made by William W. Baker, a native American.

Zionism and its attempts to assassinate the Arab culture

First of all, may I take a moment to express my sincere appreciation to the members and supporters of the Panhellenic Cultural Movement for convening this important conference, and especially for the invitation to participate and be included among such a distinguished number of caring and concerned fellow human beings.

In my book *Theft of a Nation* which reveals the theft of the land and country belonging to the Palestinian people by the Zionist Jews with the aid and support of the United States and the other European nations, I point out many simila-

rities of the cultural genocide practised against the original native inhabitants of America and the Palestinian people. These similarities are true even in the identity of the persecutors, as it was the same *ashkenazim* who arrived from Europe and began the murderous and systematic extermination of the American Indian people, as they are now doing in Palestine and the rest of the Arab world. I quote from pages 27 and 28 of my book:

«Remember, more than one million

Palestinian Arabs who still live in Palestine are true Semites! They remain today, as they have remained from the beginning, vehemently opposed to the Jewish occupation of their country. This opposition cannot be termed anti-semitism. Semites are not against Semites! Rather, the Semitical Arabs are at odds with the Zionist Jews who continue to espouse their «right to conquest» and a «national homeland» as embodied in the Zionist Manifesto of 1897. If the Arab people are anti-semitic, then native American Indians were and are «anti-American» for resisting the occupation and settlement of their land by immigrating white European pilgrims and subsequent pioneer settlers.»

I speak to you today as a direct descendant of those real and true Americans, the native (sabra) American Indians. And as a trained archaeologist and one who has studied the cultural and anthropological patterns in the Middle East, I am compelled to address my thoughts and expressions to the very real danger of cultural genocide which is now occurring to the Palestinian people and may well be experienced by the Arab people of the world. I have lived, studied and excavated in Palestine for many years, and I have witnessed this attempt to eradicate the Arab culture by

the illegal occupiers of the country, the Zionist aggressors. To convince you of the very real dangers to both the Palestinians and all other Arabs and their rich and important culture, I once again refer you to the verifiable historical events that occurred within my own cultural home and heritage, North America.

For nearly 20,000 years prior to the arrival of the first colonialists, America was inhabited by over five million natives, consisting of over 600 different tribes. Yet, within one century of the arrival of the colonialists, these innocent people were reduced to less than two million. Their calculated extermination was brought about by outright slaughter by white men and their armies; by infectious disease carried by whites and to which the native Indians had no immunity or resistance. But by far, the most effective method of decimation of the native people was by attacking their cultural roots. Once militarily in control, these foreign intruders forbid the traditional customs to be practised by the Indian people. They could no longer perform their ancient dances and ceremonies; they were no longer allowed to live their accustomed life style of moving wherever they wished, hunting and farming as they had done for centuries. ►

These once proud people were placed in concentration camps renamed «reservations» as if they were being housed in hotels. In reality, native Americans were forbidden to be citizens of *their own country!*

A major step to destroy my culture was the false depiction of the Indian culture, manner and custom as «ancient and barbaric,» exactly as is being carried-out today in the occupied territories by the Zionist oppressors of the native Palestinian people. The Arab culture and people have been falsely presented as an archaic, incompetent, backward and ignorant people. I say to you that it is no longer the Palestinians who are in danger, *but the entire Arab world, the Arab people, and their wonderful Arab culture!*

Why is this cultural genocide happening?

One primary reason is that the Arab leaders and governments collectively did very little to support the Palestinian people in their resistance to the Israeli invaders. Like the American Indians, the Arabs thought it would never happen to them, but they were wrong! The Native Americans allowed their tribes to be assimilated and destroyed one by one until all were culturally destroyed.

A second reason is that the Arab nations are so busy waging war against one another that they are accomplishing the task of cultural genocide for the Zionists! The single most important method of resisting cultural assassination and disintegration is by uniting those remaining Arab people as one people, one culture.

This cultural attack is happening because the Zionists are the same Europeans, the same colonialists, the same *ashkenazim* who destroyed the real American people and the real America. Why are they so intent on cultural destruction of native people wherever they encounter them? The answer is because they themselves are a culture-less entity. They have no rich heritage, and they have no historical references to illustrate their noble contributions to mankind. It is as if they cannot and will not tolerate another culture rich in history, invention and discovery, to exist. I was visiting the ancient village of El Quneitra in the Golan Heights a few months ago as a guest of the Syrian people. As I stood in the midst of death and destruction of a once beautiful village, and as I surveyed the flattened

houses and hospitals, it occurred to me that the Zionists and their vaunted military were stationed on the hilltops surrounding the village. I could see them observing us below, listening to our conversations and filming our activities. Yet, I thought this scenario to be quite fitting, as these cultural assassins must look everyday upon the ruins and destruction left in their inhuman attack on another innocent Arab people and culture. Inwardly I thought, «This is the Zionist/Israeli contribution to mankind, this is your cultural donation to the innocent peoples of the world: death and destruction! These are the legacy left in the wake of Zionism and oppression.

The threat of cultural genocide to the Arab culture is occurring and will be successful if the Arab people and their leaders believe that negotiation and the signing of «treaties» with the brokers of war will somehow ensure the Arab culture. A current example of such troubled thinking is the infamous Camp David Accords which accomplished absolutely nothing but the implacable resolve of the Zionists to expand their aggression not only against the Palestinians, but the rest of the Arab world. The early colonialists made over one thousand treaties, pledges and promises to the Native American Indians, and violated all one thousand!

What is the answer to Zionism's cultural genocide?

1. Arab people must instill cultural heritage.

All the Arab nations and governments must accentuate in education of their people the values of their past cultural roots, as well as emphasizing the accomplishments, developments and contributions made to modern society by their people. This includes physical origins such as archeological excavations may corroborate, and the plethora of architectural and intellectual developments. It is clear that the Zionists will oppose any and all Arabic cultural claims by denying such claims, or as in the case of Palestine, seizing all control for all archaeological excavations and artifacts, thereby eliminating the opportunity for new generations of Palestinians to gain a sense of pride and identity by relating to the many important discoveries within their own homeland. I have personally witnessed the theft of culture by Israeli Zionists as they looted the Rockefeller Museum of the West Bank, transferred all the major finds of

the excavations at Banias, Fiq, Rafid, Mount Hermon, Berak Ram and hundreds of other sites, to Israel and its own «museums».

All Arab governments and family leaders must teach the future generations to have pride in their past, and hope in their future. The Arab people, wherever they may live, must not allow themselves to be assimilated into another foreign culture, thus in reality becoming eliminated as a cultural entity. A sure and certain method of passing on the Arab culture is to teach every Arab child the Arab language!

2. Arab people must join together to stand against Zionism.

The single most fearful event or act to the Zionists and their sympathizers is the potential for Arab unity. They know that if such unity is ever accomplished, their reign of brutality and intimidation is doomed. They have succeeded thus far by encouraging Arab peoples and nations to fight one another, assuring that each Arab country is sufficiently weakened and incapable of defeating the Zionist army. We too, the American Indians, made war with one another while, one by one, we were attacked and destroyed by the common enemy. I must say now that I am proud to see the emergence of the Syrian people and their great leader Hafez Assad, attempting to achieve this very unity. I implore you to lay aside your personal grievances, your cultural peculiarities, and come together now in the common bonds of fellowship, as members of the Arab culture and the Arab world, focusing your full attention and resources on the common enemy of Zionism which is, in the final analysis, the enemy of every man and every nation that would live free in dignity and self-determination.

3. Arab nations and people must determine not to give up one more meter or inch of Arab soil to Zionist aggression.

You must determine to fight on, to surrender not one more village, one more cultural site or artifact, to Zionism and its allies. In order to achieve this unity and resistance, it may be necessary to remove and replace current governments and leaders who do not share or care about the impending genocide of the Arab culture.

Closing remarks

I want you to know that I, a true

American, have stood for the Arab people, particularly the Palestinian people and their inherent right to live free in their own native country and nation. It has cost me many things to speak up in America: financial income, assassination attempts upon my life by the JDL, black balling of my book *Theft of a Nation*, arrest and imprisonment and other events as well. Why do I dare to speak out? Because my people and my culture are long destroyed and nearly eradicated from history, but there is still time for the Arab people. I have been in the refugee camps filled with Palestinian children playing in the dirt and shambles...dreaming of a homeland and a nation. The issue is much larger than the Israelis and Palestinians, it is a struggle for cultural supremacy, the outcome of which will determine whether the noble tenets of Islam and Arab culture will be permitted to exist. One of our great chiefs (muktar) spoke the following words in 1883: Tecumseh, chief of the Shawnees, said:

Where are the Pequot? Where are the Narragansett, the Mohican, the Pokanoket, and many other once powerful tribes of our people? They have vanished before the avarice and the oppression of the white man, as snow before a summer sun.

Will we let ourselves be destroyed in our turn without struggle? Will we give up our homes, our country bequeathed

to us by the Great Spirit, the graves of our dead and everything that is dear and sacred to us? I know you will cry with me: Never!

Yet seven years later the Sabra and Shatila of the American Indian occurred at a place called Wounded Knee, South Dakota, on December 29, 1890. A peaceful Indian village of old men, women and children were herded together by the white *ashkenazim* soldiers and disarmed, then told they would live in peace. On the morning of the 29th, with the flag of the United States government flying over the Indian village, the army opened fire on the sleeping Indians, killing over 350 defenseless women, babies and children. Some of the soldiers carved chaps and saddle covers from the female organs of the slain Indian women. Coming upon the scene of slaughter was a young warrior named Black Elk. Here are his words (Dec. 1, 1960):

«Dead and wounded children and women and little babies were scattered where they had tried to run away. Soldiers followed them as they ran and murdered them. Their bodies were in heaps because they had huddled together, and some were scattered alone. I saw a little baby trying to suck its mother..but the mother was still, bloody and dead. I did not know how much had ended that day. When I look back now from this high hill of my old age, I can still see the butch-

ered women and children laying in scattered heaps along the crooked gulch as plainly as I saw them with eyes still young. And I can see that something else died there in the bloody mud, and was buried in the snow blizzard. A people's dream died there. It was a beautiful dream, but now the nation's hoop is broken and scattered. There is no center any longer, and the sacred tree is dead!»

Our dream is finished and gone out, but you may still keep your dream alive by banding together and resisting to the death the Zionist enemy who would slaughter your culture and your future place among the nations of the world. I close with the words of a great Palestinian poet and freedom fighter, Tawfiq Zayad, who wrote in his great poem entitled «The Impossible»:

It is much easier for you to pass an elephant through a needle's eye, or catch fish in a galaxy, or plough the sea, force a crocodile to speak, than to destroy by persecution the shimmering glow of a belief, or check our march, one single step.

As if we were a thousand prodigies spreading everywhere...in Lydda, in Ramallah, in the Galilee...Here we will stay, a wall upon your breast, and in your throat we shall stay, a piece of glass, a cactus thorn, and in your eyes, a blazing fire.

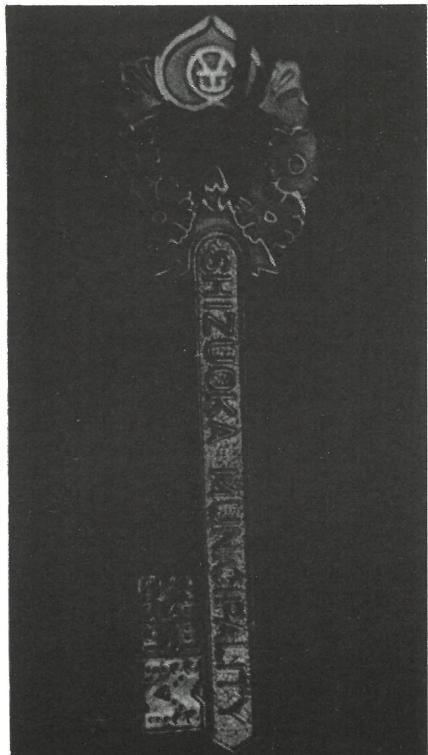
Solidarity in Japan

City Key for PLO

On March 12th, the mayor of Shizuoka municipality in Japan, Mr. Kawai Dyago, awarded the PLO the golden key of the city. The ceremony took place in the municipal building of Shizuoka, southwest of Tokyo. In addition to the PLO representative in Japan,

Mr. Bakr Abdul Mun'em, there were a number of reporters present. Mr. Dyago expressed the city's full solidarity with the just struggle of the Palestinian people, and condemned Zionist policy.

On March 13th, the PLO was awarded the golden medal of the city of Yaizu which is on the Pacific Ocean. The mayor, Mr. Hajeema Hajiwara, expressed solidarity with the Palestinian people. The PLO representative also placed a wreath on the grave of Mr. Kobayama, the first Japanese victim of the US hydrogen experiment. Mrs. Kobayama was present, and her eyes filled with tears as she received a gift from the Palestinian people, a box made of olive tree wood from Palestine.



PALÄSTINA

«Al Karamah» Magazine

Al Karamah is a new German-language quarterly published in solidarity with the struggle of the Arab peoples and the peoples of the three continents generally. *Al Karamah* began publication this year, and we were pleased to receive the first issue. The main article is the first installment of a longer analysis which traces the historical development of the Palestinian liberation struggle, providing a good background for understanding the current situation in the PLO. Also included are several articles which expose the racism and class nature of the Israeli state, its role in Latin America

and relations with the South African regime. The issue brings an interview with Dulcie September of the ANC, and concludes with a cultural article about the writings of Ghassan Kanafani.

We thank the editors of *Al Karamah* for having placed an advertisement for *Democratic Palestine* in their magazine, and we would encourage all those who read German to subscribe to *Al Karamah*, by writing to: Redaktion *Al Karamah*, Postlagerkarte Nr.068294 C, 3550 Marburg / Lahn, West Germany. Each issue costs 3 DM; 10 copies can be obtained for 2.50 DM each.

Solidarität mit dem
palästinensischen Widerstand