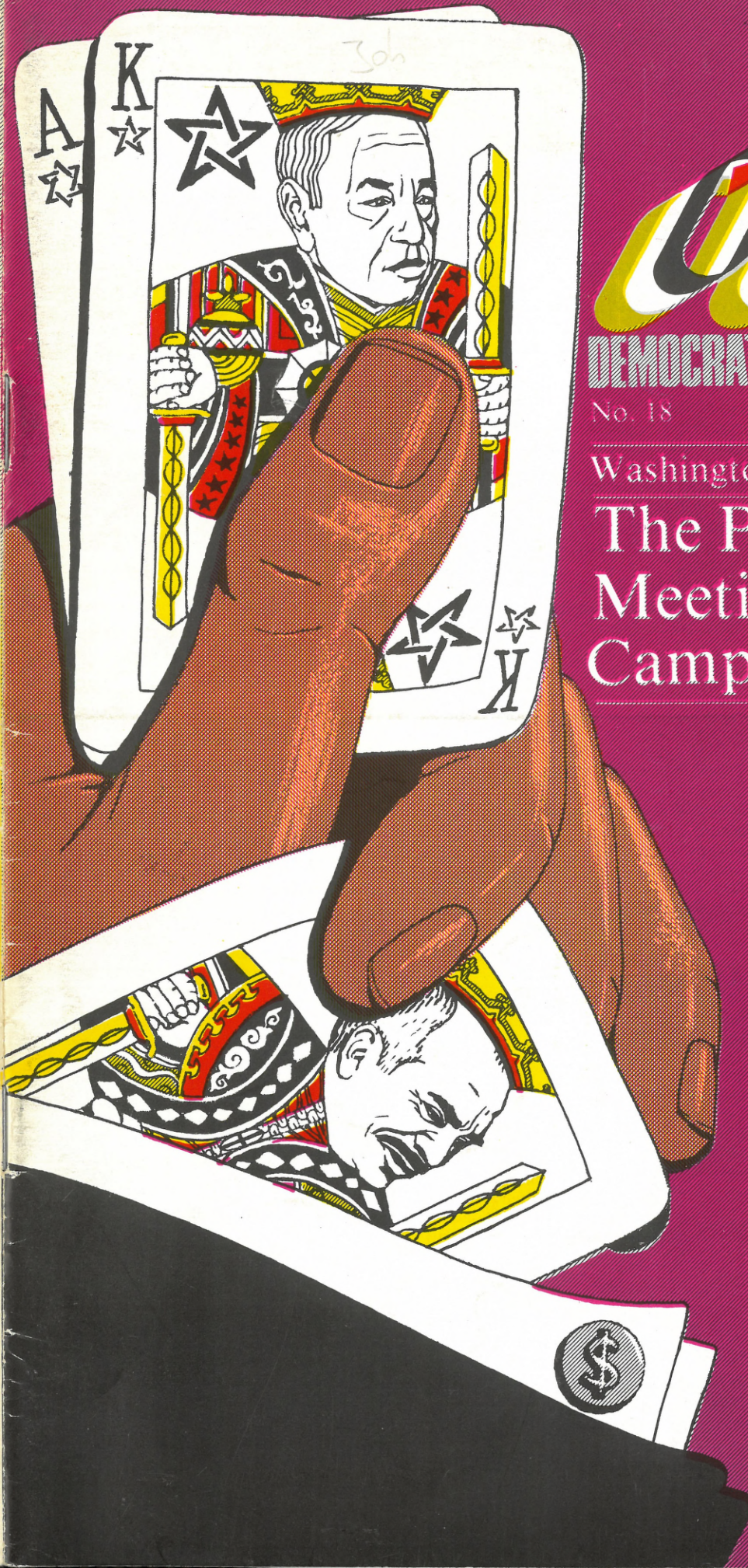
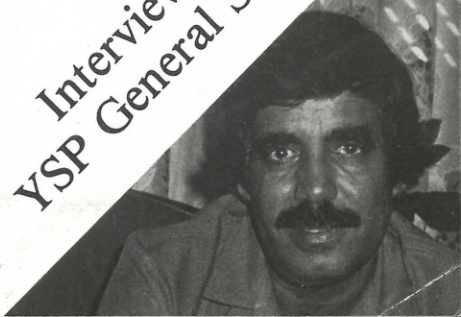




Washington's Tricky Kings

The Peres-Hassan Meeting: Prelude to Camp David II?

Interview with
YSP General Secretary





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

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

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Letters

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We received the following letter from Pakistan:

SAVE COMRADE JARU SAQI

Comrade Jaru Saqi, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Pakistan, who is in jail since 1978, is a heart patient. Recently he had an eye problem and developed acute neurological complaints. But the government shifted him back to prison from the hospital after a few days, against the advice of the concerned doctors. His life is in great danger, and the government seems bent on killing him by denial of treatment.

Apart from those who have been killed by torture, like Comrade Hasan Nasir in 1960, or Comrade Nazar Abbasi in 1980, Jaru Saqi has suffered greater victimization from the different pro-imperialist governments of Pakistan, than any other person. Since 1969, he has either been underground or in solitary confinement in jails, or in clandestine torture chambers of the army.

Jaru Saqi was a wanted person during the military government of 1969-71, due to his opposition to martial law and his firm struggle against the genocide of the people of Bangladesh. He was in jail during part of the Bhutto government of 1971-77, and underground during the rest of the period... The Gen. Zia government (1977-85) felt special enmity for Jaru Saqi. General Zia was promoted as chief of army staff during the Bhutto period for his pro-imperialist and anti-Palestinian, army action in Jordan (Black September). He is a faithful lackey

of imperialism and has opened his country to the counterrevolutionaries from Afghanistan. The Zia government arrested Comrade Jaru Saqi in December 1978, and a military court convicted him for 10 years in 1979 in Hyderabad, Sind. He was tried in another case along with Prof. Jamal Naqi and others in a military court in Karachi in 1982, but no judgement has been announced for him to date.

During this entire period of 8 years, he was kept in solitary confinement for which legal cover was provided by giving him a charge sheet as a civil suspect under the Army Act. However, such a charge sheet is valid for only 3 years... His 10-year sentence has already been served (with the inclusion of normal remissions, etc.) and there is no other conviction against him...

All shades of political leaders, class organizations and intellectuals have demanded his release and proper medical treatment. On the call of the Sind peasant organization, which he heads, there were dozens of demonstrations on March 6 all over the country. But the military government and its inducted civil government is so annoyed by his now legendary court statements, exposing the real anti-people character of the military regime, that they are bent on killing him in one way or another. Men of good will in many other countries have raised their voice of protest for him.

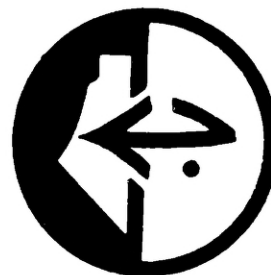
Comrade Jaru Saqi's life is in real danger. It is the duty of progressives and democrats all over the world to raise their voice of protest for this valiant son of the toiling masses of Pakistan...

July, 1986

The letter above has been slightly abbreviated. Also, we apologize for any misspelling of names, as we had difficulty reading the handwriting in the original.

PFLP 4th Congress

Political Report



This autumn, the English edition of the Political Report of the PFLP's Fourth Congress will be published. The Congress was held in the spring of 1981, and work began to translate the document to English. Unfortunately, the first endeavors were lost in the 1982 siege of Beirut. Some time passed before the work could be resumed. We think, however, that the document retains its relevance in terms of the evaluation it offers of events from 1973 until 1980, and the development of the PFLP during this period.

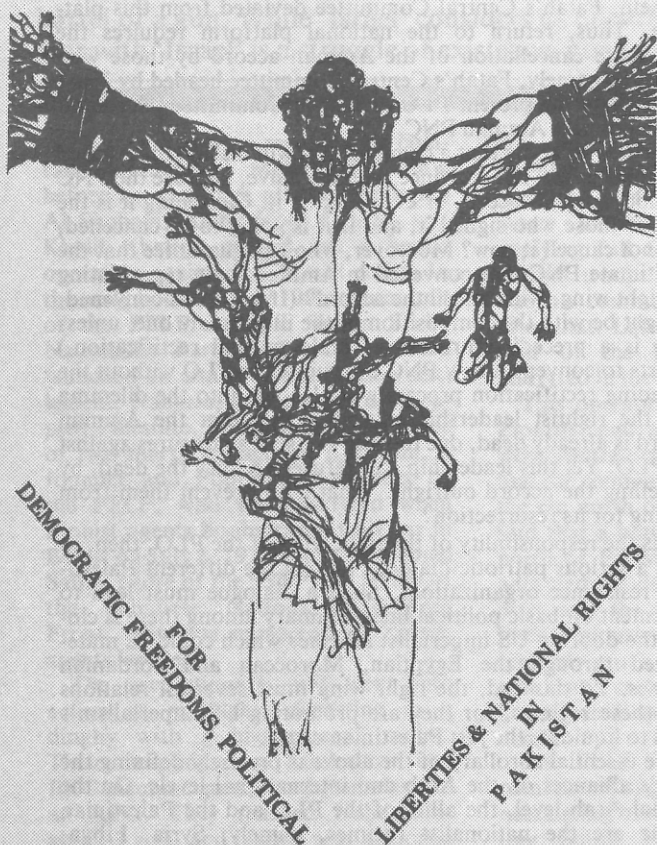
The report begins with a general evaluation of the international situation and its main components - imperialism's crisis, the successes of the world socialist system and the victories of the national liberation movements. It also addresses specific subjects such as the PFLP's evaluation of China's foreign policy, Eurocommunism and the peaceful coexistence policy.

On the Arab level, the focus is on analyzing the background and ramifications of the stage of Camp David, and detailing the means for confronting the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary alliance thus forged. Another section deals with the Palestinian situation, especially the Zionist and imperialist plans for liquidating the Palestinian liberation struggle in Lebanon and occupied Palestine. There is an overall evaluation of the course pursued by the Palestinian revolution and the lessons that can be derived from this, such as the necessity of creating a supportive operational base in Jordan, and the struggle against the efforts to impose an imperialist political settlement in the Middle East.

On this backdrop, specific chapters review the PFLP's political positions in relation to the developments of the period. Shortcomings and wrong tactics are criticized, and guidelines charted for future struggle. One chapter is exclusively devoted to evaluating the progress made in the PFLP's transformation to a Marxist-Leninist party, while another deals with the military struggle.

If you would like to receive the Political Report as soon as it is published, please write now to Democratic Palestine, Box 12144, Damascus, Syria. The price for one copy is \$12 US. If you order five copies or more, you will receive each at the price of \$10. Payment should be deposited in the following bank account: 434027/840, Bank of Beirut and the Arab Countries, Shtoura, Lebanon.

When requesting copies of the Political Report, please note in your letter the date on which you have made the payment. We will send you the Political Report as soon as it is published, after receiving both your letter and payment.



Editorial

The US imperialist schemes for the Middle East have advanced in the recent period. The most dangerous of the steps in this direction have been: the meeting in Morocco between King Hassan and Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres; the measures taken by King Hussein against the PLO in Jordan and the occupied West Bank; and the Israeli plans to appoint Palestinian puppet mayors in the 1967 occupied territories.

What do the US imperialist plans aim at, and how were they promoted by these steps? These plans aim at imposing total imperialist control over this politically, economically and geographically strategic area, capitalizing on the results of almost four decades of Zionist aggression and occupation of Arab land. Due to the inflow of petrodollar wealth to the region in the seventies, the ruling class in the reactionary Arab states grew more ready to enter into alliance with the Zionist state. Arab reaction holds the illusion that alliance with the enemy would restrain 'Israel' from swallowing Arab wealth, as it had swallowed Arab land. This was the background for Sadat's visit to 'Israel' and the signing of the Camp David accords with Menahem Begin, under the auspices of former US President Carter.

The advent of the Reagan Administration, and its determination to escalate world tension to a degree unparalleled since World War II, gave further impetus to the US drive to dominate the Middle East and oversee a new alliance between its allies, the Zionist state and the reactionary Arab regimes. Such a new class alliance would pave the way for unprecedented exploitation of the resources and manpower of the region. It would moreover turn the entire area into a reactionary bastion, and a base for the US military forces, not far from the southern borders of the Soviet Union. In the context of these realities, Shimon Peres' visit to Morocco can be understood, as can King Hussein's measures against the PLO and the Palestinian revolution (see article in this issue) and the Israeli moves in occupied Palestine.

THE HASSAN—PERES MEETING

In terms of the situation on the Arab level, the meeting in Morocco serves the following aims: (1) It serves to establish as an accepted fact the idea of face-to-face meetings and direct negotiations between Arab and Israeli officials. This means reviving the spirit of Camp David after the many obstacles it has faced on the official and popular levels in the Arab world. (2) It gives momentum to the Egyptian-Israeli relations, and boosts the Egyptian regime after the isolation it has suffered in the eyes of the Egyptian masses and patriotic forces. (3) It facilitates the efforts of King Hussein to enter into direct negotiations with the Zionist government, aimed at joint rule over Palestinians and their land.

Though the crucial issue at this stage is direct Jordanian-Israeli negotiations, King Hassan stepped forward at this point, aiming to boost his standing with the US by achieving a breakthrough for the 'peace' process. In this he relied on the political weight he carries in official Arab circles. At the time of Peres' visit, Hassan was chairman of the Arab summit. He heads the Arab League's committee for «Jerusalem's salvation.» He is head of the 7-man committee selected by the most recent Fez Summit to visit the five permanent member states of the UN Security Council, to explain the summit's resolutions.

These factors explain the general silence about the Peres-Hassan meeting on the part of the Arab reactionary regimes. In their language, silence often means consent.

From the Israeli viewpoint, the meeting between the Moroccan monarch and the Zionist prime minister serves the following aims: (1) It bolsters the Labor Party's position, reflecting that it enjoys more harmonious cooperation with the US, than does the Likud. It indicates that the Labor Party has the capacity to reach a settlement with the Arab reactionary regimes. (2) It gives Peres added reasons for dissolving the Zionist coalition government if Shamir of the Likud tries to

object to any agreement that Peres might make. If this should happen, it would be easier for Peres to form a new government with a Labor majority, and make a gain comparable to that made by Begin with Camp David. (3) It strengthens the Israeli position of calling for direct, bilateral negotiations with the Arab governments - a procedure which makes it easier for US imperialism and 'Israel' to impose their conditions on each separately, as was the case with Sadat.

CONFRONTING THE DANGER

Confronting the present difficult situation requires the creation of the following conditions: (1) achieving at least a minimal official Arab position against King Hassan's meeting with Peres, a step to be initiated by the states of the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front: Syria, Algeria, Libya and Democratic Yemen; (2) practical measures against King Hassan and all his supporters, to be undertaken by the forces of the Arab national liberation movement; (3) reuniting the PLO on a correct political and organization basis, so that it can play its rightful role in resisting the current enemy moves.

THE PLO'S UNITY

The unity of the PLO is the most important factor in confronting the imperialist plans. Such unity can only be achieved by arriving at the correct political and organizational basis, through democratic dialogue between the various organizations in the PLO. To succeed in rectifying the PLO's current situation, this dialogue must be on the basis of the Palestinian national platform. By signing the Amman accord with King Hussein, Fatah's Central Committee deviated from this platform. Thus, return to the national platform requires the immediate cancellation of the Amman accord by those who signed it, namely, Fatah's Central Committee headed by Yasir Arafat, and the present PLO Executive Committee selected at the illegitimate Amman PNC.

Those who argue that a coming PNC will discuss the issue of cancellation will not convince even the naive, because the PNC did not sign the accord, or even discuss it. Cancelling it is the duty of those who signed it, and if it is going to be cancelled, why not cancel it now? Moreover, who can guarantee that the illegitimate PNC that convened in Amman, only representing the right wing, will cancel the accord? (If a PNC is convened, it might be with the composition of the illegitimate one, unless there is a preceding process of dialogue and rectification.) Efforts to convene a new PNC or reunite the PLO without the preceding rectification process will also run into the dilemma that the rightist leadership is now saying that the Amman accord is already dead, due to King Hussein's measures against the PLO. Yet this leadership still refused to bury the dead, by cancelling the accord outright. What is to prevent them from waiting for its resurrection?

It is the responsibility of the right wing of the PLO, then, to open a serious patriotic dialogue among the different Palestinian resistance organizations. Such a dialogue must lead to agreement on basic political lines. Primary among these is closing the door on US imperialist schemes which could be materialized through the Egyptian, Moroccan and Jordanian regimes. To this end, the right wing must sever all relations with these regimes, for they are promoting US imperialism's plans to liquidate the just Palestinian cause.

The essential corollary of the above is precisely defining the PLO's alliances on the Arab and international levels. On the official Arab level, the allies of the PLO and the Palestinian people are the nationalist regimes, namely, Syria, Libya, Democratic Yemen and Algeria. The PLO cannot equate the reactionary regimes with the patriotic ones, must less favor the reactionaries, as the right wing has so clearly done since 1982. Arafat and his group might argue that Syria blocked the relations, but the response to that should not be alliance with the Arab reactionary forces. Rather, there must be continued

efforts with Syria to improve relations.

On the popular level, the PLO must strengthen its alliance with the nationalist and progressive forces in the Arab world, because it is they who stand in the same trench with the Palestinian people, confronting imperialism and Zionism.

On the international level, it must be clear that the natural allies of the Palestinian revolution, like for any liberation movement, are the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, and the progressive and peace-loving forces all over the world. The right wing in the PLO has tried to equate the imperialist countries of Western Europe with the socialist countries. If the distinction between the two is not made clear in the future program of national unity, this could ease the way for the imposition of the US imperialist schemes via its European allies.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUE

To guarantee honest and sure implementation of the national unity program, the organizational basis for national unity in the PLO must be clearly defined. The organizational issue is as vital as the political questions, for experience has proved that the PLO institutions, if dominated by a bourgeois and rightist majority, can deviate from the national platform, when pressured by the enemy. Thus, the coming dialogue must deal with sensitive, concrete issues such as the composition of the new executive committee, the PNC and all other PLO institutions.

The democratic forces must have at least half the seats in the

PLO institutions for two reasons: First, this is necessary to prevent deviation from the national unity program agreed on, by denying the Palestinian bourgeois the majority it previously held. Second, this would reflect the size and activity of the democratic forces in the Palestinian arena, which is greater than their former representation in the PLO institutions. To give some examples: The Palestinian Communist Party, the Popular Struggle Front and the Palestinian Liberation Front were never represented in the executive committee. The PFLP had only 13 members among the 400 members of the PNC, with Saïqa, the DFLP, and PFLP-General Command each having about the same. The remaining majority of PNC members were appointed by the chairman. The democratic forces did not head any one of the 93 PLO offices around the world.

Thus, an important point of discussion in the national dialogue should be the membership of a coming PNC. Will the members of a new, unifying PNC be those of the illegitimate session in Amman in 1984, or those of the 16th session in Algeria, whose term has expired according to the PLO's internal constitution. Or will it be new members committed to the unity and rectification of the PLO's line, as agreed upon among the Palestinian patriotic organizations?

These are a few examples of what must be discussed in the dialogue, when it is opened after cancellation of the Amman accord. Anything less cannot be in the interest of the Palestinian struggle, or serve the purpose of confronting the enemy plans.

Operation Naharia

«The road to liberating all of Palestine is not via relations with the capitals of Camp David, but via the barrel of a gun. While 'Israel' considers its borders to be from the Nile to the Euphrates, we stress that our war with 'Israel' is a struggle of existence, not a border dispute.»

These words were recorded by comrade Mohammed Mahmoud Kana'a before he and three others - Abdullah Al Shahabi, Abdul Hadi Qathem and Khalil Khattab carried out a heroic operation against the Zionist entity. In the early hours of July 10th, a joint unit of the PFLP and the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) of Lebanon launched an attack on the Zionist settlement, Naharia, in the north of occupied Palestine. The unit bore the name of two martyrs: Ghassan Kanafani, a founder and Politbureau member of the PFLP, who was martyred when Zionist agents boobytrapped his car in Beirut on July 8, 1972; and Mohammed Salim, cadre of the SSNP and leader of the Lebanese National Resistance Front, who was murdered by Zionist agents last year.

The revolutionary unit went into action at midnight, departing in a dinghy with a highpowered motor. Their weapons were Klashnikov and BKC machine guns, hand grenades and an RPG. They reached Naharia at about 3 a.m. and landed near a Zionist military camp where they engaged the border patrol in battle. The freedom fighters were able to gain control of one of the buildings. Wireless communica-

tion with the commandos at 9 a.m. revealed that two of them had been martyred, and the Zionists had suffered many losses. The Zionists were applying full force, using their navy, ground troops and helicopters. There was no communication with the unit after that. Later it was known that all four of the freedom fighters were martyred in the battle.

This operation greatly disturbed the Zionists, and announcements about it were contradictory. First, 'Israel' said that the commandos were intercepted in the sea north of the border. Then they said that a battle took place in the sea north of Palestine. The Zionist entity admitted the death of two of their soldiers and the injury of nine, two of them seriously. Their casualties were certainly much higher, so one can imagine that a certain number of these will be reported as victims of road accidents!

The PFLP issued a political statement describing the operation as part of «escalating armed struggle until liberating South Lebanon and occupied Palestine. This operation embodied the militant solidarity between the Lebanese and Palestinian masses...The success of our revolutionary heroes in re-

aching Palestine is clear evidence of the position of our Palestinian masses and their nationalist and democratic forces, who oppose the capitulationist policies of the dominant rightist leadership of the PLO. This operation is an answer to the reactionary Jordanian regime's attempts to create alternatives to the PLO - with the support of imperialism and Zionism. It shows the inability of the Zionist enemy to prevent Palestinian militants from reaching Palestine. It is a new proof of the failure of the aims of 'Operation Peace for the Galilee' - the 1982 Zionist invasion of Lebanon.»

DOUBLE AGGRESSION

The extent to which this operation disturbed the Zionists was shown by the fact that they felt called upon to launch a double aggression on Lebanon in the course of four days. At 7 p.m., the day of the operation, four US-made Cobra helicopters bombarded Ain Al Hilweh refugee camp on the outskirts of Sidon. The Israeli helicopters unleashed 16 rockets. One person was martyred and seven wounded, among them two children and two women.

On July 14th, the Zionists carried out a second attack. Fighter jets bombed a



spot in the mountains east of Beirut, where Palestinian revolutionary forces have a joint position with the Progressive Socialist Party, facing the fascist forces. There were two martyrs and 12 wounded in the air raid, mostly civilians. Colonel Abu Ahmed Fuad, PFLP Politbureau member in charge of the military forces, said that this raid failed to accomplish its aims, because the area targetted had been evacuated. He added: «We shall reply to this raid at the suitable time and place.»

HONORING THE MARTYRS

Several hundred people attended a gathering convened by the PFLP in Yarmouk camp, outside Damascus, to celebrate the operation and honor the martyrs. The father of Khalil Khattab

spoke on behalf of the families of the four martyrs. He congratulated the PFLP on the operation and pointed out that it demonstrated the Palestinian people's adherence to the armed struggle, and was a concrete response to the deviating policy of the right wing. Comrade Abu Ahmed Fuad also addressed the gathering, stressing the importance of the armed struggle. A videotape was shown of the martyrs in training before the operation and their last testimony. Their words indicated that they were prepared for death if this meant contributing to the continuation of the cause of liberation. The ceremony ended with Comrade Abu Ahmed Fuad presenting medals of heroism for the martyrs, to members of their family. ●

Military Operations in Occupied Palestine

The Palestinian people, regardless of the deviation of the right-wing PLO leadership, display clarity of action in the ongoing anti-occupation struggle. Palestinian vanguards in the occupied homeland continue to intensify armed resistance against the Zionist state. Below is an account of operations in occupied Palestine, carried out between June 10th and July 10th, and admitted by the Zionist authorities.

In the occupied Gaza Strip, there were nine firebomb attacks on Zionist vehicles. A Palestinian militant attacked and wounded a Zionist settler.

In the occupied West Bank, activities were more intense. In Jerusalem alone, there were eleven firebombs and a hand grenade directed against Zionist targets. There was an explosion in a hotel in West Jerusalem. In these attacks, the Zionist state admitted the injury of one settler. In Nablus, two firebombs were thrown at Zionist military vehicles. A land mine exploded when a Zionist vehicle passed near Bethlehem. A mili-

tary communications station, between Ramallah and Jerusalem, was attacked by Palestinian guerrillas. The biggest operation occurred on June 16th, when explosives were planted on an Israeli military bus in the Jordan Valley, causing its total destruction. The Zionist authorities admitted the death of three soldiers and the injury of 21, but claimed that the bus went out of control and had an accident because of brake malfunction. The occupation authorities banned distribution of the Jerusalem daily *Al Fajr* for three days, for reporting that the bus was destroyed

by an explosion. *Al Fajr* was accused of incitement!

Because of the greater concentration of Zionist settlers in the part of Palestine occupied in 1948, Palestinian militants planned many of their operations there. The Tel Aviv area was particularly targeted: five explosives were detonated in hotels, cinemas, shopping centers and crowded streets. Israeli sources admitted the injury of eight. In one booby-trapped car, five settlers were injured. In Lydda, a Zionist was injured when fired upon by a Palestinian from a passing car. In Ashdod, an explosive charge went off in the post office, injuring one according to Israeli sources. In Jaffa, there was an explosion in a busy street. 'Israel' admitted the injury of one. In the cemetery of Beisan, in the Galilee, a Zionist soldier was found executed. A phosphorous grenade was thrown into a schoolyard in Natania.

In a total of 38 operations, the Zionists admitted the death of four and the injury of 32. Three of these deaths and 29 of the injuries occurred in only two attacks. One wonders how there could have been so few casualties in the remaining operations, while on the other hand Israeli casualties in road accidents are always rising. It would seem the Zionists are supermen in withstanding explosives and grenades, but when it comes to road accidents, the most mobile army in the world does not bother to have the brakes of its vehicles repaired! ●

FIGHTING OCCUPATION IN LEBANON

This summer the Lebanese National Resistance Front, aided by the Palestinian revolution, increased its armed resistance to the Zionist occupation forces and their lackeys, Lahd's renegade South Lebanon Army (SLA). From the first of June up until the 14th of July, there were 47 artillery attacks on the Zionist army and the SLA, and 77 commando attacks on their positions. 'Israel' admitted the death of two of their soldiers and the injury of eleven. There were additional casualties in the ranks of the SLA. In the same period, there were four Katyusha rocket attacks against Zionist settlements in North Palestine.

CUMULATIVE CASUALTIES

Zionist military sources released statistics for 1985, after their withdrawal to the so-called security zone, indicating that there were 1165 military operations against the SLA and Israeli army in South Lebanon. According to their admission, six Israeli soldiers died, two were kidnapped, and ten were injured in settlements in the North of Palestine (*Al Destour*, Amman, June 17th). ●

Mass Organizations in Occupied Palestine

Leaders and activists of mass organizations have been prime targets of the Zionist iron fist policy of administrative detention. Nonetheless, these organizations continue their work, embodying the Palestinian people's national identity and striving for liberation.

Since the establishment of the state of 'Israel', successive Zionist governments have enacted policies designed to empty occupied Palestine of its original inhabitants. These policies range from land confiscation and settlement-building, to destruction of the national economy and a whole array of fascist measures-mass arrests, deportations, torture, collective punishment and the banning of nationalist political and social activities. Despite everything, the Palestinian masses have confronted all forms of oppression. They have struggled through mass organizations, committees and trade unions to express their resistance to occupation. The following article is a survey of the activities of trade unions, women's and students' organizations and volunteer work committees in the first half of this year. This period was distinguished by a high degree of political activity on the part of mass organizations, confronting the various schemes aimed against our people, whether by the Zionist enemy or the reactionary regime in Jordan. Most noteworthy is that all mass organizations, regardless of political affiliation, expressed opposition to the Jordanian regime's policy of eliminating the PLO's role.

TRADE UNIONS

Trade union activity in this period centered around specific occasions. It was limited for two main reasons:

First : The Zionist authorities escalated their repression against the unions and union activists, as seen in those deported, arrested and placed under house arrest. Recently the authorities sought once again to implement an old decision to restrict trade unions and mass organizations generally by forcing them to submit reports about their annual activities, in order to obtain permission for new activities. This decision dates back 14 years, but the Zionist authorities have never been able to enforce it.

Second : The trade union movement is hindered by subjective factors, chiefly internal division which dates back to when the Palestinian right wing split the General Federation of Trade Unions in the West Bank in 1981. There were new splits in the recent period, which were reflected in the election results in the various unions. The general tendency today is for the different trade unions to be highly concerned with the major political questions affecting Palestinian struggle. Thus the prevailing divisions coincide with political differences. In the recent elections, single blocs gained the leadership of many unions, without any competition.

The elections preoccupied the unions to a great extent in this period. Besides commemorating May 1st, trade union activities were mainly expressed in political statements about central issues. Despite the prevailing political differences, all trade unions were united in their positions on the main issues.

In Bethlehem, a public statement was issued by popular institutions, trade unions and other mass organizations, rejecting all attempts to eliminate the PLO's role as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people everywhere. The statement emphasized rejection of Security Council resolutions 242 and 338 (which recognize 'Israel', but deal with the Palestinian issue as one of refugees only, not as a national question); adherence to the right to self-determination and an independent state; the importance of Palestinian unity on a nationalist basis,

opposed to all imperialist and Arab reactionary capitulationist schemes; opposition to cooperating with the Jordanian regime. The statement was signed by the Bethlehem branches of the unions for doctors, pharmacists, engineers, dentists, carpenters, tile workers, electricity workers, engineering assistants and tailors, as well as the Labor Unity Bloc and the Women's Work Committee of Beit Sahour.

In the Jenin area, trade unions joined popular committees in issuing a statement denying what had been published on their behalf by the appointed municipal council. On February 21st, *Al Quds* daily published a statement of support to King Hussein's speech of February 19th, wherein he demanded that the PLO recognize resolutions 242 and 338, and froze cooperation with the PLO leadership. The slanderous statement had been submitted by the appointed municipal council. The trade union's statement, on the contrary, condemned King Hussein's speech and denied that the municipal council's statement represented the point of view of the people of Jenin. The statement also confirmed rejection of resolutions 242 and 338. It reiterated that the PLO is the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and called upon the Palestinian national leadership to restore the PLO's unity on a national and democratic basis, in conformity with PNC resolutions. The statement was signed by the Progressive Front for Trade Union Action, the Labor Youth Movement, the Labor Trade Union Federation, the Women's Work Committees, the local branches of the unions of engineers and dentists, and the government teachers committee.

The Vocational Trade Union Federation in Jerusalem issued a statement condemning the US attack on Libya, and demanded a boycott of the US and exposure of European hypocrisy. Imperialist aggression against Libya was condemned in another statement issued jointly by the Progressive Front for Trade Union Action, the Progressive Students' Action Front, the Union of Volunteer Work Committees, the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees and the Union of High School Students' Committees.

Prominent trade unionists condemned King Hussein's February speech, among them Younis Tayyem, executive committee member of the General Federation of West Bank Trade Unions; Mustafa Abu Salem, secretary of the Carpenters' Union; Khader Al Murranakh, secretary of the Public Services Union. Their public statements called for cancelling the Amman accord, signed by King Hussein and Yasir Arafat, in order to halt the process of concessions given by the right-wing leadership of the PLO, and to return the PLO to the national line. They also called for cancelling the 17th PNC (held in Amman 1984) and for the necessity of national unity.

MAY 1ST

In the West Bank, there were many festivals on the occasion of May 1st. In Jerusalem, there were celebrations for all labor unions. The Employees and Workers of the Jerusalem Electric Company distributed a special communique: "We celebrate this occasion at a time when our company is facing dangerous attempts to liquidate it. The final decision of the court came to confiscate the property of the company and prohibit the expen-



Bir Zeit students protest administrative detention.

diture of any funds, including our salaries, in an attempt to push us to give up."

Hebron trade unions issued statements on May 1st dealing with the situation of the Palestinian working class. The statements described the workers' situation as highly unstable—they are subject to low wages, mass lay-offs, rapidly increasing unemployment and exploitation. The trade unions called for designating May 1st as the international day against exploitation. Signatories to the statement included the unions for tailors, construction workers, public service employees and public institution workers.

The Progressive Front for Trade Union Action organized a mass festival in Al Hakawati Theater in Jerusalem. The main speech emphasized the necessity of trade union unity in occupied Palestine on a national basis, untouched by opportunism and blackmail. The division in the trade union movement was condemned, for this aggravates the movement's crisis. The right-wing leadership was held responsible for the deteriorating political situation and the reactionary regimes' intervention in Palestinian internal affairs. The US aggression on Libya was roundly condemned. In attendance at the festival were delegates from the Sons of the Village movement in 1948 occupied Palestine, and from the Golan Heights.

Also commemorating May 1st were the Union of Public Institution Workers in Bethlehem, Restaurant and Coffee Shop Workers in Jenin, and Al Ahlee Hospital Employees' Committee in Gaza.

The Federation of Palestinian Trade Unions in the Gaza Strip was prohibited from holding a celebration or issuing a publication, despite the fact that it had submitted a request to the occupation authorities on April 18th to obtain a permit.

In the part of Palestine occupied in 1948, all trade union branches called for transforming the entire month of March this year into a season of political, social, cultural and educational festivals in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the Day of the Land, and for escalating the struggle against racism.

WOMEN'S ACTIVITIES

The situation of the women's movement in occupied Palestine does not differ from that of other mass organizations in terms of the constant pressure and repression exerted by the Zionist occupation authorities to limit its activities. A current example is the arrest and trial of Yusra Barbari, president of the Women's Union in Gaza. She was accused of rendering public services without a permit. The services she had rendered were two courses in the English language and a sewing course! Despite such harassment, however, there were many women's activities in the past period. The celebration of Women's International Day became a forum for campaigning against the Jordanian regime's anti-Palestinian policies.

UNION OF PALESTINIAN WOMEN'S COMMITTEES

Early in the year, the Palestinian Women's Committees held their sixth annual bazaar in Jerusalem. The opening night, there was a meeting where the main speech stressed the importance of mobilizing Palestinian women in the organizational, political, economic and social fields, by recruiting them into the 41 branches of the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The speech also highlighted the need for giving more attention to Palestinian children by enrolling them in the union's 15 kindergartens.

Other activities of the Palestinian Women's Committees included medical days, arranged in coordination with the Popular Committee for Health Services and Care, where many people were treated and given free medicine, in most cities and villages of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. On March 6th, the union brought out a special issue of its publication entitled *The Struggle of Working Women*, devoted to its activities of the foregoing year and a communique condemning King Hussein's February speech. On the International Day of Women, the union issued statements. Union members visited the families of martyrs and prisoners. The union's main celebration was held in Al Hakawati Theater in Jerusalem. Folklore groups performed, and there was a speech on the theme of cancelling the Amman accord and the Cairo declaration (about ending armed struggle), as prerequisites for restoring the PLO's unity. The union also celebrated the International Day of Women at Bethlehem University and at Bir Zeit University in cooperation with the Student Action Front. It sponsored a celebration in Beit Hanoun in the Gaza Strip, where there was a speech and showing of the film "With My Own Eyes", based on Felicia Langer's book about torture in Israeli prisons.

The union organized many outings to different areas of occupied Palestine in order to acquaint women with the geography of their homeland. The Women's Committee in Duheisheh camp in the West Bank arranged a trip to Acca and Haifa, and participated in a trip to the Golan Heights.

In late March, a delegation from the union and the Progressive Women's Union visited Majdel Shams in the Golan Heights, delivering a message of solidarity with the people there. The union also sponsored a successful market in Bir Zeit's athletic club, in cooperation with the club.

OVERALL ACTIVITIES

All four major women's organizations in the occupied territories issued statements against King Hussein's February speech. In their statements, the Union of Women's Committees for Social Work, the Union of Women's Work Committees, the Working Women's Union, and the Union for Palestinian

Women's Committees stressed adherence to the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

International Women's Day was celebrated by all. The Union for Women's Committees for Social Work celebrated in Al Nuzha Theater in Jerusalem. The Women's Work Committee held their celebration during their fourth congress; at their celebration in Jerusalem, the main speech demanded that the PLO leadership cancel the Amman accord in order to begin a national dialogue. The Working Women's Committees had many celebrations and seminars. In the Gaza Strip, the Al Ahlee Hospital Employees' Committee celebrated with a meeting where the main speech focused on the Palestinian women's role in the national struggle. In 1948 occupied Palestine, the Arab Women's Committee organized a trip to Tiberius; 200 women from Acca, Lydda and the Galilee participated. In Nazareth, hundreds of women demonstrated on International Women's Day.

In Nablus, the Women's Work Committee, the Palestinian Women's Committee and the Working Women's Committee joined forces in solidarity with political prisoners. A memorandum signed by the families of prisoners was sent to the International Red Cross, protesting the inhuman conditions in the prisons and condemning the savage practices against the prisoners. Special attention was drawn to the transfer of many prisoners to Atlit Center, notorious as one of the worst prisons. Also noted was the situation in Bir Saba' (Beer Sheva) prison where the prisoners are grossly maltreated, food is scarce and bad, the prison is overcrowded, and there is no medical care.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

In addition to struggling for special student concerns, Palestinian students expressed their position on central political issues, as well as arranging cultural activities. After King Hussein's February speech, the various student blocs issued statements and held seminars in the universities and institutes. The Student Action Front asserted that this speech aimed to exert more pressure on the right-wing leadership to completely submit to the US conditions. It exposed King Hussein's maneuvers aimed at representing the Palestinians, and called for all nationalist forces to unite in opposing the PLO leadership's deviating trend. The Progressive Bloc confirmed the importance of national unity, adhering to the PLO and canceling the Amman accord.

BIR ZEIT

In solidarity with the university employees' union, the student movement issued a statement on January 28th, demanding cancellation of the administration's decision to terminate the contracts of professors and other employees - a decision which the administration claims is due to the university's financial crisis. The statement called on all national forces and institutions to intervene immediately to pressure the administration to cancel this decision. The student movement joined in the strike which began January 27th, and asserted that it should continue until the demands were met (for cancelling the termination decision).

The student movement is also struggling with the administration because of a huge tuition increase. A student conference was held in which the four student blocs participated (the Student Action Front, the Social Youth Bloc, the Students Progressive Bloc and the Student Unity Bloc). After the conference, a memorandum was submitted to the university council, listing the students' demands.

The four student blocs at Bir Zeit University signed a joint statement, rejecting appointments to the municipal and village councils of the West Bank. They called for public confrontation of these suspicious efforts and for support to the legitimate, elected councils. They demanded the cancellation of all the occupation's decisions and measures concerning the councils since 1982.

BETHLEHEM

The most important event at this university was that the students achieved almost all their demands through a strike

declared by the student council at the beginning of the year. After 17 days, the strike ended when an agreement was reached with the administration. Most of the students' demands were met, including the provision of a clinic, medical care and insurance, and a lawyer, reducing the prices of books, an obligatory course on the Palestinian question, a microphone for the student council, amendment of the laws for admission and transfer, improving the library and establishing a fund for needy students.

In March, the seventh annual book fair was held by the student council's cultural club. On April 18th, the student council's Palestinian popular heritage club sponsored a cultural event. Al Fonoon folklore group performed in the university's theater. As the celebration started, the US flag was burned amidst the shouting of slogans condemning the US attack on Libya. There was a speech condemning the attack and calling for Palestinian national unity.

AL NAJAH, NABLUS

A political dispute occurred among the students of this university when the Student Social Youth Movement invited Knesset member Mohammed Miari to speak at the student conference. The Student Action Front issued a statement opposing the invitation's having been extended without the knowledge of the other student blocs at the university. The statement termed the invitation a deviation, whereas the student conference should express national unity.

POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE, HEBRON

On April 16th, there was an Israeli military order to close down this institute for two weeks, after students had organized a demonstration protesting the Tehiya Party's conference in Hebron. The demonstrators had raised Palestinian flags and resisted the Zionist troops by throwing stones and fire bombs. Reinforcements had to be brought in to repress the demonstration. Zionist soldiers opened fire on the students and raided the institute. Eleven students were injured.

The Student Action Front at the Polytechnic Institute issued a statement condemning the US attack on Libya, that was signed by other organizations in Hebron: The Progressive Front for Trade Union Action, the Union of Volunteer Work Committees, the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees and the Union of High School Students' Committees.

HEBRON UNIVERSITY

On April 16th, the board of trustees of this university held an extraordinary meeting to discuss the US attack on Libya. They issued a statement on behalf of the university administration, staff and student body, condemning this attack which is a challenge to all Arabs. It is known that Ja'bari, chairman of the board of trustees is pro-Jordanian. One can therefore surmise that the statement came about as a result of pressure exerted on the board by the student body.

ABU DIS COLLEGE OF SCIENCES

Students began a strike for the right to form a student council. In a statement on January 4th, the students rejected the academic council's suggestion that they form science clubs rather than a student council. The university administration alleges that a student council would cause unrest and disturb the academic program. As the strike continued, the administration decided to cancel the academic term, itself disrupting the academic program. This intensified the students' opposition, and the student coordinating committee called for a nighttime sit-in starting January 19th.

CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY COLLEGE, RAMALLAH

On March 15th, all student blocs at this college joined together in arranging a student conference. The conference submitted a memorandum to the administration demanding that the students be allowed to form a student council, and that

expelled teachers and students be reinstated. The administration's response was to close the college for several days.

ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY, GAZA

On March 27th, Israeli forces raided the university and searched offices and classrooms until late in the night, while all traffic to the university was stopped. The preceding month, starting in mid-April, the university had witnessed violence against the nationalist and progressive students, perpetrated by the reactionary Islamic Student Bloc and supported by the administration.

The administration suspended five students for a week, and warned another, claiming they had violated university regulations. The students say that these measures were taken because they had organized a moment of silence commemorating the Deir Yassin massacre where 254 Palestinians were slaughtered by the Zionist Irgun terror organization in 1948. Progressive and nationalist students organized a sit-in on April 13th in front of the administration building, demanding that the administration cancel its decision to suspend the five students. On April 16th, the administration decided to expel all six students. Students from the reactionary Islamic Bloc prevented them from entering the university. They also beat up women who were participating in the sit-in. The Progressive Student Action Front issued a statement condemning the barbarism of the reactionaries, and accusing the administration of masterminding their actions. The statement also condemned the expulsions.

Mass organizations in the Gaza Strip also issued condemnations of the reactionaries' violence and held the administration responsible. The statement was signed by: The Progressive Front for Trade Union Action, the Palestinian Women's Committees, the Union of High School Students' Committees and the Volunteer Work Committee.

1948 OCCUPIED PALESTINE ARAB HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT COUNCILS

On February 9th, the regional conference of Arab High School Student Councils was held in Nazareth, with the following slogans: "Student unity is the guarantee for achieving our just demands, No to cosmopolitanism, Yes to programs that respect our national history, heritage and literature. The main speech at the conference asserted that the Palestinian students would never retreat in their struggle to achieve their legitimate rights. It was pointed out that the solid position of the high school councils had led to more repression against them by the Israeli authorities who were attempting to minimize the role of the councils. The speech included an announcement that the Arab Druze schools had joined the councils, as seen in the attendance of the delegation from these schools. The conference approved the main slogan for the coming year: For the broadest student unity to unite the struggle against fascism and racism directed at our Arab masses.

Nazareth Mayor Tawfiq Ziad addressed the conference on the current political situation, especially the attempts of imperialism, Zionism and Arab reaction to eliminate the PLO's role as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. He also said that a just peace will never be achieved unless the Palestinian people attain their legitimate rights to establish their independent state. He called on the students to unite in the battle against racism.

HEBREW UNIVERSITY

Early in the year, the Arab Student Front at Hebrew University issued a statement calling for resolving the Palestinian issue based on establishing an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. The statement condemned all attempts to split student unity, made by those who are chasing after capitulationist solutions, and conspiracies beginning with the Reagan plan up to the Amman accord. The statement called for foiling the Amman accord and restoring the PLO's unity, based on the Aden-Algiers agreement and the 16th PNC's resolutions.

The statement also demanded an end to the iron fist policy, and called on all students to unite in the struggle against the Israeli enemy's policies of occupation and racism, and for national independence for the Palestinian people, for equality and democracy.

It is noteworthy that the dominant phenomenon among the nationalist student organizations in the part of Palestine occupied in 1948, is that of positiveness and close coordination. This was evident in the joint list between the Arab Student Front and the Progressive Nationalist Movement in the recent student elections at Jerusalem, Haifa and Bir Saba' (Beer Sheba).

VOLUNTEER WORK COMMITTEES

In the Gaza Strip, the occupation authorities sent questionnaires to all employees of public establishments, and all members of popular committees and clubs. The questions focused on their membership and the extent of their involvement in volunteer work committees. At the same time, they were warned not to participate in any volunteer work without special permission from the authorities.

In the occupied West Bank, the most prominent volunteer work was in Duheisheh camp where the camp committee planted 300 grapevines. This was a step to reactivate the committee which has been dormant for a longer period due to the repression inflicted on Duheisheh by the occupation authorities. The committee now intends to implement a comprehensive plan in the near future, beginning with rebuilding the camp's community center that was previously demolished by the authorities.

In Jerusalem, commemorating the Day of the Land, the volunteer work committee prepared a piece of land and renovated a home belonging to a liberated prisoner. This was the first activity organized by the Jerusalem committee for four months. The Social Committee of the Beit Hanina Youth Club did maintenance work on the cemetery in Old Jerusalem.

The volunteer work committees were vocal this year in expressing their political views. All committees signed joint statements condemning King Hussein's speech, the Jordanian regime's plans, and the US attack on Libya, and commemorating Women's International Day, the Day of the Land and May 1st.

Volunteer work clean-up



Palestinian Women in Neve Tirza

The situation of Palestinian women political prisoners has deteriorated to the point that the Zionists can no longer maintain their media black-out on the appalling conditions. A case in point is Neve Tirza women's prison which houses thirty political prisoners, as well as Israeli common prisoners.

On June 21st, Israeli television broadcast that a fight had broken out between Israeli criminals and Palestinian 'security' (i.e. political) prisoners in Neve Tirza. Due to the incident, some of the 'security' prisoners were moved to Abu Khabir prison in Jaffa. After extensive efforts, Charlie Biton, former Knesset member and head of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, was able to get permission from the authorities to visit the Palestinian women prisoners on June 26th. He spoke with seven of them. The following is based on what these prisoners told him, as it was printed in *Al Mithaq* (Palestinian newspaper published in occupied Jerusalem).

THE FACTS OF JUNE 21

Mariam Rajoub, who works in the prison kitchen, tells what happened on June 21st: "While I was busy taking food to the other prisoners, I saw five Israeli prisoners beating a 16 year old Palestinian prisoner. I and another Palestinian prisoner, who is 17 years old, screamed for help. The guards came and locked us in our cells. We saw the guards pulling the young girl by her hair, although the administration knows that she suffers from severe headaches. She was forced into her cell, yet she continued to scream. The guards came back and carried her away by her hands and legs, and locked her in solitary confinement".

"Suddenly she stopped screaming. We were worried about her and demanded to meet with the prison director, but our demands were denied. The guards came and sprayed our cells heavily with tear gas, even though the administration knows that one prisoner in our cell suffers from asthma. She was suffocating and would have died if it hadn't been for the help of a fellow prisoner, a nurse, who gave her mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Later we were allowed to find out what had happened to the young prisoner: She stopped screaming suddenly because she was injected with valium."

GENERAL HARASSMENT

The Palestinian political prisoners told about their conditions in detail, and exposed the inhuman practices used against them by the prison administration and the Israeli criminal prisoners.

At Neve Tirza, the 30 political prisoners are kept in two wards. Ward A is designated for detainees, whereas Ward B is for those who are sentenced. "But this division was only made for publicity and the media," said one prisoner. "I was sentenced and will soon be released, but I spent my sentence in the detainees' ward."

The Palestinian political prisoners demand to be separated from the Israeli common prisoners. In Neve Tirza, the Israeli prisoners are mainly those sentenced for offenses against public morals, such as prostitution and drug dealing. Their behavior is often very disgraceful and they are constantly harassing the political prisoners, with the encouragement and protection of the prison administration. In May, as soon as some of the political prisoners were released from solitary confinement, the Israeli prisoners poured boiling water on them, causing severe burns. On another occasion, the Israeli prisoners threw garbage on Palestinian prisoners. In neither case did the prison administration or guards move to stop them.

The prison administration gives priority to the Israeli prisoners in a number of matters in the daily life in the prison. The Israeli prisoners go first at the lunch break. The Palestinian prisoners always have to eat standing up, because by the time they are allowed to go eat, all the seats are taken. The Israeli prisoners also have priority at the prison canteen. When the Palestinian prisoners are finally allowed to buy things, it is usually empty except for left-overs.

DISCRIMINATION AND DEPRIVATION

Palestinian prisoners don't get decent medical treatment. Another form of discrimination occurs through language. Hebrew is not only the official language in the prison, but it is the only language used by the administration. The Palestinian prisoners boycott the prison meetings, because the administration has rejected their demand to have the proceedings translated into Arabic. All announcements and bulletins are in Hebrew. Thus, it can take months for the Palestinian prisoners to find out their contents which deal with their daily life in prison.

There are no Arabic newspapers in the prison. Palestinian prisoners have found Arabic newspapers in the garbage, which means that the administration receives them, but does not distribute them to the prisoners. Although each prisoner is entitled to have a small radio, there are only three radios between the thirty Palestinian prisoners. The administration does not allow the prisoners' families to bring them radios, but insists that these be bought from the canteen. However, months pass before the canteen has radios for sale. Moreover, the administration confiscates the Palestinian prisoners' radios for months at a time, as a form of repression.

The Palestinian prisoners do not receive the aid given them by the Red Cross and Red Crescent, such as clothes and games. The administration has kept the basketball given by the Red Cross on the pretext that they decide the time for recreation. Furthermore, the administration prevented Palestinian prisoners, who have Israeli ID's (i.e. residents of occupied Jerusalem), from receiving any form of aid from the Red Cross.

The administration gives the Palestinian prisoners the break to which they are entitled at midday, when it is extremely hot. The prisoners come out of dark rooms into a yard where there is no shade at all. Breaks thus became a form of torture. As a result, the prisoners have boycotted the breaks for months.

HUNGER STRIKE

In the face of constant repression, the Palestinian women in Neve Tirza have developed a high degree of internal solidarity and collective action. Recently, they demanded that the administration move a psychologically disturbed prisoner to a room where she could receive special help; they offered to take care of her. The administration, however, moved the disturbed prisoner into a cell with three Palestinian teenagers. The disturbed prisoner beat the young girls. The administration reacted with collective punishment against the three teenagers, putting them in solitary confinement. The rest of the political prisoners protested by going on a four-day hunger strike, June 9-12th. They demanded the immediate release of the three young girls from solitary confinement.

A Jewish holiday came one day before the Muslim holiday at the end of Ramadan. The prison administration designated only one day for the prisoners' families to bring sweets and holiday gifts. This one day 'happened' to be on the Jewish holiday, which meant it fell on the last day of the Muslim fasting, not the holiday. Thus, the Muslim prisoners were forbidden to see their families on their holiday or receive gifts.

Aftermath of the 1986 Camp War

Interview with Comrade Abu Maher Yamani

In order to clarify the causes and effects of the latest round of fighting in the camps of Beirut, we interviewed Comrade Abu Maher Yamani in early July. Abu Maher is a member of the PFLP Politbureau, Secretary of the Palestine National Salvation Front (PNSF) and a member of the legitimate PLO Executive Committee. He is particularly qualified to speak on this subject for he was personally involved in reaching the most recent ceasefire agreement on June 14th, and one of the first Palestinian leaders to enter the camps afterwards.



Sabra camp, Beirut, June 1986

What are the reasons for the renewal of the camp war in the past few months?

The main reason was the Amal movement's lack of commitment to the terms of the Damascus agreement that was concluded on June 17, 1985, after the camp war begun by Amal on May 20th of the same year. Amal did not abide by clause two of the agreement which stipulated that they should withdraw their fighters from the area around the camps, back to the positions they had before the fighting broke out. Furthermore, the (Lebanese Army) Sixth Brigade did not return to their duties as practiced before the 1985 camp war, as was specified in clause three of the agreement. Rather they continued to support Amal in blockading the camps. Nor did Amal abide by clause five of the Damascus agreement which called for conducting mass gatherings and reconciliation to end the hostility caused by the war. Furthermore, the joint coordination committee, named in clause nine of the agreement, was unable to perform its duties on the political, social and security levels; it was unable to resolve pressing problems.

Amal not only continued to besiege the camps. They also stormed the houses of Palestinians in the surrounding quarters, arresting many and killing many others. One of the most bloody incidents was the autumn 1985 massacre in the Hureik quarter, enacted by spiteful elements of Amal. In this massacre, many Palestinian children and elderly were killed, and many homes were burned down.

Amal uses Arafat's group as justification for striking the camps. Can you comment on this?

We cannot deny the presence of Arafat's group in the camps, but there is a big difference between their presence and their activities. Of course, there are political differences between the deviationist trend of Arafat and his followers on the one hand and the PNSF on the other. However, despite this, the base of Arafat's supporters did not violate the Damascus agreement

between Amal and the Salvation Front. This base abided by the ceasefire. It is true that Arafat and members of his central committee were making provocative statements to the media, but their maneuvers and public statements were not in conformity with the position of their base in the camps. Their base even condemned the meeting between some Fatah Central Committee members and Amin Gemayel.

Arafat benefitted from the camp war. The war gave him room to maneuver and to speak about the Palestinian situation in Beirut, from his particular point of view, on the Arab level and internationally. Amal uses the activities of Arafat's group in the camp as the main justification for renewing the war, continuing the siege and shelling the camps. Yet when shelling the camps, Amal does not differentiate between Arafat's group and other groups and people that oppose him. Besides, if Amal had been committed to the June 1985 agreement, Arafat's men would not have found a justification for their moves and statements.

What are the dimensions of this war? What are its effects on the morale of the Palestinian masses in Lebanon, and on their material conditions?

The war definitely has negative effects on the Palestinian masses in Lebanon. The Palestinians lost many of their children and fighters in this battle of self-defense. Those fighters had participated in the confrontation against the Zionist enemy in Lebanon. Those children would have become fighters and played a role in future battles with the enemy. This war also left many injured and crippled, and these people will remain a mark of disgrace in the history of relations between the Palestinian masses and the Amal movement. Most importantly, a state of spite, resentment and animosity was created between two peoples who are supposed to be allies, uniting all their efforts and guns against the common enemy-Zionism, its agents and supporters.

In addition to the deterioration of living conditions, the siege makes it impossible for us to move and travel. It forces the camp population to consume food reserves and medical supplies. The shelling causes the destruction of the houses, water pipes and electricity network. Therefore, rebuilding the camps has become a major task to which we must devote attention.

Despite all of these negative effects and the worsening of the conditions of their life, the morale of our people, both civilians and fighters, was very high during the battle of self-defense. This consolidated our steadfastness in the worst conditions.

Could you give an idea about the Palestinian losses, material and human, and estimate Amal's casualties?

To be objective, we are unable to estimate our casualties and material losses inside and outside the camps. This needs a scientific field study, and a complete count of the number of houses, schools, clinics, etc. that were destroyed, but the losses definitely toll in the tens of millions of dollars. The human casualties, as given by the Palestinian Red Crescent, are as follows: In Bourj Al Barajneh camp, there were 67 martyrs and 460 wounded. In Sabra-Shatila, there were 26 martyrs and 135 wounded. Moreover, there are many detainees, and we don't have the exact number. We also don't know how many were killed outside the camps. By the same token, we cannot estimate Amal's casualties.

What is the Syrian role in this period? Are you satisfied with their efforts to end the camp war?

We wish the Syrian officials has used their influence to pressure the Amal leadership into adhering to the Damascus agreement which was signed with Syrian guidance and guarantees. We wish the Syrians would have stopped Amal's continuing siege of the camps, their aggression against the residents and harassment of people entering and leaving the camps. Eliminating these conditions would prevent the continued eruption of fighting around the camps.

Nonetheless we did feel the Syrian attempts to end the camp war in this period. The Syrians played an effective role and made various efforts which involved their top leadership. On the political level, Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam helped directly in reaching a ceasefire. On the military level, Syrian observers participate actively in the tasks of the observation committees around the camps. Brigadier Gazi Kanaan, head of the Syrian military intelligence in Lebanon, went to Beirut to observe the ceasefire. Clearly, there is a central Syrian decision about the importance of freezing the state of war between Amal and the Palestinians in the camps.

What is the position of the Lebanese progressive and nationalist forces and parties towards the camp war?

The PNSF delegation communicated with the various Lebanese progressive and nationalist forces and parties. They all confirmed their positions against the war and those who wage it. They all work to end this war and preserve the camps. They all work to implement the working paper that was approved by the Lebanese National Work Committee, in the presence of the PNSF delegation, for organizing Lebanese-Palestinian nationalist relations and enabling the Salvation Front to play its role in leading the Palestinian masses in Lebanon. This is based on clause 12 of the Damascus agreement of June 17, 1985, which reads: "The Lebanese National Democratic Front and the Amal movement consider the Palestine National Salvation Front as the recognized national political leadership of the Palestinians in Lebanon. It is so until it is possible to return the PLO to the nationalist line. This is confirmed in the PNSF's political platform."

How do you evaluate the position of the Palestinian organizations, that are outside the PNSF, towards the agreement?

In the light of the contact we had with the local Palestinian factions, outside the PNSF, in the camps, we were able to confirm that all are committed to the ceasefire decision. In fact, these factions have in practice shown their commitment to all decisions approved by the PNSF.

What is the relation between the 1985 Damascus agreement and the latest agreement to end the camp war?

We want it to be understood by all that the 1985 Damascus agreement is the basis. We still demand total commitment to this agreement, and that Lebanese-Palestinian relations be organized on this basis. The agreement that was reached on June 14, 1986, is not something new. Rather, it represents a decision to renew the mechanism for implementing the terms of the 1985 agreement. We consider it a decision for implementation, not a new agreement. It is known that the 1985 Damascus agreement came about as a result of dialogue between the Lebanese National Democratic Front, the Amal movement and the PNSF leadership, with the guidance of Syrian Vice-President Khaddam. The three forces signed the agreement with Syrian guarantees.

What about the rumors of the possibility of internal Palestinian fighting in the Beirut camps?

These rumors are being spread by our enemies. We rely on political struggle to resolve the political differences which exist in the Palestinian arena. In its political program, the PNSF defined its position on Arafat's trend; it defined the means for achieving its program for restoring the PLO to the national line. We differentiate between the leadership of the deviationist political trend, and the base of Arafat's supporters in the camps. We will struggle politically to mobilize our Palestinian people against the deviationist trend and its leaders. We do not approve of any other means that would lead to internal Palestinian fighting. This is based on our conviction that the revolution cannot be eliminated even by the large enemy camp, but it would be eroded and eventually eliminated if armed violence replaces political struggle within its ranks.

Do you believe that the recent agreement provides a permanent solution for the camp war?

Once again, we confirm our commitment to the 1985 Damascus agreement. We demand that Amal make the same commitment and implement all the terms of this agreement. As we explained, the recent agreement was a decision to implement the principles confirmed in the Damascus agreement. We are determined to reinforce the Palestinian-Lebanese-Syrian alliance for confronting the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary schemes. These schemes aim at liquidating the Palestinian cause, striking the progressive nationalist forces in the region, and imposing imperialist hegemony in order to continue exploitation and protect the Zionist entity.

With this understanding, we will devote every effort to reinforce militant relations between the Palestinian masses and the Lebanese masses and their national and progressive leadership. We hope that we will not be forced, once again, to confront Amal militarily, in order to defend our people in the camps. Fighting between two peoples, who are in the same trench, means a loss to all nationalists and a benefit to our enemies. We hope that the Amal movement has realized that political dialogue is the correct means for resolving differences between nationalists, and that internal fighting intensifies differences rather than help in resolving them.

If the Amal movement comes to this realization, we will succeed in our efforts to unify Lebanese and Palestinian nationalists to confront the fascist scheme on the one hand, and to restore healthy relations between our peoples in the camps and in Lebanon. This should be a guideline for all responsible leaders in order to avoid repeating the bloody tragedy to which both Palestinians and Lebanese fell victim.

Jordan's War on the PLO

King Hussein of Jordan has continued his attempts to eliminate the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, a task made easier by the Palestinian right wing's having signed the Amman accord with the Jordanian monarch.

In his efforts to enter the imperialist peace, dragging the PLO behind him, King Hussein was not satisfied with the concessions given by Arafat. Rather, the monarch wanted the PLO to reduce itself to an appendage of the Jordanian foreign ministry. After Hussein's attempts ran into obstacles, he froze the coordination with Arafat's leadership and pursued his old-new plan for wiping out the PLO altogether. In line with this, the Jordanian regime has taken a series of measures which, taken singly, may appear unimportant, but which add up to a consistent anti-Palestinian policy.

During his last visit to Washington D.C., King Hussein lobbied for his plans of finding an alternative leadership to the PLO. In an interview with the *Washington Post* on June 11th, "He left an impression, without saying so explicitly, that an Arab summit conference might be called upon to endorse a new leadership for the Palestine Liberation Organization or, failing that, to give recognition to leadership outside the PLO that would cooperate with King Hussein in peace efforts." Hussein himself said, "Maybe the Palestinians themselves will find it necessary to reorganize themselves in such a way as to enable this (new leadership) to emerge" (*International Herald Tribune*, June 12th).

Of course, the plans of Hussein caused delight in Washington and Tel Aviv, and he continued on this course. In every public statement, he stresses his suspicions about the PLO's ability to represent the Palestinians. In a press conference in Jordan on July 12th, he opened fire again: "Our difference with the PLO is that they see the Palestinian people as one people, regardless of their location... We see the importance of keeping our family on their land, and after we recover the land for the price of peace, the Palestinians would decide for themselves within the framework of a confederated Jordanian-Palestinian state... The question of self-determination is a Jordanian-Palestinian question. It is totally wrong to discuss it in a (international) conference... The PLO should accept 242 and 338, and denounce terrorism to be able to attend the conference and start relations with the US."

These words need no explanation.

They mean simply the negation of the Palestinians' right to self-determination. The monarch said that the Palestinians "need an institution to play its role fully in representing the Palestinian people," whereas the Palestinians already have their institution, and that is the PLO. The problem facing the Palestinians is the ability of this US puppet to overtly wage war on their sole, legitimate representative. King Hussein is only able to do so because of Arafat's having signed the Amman accord, which resulted in the division and weakening of the PLO. Accordingly, confronting the King's moves demands cancellation of the Amman accord and reunification of the PLO on the national platform, opposed to imperialism, Zionism and reaction.

SILENCING THE PALESTINIAN VOICE

In accordance with the same policy, the Jordanian regime increased repression in Jordan. After the massacre at Yarmouk University and the attacks on the Jordanian national movement (see *Democratic Palestine* No. 17), the regime directed its fire against the Palestinians.

In the beginning of June, the regime decided to incorporate all Palestinian youth centers into the Jordanian Ministry of Youth. The regime dissolved the elected executive committees of these centers, that had the backing of progressive and nationalist forces. Instead, the Ministry of Youth appointed a set of stooge executive committees.

The director of UNRWA in Jordan sent a letter on June 5th, to the Minister of the Occupied Territories, explaining the dangers of the step and its contradiction with UN agreements and specifically article 100 of the UN Charter. The Jordanian regime, however, ignored the UNRWA letter and continued its plan of negating any expression of the Palestinian people's independent identity.

The Jordanian regime took anti-democratic steps against our people in the occupied West Bank. The Jordanian press, radio and television were ordered to boycott news published by the independent Palestinian press in Jerusalem. Besides being an attempt to cut the flow of information between our people in the West Bank and Jordan, this was intended to punish

Palestinian journalists for their support of the PLO as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The regime placed 34 journalists in the West Bank on a black list. This list included the chief editors of four newspapers -*Al Mithaq*, *Al Fajr*, *Al Quds* and *Al Shaab*- and 10 other editors. These journalists face detention and interrogation if they visit Jordan.

In another move to pressure the PLO and the Palestinians generally, the Jordanian regime revoked the passports of 35 Palestinians who had been expelled from the West Bank by the Israeli authorities. Some of the deported were freed in the 1985 prisoner exchange; most of them are supporters of Arafat's Fatah. The Jordanian regime also placed some of them under house arrest.

SEARCHING FOR 'MODERATES'

The Jordanian regime is also working directly in the occupied territories to create an alternative leadership to the PLO. An Israeli official said that Jordan is pressuring for the appointment of four 'moderate' mayors in the West Bank, in an attempt to weaken the PLO. He added that King Hussein has promised more aid to cities and towns that cooperate with his plans (*Al Safir*, July 2nd).

To this end, the Jordanian cabinet approved a five-year 'development' plan for the West Bank, whereby \$1.4 billion, supplied by the US and Gulf states, will be dispensed by the Jordanian regime. Of this, only \$.25 billion will be spent on agriculture and industry; the rest will be spent on services. This means that the Zionist occupation authorities will be excused from spending any money on services for the people they exploit daily. The term 'services' is also an appropriate guise for dispensing funds as bribes in order to cultivate 'moderate' Palestinian figures who will advertise for Hussein's policy of returning the occupied West Bank to Jordanian rule, in accordance with the framework that was presented in the Reagan plan in 1982.

The Jordanian regime has moreover decided to resume paying the salaries of those employed in the public sector before the 1967 occupation, and to give fuel subsidies. Nimrod Novek, assistant to the Zionist prime minister, expressed support to the Jordanian plans, saying, «We support anything that encourages the moderates.»

The proposed mayors are Mohammed Rashad Ja'abari for Al Khalil (Hebron), Khalil Mousa for Ramallah, Walid Mustafa for Al Bireh and Abdul Fattah Dudeen for Al Dura. These four persons were summoned to Jordan to discuss the question of their appointments. After returning to Jerusalem, Ja'abari said, "Jordan supports

the appointment of the four mayors in the West Bank, and intends to give financial aid to these municipalities." He said he had discussed the issue with the prime minister of Jordan.

The Jordanian regime knows full well that these moves will elicit mass opposition, which is why it is presenting the political poison with a financial sugar-coating. There is also a lot of fear among those proposed for appointment, because they realize the fate that awaits those who collaborate with the enemies of the Palestinian revolution. The execution of Zafer Al Masri has not been forgotten. Even the right wing leadership of the PLO has expressed its opposition to these appointments, because this serves 'Israel' as was stated by Arafat's deputy, Abu Jihad.

All patriotic Palestinian organizations issued a statement warning of the dangers of this step and advising people not to become the instrument of the Zionist-Jordanian plans.

In Gaza, Rashad Shawwa, infamous for his collaboration with the occupation, has become more outspoken. He visited Jordan in mid-July, where he saluted "the role King Hussein plays in supporting the people in the occupied West Bank and Gaza... Jordan is the closest party that knows what is going on in the occupied territories." Shawwa praised Jordan's decision to grant passports to Gazans who reside in Jordan—a measure that he has advocated since 1970 in order to strengthen the King's claim to representing the Palestinians. Shawwa said that the PLO "should not enforce its position on the Palestinian people, but should hold a referendum." He expressed support to resolution 242, claiming it preserves the rights of the Palestinian people (*Al Ra'i* Jordanian daily, July 16th).

Shawwa is not naive. He knows full well the implications of proposing the PLO hold a referendum under the prevailing conditions of occupation. By seesawing between Cairo and Amman, he is trying to carve a place for himself in a condominium arrangement whereby the West Bank and Gaza Strip would be jointly administered by the Zionist state and Jordan. The right-wing leadership of the PLO bears part of the responsibility for Shawwa's moves, for it has dealt with him in a way that gave him a nationalist cover.

All Palestinian nationalist organizations issued statements condemning Shawwa's remarks which are in line with the Jordanian regime's efforts to find an alternative leadership for the Palestinian people. They condemned Shawwa's capitulationist position and warned all those collaborating with Jordan of the dangers of involvement in the Jordanian-Israeli conspiracy of 'self-rule' and condominium arrangements.

OFFICE CLOSURES

On July 8th, the Jordanian regime took a further step intended to weaken the PLO and its links with the Palestinians in the West Bank, and to increase pressure on the Arafat leadership. All 25 offices of Arafat's Fatah organization in Jordan were closed, including Arafat's own office. Abu Jihad, Arafat's deputy, was ordered to leave the country within 48 hours. Armored vehicles surrounded Palestinian offices.

Soon after these measures were announced, cheers of joy echoed in Zionist circles. In a comment to *Yediot Aharonot* Israeli daily, Prime Minister Peres praised King Hussein and his moves to encourage an alternative Palestinian leadership. Defense Minister Rabin called the Jordanian moves "a step in the right direction." An Israeli official, who declined to be identified, said that the closing of the offices will improve cooperation between 'Israel' and Jordan concerning the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In Washington, US officials commented positively on the Jordanian steps. One of them, speaking off the record, said that Hussein's aim was to put more pressure on Arafat (*Al Safir*, July 9th).

The Palestinian response was naturally quite the opposite. Students at West Bank universities demonstrated against the King's anti-PLO measures. In Jerusalem and Nablus, hundreds came out in the streets carrying the Palestinian flag, chanting slogans for the PLO, and condemning Hussein's moves. Palestinians also threatened to burn 1,000 Jordanian passports to show opposition to Jordanian policy.

Democratic and nationalist forces demanded that Arafat cancel the Amman accord to facilitate the possibility of reuniting the PLO. The PFLP, in a communique, termed the Jordanian decision "part of the steps taken by the Jordanian regime in the past period, aiming to eliminate the PLO and secure passage of the 'self-rule' plot in full coordination with the Zionist entity... We regret that despite the continuous blows dealt to the dominant leadership of the PLO by the Jordanian regime, this leadership is still avoiding fulfilling the demand of the masses for immediate cancellation of the Amman accord. This cancellation would be the prerequisite for Palestinian national dialogue which would enable the reuniting of the PLO on a solid basis, opposed to the imperialist-Zionist-reactionary alliance."

YARMOUK UNIVERSITY — UPDATE

Life did not return to normal at Yarmouk University in Irbid, northern Jordan. After the May 15th student protests which the regime's forces put down in a brutal massacre, checkpoints were set up around the campus, manned by police empowered to arrest any student suspected of being an activist. A state of semi-siege prevailed as King Hussein's special bedouin forces continued their encampment on the campus grounds. Students commemorated their dead colleagues by wearing black arm bands and gathering in the area where the May 15th clashes had occurred.

It is now estimated that 33 died in the clashes. Afterwards, 25 students remained in comas in intensive care wards. Many others were still missing. At the insistence of bereaved families, the intelligence service was forced to release information as to where their children had been buried by security men. The families reburied their children according to religious custom. A new candidate for president of Yarmouk University has been named, Dr. Adlouni, but he is reportedly hesitant to take up such a trouble-loaded post.

Repercussions of the uprising reached beyond Irbid. In the Palestinian refugee camp, Al Wahdat, in Amman, clashes broke out between camp resi-

dents and the special bedouin forces who had attacked homes searching for nationalist students studying at Yarmouk University. Many Jordanians have objected to the use of the bedouin forces against the students. They fear that this has sparked Palestinian-Jordanian enmity. (It is to be remembered that these bedouin forces were on the forefront when the regime attacked the Palestinian resistance and masses in 1970-71.)

The only positive aspect of the post-massacre period is the release of student detainees, and the fact the students and progressive forces continue their struggle for democratic freedoms. The high degree of solidarity among the students encouraged other sectors of the population, in other parts of Jordan, to exert pressure on the regime, leading it to release student detainees. Moreover, students formed a committee to pursue the following demands with the university administration, in addition to their original demands: (1) bringing to trial those responsible for the killings; (2) securing payment for students still being treated for injuries; and (3) halting harassment of students and releasing the remaining detainees. These demands are supported by the Jordanian nationalist parties and forces who have been active in distributing thousands of leaflets, exposing the regime's brutality and demanding democratic freedom for the people.

Gaza and Soweto

Children in Jabalia

Overcrowded shanties line unpaved streets; a newborn baby dies due to lack of adequate health care facilities; racist soldiers charge into a group of youth; schoolchildren are lulled by a third-rate educational curriculum devoid of any truthful reference to their own history and culture; meanwhile, thousands leave home at dawn to work in the colonizers' enterprises.

This is daily fare for Palestinians of the occupied Gaza Strip and Africans living in Soweto, outside Johannesburg, South Africa. Both are victims of settler colonialism's ultimate development. Dispossessed of their land and other means of independent livelihood, they are forced to sell their labor power cheap - to the colonizers. 'Israel' and South African settler colonialism represent a particularly ruthless form of capitalism. Applying racist laws and fascist repression, they escape paying Palestinians and Blacks, respectively, wages that provide a minimal standard of living. With the profits of this super-exploitation, the regimes provide extra welfare to the settler population, increasing its cohesion across class boundaries. This single fact is the main explanation for the abject living conditions and oppression shared by Gazans and Sowetans.

The comparison between Gaza and Soweto was recently made in a report on the Gaza Strip, published by the West Bank Data Base Project, headed by Meron Benvenisti, Israeli researcher and former deputy mayor of Jerusalem. The report called Gaza 'Israel's Soweto' due to its booming population, appalling health conditions, deteriorating economy and increasing dependence on 'Israel'.

NO SPACE TO GROW

The total area of the Gaza Strip is 140 square miles. Of these, 43.6 have been declared 'state lands', i.e., reserved exclusively for use by Israeli Jews. On this one-third of the Strip, there are something over 2,000 Zionist settlers in 18 settlements; some use their settlement only for weekend farming or recreation. In contrast, 525,000 Palestinians live in the remaining 96.4 square miles. Their population density is 5,440 persons per square mile, one of the highest in the world.

The majority of Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip today are refugees from the 1948 occupation of Palestine; 69% of them live in eight refugee camps. Israeli occupation policy bears direct responsibility for inhuman overcrowding. Despite population growth, the camps cannot be expanded, and residents are forbidden to enlarge or even renovate their houses. Some have been fined for plastering a wall or changing a window. 'Illegal' additions are simply demolished, as happened with 35 shel-

ters in Shatti camp in 1983. This is not merely application of zoning laws, but a deliberate part of the occupation policy designed to control the population. The problem is compounded by the Zionists' practice of demolishing the houses of families of 'suspects'. In one week of the spring of 1983, six houses were bulldozed, leaving 55 people homeless because members of the family were wanted or imprisoned (but not tried).

The result of all this is 10-20 persons living in small corrugated iron or mud huts built with the help of the UN in the early fifties, for families less than half their present size. In the largest camp, Jabalia, there is an average of six persons per room.

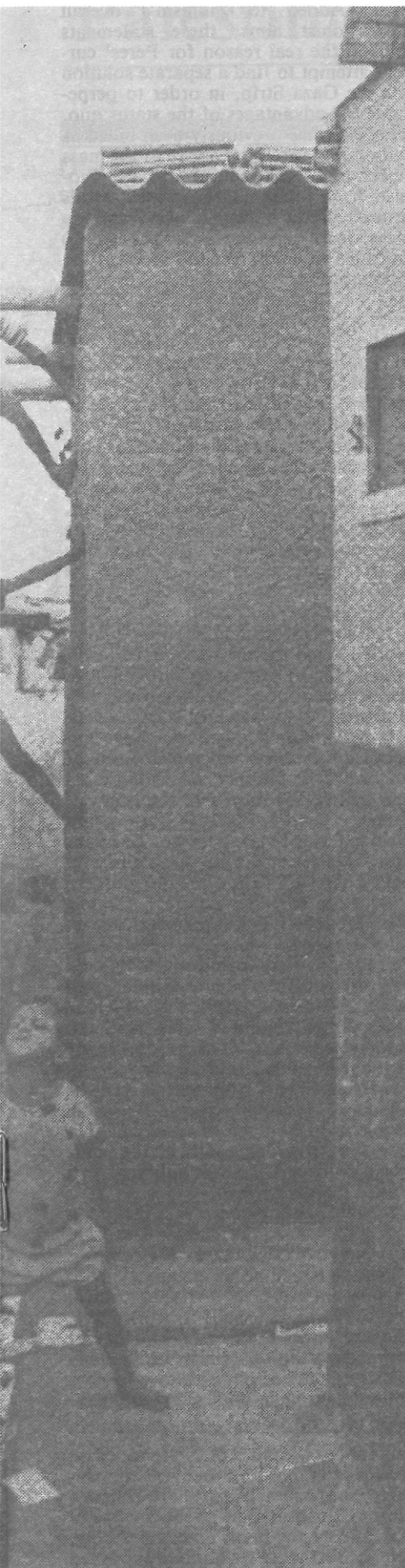
REFUGEES IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY

Like Gaza Palestinians, and most Black South Africans, the people of Soweto are refugees in their own country. Soweto grew into an overcrowded ghetto with a population of one and a half million as a direct result of apartheid. In the forties and fifties, Blacks were forced out of Johannesburg and whole neighborhoods razed to the ground, pushing thousands into Soweto. Under Pretoria's Bantustan policy, Black South Africans have no permanent residence rights outside their assigned 'tribal homeland'. Thus, Sowetans rent their houses from the government. Recently, in one of its fake 'reform' gestures, the Botha government offered Sowetans 99-year leases on their houses, but only a handful had enough money to pay for this.

Also in accordance with apartheid, residents must carry a pass showing they have the right to be in Soweto, or travel to work in Johannesburg. For others, special permission is needed to enter Soweto, just as the Israeli occupation authorities do their best to isolate the Gaza Strip, unless it comes to Gazans doing menial work in 'Israel'.

An average of 14 persons live in the four-room matchboxes that crowd Soweto's streets. Only one out of every five houses has electricity. Most do not have an indoor toilet. The most extreme crowding is found in the hostels for migrant workers who leave their families in the Bantustans, where there is no work, for eleven months a year to work in Johannesburg where they are for-





bidden to live. Cultural and recreational opportunities are limited, except for what the people create themselves. Apartheid laws forbid Blacks from setting up establishments that provide more than basic necessities, ruling out any substantial economic sector in Soweto.

BANTU EDUCATION

School children made Soweto famous with their 1976 uprising and school boycott that lasted for months. They were protesting having Afrikaans (the Boer settlers' language) imposed as the main language for instruction instead of English. The students correctly saw this change as part of the whole system of Bantu education designed to keep them in ignorance, fit only for menial jobs, rather than being educated citizens, equipped to fight for their rights. They were protesting financial starvation of their schools, makeshift classrooms with an average of sixty students per teacher, inferior academic and sports facilities. They were protesting that their parents had to pay for their schooling, while education for white South Africans is free. They were protesting the blatant lies told in the schools, like that their own ancestors migrated to South Africa in 1652, the same time the first white colonialists arrived in the Cape from Europe.

In the Gaza Strip, Israeli policy is similarly to make the Palestinians ignorant. This is enforced via the curriculum which, with the 1967 occupation, was purged of all mention of Palestinian history, and has moreover not been updated to meet modern standards. The Israeli policy is also enacted materially. There are simply not enough classrooms and teachers. Instead of new schools being built for a

growing population, some have actually been closed after 1967. In the UNRWA schools, there is an average of 50 children per class. In 1984, the Israeli authorities refused to allow UNRWA to build new classrooms to alleviate overcrowding. There are no secondary schools in the refugee camps, so children must walk or bicycle for miles, past Zionist checkpoints where they are frequently harassed.

As a result of the hardships of occupation, fewer students are finishing secondary school than before 1967. Many drop out to work to help provide for their families. Other contributing factors are the limited access to higher education and the lack of job opportunities for those who do continue their education. The only university in the Strip is the Islamic University, opened in 1978 after Egypt closed its universities to Gaza students in line with the Camp David policy. This university is only three years and thus cannot grant degrees, and the Zionist authorities have so far refused requests for a license for the fourth year.

SHARED DESTITUTION

In 1948, UNRWA considered 600 families in the Gaza Strip destitute. Palestinians who work in the Israeli economy receive 40% less than the average Israeli wage, and those working in the local economy may earn even less. Yet substandard wages are only the latest symptom, not the original cause of Gazan poverty. The basic reason is the Zionist occupation's systematic destruction of the local economy. Citrus fruit production, a major source of income, has been almost halved in the last decade, due to Israeli restrictions on marketing. The fishing industry, from which almost 30,000 Gazans draw sustenance, has ▶

Text of a protest leaflet during the 1976 Soweto school boycott: «Parents, you should rejoice for having given birth to this type of child... a child who prefers to die from a bullet rather than to swallow a poisonous education which relegates him and his parents to a position of perpetual subordination.»



been all but strangled by Israeli imposed limitations on fishing grounds. These have been reduced to one sixth of their original size with daily catch reduced accordingly. Fishermen who violate the 12 mile limit risk fines, having their boats confiscated and being shot at by the Zionist forces. Yet Israeli boats fish in the forbidden areas.

The Israeli authorities' deliberate neglect of social services also contributes to poverty. Most glaring are the grossly substandard medical facilities and generally unhealthy living conditions. None of the camps, and only three towns and villages, have a sewage system. There are thus constant overflows, sometimes resulting in outbreaks of cholera. Benvenisti reported Gaza's Shifa Hospital as a scandal - patients two to a bed, mice, no X-ray machine, patients waiting up to a year for some operations, and emergency patients sent to Ashkelon bleeding, due to lack of intensive care equipment. The fact that the Israeli authorities refused to disclose the health budget for Gaza in 1985 to the WHO, is damning in itself. While before the 1967 occupation, funding to public services in the Strip was 20% of the area's gross national product, today under Israeli occupation, it is less than 10%. The result in the field of health can be deduced from indices such as the infant mortality rate which is four times higher than among Jews in 'Israel'.

THEFT

The most interesting finding in Benvenisti's report is the extent to which the Israeli authorities have actually robbed the Gaza Strip, by extracting taxes without giving commensurate services. Subtracting what the Israeli administration has expended on the Gaza population from the taxes paid by Gazans (direct taxes and income taxes paid by those working in 'Israel', plus VAT on Israeli goods paid by all), Benvenisti calculates that the Zionist state owes Gazans \$500 million for their contribution to the Israeli economy over 19 years of occupation. (One could, of course, arrive at an even larger sum if one counts the value of land confiscated and labor power exerted at substandard wages.)

A similar grand larceny has been committed against the South African masses. In a complex process of colonization stretching over three decades, the vast majority of the people were deprived of all but 13% of the country's land, i.e., relegated to the bantustans where the soil is least fertile and there are no jobs, social services or infrastructure to speak of. South African Blacks do the grueling labor in agriculture and the mines for wages averaging one-fourth those of white workers. Studies in the eighties show that the gap between Black and white wages is widening, and in places like Soweto real wages are declining markedly. In short, the African masses

have built the wealth of the country, but are deprived of political rights and basic necessities. To give just some examples: 30% of Black children are malnourished. The budget for all health care in the 10 bantustans amounts to the cost of running one white hospital in Johannesburg. The government spends almost ten times more to educate a white student than a Black. According to official figures, the infant mortality rate among Blacks is six times higher than for whites. In the Bantustans, it is higher still.

GHETTOS BESIEGED

While the Israeli and South African governments and capitalists thrive on Gaza and Soweto as labor camps, they also fear these concentrations of the oppressed. Thus, Gazans and Sowetans live under a perpetual state of siege.

It is not without reason that the racist rulers fear the masses in these two ghettos. Thousands of African youth were radicalized in the 1976 uprising in Soweto, which can correctly be termed the precursor of the current mass uprising in South Africa. Also the Gaza Strip has been a focus of resistance. Following the 1967 occupation, armed struggle reached the point that the fedayeen controlled the Strip by night, while the Israeli troops patrolled only by day. The Zionist occupation's response was a particularly brutal application of military rule. Ariel Sharon directed a counterinsurgency campaign whereby the camps in the Strip were 'rearranged'. In 1971, 3,000 shelters were destroyed to make way for wide roads to accommodate the occupiers' patrols. Thousands were removed from the most densely populated areas into 'townships' - as Soweto is also euphemistically called. This was the start of a resettlement conspiracy that continues until today; since 1971, 4,000 refugees have been evicted from Rafah. Israeli repression did not stop with the 1971 crushing of revolutionary cells, but is ongoing. This May, a number of entrances to Jabalia camp were sealed off with barbed wire, and orchard owners were ordered to uproot their trees along the main road, to prevent attacks on military patrols.

Today, Soweto is under an intense siege with the latest state of emergency, hundreds arrested and the apartheid police and army opening fire on any movement of the masses. The Gaza Strip experienced a similar siege during the spring 1982 mass uprising in occupied Palestine. A ten-day curfew was clamped on Jabalia camp. Workers returning from jobs in 'Israel' were arbitrarily beaten and arrested, as were parents who ventured out to retrieve children who had left the house. In this way, 700 men were assembled on a single day and made to pay exorbitant fines for 'violating the curfew'.

WHY GAZA FIRST?

«The whole of Gaza is becoming a labor camp for use by Israel...Gaza is a profit-making business for the Israeli

treasury,» according to Meron Benvenisti. Added to Zionism's overall expansionist aims, these statements explain the real reason for Peres' current attempt to find a separate solution for the Gaza Strip, in order to perpetuate the advantages of the status quo. This plan has previously been billed as 'autonomy first', but aware of the mass rejection of this conspiracy, the Zionists have begun shuffling their words around. The message, however, is clear. In the spring, 'Israel' named 20 so-called directors general in Gaza for administering local affairs. Commenting on this, a senior Israeli official said: «It's not Camp David. I'm not talking autonomy. It's not home rule, but instead of work being done by Israelis, it'll be done by people who are residents of the West Bank and Gaza. They will not decide policy questions. Let them improve their standard of living and the quality of their lives. We're also giving them freedom to bring in Arab money to build hospitals, schools and so forth. The better the economic situation, the less attraction to terrorism. We're not changing the structure, but only who does what» (*Boston Globe*, May 24th).

Gaza mayor Rashad Shawwa, known feudal and rightist, responded to the Israeli plan by proposing autonomy for the Strip under Arab sovereignty (Egyptian / Jordanian). The masses, however, won't swallow this. The people of the Gaza Strip understand the essence of 'autonomy' no matter what it is called, for they bore the brunt of Camp David. Though the accord included a settlement freeze, 12 of the now 18 settlements in the Strip were built after 1978. They line the southern coast close to water aquifers. Dealing another blow to Palestinian agriculture, Zionist settlers sank 35 wells, while Palestinians were forbidden to dig any. The town of Khan Younis is now boxed in by settlements. Rafah was redivided as the Israelis withdrew from the Sinai. Homes were bulldozed to create the new border; families were divided and owners separated from their orchards; commerce was totally disrupted as most people are forbidden to cross the dividing line. Swedish camp in the same area became a permanent military zone; there is nightly curfew.

Despite the extreme hardship in which they live, the Gaza masses are not likely to fall prey to the illusions which the Israeli occupiers are trying to implant in order to maintain control over the Strip, especially its work force. The rise in the number and quality of anti-occupation operations in the Strip testifies to the people's resolve to continue the struggle until genuine liberation.

Facts about the Gaza Strip are based on newspaper reports of Benvenisti's findings and issues of *Al Fajr* (English edition). Information about Soweto is drawn from the book *Freedom Rising*, written by James North and published in New York by Macmillan in 1985. ●

Palestinian Women's Organization

First Congress

Despite the extremely difficult situation of the Palestinian revolution generally, Palestinian women have continued their combined social and national struggle, to assert themselves in all fields and prove that they are a vital factor in the process of liberation. The convening of the first conference of the Palestinian Women's Organization, affiliated to the PFLP, is another manifestation of women's struggle.

The conference was held June 26-27th, under the slogan: For developing the Palestinian Women's Organization, enhancing the unity of the Palestinian women's movement within the General Union of Palestinian Women, and participating in reuniting the PLO on the basis of opposition to imperialism and Zionism. Comrade Leila Khaled opened the conference. The opening session was attended by delegations from various local, regional and international women's organizations.

The speech of the preparatory committee of the Palestinian Women's Organization (PWO) was delivered by its president, Comrade Samira Salah. She stressed that holding the conference was in itself an achievement, and that it was the culmination of the efforts of all branches of the PWO. She outlined the agenda of the conference as follows:

(a) discussion of the organizational report; (b) confirmation of the program for the coming four years; (c) adopting the internal rules and regulations; and (d) election of the general council. It was emphasized that the PWO is the result of the need for a broader democratic framework to encompass the increasing number of active women, and not a product of the crisis in the PLO and the General Union for Palestinian Women.

Other speakers at the opening session were: Comrade Widad Hilal of the General Union of Syrian Women; Comrade Zuhur Al Qadi of the General Secretariat of the GUPW; Comrade Butheina of the Iraqi Women's League; and Comrade Abu Ali Mustafa, Deputy General Secretary of the PFLP, whose speech is summarized below.

NO COMPLETE FREEDOM WITHOUT FREEDOM FOR WOMEN

Comrade Abu Ali Mustafa began his speech by expressing his deep respect and admiration for all the women who had expended efforts for making the first conference of the PWO possible. He also saluted the steadfast Palestinian women under Zionist occupation and in the Zionist jails. He saluted all militant Arab women and all women in the world who struggle for liberation, progress and democracy, who raise the banner of peace.

Comrade Abu Ali pointed out that this first conference should be modestly considered as the first step on a long, hard path of struggle towards complete liberation. The PWO should be considered as a suitable framework for women's struggle to achieve revolutionary goals. The revolutionary process is the joint responsibility of both men and women. Thus, the women's issue should not be dealt with apart from the overall process of liberation. The complexity and difficulty of this responsibility stems from the economic and social conditions, both of which impose barriers which hinder human progress and pose real challenges to all those who struggle for liberation.

Comrade Abu Ali pointed out how socialism has enabled women to progress at an enormous pace, while under the shackles of bourgeois societies women's progress is not only hindered, but they are considered the promoters of products if not commodities themselves. These same distorted values are being imported into our region by the bourgeois regimes, threatening our principles and everything national and wholesome. Again, in these societies, it is women who pay the highest price—not in cash, but in lack of freedom.

Comrade Abu Ali noted that his purpose was not to arouse fear, but to instill awareness of the dangers of these realities, so as to enable all to better protect our struggle and avoid illusions. He mentioned two unsound trends which are often encountered in dealing with the women's question: One is the trend which completely rejects whatever it considers unfavorable, calling for total rebellion and immediate, comprehensive solutions. The second is considering women's role as something insignificant, that women should not be included in the process of liberation; this presupposes that the liberation process falls on the shoulders of half the society only.

In contrast, the sound trend is characterized by constant work, step-by-step, to effect the needed cultural, economic and political changes, keeping in mind the dialectical relation between the task of national liberation and the task of social change. Such a view is imperative, because there is no complete freedom for any society without freedom for women. On the other hand, there is no such thing as a liberated woman outside the context of a liberated, democratic, socialist society. Moreover, the process of cultural, educational and political development should not be limited to women, but should involve men as well, to liberate them from limited horizons of understanding.

Comrade Abu Ali emphasized that in the light of the great national tasks facing us all, it is necessary to uphold the spirit of steadfastness and resistance in order to guarantee the continuity of the revolution. Thus, in this conference, the national issue cannot be overlooked, because it unites us in the struggle, requiring the efforts of both men and women. Suffering and death have become common to us all. "Not because of any lack of human feelings, but because we do have feelings like everyone else, we are even more determined to struggle until victory for our people, so that our children will live a normal life as they deserve. We are a people destined to sacrifice and we are convinced of the necessity of this sacrifice."

THE REVOLUTION WILL CONTINUE

Comrade Abu Ali emphasized that no one is under the illusion that the struggle will be over in a matter of years. "Yet without a doubt, a coming generation of our people will be victorious." He spoke of the reactionary regimes who are so brave when it comes to striking the people, but so cowardly when it comes to confronting the real enemy. These regimes fear the spread of revolution in the region, sparked by the Palestinian revolution. From this stems their attempt to cut the revolution down to size, but "our people and revolution will remain a thousand times larger than the size they cut out for us... We will strike at all who have the illusion that if they kill the Palestinians by the thousands, the revolution will end. This revolution will not end as long as our women have children!"

Comrade Abu Ali then spoke about the many attempts to contain or liquidate the revolution. "We have no illusions at this stage about effecting a dramatic strategic leap towards realizing our national program completely. We are, however, able to struggle effectively to abort enemy programs and plots, and these efforts will necessarily accumulate to give the revolution a positive boost forward." Abu Ali referred specifically to the Jordanian regime and the dangers posed by its continued



Leila Khaled addresses the congress

attempts to liquidate the PLO or any expression of rebellion. He noted that the uprising of Palestinian and Jordanian students at Yarmouk University in May, which the regime put down in a bloody massacre, is an indication of the growing awareness that the national struggle is one of all people in the region.

LEBANON

The bloody war of attrition in Lebanon not only targets the Palestinians, but all patriotic Lebanese. Comrade Abu Ali noted the various pretexts under which Palestinians are killed -for example, Atif Aoun of the Amal movement who justifies the war on the camps by saying it is to prevent Palestinians from settling in Lebanon. "We experienced this distortion of facts during the massacre last year in Sabra, Shatila and Bourj Al Barajneh, and we stressed two reasons for our being in Lebanon: (1) preserving our people's political and social rights, their right to security and to continue the liberation struggle based on our declared national program. We have no other, secret program hidden away in our chambers.

(2) supporting the Lebanese national program in confronting the reactionary program, and participating in fighting the Zionist occupation.

"I think we were true to our word. Under the banner of the Lebanese National Resistance, we buried our martyrs without declaring to whom they were affiliated. We fought in the hills in the name of the Lebanese National Resistance... All Palestinian militants fought on the basis of solidarity, for the national cause... In whose interests is it to waste and divert nationalist efforts?... We are tired of slogans and illusions and the beating of war drums... We are tired of claims that it is a war to overthrow Amin Gemayel... and then having it end up in a war against the camps." Comrade Abu Ali stressed the fact that there is no wish for this type of war, but "we will fight a war in defense of our people, cause and gun". He quoted a Cuban saying: "It is idiotic to get involved in a war which can be avoided, but it is cowardice and shameful to avoid a war that must be fought."

Comrade Abu Ali pointed out the dangers of imposing sectarian solutions at the expense of national progressive ones. He denounced all the efforts of right-wing Palestinians who are betting on the reactionary forces in Lebanon. He stressed that the PFLP's alliances will be of a patriotic nature, and warned against those who instigate inter-Palestinian fighting which threatens all with destruction.

On the current truce in Lebanon, he said: "Only when relations among the Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian allies are established on a sound and permanent nationalist political

foundation can we consider that the era of truces is past." Otherwise the ceasefires will continue to be only temporary truces.

THE PLO'S UNITY

Comrade Abu Ali then spoke about the issue of Palestinian national unity, stressing that it must be based on a national program opposed to capitulationist projects, not just unity per se. Although the PLO's present difficult situation is due to both subjective and objective factors, the subjective factor should have been fortified to safeguard the PLO against the adverse objective conditions. The PFLP's view on how to set the PLO's situation aright, politically and organizationally, has been documented in the Program for Unity and Democratic Reform, the agreement of the Democratic Alliance and the Aden-Algiers agreement; these documents remain sound in principle, even though their implementation has been hindered.

Attention was called to the right wing's self-contradictory position on the Amman accord (with King Hussein). On the one hand, Arafat's men declare that the Amman accord is dead, and issue statements against the Jordanian regime's deportation, arrest and surveillance of Palestinians. On the other hand, they refuse to take any concrete step to cancel the Amman accord, even for the sake of national unity. Cancellation of the Amman accord is the first step towards extricating the PLO from its crisis and a guarantee of resolve to be committed to the national program.

In closing, Comrade Abu Ali, in the name of the PFLP Politbureau and Central Committee, wished the women's conference success in achieving the national and social goals which all are striving for.

Final Statement

The conference session resumed on June 27th, ending with adoption of the final statement. Below is a summary of the proceedings and the final statement.

The conference assessed a number of important documents dealing with the activities of the PWO. The organizational program, and the program of activities and tasks, submitted by the central preparatory committee, were approved, as was the program of tasks and activities for the coming phase, and the internal rules and regulations. Lastly, the general council was elected.

The discussions at the conference and the designation of tasks were based on a scientific assessment of the women's issue, for the liberation of women is organically tied to economic and social liberation. Thus, struggle for women's liberation is an intrinsic part of the progressive struggle of revolutionary forces. As a democratic mass organization, the PWO works for guaranteeing women's right to participate in political activities and increasing women's participation in the national liberation struggle. Therefore, the PWO encourages women to become members of unions as well as other popular organizations. This is important for advancing the women's cause and establishing their rights.

The PWO advocates the unity of the Palestinian women's movement within the framework of the GUPW. It calls for participation in the GUPW activities and for struggle from within to improve the GUPW's political positions. Based on this, the conference approved the following guidelines for PWO activities:

Comrade Abu Ali Mustafa addresses the congress



1. To be active in the GUPW and consolidate the unity of the Palestinian women's movement in this framework. This in turn will bolster the GUPW's militant role in the Palestinian arena.
2. To struggle to establish an advanced national line which would govern the position and progress of the GUPW, and to confront all moves to divert the union from the sound national line.
3. To strive towards establishing democracy and proportional representation in the GUPW.
4. To strive for activating the GUPW and strengthening its relations with progressive Arab and international unions.

The conference also discussed the Palestinian women's movement in the occupied territories, in the camps in Lebanon, and in other places where there are Palestinian communities in exile.

On the political level, the conference dealt with current issues on the Palestinian, Arab and international levels. The Amman accord was termed the dangerous turning point towards implementing imperialism's plot to liquidate the Palestinian cause. The conference also emphasized the importance of national unity. To this end, the PWO calls for the PLO's official leadership to forgo its destructive trend, cancel the Amman accord and begin comprehensive dialogue for restoring national unity. The PWO adds its voice and efforts to those of other Palestinian democratic and national forces struggling for unity. The statement expressed high esteem for the Algerian and Soviet initiatives in this respect.

The PWO called attention to the dangerous developments in the occupied territories and the importance of confronting the Zionist-Jordanian-Egyptian maneuvers. The PWO noted the bloody events in the Beirut camps. It condemned the massacre at Yarmouk University and pointed out that this is an indication of the multifaceted crisis of the Jordanian regime. In this context, the PWO emphasized the importance of building a national front in Jordan, as an effective means of confronting the regime's reactionary policies and solidifying ties with regional and international progressive and democratic forces to confront the imperialist policies.

The statement condemned the official state terrorism practiced by the Reagan Administration in the form of the aggressive attacks on Lebanon, Libya and Syria. The conference commended and supported the peaceful initiatives of the Soviet Union concerning the nuclear arms race.

Finally, the PWO vowed to struggle for strengthening the role of the Palestinian mass organizations and unions, most importantly the GUPW, and to contribute actively to realizing the Palestinian national program.

TELEGRAMS TO THE CONFERENCE

From the Executive Committee of the Union of Palestinian Women's Committees in the occupied territories:

Comrades, members of the first conference of the Palestinian Women's Organization, we take this opportunity to salute you. With clenched fists raised high in determination, we extend sincere hopes for success, hoping that your first conference will be a new brick added to the structure of our people's revolution in its continued struggle against the Zionists, and other forces of the enemy camp. We had sincerely wished to participate in your conference, but our duties hold us here. Our land must be planted and our children raised on the milk of molotovs and stones. Our eyes are turned towards you, however, proud of your daily confrontation with the enemy. Go forward, for any victory of yours gives us more hope and determination in our march.

From the Popular Committees of Shatila and Bourj Al Barajneh:

Comrades, your conference convenes at a time when a brutal attack is being launched against our people and revolution in the

camps of Beirut. Our steadfast masses congratulate and support you in your first conference. We wish you success and positive results which will channel into the progress of the revolution in general and the increased militancy of the women's role in particular.

From the women of the Cuban Embassy in Syria:

We have witnessed scenes which have become familiar to us all. A Syrian woman in the occupied Golan Heights fights a fully armed Zionist soldier with a stick. No annexation decision or regulations about indentity cards, nor any form of Nazi oppression can daunt the Arab woman. She will stand proud like the skies of the Golan Heights. The Golan is Arab and will remain so forever...

Telegrams were also received from: Communist Party of India; Communist Party of Portugal; Woman's Bureau of the Palestinian Communist Party; Iraqi Women's League; Woman's Bureau of the Palestinian Liberation Front; Omani Woman's Organization; Democratic Woman's League in Saudi Arabia; Woman's Bureau of the Popular Struggle Front; Palestinian Youth Organization; Popular Woman's Association of Sidon, Lebanon; Jordanian Woman's Movement.

'Israel'

Nom de Guerre for US Military Base

Zionist determination to simultaneously maintain its high level of military preparedness, domestic social benefits, rising real wages and private consumption, has produced a situation which the Zionist leaders had hoped to avoid, i.e., the gradual narrowing of their economic, military and therefore political margins. The economic downturn of the Zionist entity, and how it precipitated intensified US involvement in the rectification process, was dealt with in *Democratic Palestine* no. 17. This article will focus on the military aspect of the issue.

May 1986 marked the first anniversary of the launching of the Israeli economic stabilization plan. There has been much jubilation about the fall in inflation from the January-May 1985 monthly average of 11.3% to 1.5% in December 1985,¹ and the decrease of the foreign debt: «For the first time since 1973, Israeli's foreign debt dropped.»² However, these economic feats cannot simply be attributed to the miraculous effects of an austerity plan, which the US pressured the Israelis into implementing in the first place. The immense efforts of US think-tanks had more than a little to do with the Israeli economic recovery - not to mention the substantial quantities of financial aid disbursed under the strictest supervision.

With this task achieved, the situation is ready for focusing on other equally important matters: «The day of reckoning for Israel's economy is at hand; that day for its military policy cannot be more than a few years off.»³

The development of imperialism has inevitably brought about the increasing orientation of industry towards arms production. 'Israel' presents an extreme case of this phenomenon. The dominance of its military industry has become so great that a staggering proportion of the economy is devoted to war. The Israeli defense industry is the second largest single source of employment, involving 25% of the labor force.⁴ In his book *A Changing Israel*, Peter Grose describes the situation as «a state within an industry - rather than vice versa.» For the US, it is important to develop the economic muscle based in the militarized Israeli industry, since its survival is imperative for safeguarding imperialism's interests in the region.

Until the early 1980s, US financial aid preserved an artificial prosperity in a country whose economy was beginning to give way to a multifaceted crisis. However, the traditional methods of bailing 'Israel' out were no longer considered efficient because their effect would not be lasting. Thus alternative methods of aid had to be adopted, such as increasing US purchase of Israeli-made goods, especially weaponry and hightech systems for US military units, as well as integrating 'Israel' more closely in the imperialist military complex, by focusing on hightech equipment. This would provide a means of bolstering the Israeli economy while circumventing the normal US budgetary process, thus serving to diffuse some of the domestic discontent with Reagan's «profligate defense program.»⁵ It would moreover ensure that measures to strengthen the Israeli economy do not weaken its military establishment or undermine its ability to function as a strike force in the Middle East. It would also help manage the Israeli debt burden and monetary reserves, so that the recovery plan is not capsized by financial disturbances.

A new era has begun for 'Israel', sponsored by its most faithful guardian, whereby an economic and military overhaul is seen by the imperialist forces as the best way to impose a political situation suited to serve their interests.

Under the terms of the 1984 memorandum of agreement between the US and 'Israel', obstacles to reciprocal defense trade have been removed. The agreement allows the US Defense Department to waive customs duties on items being

sold to the US armed services. The five-year plan also provides for operational and technical exchange leading towards understanding of military requirements and their technological solutions. The go-ahead for significant purchases of Israeli-made military equipment has already been given by the Pentagon. «Israel can only survive over the long run by competing in the international arms market.»⁶

STRATEGIC COLLABORATION

The strategic cooperation agreement signed between the US and 'Israel' in November 1983 is a revival of the agreement between Reagan and Menachem Begin in September 1981. (The latter was temporarily suspended by the US due to Israeli annexation of the Golan Heights. The period after 1983 has witnessed the most active manifestation of this strategic alliance ever. Well-placed, senior officials of both governments have repeatedly asserted how relations were at «an all time high» or «iron-clad». Reagan, in a speech on March 13, 1984, to the Young Leadership Conference of the United Jewish Appeal, called the strategic alliance «The first such formal arrangement between the US and Israel.» Proponents of the 'Israel first' school of thought were on the loose in the bourgeois media. Despite all the behind-the-scenes squabbling over how to resolve the Israeli economic woes, there was never any dispute about the necessity of maintaining the military superiority of 'Israel'. «There has been no basic disagreement between Washington and (Israel) on the military side...»⁷ «Even as we... work with Israel on its economic program, we... went ahead with a major increase in our security assistance for Israel.»⁸ Thus, in the span of two years, Reagan's Administration has accelerated the process of fortifying its own position in the Middle East. «As various crises have rocked the Middle East... steps have been taken to improve the U.S. ability to fight in that region... The Reagan Administration has accelerated the pace of these improvements»⁹

The strategic cooperation between the US and 'Israel' is a broad program which encompasses, among many other things, the following:

1. Coordination of objectives, strategies and tactics.
2. Prepositioning of US military equipment, ammunition and fuel in 'Israel' for possible use in a regional crisis.
3. Medical support; arrangements for US use of Israeli hospitals in an emergency. ('Israel' and the US have conducted joint medical exercises where US helicopters took 'wounded' US Navy personnel from a Sixth Fleet vessel to the Hadassah hospital. Facilities for US 'folding hospitals' which can accommodate up to 4,000 beds are provided by 'Israel'. This triples the medical capacity of the US forces in the Middle East.)
4. The use of Haifa as a port facility for the US Sixth Fleet. (US Congressman Jack Kemp went so far as to state: «I view (Israel) in... the same framework as a naval base.»¹⁰)
5. Tactical airfields: US Air Force use of Israeli runways and

tactical aircraft ground support equipment. (US Sixth Fleet jets have been practicing precision attacks in the Negev area.)

6. Strategic airfields: Construction of a special Israeli facility for US Strategic Projection Force aircraft. (In the October 1984 issue of *Newsweek* magazine, columnist George Will wrote that 'Israel' is «The only nation in the region where we know we can land a plane tomorrow.»¹¹)

7. Transshipment of US supplies to the Lebanese Army overland from 'Israel'.

8. Intelligence sharing of data and analysis on «radical» forces and movements in the Middle East.

9. Maintenance: Israeli maintenance and overhaul of US aircraft and ships in the eastern Mediterranean to raise US operational readiness.

10. Defense against submarines: Cooperation in anti-submarine warfare by increasing Israeli ASW capabilities, and operating US ASW equipment out of Israeli facilities. (The first joint anti-submarine exercises between the US and Israeli navies began after the signing of the strategic cooperation agreement. «The US has reportedly told Israel that it plans to play a very active role in overseeing the costs of US participation in an Israeli diesel submarine project and also in the future Saar-5-class missile boats for the Israeli Navy.»¹²)

11. Enhancing US-Israeli cooperation in the «struggle against international terrorist organizations and operations.»

12. Coordinated air and naval peacetime maneuvers to develop and perfect joint procedures.

13. Coordinated US-Israeli defense industrial base planning to enhance wartime 'surge' production capability.

14. Cooperation in industrial research and development. (Israeli firms have made significant advances in research areas of potential importance to the US armed forces. Moreover, 'Israel' has served as a laboratory for testing the strengths and weaknesses of new US weaponry in actual combat. The F-15 and F-16 planes were first tested in combat by Israeli pilots. 'Israel' made as many as 27 changes and improvements in these bombers, as well as 114 modifications on the US Patton tanks. The Israeli armed forces tested cluster bombs, phosphorous bombs and chemical weapons on innocent civilians during its 1982 invasion of Lebanon.)

15. Joint projects to enhance economic development and security planning in 'third world' countries. (Under the guise of development or agricultural projects, the US has been able to impose its influence in 'third world' regional politics, using 'Israel' as its surrogate, especially in areas where it would be diplomatically embarrassing to operate overtly. Weaponry is delivered to fascist regimes, being written off as 'metal ware' or 'machinery' or 'electronic goods'. 'Israel' often works out of 'interest sections' of European embassies in countries with whom it does not have diplomatic relations).¹³

At a higher level, 40 US industrial executives explored aspects of Strategic Defense Initiative (Star Wars) cooperation between the US and 'Israel'. This included opportunities for cooperation with Israeli companies in high technology, and space research and development projects. Other fields for possible cooperation include: communications systems, computerized publishing systems, lasers, microelectronics, quality control systems, pharmaceuticals, robotics, fiber optics, data transmission and distribution systems, and biotechnology.

In view of the above, 'Israel' is simply a *nome de guerre* for what is actually a US military base in the Middle East. A clearly emerging aspect, however, is that military might is not serving to cower people into the kind of submission that would allow imperialism to get on with their rearrangement of the region.

FROM STRIKE FORCE TO MILITARY BASE

Over the years, when the Arab nationalist movement refused to succumb to imperialist plans and conditions, the US has used Israeli military might to impose its hegemony. Created by aggression, 'Israel' got its first major war experience in the 1948 occupation of the major part of Palestine. 'Israel' joined the French-British aggression against Egypt in 1956, and in 1967 occupied the rest of Palestine, plus Egypt's Sinai Peninsula and Syria's Golan Heights. In 1982, the Zionist state invaded major parts of Lebanon, including the capital, Beirut. In addition, there were a series of blitz attacks - the Israeli

bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor in 1981, and of the capital of Tunisia in 1985, as well as semi-daily attacks on neighboring Arab countries, against the Palestinian people and revolution. All of these acts of aggression were supported and financed by US imperialism, because they served its interests.

On the other hand, doubts have more recently been raised as to the Zionist entity's ability to implement the full array of imperialist aims, simply by the US pumping in astronomical amounts of aid to finance indiscriminate aggression. This is why US Secretary of State Schultz last year stressed: «Israel's long term security can only come through peace with its neighbors, not military superiority,»¹⁴ though the US continues high power efforts to develop this very superiority. Meanwhile imperialism is stressing the efforts to impose a political settlement on the conflict in the Middle East, attempting to capitalize on the results of Zionist aggression. By bridging the gap between Arab reaction and the Zionist state, imperialism hopes to secure the latter's permanent presence while ensuring its own exploitation of the area's resources and manpower. Such an ambition requires elimination of the Arab national liberation movement and especially the Palestinian revolution. For this reason, when the imperialist plan took concrete form in the Camp David accords, these were just as much a model for a military pact in the area. Parallel to the political settlement between 'Israel' and Egypt, the US increased its direct presence in the area, building and expanding bases in a string of countries bordering on the Gulf and Indian Ocean; it established the RDF and made other preparations for direct intervention.

With the advent of the Reagan Administration, the emphasis on military might - both American and Israeli - increased, along with the imperialist drive to establish the Middle East as reactionary bulwark against the Soviet Union. At the same time, Arab reaction did not capitulate all at once and join Camp David openly. Not even all of the reactionary Arab states welcomed the degree of direct US military presence that the Reagan Administration wanted. In this situation, the original US-Israeli strategic cooperation agreement was signed, and the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon was launched, supported and financed by US imperialism, to break the deadlock for Camp David. This war exhibited the most obvious form of US-Israeli wartime coordination to date - with the US Marines brought in to protect the Israeli occupation and reap the political results of the invasion. Despite all the signs of US-Israeli friction during this time, and the failure of this joint venture, the experience of Lebanon actually served to add momentum to closer US-Israeli coordination. The US's fiasco of trying to bolster Amin Gemayel's unpopular regime increased appreciation for the importance of 'Israel' as a totally dependable ally.

The Zionist state's dependability is virtually ensured by its very nature as a settler colonial society. Established by aggression and displacement of the native Palestinian Arab population, the Zionist state placed itself in geopolitical isolation. The settler society has a high degree of internal cohesion in the face of the «external enemy» created by its own aggression. Thus, the Zionist society's internal stability is virtually ensured, and the settler population is highly mobilized to serve as cannon fodder in military ventures which they perceive as a struggle for their own existence. This situation dictates the Zionist state's loyalty and readiness to struggle for imperialist dominance as the ultimate guarantee for its own existence.

It is these qualities in the Zionist state that made it inevitable that the strategic cooperation agreement would be revived and materialized in ever closer Israeli - US military cooperation. For all the while the US promotes the 'peace' process, it encounters obstacles and wields the threat of aggression to eliminate them. Thus, we witnessed the Israeli bombing of the PLO's headquarters in Tunis, with US logistical and intelligence support. In turn, this spring, the US bombed Libya and counted on 'Israel' for intelligence information about the effects of its aggression.

The unprecedentedly high degree of US-Israeli military cooperation today has its war-and peacetime applications, for military and political means are two sides of the same strategy for imposing imperialist dominance. As more Arab reactionary regimes are now showing readiness to capitulate to the US-Zionist conditions, closer US-Israeli cooperation on the alternate use of these two options is more crucial than ever

before. If the US is able to draw more Arab regimes into a political settlement, this will create a class alliance for a new form of exploitation and oppression of the Arab masses. This will in turn elicit new forms of revolutionary struggle, which the enemy alliance must be prepared to confront.

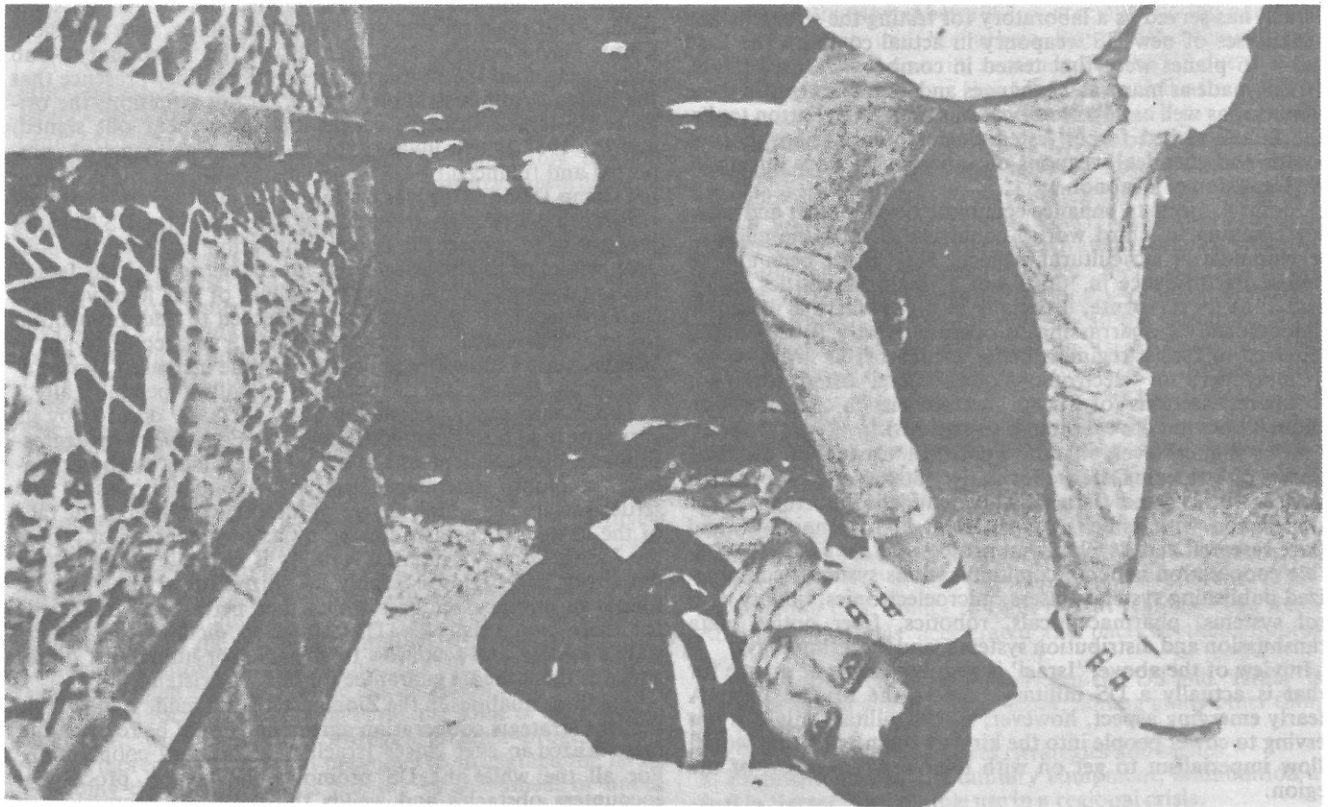
Thus, it is not likely that imperialism will resort to being benignly indifferent to the Middle East. Another factor adds weight to this: The Gulf countries hold an estimated 56% of the world's proven oil reserves, and US specialists predict that the US will be much more dependent on... Gulf oil in the 1990s than today.¹⁵ Schultz has labeled as «absurd» the notion that the US can turn its back on regional conflicts that affect Western interests.¹⁶ It is therefore not surprising that the US is more than ever involved in bolstering 'Israeli' militarily and economically. This is the pillar of US Middle East policy.

'Israel' also has a growing role in the US's global policy, such as delivering arms and other vital aid to pariah regimes like the one in South Africa. 'Israel' has moreover offered itself as the US's partner in Star Wars research which has multiple hightech and military applications, further intergrating the Zionist state into imperialism's military-industrial complex. 'Israel' has thus more openly joined in the Reagan Administration's anti-Soviet campaign, as also signalled by its agreement to housing a new «Voice of America» transmitter

on occupied Palestinian land. Coming after the refusal of even reactionary regimes like Turkey, Egypt and Morocco, Israeli acceptance was especially welcome. The \$300 million the US will spend annually to spread anti-Soviet lies from this transmitter represents a new investment in the Zionist state, a further enhancement of this aggressive strategic «asset».

1. *Wall Street Journal*, February 1986, p. 24.
2. *The Times*, May 30, 1986.
3. *Christian Science Monitor*, December 19, 1984.
4. *A Changing Israel*, by Peter Grose.
5. *Christian Science Monitor*, December 19, 1984.
6. *Wall Street Journal*, May 29, 1985.
7. *Jerusalem Post*, March 8, 1985.
8. *Current Policy: US Department of State*, April 21, 1985.
9. *Defense and Foreign Affairs*, December 31, 1984.
10. *Near East Report*, December 31, 1984.
11. *Foreign Service Journal*, February 1985.
12. *Defense and Foreign Affairs*, January 1986.
13. *Near East Report*, November 18, 1983.
14. Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, October 10, 1985.
15. *Washington Post*, February 13, 1986.
16. *Mideast Observer*, February 13, 1985.

The Shin Bet 'Scandal'



Israeli undercover policeman holds down a Palestinian from Ramle - another case of brutality, also in 1984.

Seemingly, the most controversial issue in Zionist circles recently has been the so-called Shin Bet scandal. Western and Zionist media have named it so, not because pistol-whipping two handcuffed Palestinian prisoners to death is considered scandalous. Rather, it is considered a scandal that the murder was publicized; even worse, it came to

light that it was ordered by the head of Shin Bet, approved by then prime minister Shamir, and covered up by the two jointly.

Indeed, «most Israelis are not worried because these two were killed» (*Boston Globe*, January 1st). Their main concern is something the Zionists ironically call «the moral issue». To the

extent that Zionist politicians and the press have focused on «the moral issue», they worry about the moral harm that may come to their *Zionist* society if security officers act outside the stated norms of conduct, enjoying autonomous power and the ability to hide their actions from the Israeli public.

The bourgeois and Zionist press have not emphasized the atrocity of how these two Palestinians were murdered, nor for that matter how the whole Palestinian people is being subjected to Nazi Zionism. The emphasis is never on the horrible measures being perpetrated against Palestinians in Zionist jails, nor on a system dedicated to the total destruction of the indigenous economic, educational and social structures in Palestine, and ultimately the physical elimination of a whole people. There is never any mention that it is these goals and the fascist means used to implement them that have given rise to the Palestinian resistance movement, as the greatest threat to the Zionist entity.

Instead, pro-imperialist and Zionist journalists have woven lengthy articles and debates around the legal and security aspects of the crime and its cover-up. This has been done purposely to divert from the major issue which is the Palestinian cause with its political, social and economic ramifications. The human aspect is left glaringly undiscussed. When it touched upon, ludicrous justifications are happily found for this and other Zionist atrocities.

It would therefore be incredibly naive to be deceived by the false declarations of a «revival of conscience» or «democratic values», «concern for freedom of the press», etc., in Zionist circles. If anything, this media ballyhoo should not be taken as a manifestation of «Israeli democracy», but as an example of how «freedom of the press» can be manipulated, and particular news items muffled or released in accordance with imperialist and Zionist political considerations.

A more realistic picture of this issue can be extracted by viewing it in the context of the power struggle between Labor and Likud, partners in the Israeli national unity government which is on the verge of a reshuffle.

APRIL 14TH, 1984

Four Palestinian militants, members of the PFLP, boarded a no.300 bus carrying 45 Zionists bound for Askalan on April 19, 1984. Almost forty years after the atrocious Zionist massacre of

the villagers of Deir Yassin, these youths stepped forth to make their contribution to the Palestinian liberation struggle. They took command of the bus, demanding the release of fellow Palestinians imprisoned in Zionist jails. The operation was considered the most significant one launched by the Palestinian revolution since the Dalal Al Maghrabi operation of March 1978. It derived far-reaching implications from the fact that it took place in the aftermath of the Zionist invasion of Lebanon. It was at a time when the Zionist authorities were under local and international pressure because of the general outrage elicited by the atrocities committed under the banner of «Peace for Galilee». This situation added to the Zionist authorities' frenzied determination to crush the operation, even if that meant killing their own people.

Seven Israelis were killed and two wounded when the Zionist forces stormed the bus after ten hours of siege. Two of the Palestinian freedom fighters were killed immediately. The two others, having been taken prisoner, were mercilessly pistol-whipped to death in a wheat field nearby the site of the operation.

The Zionist authorities did not lose much sleep over the issue until recently when it took on a political dimension. Even then, it was not the brutality of the murder which disconcerted them. «Peres... would like to see a commission of inquiry which could pass judgement on the *political handling* of the affair» (*The Times*, June 3rd).

WHY THE SCANDAL?

In this base and intricate game, the question remains as to why this particular time was chosen to raise this particular issue and label it a scandal. According to agreement, Shamir is slated to replace Peres as premier in October. Up till now, however, the Labor Party has been making strides towards a political solution which is conducive to US plans for the region. Having to deal with Likud intransigence would most probably raise obstacles to this process, at a time when the Arab reactionary regimes are bending

over backwards to oblige US imperialism. Zionist intransigence at such a time could set everything back to square one, interfering with the US plans.

It is therefore not surprising that this so-called scandal was dug up from when Shamir was prime minister. It could be an attempt to discredit him and trim his chances for ascension to the premiership, thus extending Peres' term. On the other hand, it is doubtful whether Peres would have been able to make much political capital out of slandering a fellow politician 'just' because he killed two Palestinians. «The majority of the Israeli public... oppose destroying the careers of Israeli officials whose only crime may have been involvement in putting terrorists to death» (*New York Times*, June 3rd).

Indeed, it has always been that the more fascist the leader the dearer he is to the hearts of the Zionist settlers. Such was the case with Moshe Dayan, Begin and Sharon. Thus, if the Labor Party (and its US supporters) were to go so far as to push for new elections on this issue, Peres would probably lose the popularity accumulated so far through the painstaking and dramatic, economic overhaul underway in the Zionist state. Shamir might regain some of the popularity the Likud has lost in the past few months.

On the whole, it is not likely that the differences raised over this issue will be pushed too far, since neither of the two parties would allow the killing of two Palestinians - a commonly accepted practice by both Labor and Likud - to become the justification for splitting the coalition government.

If Peres wins this round of politicking, this would naturally facilitate US plans for the region. On the other hand, the possibility remains that Shamir will assume the premiership as stated, especially in view of the Likud's 14-11 victory in the cabinet vote against holding a judicial investigation of the Shin Bet 'scandal'. Nevertheless, the 'scandal' will remain on hand to be used in the future if Shamir should decide to put obstacles to the imperialist plans for the region.

Majid Abu Juma and Subhi Abu Juma - the two Palestinian militants murdered by the Shin Bet



PFLP Visit to Democratic Yemen

Having been invited by the Central Committee of the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP), a PFLP delegation, headed by Secretary General George Habash, visited the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, June 23-29th. Aside from discussing major political issues, the main purpose of the visit was getting a picture of the situation after the internal fighting of January, and how the Yemeni leadership has been able to solve the problems this presented.

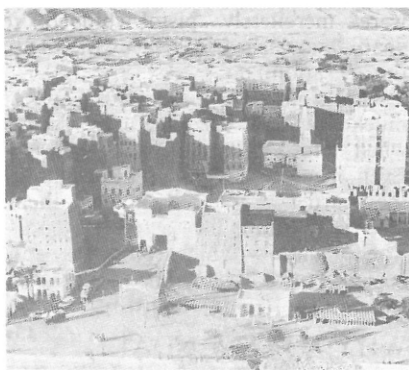
Upon arrival in Aden, Doctor Habash made a statement to the Aden News Agency, saying that the visit was a confirmation of the PFLP's ongoing solidarity with the October 14th revolution, led by the Yemeni Socialist Party, especially after the regrettable events in January, when a number of the historical leaders of the revolution were martyred. Dr. Habash expressed confidence in the Yemeni Socialist Party's ability to overcome the consequences of the violence. He added: "It is the duty of the PFLP and all nationalist and progressive Arab forces to do their best to safeguard the vanguard role of the October 14th revolution in the Arab liberation movement."

The delegation was welcomed by Comrade Ali Salem Al Beed, Secretary general of the YSP, and members of the politbureau. The warm reception accorded the delegation expressed the strength of the militant relations between Democratic Yemen and the Palestinian revolution in general, and the PFLP in specific.

Dr. Habash had two official meetings with the YSP secretary general. In both, Comrade Al Beed gave detailed explanations about the violent events of January 13th, and the practical measures taken by the YSP in the political, social, economic, educational and organizational fields, to contain and resolve the problems which arose as a result of this violence. Comrade Al Beed confirmed that the YSP will adhere to its principles for achieving the national democratic revolution with socialist horizons. He affirmed that in the coming period, relations with the PFLP would be further consolidated. The PFLP delegation stated its satisfaction with what was said concerning the party leadership's ability to overcome the consequences of the January 13th events.

The PFLP delegation met with Comrade Haider Abu Bakr Al Attas, member of the YSP Politbureau and chairman of the Supreme People's Council leadership committee, and with

Politbureau member and Foreign Minister Abdul Aziz Al Dalee. Comrade Al Attas explained the activities of Democratic Yemen for uniting Arab efforts to confront Zionist and imperialist plans in the area, and for fulfilling the legitimate goals for which the Arab people are struggling. For his part, Dr. Habash gave a detailed explanation of



the latest developments in the Palestinian revolution, and the main tasks facing the Arab democratic and progressive forces. He confirmed Democratic Yemen's role as the Palestinian revolution's strategic ally.

The delegation met Comrade Saed Saleh, member of the YSP politbureau and minister for state security, and Saleh, politbureau member and defense minister. The delegation heard a detailed account of the internal situation and the defense capacity of Democratic Yemen, and expressed their satisfaction.

The delegation visited the central committee office where the tragic violence occurred on January 13th, causing the loss of the historical leadership of the October 14th revolution: Abdul Fattah Ismael, Ali Antar, Saleh Musleh and Ali Sha'e. The delegation visited the families of these martyred politbureau members, and laid a wreath on their graves at the January 13th Martyr's Cemetery.

While in Aden, Dr. Habash met with the ambassadors of socialist countries,

explaining the current situation of the Palestinian national struggle in the occupied territories, Lebanon and elsewhere. He discussed with them the position of the PFLP on reuniting the PLO on a nationalist basis. The delegation also met with comrades from the Popular Unity Party (affiliated to the National Democratic Front of North Yemen) who explained the current situation in North Yemen.

Comrade Habash met with leading cadres of the YSP organization in Aden. He recalled his experiences working with the Yemeni revolution's leaders who were martyred on January 13th, dating back to the sixties: "Due to their absence, this visit was especially painful. Yet I feel proud of the October 14th revolution. The Yemeni Socialist Party has passed this regrettable stage. I myself experienced difficult days from January 13th until the violence ended. We Palestinian and Arab people, confronting the oppression and aggression of imperialism for many years, have passed through some really rough periods... I personally experienced the difficulties of the January 13th events. They were as difficult as the June 1967 defeat, the day we left Jordan in 1971 and Beirut in 1982. Still, we are proud of your steadfastness and the continuity of your revolution..."

"You have heard me before comparing the role of the Yemeni revolution on the Arab level, to that of the Bolshevik revolution on the international level... I know the material limitations of this country... but I'm convinced that more important is its political voice which expresses the interests of Arab workers and which constitutes the major support to the Arab national liberation movement as a whole... Though you experienced a shake-up in January, I have confidence in your masses, their political awareness and the experience of your revolution, its leadership and cadres. I was relieved to hear from the politbureau members and Secretary General Al Beed, that the party has been successful in overcoming the negative effects of the violent events; that it has regained its leading role in the society, uniting the masses to confront all problems and achieve the national democratic revolution; that it has regained its ability to play its role not only in Yemen, but in the Arab Peninsula and the Arab world."

Dr. Habash also spoke about the Palestinian struggle, the efforts to restore the PLO's unity, and the obstacles erected by the right-wing leadership's insistence on retaining the Amman accord as an option for returning to the US solution when it has the chance. At the end of the meeting, the PFLP delegation answered questions posed by the Yemeni comrades.

Interview with YSP General Secretary

«Our Socialist Orientation Emerged Victorious»

INTERVIEW WITH ALI SALEM AL BEED,
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE YEMENI
SOCIALIST PARTY(YSP)

Democratic Yemen faced painful events on January 13th, causing sorrow to all progressive Arabs. All forces opposed to the revolution started a campaign against Democratic Yemen, questioning the possibility of success for Marxist-Leninist theory in any part of the Arab world. What is your view about this campaign?

This campaign by forces opposed to our revolution is not new. We have constantly experienced it, but this time it is particularly intense and hateful. In our view, this is because the forces waging this campaign were behind the events of January 13th. They counted on succeeding in striking our party and revolutionary experiment, and returning our country to neo-colonial domination. However, our party, with the support of the masses of our people, was able to contain these events and foil this conspiracy and its figures. The socialist orientation, the theory of scientific socialism and proletarian internationalism emerged victorious. Consequently, these forces were filled with hatred and anger towards our party and revolution. They could only try to cover up their defeat by absurd lies and false analysis about our socialist orientation, claiming that it is not applicable in our country, or in other newly liberated countries.

Concerning overcoming the effects of the conspiracy: Our party, mass and governmental activities were geared towards healing the wounds, consolidating the national unity of our people and rebuilding what was destroyed by the conspirators. The decision to grant a general amnesty showed the democratic nature of our progressive system, as did the party leadership's concern for reeducating those who had been misled. The general amnesty has been extended until the end of 1986. It has facilitated the release of 3,000 persons involved in the events of January 13th. Others have returned to the republic. All of them have a secure, stable life with their families, and conduct their work and daily life in total freedom.

What are your priorities for development on the party and state level?

After the events of January 13th, we face great, new, complicated tasks because of the destructive effects of the conspiracy on the life of the party, state and society. The leadership of our party put a lot of emphasis on the tasks of rebuilding the party, mass organizations and governmental apparatus that were negatively affected by the conspiracy. This rebuilding will be carried out in a manner that consolidates the leadership role of the party in the society.

We have big accomplishments so far. We restored the electoral process of the party organizations in Aden, Ibyen and Shabra, where the conspirators, Ali Nasser Mohammed and his clique, had suspended the electoral process, the internal regulations and the directives of the Central Committee in May 1985. They did so because of the clear loss suffered by elements supporting the conspirators at that time. Now we are ready to

resume these processes by convening conferences of sections and districts. We have already completed the electoral process for all base organizations of the party.

We also made big accomplishments in rebuilding the mass organizations. We have convened the general congresses of the Women's Union, the Popular Defense Committees and the Union of Fattah's Yemeni Socialist Youth (named after Abdul Fattah Ismail, a founder of the Yemeni Socialist Party, who was murdered by the conspirators in the events of January 13th). We are preparing for the congresses of the other mass organizations in the coming period.



Comrades George Habash and Ali Salem Al Beed

We also had great success in the sphere of rebuilding the state and government institutions and the local government apparatus. There are now preparations for the election of the Supreme People's Council and local people's councils, that will start in October.

These activities are taking place along with mass and party preparation for a party conference. This conference will evaluate the development of the revolutionary process in our country in the light of the document being prepared, to be presented to the Central Committee and submitted to discussion and approval at the conference.

Imperialist and reactionary forces are attempting to undermine Democratic Yemen from within by creating financial problems. How will you face this?

The economic front remains paramount in the plans of the forces antagonistic to our revolution. These plans aim at toppling our progressive regime from within, after the failure of

all attempts at military attacks launched from outside. There were dangerous, deviant practices on the economic front, carried out by the conspirators, Ali Nasser Mohammed and his clique, in the past period. These deviations aimed at weakening the public and cooperative sectors, and creating and developing parasitic sectors. They aimed at striking planned development of the national economy, and caused the waste of public assets. They also caused the weakening of economic relations with the socialist countries, and the development of consumerist trends in our society. The events of January 13th caused severe economic losses for the country. Losses in buildings and fixed assets, caused by the conspiracy, were about 42 million dinars (\$126 million). We have allocated 40 million dinars (\$120 million) for repairing what was destroyed and continuing social and economic development.

At present, the economic conditions are the central issue in the struggle of our party. We are concentrating all efforts for developing these conditions, increasing production, maintaining public ownership and improving labor. We feel satisfied with our accomplishments so far in resolving the biggest part of the consequences of the conspiracy. These accomplishments are due to the inspiration of our masses and their participation in voluntary work and other initiatives, and to the role of the construction sector in repairing damage. This gives us confidence in our ability to foil the enemy's plans for destroying our revolution via the economic front.

The forces antagonistic to your revolution are still threatening with external interference. What are you doing to confront this danger? How are your relations with neighboring states?

It has been proven that those who planned and executed the bloody January 13th plot, with its massacres and huge dangers, were counting on external intervention to contain their defeats and topple the progressive regime in our country. The heroic steadfastness of our party members and the masses, and the great internationalist position of the Soviet Union, prevented external intervention. This aborted the hopes of those enemies who expected to capitalize on this crisis in order to destroy the Yemeni workers' and peasants' state.

In this context, the peaceful policy of our country has played an important role in preventing external intervention. This policy guarantees continuing the policies of peaceful coexistence and international solidarity in our foreign policy. We are determined to continue our relations, especially with fraternal countries and neighboring states, on the basis of peaceful coexistence, constructive cooperation, mutual respect for national sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs and guaranteeing peace and stability in the area.

There were strains in your relations with the Ethiopian revolution. What is the situation now?

We have close, militant relations, consolidated by blood, with the Ethiopian revolution, the vanguard Ethiopian Workers' Party and Comrade Mengistu Haile Mariam. We are in the same trench confronting antagonistic conspiracies planned by the imperialist forces against our two revolutions and countries. We feel comfortable with our accomplishments in removing the misunderstandings that arose in Yemeni-Ethiopian relations, due to the misleading and falsifications of the conspirator Ali Nasser Mohammed. He aimed to isolate Democratic Yemen from its true friends and cover up his conspiratorial relations with forces antagonistic to our revolution, as part of a plan to attack the progressive system in our country.

Day after day, the militant relations between Democratic Yemen and Ethiopia are being consolidated, based on common beliefs and goals. We are struggling side by side to accomplish these goals, guided by the great ideas of scientific socialism and proletarian internationalism. We are interested in maintaining and developing this relationship, because we consider it a source of strength for our just struggle and for both the Arab and African national liberation movements.

How do you envision your future role in the Arab national liberation movement?

In the light of the strong relation between our patriotic, Arab nationalist and internationalist commitment, we consider the task of consolidating the unity of the Arab national liberation movement as a primary task to which we should devote our utmost efforts. Mobilizing and uniting the militant abilities and will of our Arab people, and their nationalist and progressive forces and regimes, is an important precondition for confronting the enemies' challenges to the Arab national liberation movement. These challenges reached a climax in the conspiracy and outright aggression against the vanguard position of Libya and Democratic Yemen, and what is now being planned against steadfast Syria. We are concerned about increasing the role of our party and country in solidifying the unity of the Arab struggle against imperialism and Zionism.

We will continue our party's efforts for reuniting the PLO and consolidating its militant alliance with Syria and the Lebanese national movement. We also want to help pave the way for more joint activity between the Arab progressive nationalist forces and states in confronting the aggressive and expansionist policies and plans of imperialism and Zionism, that aim at striking the achievements of the Arab liberation movement and reversing the movement of history.

What should Palestinian national unity be based on?

We support the Palestinian people's struggle to return to their homeland, for self-determination and establishing an independent state under the leadership of the PLO, their sole, legitimate representative. Reuniting the PLO is an important task in confronting the attacks of the imperialist and Zionist forces against the Palestinian cause. We think that the basis for Palestinian national unity is democratic dialogue and adherence to the decisions of the 16th PNC, held in Algiers in 1983, and the decisions of the Fez summit.

Palestinian national unity should confront all plans and projects that fall short of fulfilling the indelible, legitimate, national rights of the Palestinian Arab people. We welcomed the Algerian initiative presented by President Shadli Bin Jedid, on reuniting the PLO. Our country worked with Algeria in the past to achieve these noble aims. The most prominent result was the signing of the Aden-Algiers agreement. We shall continue efforts with our Algerian brothers to end the state of division in the Palestinian arena, in order to remobilize the energies of the Palestinian people and revolutionary fighting forces to confront the dangers threatening their just cause.

How do you evaluate the relationship between the YSP and the PFLP?

I would like to stress that the relationship between our party and the PFLP is a militant, historical one. Our relations were consolidated over the various stages of the Yemeni and Palestinian revolutions. The PFLP and its secretary general, Comrade George Habash, stood by our revolution and party in all difficult situations. We highly appraise the positions of solidarity that the PFLP has taken in support of the struggle of our party and people to accomplish the tasks of the national democratic revolution and solidify the socialist orientation of our country. The PFLP also supported us in confronting all internal and external conspiracies aimed at striking our progressive regime and delaying the progressive development of our revolution.

In the latest bloody conspiracy of January 13th, the PFLP and our militant comrade George Habash played an important role in condemning the conspiracy. We shall continue to solidify the historical, militant relations between the YSP and the PFLP in order to serve the militant alliance between the Yemeni and Palestinian revolutions, increasing their contribution to strengthening the struggle of the Arab national liberation movement against imperialism and Zionism. ●

South Africa

Apartheid in its Death Throes

The mass struggle in South Africa today stands at the forefront, challenging US imperialism's global strategy for reversing the tide of history.

«The people had lifted the ban on the ANC and imposed on our situation their own system of legality.» - This is the ANC's evaluation of the escalating mass struggle inside South Africa, as presented by President Oliver Tambo in the Political Report of the National Executive Committee to the National Consultative Congress in June 1985. In these words lies much of the explanation for why Pretoria's most recent, pervasive and brutal state of emergency has failed to harness the masses' struggle for freedom.

Quite the opposite, the state of emergency has served to expose the depth of the apartheid regime's crisis. The movement for sanctions against South Africa is gaining ground daily, displaying the dialectical relationship between the oppressed masses' militant struggle and international solidarity. In all this, the ANC is playing a key role, guiding the struggle and coordinating its multiple aspects, inside and outside South Africa.

On June 12th, Pretoria imposed a state of emergency, ostensibly to prevent mass commemoration of Soweto Day and attacks on the apartheid system planned by ANC revolutionaries. It is quite clear that the masters of apartheid fear the occurrence of an all-out insurrection. Yet the extent of the draconian measures imposed shows that the reactionary, racist regime's aims were more pernicious than quelling unrest. The police are empowered to make arrests without charges, and search without warrants. In this way, approximately 4,500 persons were detained within three weeks (some estimates run at 8,000). In most cases, their families were not informed; only after a month was the way cleared for a fraction of the detainees to see a lawyer. Reports of torture are rampant.

The detainees include trade unionists, social workers, schoolchildren, women, students, teachers, clergymen, journalists, community leaders and anti-apartheid activists, especially from the mass organizations affiliated to the United Democratic Front. Their composition reveals that the aim of mass detentions was not only to paralyze the organized mass struggle, but to silence the voice of all those qualified to speak out against apartheid's crimes. This is

only one of many indications that the state of emergency was intended to permit the regime to use the most brutal methods, not excluding mass murder.

In South Africa today, the police and army may use any amount of force to move people. Any place can be designated an 'unrest area', authorizing the regime's forces to use extraordinary measures. To hide real and potential atrocities, press censorship is near total. Reporting on the actions or deployment of the security forces is forbidden, as is mentioning the names of detainees. Reporters are banned from the Black townships, many of which are under nightly curfew. Press offices are raided and newspapers seized. Indoor meetings are banned (outdoor meetings

were already illegal). About 120 anti-apartheid groups are banned from issuing statements, publications or posters. Foreign teachers, clergymen and journalists have been expelled.

Under these conditions, people are shot down on the whim of a police officer. Whole church congregations were arrested on Soweto Day. Babies were teargassed when police raided a township, as were one thousand people in a mosque in the Western Cape. Government bulldozers were sent to flatten the remains of KTC squatters' camp near Cape Town, while thousands of homeless were ordered out of refugee centers. Under the cover of the state of emergency, vigilante groups and death squads increased their attacks on anti-apartheid activists and centers. These atrocities and others, that may still be unreported to the outside world, led Oliver Tambo to charge that Pretoria aimed to create a situation where it can massacre tens of thousands. This is the ultimate logic of apartheid. The white minority regime, which presides over the interests of international capitalism in resource-rich South Africa, is prepared to enact a genocidal policy to maintain the oppression and exploitation of the vast majority. ▶



IT HAPPENS UNDER APARTHEID... AND UNDER ISRAELI OCCUPATION: DETENTION AND TORTURE OF CHILDREN

South Africa: Youth are a main target of the apartheid police and army in their ongoing arbitrary harassment, arrest and torture. In 1985, 25,000 persons were arrested and 10,000 detained; 25% of them were children. Other estimates indicate that two-thirds of detainees in the same year were under 18 years of age. Investigation shows that most detainees are mistreated; many are tortured severely - some to the point of death. In 1985, 16 persons died in police custody and one in detention, many of them young people. We take only one example of the apartheid regime's crimes against African children as was reported in *Sechaba*, April 1986: Eleven year old Fanie Kuduku spent 57 days in solitary confinement, despite two court hearings to secure his release. He was subsequently acquitted of charges of public violence, but he is now in hiding, for the police who assaulted him during his detention still constantly hound him.

Occupied Palestine: Israeli Military Order no. 132, applied in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, allows for the arrest of Palestinians as young as 12 years old. Those under 15 must be held separately from other prisoners,

«unless the military commander ordered otherwise.» As one example, nine out of ten youth in Duheisheh camp near Bethlehem, in the West Bank, have been arrested since the 1967 occupation. Specifically for quelling youth activism, the Zionist occupation authorities opened Al Fara'a Detention Center near Nablus. Since 1982, hundreds of West Bank youth have been snatched from their homes or off the streets, incarcerated in Al Fara'a, beaten and otherwise tortured to extract confessions to some alleged 'crime' of resisting occupation. One child who has been doubly victimized is Mohammad Abu Wardeh, 12 years old, who lives in Balata refugee camp near Nablus. He was held for 18 days at Al Fara'a in 1985, and interrogated brutally about books which soldiers found in the room he shares with his elder brothers. In February, he spoke out about his torture at a press conference in Jerusalem organized by the Committee Confronting the Iron Fist. Afterwards Israeli soldiers repeatedly raided his home, rearresting two of his older brothers, as punishment for Mohammad's public testimony about Zionist crimes (*Al Fajr*, May 16, 1986).

MASS PERSISTENCE

Despite the extent of fascist repression, the struggle for freedom is ongoing, though we are prevented from learning all its details. Soweto Day was marked by a general strike which was 90% effective in several major centers. News trickling through the apartheid censorship's iron curtain indicates that daily confrontations continue between the regime's forces and the people in many areas. In this round, the Black trade union movement has placed itself firmly in the frontlines of the anti-apartheid struggle. Since Soweto Day, there has been a series of strikes demanding the release of detained trade union officials, an end to the state of emergency and to apartheid as such. At one point, four diamond mines and a gold mine shaft were halted for several days running, showing the trade unions' potential to strike at the heart of the racists' and imperialists' interests. The first ten days of July saw 200,000 workers on strike, culminating in mass protests. Attacks in the vital urban centers of apartheid expose the regime's failure to halt the revolutionary armed struggle waged by the ANC.

Reports indicate that mass organizations are still functioning, though in great secrecy. Relying on many years of

experience, especially that of last year's state of emergency, many political activists were expecting the regime's onslaught. Many avoided detention and are able to move among their people, organizing and coordinating the struggle.

The ability of the masses and revolutionaries to persist in their struggle is due to a set of factors that have emerged clearly over the past few years. The 1981 movement, protesting the regime's celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Republic of South Africa, marked the readiness of broader sections of the masses to engage in radical, united struggle to challenge state power. There was massive involvement of the so-called colored population in the anti-apartheid struggle, while the Indian community rejected the puppet council created for keeping 'coloreds' and Indians down, but just above the majority Black population, in order to perpetuate white minority rule.

Growing popular unity paved the way for the creation of the United Democratic Front which brings together local groups representing every sector of the people who suffer from apartheid. The student movement, which played a radical, pioneering role a decade ago, is now part of a much broader and sustained mass movement.

The movement has ever more clearly asserted its adherence to the ANC, which gives mass action broader scope as part of the ANC's carefully defined strategy for liberation. Another highly significant development came with last year's formation of COSATU as the largest and most representative workers' movement in the history of South Africa. Its alliance with the United Democratic Front and with SACTU (the banned trade union federation affiliated to the ANC) meant a great boost in the role of the working class in the anti-apartheid struggle.

Bolstered by better organization and clearly defined political aims, the current mass uprising, which dates back to 1984, has not only withstood repression, but has created new realities. Starting last year, a number of Black townships became no-go zones where the regime's forces venture only in large military convoys. Local structures are being built, which are embryonic forms of people's power, and coordinated with parallel structures in other areas.

CHANGING TIMES

A few years ago, US imperialism was counting on the racist South African regime to just plain liquidate the ANC. Pretoria drew strength from the Reagan Administration's policy for exporting counterrevolution, and it escalated aggression against the African masses and neighboring states. Today, due to the advancing liberation struggle led by the ANC, support to Pretoria has become a problem for the imperialists. They are forced to ask themselves: Can we save both our interests and this system of apartheid which has historically watched over them for us? Thus, we see something approaching a political crisis in Britain, due to Thatcher's resistance to sanctions, while the Reagan Administration has found it necessary to reappraise its attitude toward the ANC. This is, of course, a political maneuver designed to ward off real liberation for the South African masses, but the ANC is well-equipped to deal with such maneuvers. Most of all, it shows the changing reality brought about by mass unity and militancy, revolutionary leadership and persistent armed struggle.



Ghassan Kanafani

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of Ghassan Kanafani's birth in Acca, Palestine, in 1936, and 14 years since his martyrdom. Ghassan Kanafani was a member of the PFLP's Politbureau and the founding editor of its weekly Arabic magazine *Al Hadaf*. On July 8, 1972, comrade Ghassan and his niece Lamis were murdered in Beirut. Zionist agents had booby-trapped his car, and it exploded as he started the engine.

Ghassan's contribution to the Palestinian and Arab people's revolution was boundless, especially in the political and cultural fields. Ghassan played a leading role in laying the political foundation for the PFLP's transformation into a Marxist-Leninist organization. He wrote plays, novels and short stories. He painted and drew a number of posters. When we commemorate Ghassan, we always remember the slogan he articulated to be the guide for *Al Hadaf's* foundation and continuing practice: «All Facts to the Masses.» This expresses the essential thrust of all his works.

Ghassan's works were characterized by dealing with the essential dynamics of issues. To him, appearances mattered only in relation to their influence on the essence. In both his literary and political writings, Ghassan frequently addressed social issues which affect the revolution's development. As one example, Ghassan wrote about what was then known as the Abu Hamido case, in an article printed in the August 12, 1972 issue of *Palestine Affairs*, the journal of the PLO Research Center. Abu Hamido was a fighter in South Lebanon, who belonged to a non-Marxist resistance organization. He raped a woman, was sentenced to death by a revolutionary court, and executed. A shallow person would have read the news of this incident and been content with simply remarking that revolutionary justice had been done, but not Ghassan.

Instead, Ghassan wrote: «...even if Abu Hamido committed the crime of rape, the conditions of the revolution compell us to examine the crime consciously - if we want to consider it a political crime as well. If we view it through the consciousness of Abu Hamido, we must examine the political education in the organization to which he belonged. If the political education in that organization is advanced, if it is based on revolutionary discipline and behavior, and close relations with the masses, the punishment for a person

committing such a crime would be different than in an organization without discipline and political education.» Ghassan was not satisfied with guilt being assigned only to the individual who had deviated, but wanted to examine the deeper causes for the crime. He probed further into the revolutionary organization's responsibility for the conduct of its members. This is typical of many of Ghassan's articles which dealt with problems and shortcomings in the revolution, with a view towards correction and improvement.

THE LEADERSHIP PROBLEM

In his novel, *Men in the Sun*, Ghassan depicted the impotency of the

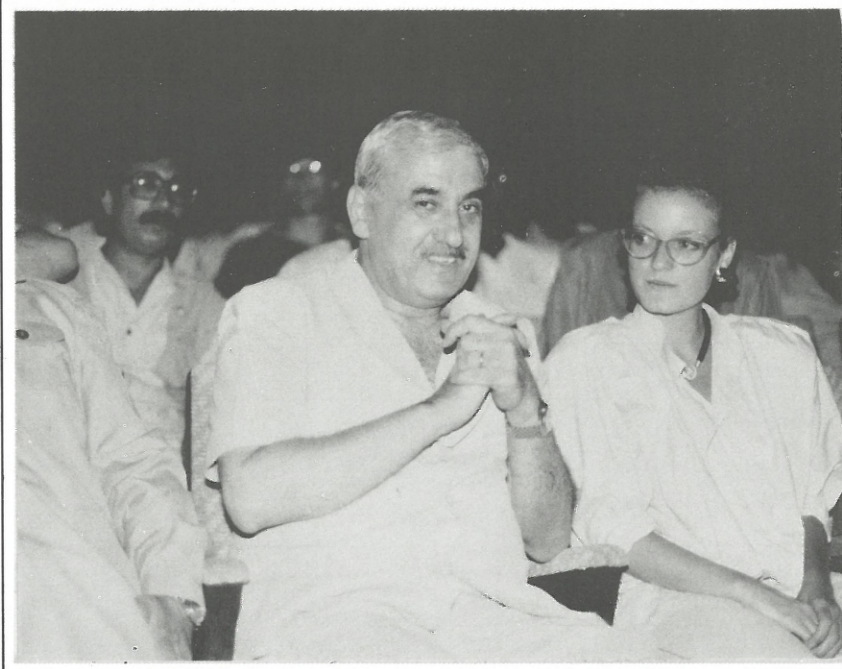
bourgeois leadership of the early sixties, raising the question of the impact of the class character of the leadership at a time when few had addressed this issue. In *Men in the Sun*, the Palestinian people are symbolized by individuals trying to find a solution to their problems by migrating to the Gulf states. In their journey, they are guided by an old man who had lost his manhood when fighting against the Zionists, and since become involved in smuggling migrants over the Arab borders. The three end up suffocating inside the tank of a truck, while the old man waits for having his papers stamped at a border post. Their bodies are thrown in a dump. The reader will question why they died. The answer is clearly woven into the story. They were victims of the wrong way to solve their problems, i.e., an individual solution, and the wrong leadership. Ghassan leaves the reader to think about the alternative.

In his writing, Ghassan utilized Marxism-Leninism as an analytical

Ghassan Kanafani's martyrdom was commemorated in occupied Palestine and in Palestinian communities in exile. In Damascus, Syria, there was a cultural event at the Soviet Cultural Center, attended by many representatives of the Palestinian resistance organizations and unions, and of the socialist countries. Also present was Leila Kanafani, Ghassan's daughter, who was seated beside Dr. George Habash, General Secretary of the PFLP. The program included speeches by Comrade Habash and by several Palestinian writers, and a performance by the *Al Ard (The Land)* folklore group.

Comrade Habash began his commemoration of Ghassan by saying: «Today, on the 50th anniversary of Ghassan's birth, I am glad to stand and say, with great pride, that he is still alive and fighting the enemy. Today, Ghassan's comrades salute him by carrying out a heroic military operation at Naharia, against the enemy that murdered Ghassan and tried to wipe out his memory from among us. Yet Ghassan still makes the enemy toss in his bed after his martyrdom, as he did during his lifetime...»

Dr. Habash and Leila Kanafani



tool, going beyond the general to examine the specific. He was courageous in terms of discarding old methods of thought and introducing new ideas. There are many examples of his analytical ability in his writing about the 1936-9 revolt in Palestine, which brought new understanding of this turning point in the Palestinian national struggle. For example, he compared the role of the feudal class to that of the urban bourgeoisie, noting:

«It is significant that Palestinian Arab advocates of conciliation, who became outspoken during the thirties, were not landlords or rich peasants, but rather elements of the urban upper bourgeoisie whose interests gradually coincided with the expanding interests of the Jewish bourgeoisie. The latter, by controlling the process of industrialization, was creating its own agents.»

This is an interesting point which might not be discovered by the casual observer. One might automatically assume that the feudal class would be the most reactionary, but due to the specifics of the Palestine conflict, where the Zionists focused on grabbing the land, the classes with attachment to the land were threatened and their political position was molded accordingly. Of course, this applied even more to the peasants who were a main force in the revolt.

Ghassan's historical writings, as in the analysis of the 1936-9 revolt, were not merely academic exercises. Ghassan once said, «The goal of education is to correct the march of history. For this reason, we need to study history and apprehend its dialectics in order to build a new historical era...» Ghassan's political writings illuminate the dialectics of history in order to provide guidelines for future strategy and tactics. His analysis of the 1936-9 revolt was, in fact, intended as the first part of a study of the history of the Palestinian national movement in its successive phases. This project was cut short by Ghassan's untimely death.

INTRODUCING THE POETS OF RESISTANCE

Another one of Ghassan's contributions was introducing the poets of resistance in occupied Palestine, to the Palestinians in exile and to the Arab world in general. He worked to spread the poems of Mahmoud Darwish, Samih Al Qassem and others. Today they are famous, but this was not always the case. Samih Al Qassem noted Ghassan's role, saying, «With the existence of Ghassan, we felt that someone cared about us.» Since then, the writings of these poets of resistance have played an important role in conveying the Palestinian situation to the international audience, as have the sto-

ries of Ghassan which have been translated into several languages.

Ghassan also thought that it is important to know the Zionist literature in order to better understand the nature of the enemy. He was the first

serve the cause of internationalism. He said: «Imperialism has layed its body over the world, the head in Eastern Asia, the heart in the Middle East, its arteries reaching Africa and Latin America. Wherever you strike it, you



Arab writer to interpret Zionist literature published in occupied Palestine.

NATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

Ghassan was a Palestinian nationalist because it was in this way he could

damage it, and you serve the world revolution... The Palestinian cause is not a cause for Palestinians only, but a cause for every revolutionary, wherever he is, as a cause of the exploited and oppressed masses in our era.»