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ISRAEL PREPARES NEW ATTACK

Thousands of Palestinians threatened

Report by James Donaghue in Baalbek, Colin Smith in Cairo and Louis Eaks in London.

ISRAELI FORCES are moving into positions to launch a new attack on Palestinian refugees in northern and eastern Lebanon. Tens of thousands of families, driven from Palestine by the Zionists in 1948 and 1967 appear likely to become the latest targets in Israel's 'final solution' campaign to eliminate any Palestinian presence in Lebanon.

At the same time, Israeli occupation forces in Lebanon are implementing a plan aimed at maintaining a permanent presence in the country following the invasion which began in early June.

The new targets are the Palestinian refugee camps in northern

Lebanon, mainly in the Tripoli area, and in the eastern region around Baalbek.

Daily overflights of Israeli jet fighters and reports from independent observers of Israeli military equipment moving northward are fuelling rumours that renewed Zionist attacks on the Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese Muslim defence forces based in Baalbek are imminent.

Baalbek, a bustling town of 30,000, swelled to four times that number during the summer as displaced Lebanese and Palestinians fled the trail of death inflicted by Israeli forces in southern Lebanon. As many as 50,000 internal refugees still

remain, doubled up with relatives or crowded into empty schools, unused houses, and open air camps. 10,000 have crossed into Syria.

An Israeli ground advance is expected along the northern coast to Tripoli where the PLO continues to provide defence and welfare services in two refugee camps.

The PLO is insisting that after the massacres which followed their withdrawal from Sabra and Shatila camps in Beirut, any agreement on PLO withdrawal must guarantee 'social and civil rights' of the remaining Palestinians.

Meanwhile, to maintain its military occupation of southern Lebanon, Israel is now either arming, or per-

mitting to retain weapons, four different and in some cases opposing sectarian factions.

In the Chouf mountains, east of Beirut, light arms have been issued to the Druze, who are under attack from the Phalangist militias, themselves armed and trained by Israel since 1976, and who Israel arranged to move into the Druze area following the June occupation of southern Lebanon.

In the south, the militia of Lebanese army deserter Saad Haddad, armed and supplied by Israel since 1978, has been encouraged to expand its operations over much of southern Lebanon, reinforced by Shi'ite Muslims newly armed and uniformed by Israel.

Lebanese commentators see these moves as ample proof of Israel's intention to fuel sectarian differences, encourage armed conflict between the groups, and create a situation in which at least one group will also welcome an Israeli military presence in the country. Some warn that Israel aims to turn Lebanon into a mosaic of independent religious states, smaller versions of the Zionist state in occupied Palestine.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The conflict and the solution

NABIL RAMLAWI, London Representative of the PLO, explains the background to the Palestine conflict, and reviews the peace plans which have been put forward by the PLO. He charts the conflict from early Zionist settlement in Palestine and looks to a future which assures Christians, Jews and Muslims security and peace. See page 8.

Lifeline from Washington

HAS THE United States changed its stand towards Israel, or is the Reagan plan merely rhetoric? A special study on page 5 looks at the massive military and economic aid programme which flows from the US to Israel unabated despite the Lebanon invasion and Israel's continued settlement programme on the West Bank.

West Bank opinion

EARLIER THIS year two independent opinion surveys were conducted amongst the Palestinians living under Israeli military occupation. Their views on the PLO, the Arab world, the Israelis, the US and the Soviet Union are examined on page 3 by Louis Eaks. The results of a MORI poll of British opinion appears on page 12.

Focus on Lebanon

A SPECIAL two-page report appears on pages 6 and 7, with articles analysing the motives for Israel's invasion and the massacres at Sabra and Shatila. A separate article provides an eyewitness account of the siege of Beirut.

The rise of the PLO

THE EMERGENCE of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation was to change the political face of the Middle East, and provided Israel with a challenge unsurpassed for decades. On page 10, Dr Alan George examines the events leading to the formation of the PLO and the role which it has played in speaking for the Palestinian people in their quest for liberation and self-determination.

Survivors face terrible ordeal

THE THOUSANDS of Palestinians murdered in southern Lebanon by the Israeli invasion forces during June and July have been spared the reign of terror and fear now facing the survivors. Little information is being allowed out of southern Lebanon as the Israeli occupation forces maintain strict security, and there seems little hope that even the Lebanese government will be allowed any effective authority over the area for months, perhaps years, ahead, reports Louis Eaks.

As many as 16,000 Palestinian and

Lebanese youths and men are being held prisoner under conditions of strict secrecy by the Zionists. Prisoner of War status, to which PLO commandos are entitled, has been rejected by the Israeli government.

As Israeli forces moved through southern Lebanon, almost all males, including youths, were seized and taken away for interrogation. Clinics and hospitals faced with the difficult task of coping with casualties created by the heavy bombing and shelling of residential areas and refugee camps were virtually forced to close as all

male medical staff were rounded up and marched away at gun point. Most still remain in concentration camps hastily erected by the Israelis.

30,000 Palestinians and Lebanese males are estimated, by local women's organisations, to have been interned at various times since the Zionists arrived.

Without the defences provided by the PLO, the survivors of the refugee camps now live under the constant fear of attack from Christian groups armed and permitted to operate in the area by the Israelis. These groups

maintain constant harassment of the Palestinians; indiscriminate killing of Palestinians continues.

As the winter rains and cold arrive in Lebanon, thousands of Palestinian families, made homeless when their dwellings were razed to the ground by the Israelis, now face the struggle for survival against the elements. Like the 7,000 Palestinian prisoners at the Ansar concentration camp, most Palestinian families face the winter with little hope of anything more than a tent for shelter.

PALESTINE BRIEFING



Phalangists 'invited Israeli troops to Beirut in '76 war'

IN 1976, at the height of the bloody Lebanese civil war, the extreme right wing Lebanese Phalangists invited Zionist troops to take part in the fighting against Palestinians and their Lebanese leftist allies. Israeli Labour Party leader Shimon Peres has revealed. In a lecture in Petah Tikvah, near Tel Aviv, on 15th October, Mr Peres, who was defence minister under premier Yitzhak Rabin in 1976, said the invitation to Israeli troops had come from Bashir Gemayel, the Phalangist leader who was elected Lebanese President in August this year, but assassinated shortly after.

Peres rejected Gemayel's invitation, and after his Petah Tikvah lecture he claimed that Israel's role in the Lebanese civil war had been restricted to supplying arms to the rightist 'Christian' forces.

Occupation troops face court martial

FOLLOWING COMPLAINTS about their savage treatment of Palestinian protesters, two senior army officers have been transferred from their posts in the Hebron district of the occupied West Bank, and eight other soldiers, including a major, will face court martials. Israel radio announced on 15th October. The complaints were submitted by three reserve officers during the wave of Palestinian demonstrations that swept the 1967 occupied territories in March, in which troops killed at least ten people and wounded more than one hundred.

The eight soldiers face charges of illegal use of weapons, aggravated

assault, improper behaviour and indiscipline.

The radio added that the complaints had first been raised at a press conference called by the Peace Now movement, and that at the time Zionist defence minister Ariel Sharon had refused to meet with the reserve officers, while premier Menachem Beigin had 'harshly denounced them and demanded an apology from them'.

Colonists in Hebron centre

IN A flagrantly provocative move, Zionist settlers have begun demolishing Palestinian homes in the centre of Hebron in the occupied West Bank, as the first stage of a plan to reconstruct a former Jewish quarter in the town. Under heavy 'army guard, settlers from the nearby colony of Kiryat Arba in late October moved in with a bulldozer and began demolishing a number of houses near Hebron's central market place. The settlers plan to clear a large site and construct a three-storey block of flats to house 21 families, all of which will be provided with round-the-clock protection from the occupation forces.

Speaking at the fenced-off site on 29th October, Mr Mustapha Natshe, the Acting Mayor of Hebron, said that many Palestinians had been made homeless by the bulldozing, which had also threatened other occupied homes close by. Some of these were quite clearly damaged, with large structural cracks. 'We have already protested to the United Nations about this criminal act,' declared Mr Natshe.

The Zionist cabinet decided in 1980 to allow colonisation in the centre of Hebron, in a provocative response to a Palestinian guerrilla ambush in the town in which six armed settlers from Kiryat Arba were killed. Action on

the decision was deferred, however, to accommodate US displeasure.

One day before the bulldozers moved into Hebron, Zionist defence minister Ariel Sharon told a meeting of West Bank colonists that a vast settlement programme was the 'best answer' to the various Middle East peace plans being put forward by the United States and other countries.

European Parliament calls for Palestinian state

THE EUROPEAN Parliament in Strasbourg has for the first time called for a Palestinian state. A resolution tabled on 17th October by the Socialist, Conservative and Liberal groups, as well as the Christian Democrats and the Italian and Greek Communists, also expressed 'solidarity with the Palestinian people in their trials'.

The resolution noted that the 'odious massacres' in the Sabra and Chatila Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut took place at a time when the Israeli army was in Beirut with the stated aim of maintaining order.

Does Israel accept 242?

ISRAEL'S CONTINUING establishment of illegal colonies in the 1967 occupied territories has prompted the United States for the first time publicly to question the Zionist state's commitment to UN Resolution 242, passed in the wake of the 1967 Six Days War and requiring Israel to 'withdraw from territories occupied' in the conflict.

Israel's attitude has been called into question by its reaction to Presi-

dent Reagan's Middle East peace plan, which calls for a Zionist evacuation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and for the Palestinians to become 'self-governing' in association with Jordan. The plan specifically calls for an end to Israeli colonisation. The Zionists responded to Reagan's proposals, however, by stepping up their settlement programme.

Following the Israeli government's announcement on 4th November that it had earmarked £9 million for five more settlements, the US State Department issued a sharply-worded statement saying: 'Settlements activity raises questions about Israel's willingness to abide by the promise of Resolution 242 that territory will be exchanged for true peace'.

Technology for nuclear reactor

FOR THE first time it has been officially disclosed that the Zionist state has the technology to build a nuclear reactor. Speaking on 1st November during a tour of the secret Dimona nuclear plant, Zionist energy minister Yuval Ne'eman said that he would be presenting the government with a plan to build a nuclear reactor 'for peaceful purposes'.

The minister also disclosed that Israel had wanted to buy a reactor from either the United States or France, but had been turned down, apparently because the Zionist state was not a signatory to the 1963 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which requires international inspection of nuclear sites.

Israel already has a French-built top-secret reactor at Dimona in the Negev desert, and also a smaller research facility at Nahal Sorek on the Mediterranean coast near Ashdod.

It has been reliably reported that the Zionists have at their disposal up to 200 nuclear warheads. Nuclear technology is one of the key areas of co-operation between Israel and South Africa.

Israelis have clear conscience on massacre

MOST ISRAELIS are not troubled by the role of their occupation troops in the massacre of Palestinian civilians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Beirut, according to an opinion poll conducted by the respected PORI institute and published on 3rd November in the Hebrew daily *Ha'aretz*. The poll showed that only 25.4 per cent of the Israeli public believe that the Zionist state bears any responsibility at all for the massacres. 55.5 per cent do not believe that Israel should be blamed for the atrocity, while 7.7 per cent are reserving judgement pending the outcome of the Israeli judicial enquiry into the killings.

Support drops in the US

AMERICAN SUPPORT for the Zionist state has declined sharply since the start of the invasion of Lebanon, according to public opinion poll published in *Time* magazine on 25th October. The survey shows that 48 per cent of Americans are less sympathetic towards Zionist premier Beigin than a year ago, and that more than two thirds of the American public think that Israel should accept President Reagan's Middle East peace proposals, which call for an Israeli withdrawal from the

PALESTINIAN OPINIONS THE ZIONISTS TRIED TO SUPPRESS

occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, and for Palestinian self-government in association with Jordan.

Thirty per cent felt that the Israeli government must take the major responsibility for the Beirut massacres. 28 per cent blamed Zionist defence minister Ariel Sharon, and 39 per cent blamed the Phalangists.

Troops suffer psychological problems

SIX HUNDRED Israeli soldiers suffered psychiatric disorders during the invasion of Lebanon, the Israeli Army's Psychiatric Department announced on 19th October. It said that 23 per cent of soldiers wounded in the fighting had suffered psychological problems, double the percentage in the 1973 Arab-Israeli war.

Reserve troops have suffered greater mental disorders than regular soldiers. While only 47 per cent of the wounded were reservists, they accounted for 78 per cent of those with psychiatric problems. It was announced that more than one hundred soldiers are still under treatment.

The high proportion of soldiers suffering mental disorders is attributed to the nature of the fighting in the Lebanon invasion. Often Israeli troops were caught in fierce street battles for which their training is inadequate.

'PLO strength greater now,' Israelis admit

MOST ISRAELIS believe that the political strength and influence of the Palestine Liberation Organisation is greater now than it was before the invasion of Lebanon, according to an opinion poll commissioned by the Hebrew daily *Hu'aretz* and published on 4th October. 32.3 per cent of all respondents believed that the PLO was politically stronger now, and 37.5 per cent felt that its influence was unchanged. Only 21.1 per cent believed that the invasion had weakened the PLO politically, while 9.1 per cent were unable to reach a decision.

The poll shows that the Israeli public have judged the Lebanese war a failure, since one of the major objectives of the invasion was to humiliate the Palestinian fighters as a means of undermining support for the PLO.

Phalangists 'are not Christians'

THE ECUMENICAL Council of Nazareth, in the 1948 occupied territories, which represents all the Palestinian city's Christian denominations, has appealed to Israel's state broadcasting authority and to the Minister of Education and Culture, who is responsible for media laws, to stop Israeli radio and television from using the term 'Christians' when referring to the Phalangists and the militia of the south Lebanese protege Sa'ad Haddad. In a message on 7th October, the Council argued that the militias do not act on the basis of Christian principles, and instead pursue rightist, Lebanese or other objectives which have nothing whatsoever to do with the Christian faith.

THE PALESTINE Liberation Organisation is seen by 66 per cent of West Bank Palestinians as 'the only legitimate representative' of the Palestinian people, and an ever greater percentage (72%) would prefer the 'establishment of a Palestinian state under the leadership of the PLO,' writes Louis Eaks.

This strong backing for the PLO amongst the West Bank Palestinians was shown in a survey conducted amongst 3,000 people in the 1967 occupied territories, covering residents in eight geographic zones embracing cities, villages and refugee camps. The poll was conducted in April this year by a team from the Nablus based Al-Najah University Political Science Department, headed by Abd al-Sattar Kassim.

The views shown by this poll pose a major challenge both to Israel's declared intention to permanently occupy all areas of Palestine and to use its military power to obstruct any moves towards the creation of a Palestinian state, whatever compromises might be made over borders, such as acceptance of a state based only on the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The poll also shows that the Reagan plan, which proposes Jordanian sovereignty over the West Bank, is unacceptable to the Palestinians.

The results of the Najah University survey have been subsequently substantiated by a Time magazine poll conducted by the Israeli opinion survey pollsters PORI, and published on 24th May, only three weeks before Israeli troops launched their blitzkrieg into Lebanon.

The PORI poll based on a survey of 441 West Bankers, shows 98.2% supporting an independent Palestinian state. Moreover, 71.4% said they thought peace between Israel

and the Palestinians would 'never happen'.

Both polls were obstructed by the Zionist regime in a determined effort to stop any scientific survey of Palestinian opinion. In the Najah survey 110 questionnaires were confiscated by the occupation military authorities, several student pollsters were detained, one being held for four days. One PORI pollster was also arrested and his research material confiscated, while the government attempted to stop publication arguing that the poll violated Jordanian law and two Israeli military regulations enforced in the occupied territories. Finally Time magazine reached a compromise by agreeing to show the government the poll results for their comments.

The Najah poll was more detailed. On the future of the West Bank 79% believed Israeli withdrawal would 'come about only by force'. Questioned about the form of a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict, from nine alternatives, 32% wanted a return of all Palestinians to their former property and possessions and the creation of a population balance equivalent to 1918; 25% opted for the return of all Palestinians to their former property and homes, and the establishment of a state that would include Muslims, Christians and Jews. The other substantially supported choice was the creation of a West Bank and Gaza state, backed by 22%. The return of the West Bank to Jordan and the Gaza Strip to Egypt was supported by only 3%.

The survey showed a clear feeling that the Palestinians must solve their own problem, and an obvious cynicism of outsiders. In a separate question concerning King Hussein's role in the future of the Palestinians,

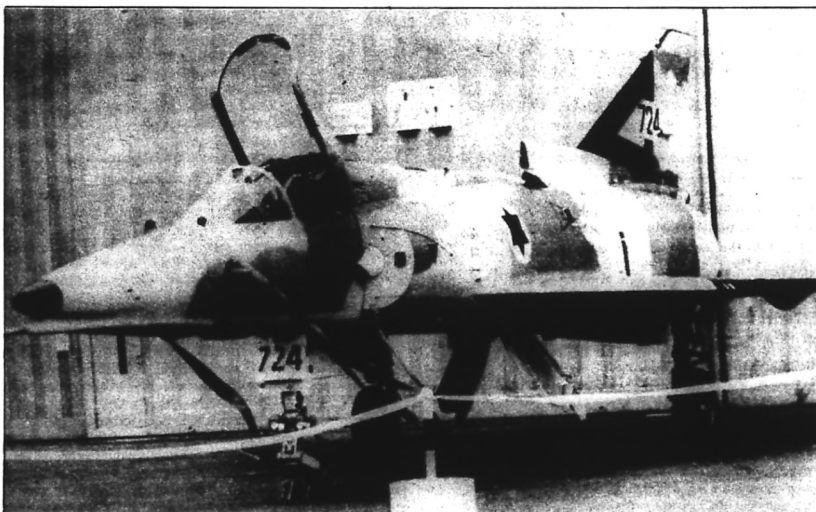
72% said he did not represent the Palestinian people 'at all'. 42% accused the Arab states of indifference 'if not standing against the Palestinians', while Saudi Arabia was said by 39% of seeking a solution 'which suits US interests'. 89% said 'the US is pro-Israel and cannot be trusted', but the Soviet Union was accused by 60% of supporting the Arabs for 'its own interests'.

Strangely, for a journal normally reflecting US government policy, Time magazine said of its poll that the results 'were quite predictable', noting that 86% said they wanted a Palestinian state 'run solely by the PLO'. Clearly that is a message which the White House is none too keen to admit to hearing.

Any election would see Yasser Arafat in a strong position, with 50% support according to PORI, against Naif Hawatmeh with 12% and George Habash with 7%.

Meanwhile, while the Quisling Mustafa Dudeen, appointed by the Israelis to head the Village Leagues, was backed by 'a miniscule 0.2%', in the words of Time magazine, Nablus Mayor Bassam Shaka headed the poll of West Bank leaders with 68%.

The Lebanon war may have brought some change in these results, although it is hardly likely that there would be any evidence of a softening of opinions about the Zionist occupation or the support for an independent Palestinian state if a new poll were conducted now. Given Israel's opposition to these two polls, it is unlikely that a future survey will be permitted, and democratic elections for municipal leaders have been long cancelled as Israel and her American backers struggle to silence all expression of Palestinian opinion.



Kfir jet: Israel takes fifth place in international arms trade

Israel fifth in world arms sales league

ISRAEL HAS reached fifth place among states supplying weapons abroad, the Washington-based American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee has revealed in a report

published *Israel's Arms Exports*, published on 15th October. The report shows that the value of Israel's arms exports has doubled every year since the mid-1970s, and reached \$1.3 billion, about four per cent of the Zionist state's total exports, in 1981. The American Central Intelligence Agency estimates that Israel takes fifth place in the international arms

trade, says the report.

A large section of the report covers the way in which Israel is used by the United States to arm countries to which Washington has restricted arms sales in retaliation for human rights abuses. In the last days of the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua, for example, Israel was providing 98 per cent of the regime's arms imports.

Other past and present buyers of advanced weapons from Israel include the junta in El Salvador, Haiti, Argentina, the Philippines, Taiwan and the Shah's Iran.

'Israel has emerged as a major arms exporter to some of the most notorious regimes, with hardly a protest from those Americans who have been activists on behalf of human rights issues,' the report says.

The study adds that the total silence of the Reagan administration on such arms sales by a country that is the principal recipient of US military and economic aid suggests that Washington 'has been content to have Israel assume a role as major arms supplier to authoritarian military regimes'.

Threat to Palestinian schools

PALESTINIAN SECONDARY school teachers in the 1948 occupied territories have complained at the continuing neglect of Arab education by the Zionist state, and at politically motivated selection of teaching staff by the Israeli Ministry of Education.

A meeting on 14th October in the Palestinian village of Baka al Gharbiya between leaders of the Union of Secondary School Teachers and teachers and school administrators was told how the Ministry had recently refused to hire four teachers with academic degrees, because they had distributed nationalist literature while university students. The Ministry took the action despite the severe shortage of academically qualified teachers. Instead, four teachers without university training had been appointed.

Headmasters and teachers also complained of a lack of trained supervisors and inspectors, saying that there was only one inspector of Arab language courses to cover all the Palestinian schools in Israel, and no inspectors of Islamic religion and culture, science and history. The lack of psychologists, social workers, doctors and nurses in schools was also condemned.

Gaza economy undermined

THE ZIONIST military authorities in the occupied Gaza Strip last month imposed an indefinite ban on the export of citrus fruit to Jordan, claiming that the Amman-based company which re-exports the produce to the Arab world was 'controlled by the PLO'. Later, the Zionists extended the ban to cover Gaza citrus fruits sold in eastern Europe.

Mr Rashad Shawa, Mayor of Gaza until his dismissal by the military government in July, has described the ban as an economic catastrophe that will spell unemployment for many thousands of Palestinians in the region. He added that it was another measure aimed at breaking Palestinian morale and forcing them to accept the 'autonomy' called for by the Camp David accords.

The Gaza Strip, 28 miles long and 5 miles wide, is one of the most densely populated parts of the world, with 2,100 people per square mile. 363,790 of the population are refugees, two thirds of them living in sprawling refugee camps. The export of Gaza lemons, grapefruit and oranges forms the basis of the local economy, with annual sales of between £41 million and £47 million.

WEST BANK REPORT



Gush Emunim settlers with their heavy weaponry.

Settlers cement Zionist hold over West Bank

UNDER COVER of their invasion of Lebanon, the Zionists have launched a new colonisation drive in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. The settlement plans aim at making the Zionists' grip on the Palestinian regions unbreakable.

ISRAEL'S COLONISATION programme in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip regions of Palestine has formed a constant backdrop to the rapidly changing course of events in the region over the past year. Steadily, and in the teeth of stated international opposition, the Zionists are moving to implant hundreds of thousands more illegal settlers into the 1967 occupied territories, in an effort to weld the regions irrevocably into the Zionist state.

The most recent Zionist declaration of intent came in response to the Middle East peace plan floated by President Reagan on 1st September, which called for an end to colonisation. Replying on 5th September, the Israeli premier Menachem Begin asserted that Israel would never withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza Strip. To underline the message, the Israeli cabinet's settlement committee announced the approval of seven new colonies in the West Bank and another one in Gaza. A further five settlements were brought to the planning stage. More have since been inaugurated in the occupied West Bank.

Two days later, the World Zionist Organisation (WZO) unveiled a colonisation master plan, calling for 1.4 million new settlers in the West Bank over the next thirty years. The first phase calls for a rise of 120,000 in the number of West Bank settlers by 1986, and by the year 2010 almost half the region's projected three million residents will be Zionist settlers.

Already there are some 25,000 colonists in the occupied West Bank excluding Arab Jerusalem. Of the 103 West Bank settlements — again excluding the sprawling Zionist suburbs of east Jerusalem — 79 were built since Menachem Begin first came to power in May 1977.

Ten thousand
Shortly after the disclosure of the

West Bank colonisation master plan, details were released of a document named 'Ten Thousand for the Gaza District', another World Zionist Organisation plan that calls for ten thousand colonists to be implanted in the occupied Gaza Strip over the next five years. Two major new urban settlements are envisaged — Neve Deqalim in the south and Nazarim in the centre. There are already 1,000 settlers in five illegal colonies in the Gaza Strip, and another half dozen settlements are nearing completion.

The settlements master plans for the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip take their place alongside a similar scheme for the Golan Heights. Disclosed in May, the programme for the occupied Syrian region calls for 20,000 new colonists, to join the 8,000 already there.

The large scale theft of Palestinian land continues as an integral part of Israel's colonisation process. On 25th July the *Sunday Times* revealed that, under cover of the invasion of Lebanon, the Zionists had launched 'the biggest land grab since the Israeli occupation in 1967'. The paper gave details of Israeli plans to zone forty per cent of the West Bank for Zionist colonisation or Israeli military use and a further fifty per cent for agriculture, with strict controls on building by Palestinian Arabs. Only ten per cent of the region is designated for the expansion of Palestinian towns and villages.

A vision of the future West Bank under continued Israeli rule was given in the *Jerusalem Post* on 25th September by Dr Meron Benvenisti, a former deputy mayor of the city who now conducts research into the Israeli settlement process. 'The Arab towns and villages are to become like ghettos,' he said. 'They will be surrounded by large Jewish dormitory suburbs, settlements, military camps — all served, linked and carved up by fast access highways.'

THE REAL target of Israel's invasion of Lebanon was the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Zionists have never concealed their intention of annexing the two regions, but have been hindered by the tenacious civilian resistance of the local Palestinians. In the fantasies of Beigin and Sharon, this resistance stems not from Israel's denial of Palestinian national rights, and from the harshness of the occupation, but from 'PLO intimidation' of West Bankers. Israel hoped that smashing the PLO's military power would break the morale of Palestinians under Zionist occupation, forcing them to collaborate with the occupiers.

Prior to the invasion, Israel had already been moving to stifle Palestinian national feeling in the West Bank, by a stick and carrot policy of repression and inducements. The Israeli plan has its roots in the US-sponsored Camp David Accords. These called for the local Palestinians to exercise 'full autonomy' through an administrative council. The council, however, was to have no real power. It would have authority only over such matters as local health and bus services, and fell far short of the self-determination that Palestinians demand as their right. The worst fears over the Camp David 'autonomy' scheme were confirmed when Zionist premier Beigin declared that 'autonomy' would apply to people, but not to their land, paving the way for open-ended Zionist colonisation of the West Bank and Gaza.

Perpetual occupation

From the start, Palestinians rejected the scheme as merely a guise for perpetual Israeli occupation. Faced with the refusal of the authentic local

STRONG RESISTANCE TO ANNEXATION

THE REAL objective of Israel's invasion of Lebanon was to break the morale of the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, where the Zionists have been pursuing an elaborate strategy to silence the authentic local leadership and replace it with collaborators. Alan George reviews the failure of Israel's plans.

leadership to take part in the scheme, the Israelis set about creating an 'alternative' leadership of collaborators, organised in the Israeli-sponsored and financed village leagues movement. As part of the strategy, Israel has moved to isolate and neutralise the authentic elected leadership. The nationalist municipalities have been starved of funds for development projects, and many of the responsibilities of the towns — for example the issue of permits for travel abroad — have been transferred to the village leagues.

In March and April, Israel used a wave of angry protest demonstrations in the West Bank as the pretext for sacking the elected Mayors of El Bireh, Nablus, Ramallah and Anabta. Since the invasion, the elimination of the elected leadership has been stepped up and widened. On 15th June — only a week after the invasion was launched — Israel dissolved the town councils of Nablus and Dura. On 6th July the Jenin municipal council was dissolved. On 26th July Rashad Shawa, the Mayor of Gaza, was dismissed.

Palestinians have long suspected that the eventual Israeli intention was to oversee the formation of a tame Palestinian 'autonomy' council, hand-picked from amongst the collaborators in the village leagues.

The council would be presented as the fulfilment of Camp David. These fears are now being confirmed. On 7th September Mustafa Dudeen, the leading light in the village leagues movement, told *The Times* that 'after a "discussion period" of six months with groups and organisations throughout the West Bank, he hopes to stage a referendum which will lead to direct talks with Israel'. And on 30th September Israel radio disclosed that Dudeen had 'put it to the defence minister [Ariel Sharon] that he lets him convene a congress of Arabs in the [1967 occupied] territories with the intention of authorising him [Dudeen] to participate in the autonomy talks'.

Despite the tenacity of the Israeli measures, however, it is clear that the village leagues are backed only by a handful of quislings, and the Israeli strategy has failed dismally to undermine Palestinian support for the PLO. On 24th September *The Times* commented: 'The government's attempts to prise the population's political loyalty away from the Palestine Liberation Organisation have been a failure. The crackdown and parallel efforts to encourage a new pro-Israel leadership in the West Bank have produced a result opposite to that intended.'

Universities closed, lecturers deported



Students in Nablus demonstrate against repression.

AS PART of their efforts to stamp out all manifestations of Palestinian national feeling in the 1967 occupied territories, the Israeli occupation authorities have this year clamped down heavily on West Bank institutions of higher education, enforcing university closures, and deporting lecturers who have refused to sign declarations spurning the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

BIR ZEIT University, near Ramallah, is the West Bank's principal university and has been a frequent target for Israeli repression. The uni-

versity has been closed down by the Zionist authorities for seven months of the past academic year, severely disrupting teaching programmes. The first closure, for two months, was imposed on 4th November 1981, in retaliation for student demonstrations against the introduction of Israel's 'civilian administration' in the West Bank.

The Camp David accords called for the withdrawal of the Zionist military governments from the 1967 occupied territories. Israel, however, is intent on retaining control over the regions, and the 'civilian administration' is Israel's attempt to recon-

cile its objectives with the requirements of Camp David. The new administration is civilian in name only. Most of its staff are Israeli military officers, and all its functions were taken over from former military governments.

The Palestinian universities, in common with the elected West Bank municipalities, decided from the start not to co-operate with the 'civilian administration' scheme. The Zionists, however, adopted a deliberately provocative posture, attempting to enforce meetings between university officials and the administration. On 15th February this year an education officer of the administration entered the Bir Zeit campus uninvited and was involved in a scuffle with students. The following day the university was ordered to close for two months.

The third closure — for three months — came on 7th July, and was imposed in retaliation for the participation by students in angry demonstrations protesting against the invasion of Lebanon.

The start of the new academic year in October saw the reopening of Bir Zeit, but Al-Najah university in Nablus was unable to open because of a Zionist campaign of intimidation directed against its teaching staff. Since August, the Israelis have been demanding that non-resident lecturers at the West Bank's universities sign documents disclaiming support for the PLO, as a condition of securing work permits. By 21st October, the Zionists had deported sixteen Najah lecturers, including the university's President, Dr Munzer Salah, and the Vice President, Dr Abdul Rahman Shaheen, for refusing to sign the declaration.

Israel mocks United Nations Charter

ISRAEL'S AGGRESSION against the Palestinians in Lebanon, and its refusal to abide by UN resolutions during the invasion, prompted a campaign by Arab countries to oust the Zionist state from the United Nations. Alan George explains the case for Israel's expulsion.

AUTUMN'S 37TH Session of the United Nations General Assembly saw a campaign by Arab member states to expel Israel from the world body, in response to the Zionists' persistent violations of UN resolutions and the principles of the world body's Charter. US threats to boycott the UN if the move succeeded won a reprieve for the Zionist state, but Arab countries have said that if Israel's renege behaviour is not rectified the Zionist state will face renewed expulsion moves next year.

Israel's contempt for the UN has been clear ever since the Zionist state's admission to the world body, and it was highlighted once more during the invasion of Lebanon. On 5th June, shortly after the first air strikes in Lebanon, the UN Security Council unanimously approved resolution 508, calling on 'all parties to the conflict to cease immediately and simultaneously all military activities within Lebanon and across the Lebanese-Israeli border'. It also expressed 'grave concern' at 'the violation of the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of Lebanon'.

Israel completely disregarded the resolution, despite Security Council resolutions being mandatory on all UN member states. The following day, the Zionists intensified their assaults, and launched their ground forces into Lebanon. The Security Council met again, and approved Resolution 509, demanding that 'Israel withdraw all its military forces forthwith and unconditionally to the internationally recognised boundaries of Lebanon'. Once more, the UN call met with the Zionist state's outright rejection.

On 19th June, at a time when the extent of the Zionists' savage invasion had become clear, the UN Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 512, condemning Israel for its ferocious treatment of Palestinian prisoners and its premeditated ob-

struction of relief supplies to the devastated areas of Lebanon. Again, the resolution was completely ignored by the Zionists.

When the Arab group at the UN took steps this autumn to oust the Zionist state in retaliation for its excesses, they based their case firmly on the provisions of the UN Charter. Chapter One of the Charter sets out the purposes and principles of the world body, and Article Two of the Charter states: 'All Members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and justice, and justice, are not en-

dangered.' It adds: 'All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any other state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.'

Article Four of Chapter Two is clear that 'Membership of the United Nations is open to all peace loving states which accept the obligations contained in the present Charter and in the judgement of the Organisation, are able and willing to carry out these obligations.'

The procedure for dealing with UN members that violate the Charter is clearly set out in the same Chapter: 'A Member of the United Nations which has persistently violated the Principles contained in the present Charter may be expelled from the Organisation by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council.'

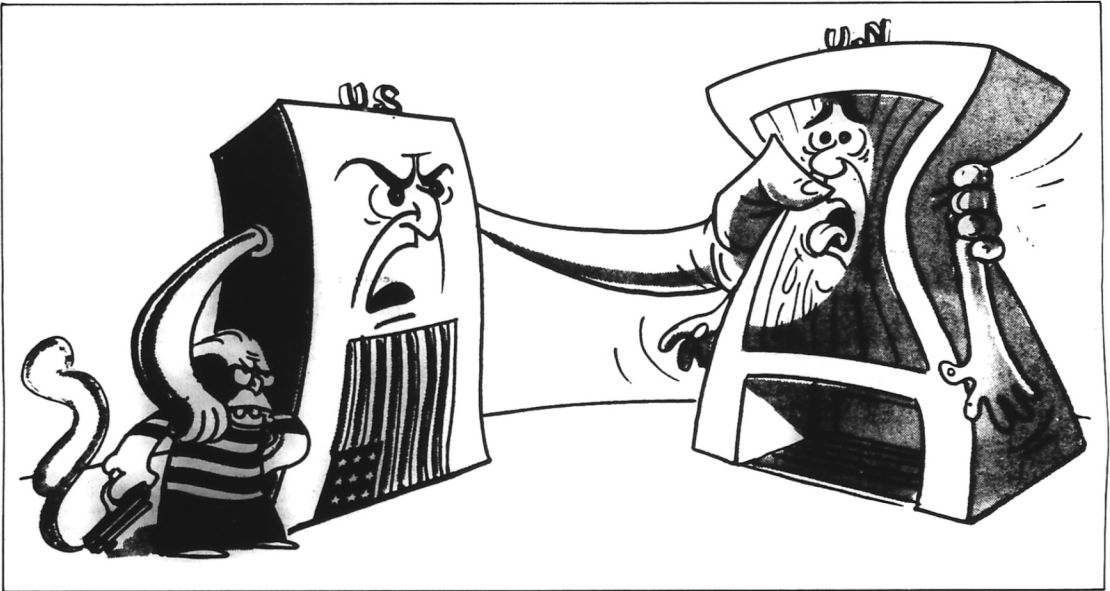
It was evident to the Arab group at the UN that, with the US entrenched with a veto in the Security Council, the latter would never pass a resolution urging Israel's expulsion. Accordingly, they decided to pursue another route, which would bypass the Americans. Every year the General Assembly must review the credentials of its members. This year, however, the Arab countries had intended to challenge the right of the Israeli delegation to attend General Assembly meetings. It was by this procedure in the General Assembly, where no country has a veto, that South Africa was effectively barred from the UN eight years ago.

Predictably, though, the US indicated that it would rather see the dissolution of the United Nations than the expulsion of its client state. On 18th October, as the Arab diplomatic campaign gathered momentum,

Secretary of State George Shultz announced that if Israel's credentials were challenged, the US would pull out of the UN and cease paying its annual contribution of \$180 million — accounting for one quarter of the world body's income.

Faced with the US threats, the Arabs decided to defer their moves to oust the Zionist state, although Mr Abdel Salam Treiki, Libya's UN Representative, declared on 22nd October that if Israel persisted in defying UN resolutions, such as those calling for withdrawals from the occupied Golan Heights and from Lebanon, the Arabs would next year revive their campaign to black Israel's General Assembly delegation.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the whole episode, though, is that even the US could find no moral or legal grounds on which to argue Israel's case. Washington had resort only to blackmail.



ISRAEL'S EXPANSIONISM and its colonisation of the occupied West Bank, Gaza Strip and Golan Heights, would be impossible without massive flows of military and economic aid from Washington. In theory, these give the United States a powerful lever to restrain its protégé but there is no sign that the Americans have any intention of curbing the aid programme, suggesting that Washington fully approves of Israel's policies.

In the fiscal year just ended, the US aid programme totalled \$1.4 billion in military grants and \$785 million in economic aid, which went into Israel's general treasury funds. Commenting on the aid programme, the *Washington Post* said on 21st June: 'This year alone the Israeli government will spend \$5.5 million on defence. One out of every three of the dollars will come from the US Treasury.'

There is clear evidence that the US even times its arms shipments to Israel in accordance with the Zionist state's war plans. Writing in the *New Statesman* on 20th August, Claudia Wright said: 'Pentagon

FUNDING AGGRESSION: Israel's US aid lifeline

ISRAEL IS totally dependent on massive arms and cash aid from the United States, and there is no sign that Washington is contemplating any aid cutbacks to bring the Zionist state to heel. The level of US aid challenges any claim that Washington seriously opposes the policies of the Beigin regime.

figures just released in response to a Freedom of Information Act request reveal a massive surge of military supplies to Israel in the first three months of this year — as Israel planned the invasion of Lebanon,' said Claudia Wright in the *New Statesman* on 20th August. The figures show that in the first quarter of the year Israel took delivery of \$217,695,000 worth of US military hardware. Ms Wright noted: 'This is almost ten times the value of US military goods delivered to Israel in the same period of 1980. It is almost 50 per cent greater than the value of deliveries at the same time last year.'

Coincidence

Pentagon spokesmen have denied any prior knowledge of the invasion of Lebanon, but Claudia Wright commented: 'At the very least an extraordinary coincidence has occurred between US weapons delivery schedules and Israeli military plans for Lebanon. Starting three months before the invasion commenced, the Pentagon must have seen the build-up and known that Israel was stockpiling at a massive and costly rate. It is inconceivable US officials failed to anticipate what this stockpile was for.'

Successive US administrations have argued that to cut back on the aid programme to restrain Israel would

merely anger the Zionists, resulting in even more outrageous action by Israel. Given the extent of Israel's dependence on the US, though, it is difficult to see any logic in such assertions. Journalist Philip Geyelin, reviewing the aid programme in the *International Herald Tribune* on 25th December, was closer to the truth when he said: 'When the Reagan administration says it cannot put the arm on Israel because it would only encourage and/or strengthen Menachem Beigin, what it means is that out of conviction or political cowardice or simple incompetence it does not choose to.'

Compelling

He added: 'The fact is that in any number of quiet, compelling ways the United States can bring pressure to bear on Israel', and went on to cite a number of areas on which US action should focus. Israel's colonisation programme in the 1967 occupied territories, costing some \$200 million per annum, is a case in point, says Geyelin. Given President Reagan's publicly stated demand for an end to settlement activity, 'Surely it would not be bludgeoning Israel to back up that demand with an offsetting cutback in economic aid,' said Geyelin, adding: 'This would at least disassociate the United States from financial backing for something that is at war with American policy.'

For the current fiscal year, however, President Reagan has actually requested Congress to increase aid to Israel by some \$300 million. And the Zionist state is clearly hopeful of winning a significant increase in US support. On 8th October the Zionists submitted a record aid request of \$3 billion for the new fiscal year, \$800 million more than last year.

LEBANON: NEWS ANALYSIS

IN JUNE, the Zionist state launched one of its most savage assaults against the Palestinians. After months of careful preparation, thousands of Israeli tanks and infantry poured across the Lebanese border, backed by the full weight of the Zionists' US-supplied air force. Israel's objective was to humiliate the Palestinian forces in Lebanon, in a bid to break the PLO's political power. After three months of bitter fighting, with appalling destruction and carnage, however, Israel had plainly lost the war. Shocked by the savagery screened nightly on television, the last pockets of Israeli sympathy in the west evaporated. The stubborn Palestinian resistance had prevented an Israeli occupation of West Beirut. And the PLO emerged with their prestige and popularity higher than ever before.

Israel's pretexts for launching the invasion were transparently disingenuous. At first, the Zionists claimed that they were retaliating for the assassination attempt on the Israeli ambassador in London, despite the fact that the PLO had strongly condemned the attack, and that the British government had confirmed that the PLO was not responsible.

Another line of Israeli propaganda was that they were acting to protect their northern settlements from PLO shelling. But Palestinian forces in Lebanon had rigorously abided by the terms of the ceasefire established at the end of the July 1981 border war. Further, the Palestinians had refrained from breaking the agreement despite repeated Zionist provocations. Again, the Israeli argument concerning its northern settlements was rejected out of hand by the international community.

Complex

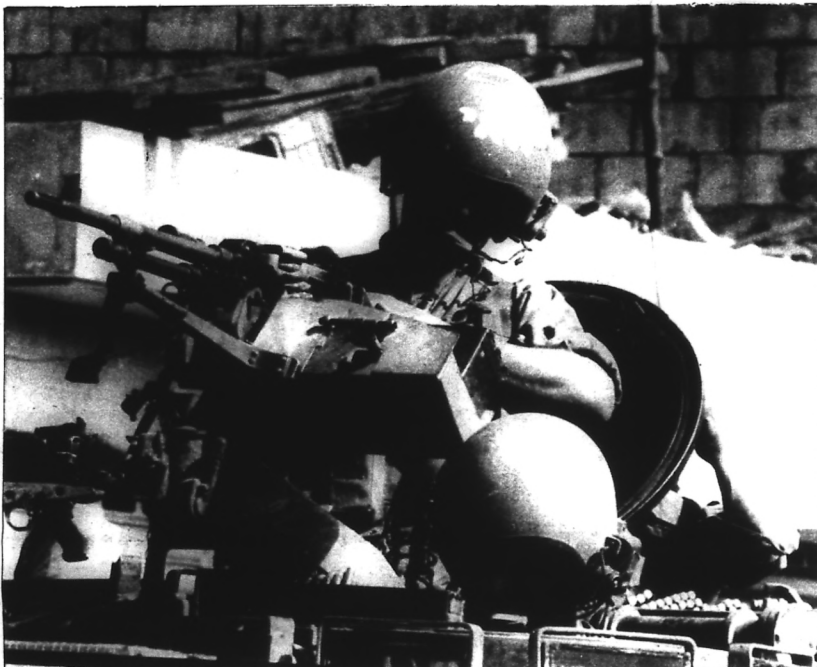
The invasion had been planned for months, and its real motives were far more complex. One objective was to smash the PLO's military power in an effort to undermine its growing political influence. In this respect, a key target was the West Bank and Gaza Strip, where the Zionists believe that civilian resistance to the occupation stems from 'PLO intimidation', and not from Israel's denial of the Palestinian right to self-determination and the sheer brutality of the occupation regime.

Shortly after the start of the onslaught, on 10th June, the *Irish Times* quoted a 'very earnest Government press officer' as saying: 'When we have beaten or discredited them [the PLO] there is a chance of a political settlement.' He added: 'We must separate the Palestinians from the PLO.' This line was echoed by Zionist foreign minister Yitzhak Shamir, in the *International Herald Tribune* on 16th June. He said that the invasion had opened the way for 'progress on autonomy negotiations' in the 1967 occupied territories, adding: 'There are lots of Palestinians who want to co-operate with us, and now they won't be intimidated.'

Another of Israel's objectives was to 're-arrange' Lebanon's internal affairs and install a regime antagonistic to the Palestinians. The ultimate objective was the conclusion of a Camp David-style peace treaty between Israel and a puppet regime in Beirut. For the Zionists, such an arrangement would prevent any re-assertion of Palestinian military and political power within Lebanon. An obvious partner for Israel's plans was the extreme right wing Phalangist Party, headed by Bashir Gemayal

The 'final solution' that failed

FOR ISRAEL, the invasion of Lebanon was a spectacular failure. Far from being destroyed, the PLO has emerged intact and with its prestige higher than ever, and having failed to install a compliant puppet regime in Beirut, the Zionists are now bogged down in an occupation that looks set to be long and costly.



Israeli soldiers bogged down in a long and costly occupation.

until his assassination in September. During the bloody Lebanese civil war that reached a peak in 1975-76 the Phalangists were lavishly supplied with weapons and training by the Zionists. In its 1982 invasion, Israel came to collect the debt.

Victory

The invasion, however, ended with victory for the Palestinians and

subject failure for the Zionists. Israel expected another lightning victory, but despite their overwhelming inferiority in arms, the Palestinian fighters dragged the Zionists into their longest-ever war. And when the PLO guerrillas evacuated West Beirut at the end of August, it was only to spare the civilian population further suffering from Israel's remorseless siege and bombardment of the city.

Israeli infantry had several times attempted to break through into the western sector of the city, but had been beaten off with heavy losses. Israel was denied its most important military objective, while the Palestinians, far from being militarily humiliated, had earned a new respect — not least amongst their brethren in the 1967 occupied territories.

The savage tactics of the Israelis, meanwhile, and their total disregard for the lives of civilians, served further to isolate the Zionists in the international community. And just as important as the official condemnations of the invasion from governments was the reaction of the public, notably in the west where Israel continued to command considerable sympathy before the aggression. It was the first Zionist war in which television cameras had been present on the receiving end, and the nightly film of carnage from Beirut, accompanied by Beigin's carping about Israel's 'respect for human life', prompted a sea-change in western perceptions of Israel.

Dismay

The Zionists were no more successful in forging a new alliance with Lebanon. To Israel's dismay, the Phalangists refused to take an active part in the invasion. And even after his election to the Lebanese Presidency Gemayel took pains to keep his distance from Beigin, refusing point blank to conclude any peace treaty with the invaders. Whatever their shortcomings in other respects, the Phalangists were aware that Lebanon's national integrity depended on a reconciliation between the Muslim and Christian communities, and they knew that any dealings with Israel by the rightist Christians would be deeply resented by the Muslim-leftist community, who strongly sympathise with the Palestinian cause. There is indeed speculation that it was the Israelis who arranged for Bashir Gemayel's assassination, in the hope that his successor would be more accommodating.

In the event, Amin Gemayel, who was elected President in place of his brother, has proved no more co-operative, and seems intent on throwing in his lot with the Americans rather than the Israelis.

After killing more than 20,000 people and severely wounding thousands more, most of them civilians, Israel has achieved none of its aims. Like the Americans in Vietnam, the Zionists are stuck in the quagmire of Lebanon's complex internal politics, unable to bend the situation to their advantage, and unable to withdraw with dignity. The Israeli army of occupation is now bogged down, and faces a guerrilla war of attrition that is taking an increasingly heavy toll.

Palestinians winning war of attrition



Resistance fighters gaining the upper hand.

ISRAELI HOPES for a swift victory in Lebanon were dashed by the tenacity of Palestinian and Lebanese leftist resistance, and the Zionists were forced into their longest ever war, suffering heavy casualties. Five months later, there is no sign of any respite for Israel, whose occupation army has been drawn into a bitter war of attrition, in which Palestinian guerrillas are gaining the upper hand.

The growing intensity of the guerrilla war was highlighted by the *Daily Telegraph* on 30th October. 'Israeli troops sealed off Aley in the Chouf Mountains (near Beirut) yesterday and conducted house-to-house searches after an Israeli soldier had been shot dead,' the paper said, adding: 'In two further incidents on Thursday, an Israeli soldier was injured when a gunman hit him in the chest at close range in the southern port of Sidon. Later that day, an Israeli troops bus came under

bazooka fire further south near Tyre'. The *Daily Telegraph* report noted: 'On Tuesday an Israeli soldier was injured when a hand grenade was hurled into his jeep in Sidon'.

The single most striking demonstration of the Palestinian commandos' ability to hit at the occupation army came, however, on 3rd October, when guerrillas armed with sidearms and rocket propelled grenades ambushed a troop bus in the centre of Aley, killing six soldiers and wounding 22. A tight curfew was imposed on the town, but the attackers eluded capture.

Israel's failure to crush Palestinian military power was also underlined on 5th September, when a Palestinian unit operating behind enemy lines near the town of Bhamdoun overran an Israeli position without firing a shot, and captured all eight soldiers manning it.

SIEGE DIARY

FOR SIX weeks in July and August, at the height of the Israeli bombardment of Beirut, Major Derek Cooper and his wife Pamela were in the beleaguered western sector of the city as volunteers for Oxfam. Major Cooper's diary vividly captures the horror of the Zionist siege.

□ Night of 26th/27th July

'THE WORST night attack to date, bombs and flares were dropped in order to pin-point PLO positions, without any response.'

□ 27th July

'ANOTHER HEAVY bombardment took place at noon. An apartment near the sea, occupied by displaced Lebanese and Palestinians, was hit by a deep penetration bomb. The young Norwegian paramedic who stays in our hotel spent the rest of the day pulling out the dead and injured. Under cover of smoke from the explosion, helicopters came in and machine-gunned the nearby corniche, the sea-front, and for the first time the business area of Beirut was haphazardly bombed and shelled. More than one hundred died today, and double that number were injured.'

'The plight of the refugees, both Palestinian and Lebanese, grows daily as they crowd into cinemas, schools, apartment buildings and public gardens. Sanitation is completely inadequate, water must be drawn and carried from the UNICEF tanks placed around the city, and there is growing overcrowding due to the constant influx of new arrivals abandoning their homes near the front line or the southern suburbs.'

□ 2nd August:

Message to Foreign Office

'TODAY THE city was bombed from the air and shelled from the sea and land for fifteen hours almost without stopping. This has been happening day and night for some time with a few cease-fires. Today's attack was by far the longest. A short way south of here there is almost total destruction, which includes the refugee camps, and the daily Israeli creeping barrage nibbles off yet more areas on the perimeter south and on the coast, obliging people to move closer into the central parts where every building is already teeming with families.'

'Up to date, the casualties have been about 80 per cent civilians, and many children; many have died from burns; now there is serious fear of dehydration and epidemics from polluted water. The Israelis allow water in now and then, under pressure, but not the fuel to boil it with. Lately, they have blocked the Red Cross and UNRWA rations.'

'WE HAVE been, and are working, in the south, but that is another horror story, of which the truth will probably never be told nor the dead numbered. Not even in the Second World War did I see such remorseless and indiscriminate bombing of helpless people, and am dismayed that no sanctions have been taken

against Israel. The Arabs here are convinced that the US gave the go-ahead for the destruction of Beirut, the Palestinians and their families and the poorer Lebanese.'

□ 3rd August:

Visit to the Islamic Mental Hospital 'I FOUND that the hospital had come under attack for the fifth time last Sunday — the two top floors were badly damaged with broken windows on most floors — one person had been killed and three injured in bed.'

□ 4th August

'AT 1.30AM the Israelis start very heavy bombardment, and at the same time attempted three-pronged entry into West Beirut, via the port road and due east and up the coast from the airport. We were confined to the shelter of the hotel, listening to the continuous bang, roar and crash into buildings near the sea from the barrage from naval gunboats, straddled by round after round from the south east. This went on all day and into the night, combined now with waves of fighter bombers dropping flares and the noise of large bombs crashing into buildings. The civilian casualties, as usual, were high — over 300 dead or injured — it is impossible to know really as so often bodies are dug out some days later.'

□ 6th August: Shattered

'THE AFTERNOON was shattered by an air bombing attack and an enormous explosion when a deep penetration bomb went through an apartment block and ten stories collapsed on themselves, killing over 100 with many more injured who were pulled out all through the night. They were all refugees — mostly women and children already bombed and shelled out of the Bourj al Brajneh camp (in south Beirut). The Israelis announced they had hit a military target! At the same time, the Jardin Publique was hit, where many families were camping. This was not enough. A car bomb (planted by collaborators) went off nearby, killing and wounding many more.'

'The tightening of the blockade is relentless. Little gets in. The siege is almost medieval, with the addition of a steady use of the most sophisticated weapons in the world, many designed to maim in the most horrible way — shelling from the land and sea and bombing from the air, completely indiscriminate at this stage. No part remains undamaged, and as you drive south from Hamra Street you come upon almost total destruction, schools, embassies, hotels, shops, apartment blocks, hospitals — everything has been hit or totally flattened or burnt.'



The carnage of the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps.

The Zionist pogrom to force Palestinian exodus

THE MASSACRES at Sabra and Shatila took place as part of a wider terror campaign launched against the defenceless Palestinian refugees and Lebanese leftists by the Phalangists and their Zionist allies.

ISRAEL HAS portrayed the massacre of some 2,000 Palestinian civilians in the Beirut refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila as an isolated atrocity. Yet the mass murder was the inevitable consequence of a plan, drawn up by the newly ascendant Lebanese rightists with the full endorsement of the Israelis, to terrorist Lebanon's defenceless Palestinian community into fleeing the country.

The existence of a 'master plan' to terrorise the Palestinians was confirmed by *The Guardian* on 1st October. The entry of rightist murderers into the Beirut camps, said the paper had been 'in accordance with an operational plan designed and approved by the highest military echelons of the late Bashir Gemayel's Lebanese Forces militia, including Mr Gemayel himself before his assassination on September 14'.

The Guardian disclosed that the plan did not specifically urge the slaughter of innocent Palestinians. But it did call for 'arrests, interrogations, and physical destruction of housing as part of an effort to spread terror among Lebanon's estimated 500,000 Palestinian refugees to encourage them to flee the country'.

The terror campaign had already been launched, with the full approval of the Israelis, well before the Beirut massacres. On the night of 7th August, for example, Zionist troops facilitated the entry of Phalangist gunmen into the Mieh Mieh refugee camp in the southern port town of Sidon. The rightists shot up the camp, burned down many homes and looted others. About half the camp's 4,000

refugees were driven out, and forced to fend as best they could in the rubble of the nearby Ain al Hilweh refugee camp, which was all but totally destroyed during the invasion and by subsequent Israeli demolitions.

Gunmen

The rightist gunmen have also moved to 'settle scores' with their Lebanese leftist opponents. On 28th September Israel radio revealed that the Zionist occupation army had for some two months been allowing the Phalangists to intimidate the residents of Druse villages in the occupied south. In one incident reported by radio, a Phalangist battalion had entered the village of Suq al Gharb, in the mountains east of Beirut, prompting 'grave clashes between the Druse and Christians [sic], with both dead and wounded'. The radio added, 'On one of the nights the Phalangists directed fire from a moving jeep into a wedding hall and killed fourteen, Druse'.

In West Beirut, the Christian-officered Lebanese Army has conducted mass round-ups of Palestinians and Lebanese leftists, on the pretext that it was seeking out 'illegal immigrants'. But *The Guardian* said on 8th October: 'left wingers and the Palestinians accuse the army of trying to crush the remnants of their power while leaving right-wing militias friendly to Israel operating unchecked'.

Electric wires

There are clear signs that those arrested by the army are tortured.

The Guardian report added that a number of accounts by released detainees 'agree that the prisoners are blindfolded and stripped to the waist and starved for a couple of days and beaten with electric wires'.

The Lebanese army's close collaboration with the Zionists was underlined by the *International Herald Tribune* on 4th October, when it revealed that some of the Palestinians arrested 'have been expelled from the country or taken to the Israeli detention centre in southern Lebanon at Ansar'.

The concentration camp set up by the Israelis at Ansar, near the southern town of Nabatiyeh has come to symbolise the massive human rights violations under way in Israeli-occupied Lebanon. More than 7,000 Palestinians and Lebanese, ranging from old men to teenagers, are being held as 'terrorist suspects' in the Ansar camp. Many were captured during the invasion, but many others were simply seized off the streets after being pointed out to the Israelis by hooded informers.

Describing the conditions at Ansar, the *Daily Telegraph* said on 1st October: 'The detainees are living under canvas on an exposed rocky hilltop, and face deteriorating conditions with the onset of winter cold and rain'. On 3rd October a senior Red Cross official expressed the same view in the *Sunday Times*, saying that the prison camp was 'overcrowded' and had 'no proper sanitation' and adding: 'Winter will bring critical hygienic problems. It will be freezing cold'.

As you drive south from Hamra Street you come upon almost total destruction: schools, embassies, hotels, shops, apartment blocks, hospitals, everything has been hit or totally flattened or burnt.

CONFLICT STUDIES

AN OPPRESSION WE CANNOT ACCEPT

Nabil Ramlawi explains the Palestinians' case and their view of peace



Palestinian prisoners at a camp in southern Lebanon: Geneva Conventions ignored.

TODAY THERE are some four million Palestinians, the original Christian and Muslim Arab inhabitants of Palestine, and their children and grandchildren. About half that number still live in Palestine, and of that number about 175,000 still live in the area claimed as the state of Israel in 1948. The other two million Palestinians live as refugees outside their homeland.

We witnessed the occupation of our coastal lands in 1948, the establishment of Israel on that land, and the mass expulsion of our Palestinian people from that region. We watched a new state emerge on our land, in which our people who remained there become second class citizens in their own land. Most of our Arab towns and villages were razed to the ground, and new Zionist settlements emerged to forge the new image of Palestine as a Jewish state. At the United Nations resolutions supporting our right to return were adopted; it was a condition of Israel's admission to the UN in 1949 that we be allowed to return to our homes, but Israel has never respected that right of the Palestinian people.

Again in 1967, a new war was waged by Israel against the Arab nation; at the end of the Six Day War the whole of Palestine had fallen under Zionist control; many refugees from the 1948 War found themselves a tragic and ironic situation — they were under Israeli military occupation; the whole of Palestine was under Zionist control; yet the refugees of '48, who had sought shelter on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, were now prisoners of their refugee camps, still denied the right to return to

their homes in the territories occupied in '48. And by the end of the Six Day War tens of thousands more Palestinians had fled the Israeli invasion, to swell the numbers of Palestinian refugees outside Palestine.

I make these remarks by way of an introduction because no solution can be found to what is known as the Middle East conflict unless it is understood that the conflict is about Palestine. Involve as it may, the wider Arab community, it cannot be solved as an Arab-Israeli conflict. At the heart of the dispute are the

Palestinian people, long regarded by the international community as a side-issue, but in reality we are the real victims of war, and peace is wholly dependent on respect of the Palestinian people's rights.

I also reject that it is a conflict between Jews and Arabs. Such a simple approach may serve Zionist propaganda to secure international sympathy, but we in the Palestine Liberation Organisation do not consider ourselves at war with the Jews.

I stress this point, concerning Jewish and Arab relations, because I

want to emphasise from the outset that it is not an obstacle to peace in Palestine.

Zionism

At the heart of the conflict is the Zionist movement; not the Zionism of traditional Jewry, a concept or belief based on religious teachings. When we speak of Zionism, we refer to the political ideology created amongst European Jewry at the end of the 19th century, and which was to motivate the Zionist movement to colonise our land in Palestine.

The Zionist movement was officially launched in 1897, at the First Zionist Congress in Basle. The year before, the leading Zionist Theodore Herzl published his plan, entitled *Der Judenstaat* — the Jewish State. The term 'state' was subsequently dropped from the Zionist vocabulary, to be replaced with the term 'home' or 'homeland', to make the scheme more acceptable to the colonial powers to whom the Zionists turned for support.

The first Zionist Congress agreed a plan, and I quote from the resolution adopted, 'To create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law', and to support 'the promotion on suitable lines of colonisation of Palestine by Jewish agricultural and industrial workers'.

Thirty years later, in 1917, the Jewish community accounted for only six per cent of the population of Palestine. So how was a Jewish state to be created in a land where 94 per cent of the population was not Jewish?

You will find the Zionist solution to this dilemma written in Herzl's diary on 12th June 1895. On that day he wrote: 'The poorer sections of the population we shall try to transfer across the border, without raising noise, by giving them employment in transit countries, but in our own country (by which he means Palestine) we shall deny them all work.'

In a comment described by *The Times* as a 'Powellite' remark, Mrs Golda Meir declared on 23rd October 1972, 'After we have signed peace treaties' with our neighbours and agreed borders, the nature of the State of Israel will be Jewish with a large Jewish majority, so that we don't wake up every morning, being afraid to ask, "Who was born during the night. Was it a Jew or an Arab".'

Arab expulsion

In the Israeli daily *Yediot Aharonot* on 15th January this year, the former head of Israeli intelligence, General

Shlomo Gazit, explained Israel's objectives. They are threefold, he explained.

First, to maintain Zionist control over the whole of Palestine, which he calls 'Eretz Israel'. The second objective, that Eretz Israel 'will remain entirely under Jewish control'. And here is the third objective, in his own words: 'The third objective is a full solution of the problems of the Arabs of Eretz Israel. The solution must be found for them outside historic Eretz Israel.'

So here we have a fundamental problem, a cause of conflict which cannot be ignored. I refer to the consistent and persistent objective of the Zionists to eliminate the Palestinian Arab presence from Palestine. It has been a fundamental objective from the earliest Zionist statements to the current day.

If the first aspect of Zionism is its aim of expelling my people from our homeland, the second aspect of Zionism which must be considered is the status and rights of those Palestinians who remained under Israeli rule within the territories seized in 1948. They became second class citizens in their own land. The rights of these people cannot be ignored; they are part of the Palestinian people; there was no peace between the Zionists and the Palestinians between 1948 and 1967 because we rejected the Zionist basis of the state of Israel as much as we were moved by the expulsion of most of our people from that territory taken in '48.

For those who became known as 'Israeli Arabs', it was a humiliating and traumatic experience. Firstly, they had no automatic right to citizenship; this automatic right was reserved only for any Jew who emigrated to 'Israel'. Secondly, as Herzl and the first Zionist Congress agreed, land and employment would be reserved for Jewish immigrants. Of course, Arab labour is used in Israel, but Palestinian workers face great discrimination. Ninety per cent of agricultural land is owned by the Jewish National Fund, a quasi-government body. The constitution of the JNF makes clear that its land, 'is the inalienable property of the Jewish people', and Article 23 of the JNF leases states, 'The lessee undertakes to execute all works connected with cultivation of the holding with Jewish labour . . . where the lease has contravened the provisions of this article three times the Fund may apply the right of restitution of the holding without paying any compensation whatever.'

Hence, we not only lost our land, but the right to work on that land. Today, this process is under way on the West Bank, as Arab lands are confiscated and handed over to Zionist settlers.

There are many aspects of discrimination which we as Palestinians face within the state of Israel; none is greater than the freedom of any Jew, from anywhere in the world to settle in Israeli controlled Palestine, while we Palestinians who are exiled as refugees are denied the right to return.

It is necessary to deal with some of these aspects of Zionism because unless they are fully appreciated it is not possible to make proposals for peace, nor to understand why we have rejected many so-called peace proposals in the past, which have been put forward by outside powers such as the Americans. These injustices must be resolved; we are not some sub-human form; we are human beings, and we cannot live in peace while we are being oppressed and



Doctors in Lebanon including European volunteers, rounded up and imprisoned.

denied the rights which other human beings take for granted.

Nor, of course, can there be a solution based on a situation in which we, the oppressed Palestinians, become the oppressors of the Jewish settlers in Palestine. The solution must respect the security and dignity of all communities in Palestine to live free from discrimination and with equal rights.

Palestinian rights

The United Nations has adopted a series of resolutions through which the international community has expressed its view of the rights of the Palestinian people. The Palestine Liberation Organisation fully accepts those rights as the basis on which peace can be secured. In the face of Zionist rejection of those rights, I put it more strongly. We insist that there can be no peace which does not fully respect the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.

The rights of the Palestinian people, defined by the UN General Assembly, are these:

- First, our right as Palestinians to self-determination in an independent sovereign state, free from external interference.

- Second, the right of those Palestinians in exile to return to their homes and property, or for those who choose not to return to receive compensation.

Additionally, of course, the United Nations has recognised the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and stated that the PLO must be involved in any conferences or negotiations concerned with the future of Palestine.

I am not optimistic about the prospects for peace in Palestine in the immediate future. But we have a responsibility to our people to work ceaselessly to secure a just and living settlement based on the rights of the Palestinian people.

When the Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, Yasser Arafat, addressed the United Nations General Assembly in 1974, he took with him proposals for peace in Palestine. The proposals were not new, but

they had rarely been heard in the West because of the persistent failure of the media to give attention and coverage to our plan for the establishment of a secular and democratic, unitary state of Palestine.

We remain convinced that it is in the interests of all the people of Palestine that such a state be created to replace the Zionist regime with its inherent racist ideology. When we speak of dismantling the Zionist state, we are not proposing genocide against Israeli Jews; we refer to the removal of all forms of discrimination and oppression which are central to the Zionist system.

I would like to remind you of the words of Yasser Arafat, when he addressed the UN General Assembly in November 1974. He declared, 'When we speak of our common hopes for the Palestine of tomorrow, we include in our perspective all Jews now living in Palestine who choose to live with us there in peace and without discrimination . . . that we might work together in a framework of a just peace in our Democratic Palestine.'

This proposal for peace, for a secular, democratic and unitary Palestinian state came not from a speech writer to impress the United Nations General Assembly. It had been the result of debate within the Palestine National Council, our Palestinian parliament, and adopted as PNC policy back in the 1960s.

I do not need to remind you that this plan for peace in Palestine was categorically rejected by the Zionists. We still believe it to be the best basis for a just and lasting solution, and we have faith, we must have faith, that in the future a leadership of Israeli Jews will emerge to join hands with the Palestinian people to create such a state.

But faced with this rejection, it was our responsibility to search for an alternative proposal: one which would provide for the immediate needs of our people. Much is heard here in the West of the traumas of war experienced by the Israeli Jews. They are no less for my Palestinian people; we have been uprooted in the most violent and cruel manner. Wars mean suffering of innocents on both sides of any conflict. When Israel



Chairman Yasser Arafat with military aides in an office near Beirut plan Palestinian resistance to Zionist military bombings.

bombs our refugee camps, it means the death of our sons and daughters, our mothers and fathers, our friends and relations. Our homes are destroyed, our lives are shattered. Yet this has been our experience for too long. We yearn, like any other human being, to be free from brutalities of war . . . a war which we did not choose in the first place.

Our people have entrusted us, the PLO, with the responsibility to secure for them the freedom from war. We have the task to secure that freedom, and to secure respect for our legitimate rights. We have, therefore, put forward an alternative proposal, that a Palestinian state, independent and sovereign, should be created on any part of the Palestinian homeland from which Israeli Zionist control is removed.

Specifically, we propose that this Palestinian state should be established on the Palestinian territories seized by Israel in 1967, and which the

international community through the General Assembly and the Security Council has termed an illegal military occupation from which Israel must withdraw. It would be a Palestinian state embracing the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and Arab Jerusalem.

Such a Palestinian state would provide peace in the area, and freedom for my people to rebuild their lives, and reassert our Palestinian identity and our moral and political values. It would provide the opportunity for Israeli Jews to view us as equals, rather than as a people subjugated under military occupation. It

would open the way for co-existence between the two peoples, and provide the process for each to recognise our common destiny and interests in a single Palestinian land.

We cannot accept less than this. Our people will not accept less than this. The challenge which faces us all as members of the international community, is how do we reach a just peace in Palestine.

□ This article is based on extracts from a lecture given earlier this year by Nabil Ramlawi, the London Representative of the PLO, to an audience of post graduate students at the London School of Economics.

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Palestinian refugees cross the River Jordan carrying only a few possessions.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

ON NEW Year's Day 1965 journalists in Beirut were puzzled by a short communiqué issued by a hitherto unknown group named Asifah Forces. The statement, described as Military Communiqué No 1 of the Asifah Forces' General Command, read: 'On the night of 31st December 1964-1st January 1965, detachments of our strike forces went into action, performing all the tasks assigned to them in the occupied territories and returning safely to their bases.' 'Asifah' is Arabic for 'storm', and the Asifah Forces were in fact those of the embryonic Palestinian resistance group Fatah.

The operation marked the start of organised resistance to the Zionist seizure of Palestine. The *Harakat al Tahrir al Watani al Falastini* — the Palestine National Liberation Movement — had been founded seven years earlier. Fatah is an acronym, derived by reversing the initial letters of the group's Arabic name. Fatah and other resistance groups emerged in response to the failure both of the international community and the Arab states to take any effective action to redress the wrongs suffered by the Arabs of Palestine when the Zionists seized their country and expelled them in 1948.

In the immediate aftermath of the Palestine war, the refugees were confident that their exile would be short. In December 1948 the United Nations had passed Resolution 194 (II) calling on Israel to allow the Palestinians to return, and the refugees believed that it would be only a matter of time before Israel complied, albeit under pressure from the world community. The refugees anyway had no option but to place their trust in international diplomacy, conducted on their behalf by others. They had no military strength. Their traditional leadership was discredited. The Palestinians were scattered between half a dozen regions, each under the jurisdiction of different states. United and effective action on their own initiative was impossible.

Pan-Arabism

As the months of waiting in the squalor of the refugee camps turned into years, however, the Palestinians began to see that they could win their national rights only by force. After Nasser's overthrow of the Egyptian monarchy in 1954, it seemed that a tide of revolution would engulf the region, bringing Arab unity. Only a united Arab world would command the strength that might bring military victory against the heavily-armed Zionist state, and the Palestinians pinned their hopes on the pan-Arab political parties such as the Nasserites and the Ba'athists, joining their ranks in large numbers.

By the end of the 1950s, however, the Palestinians were becoming as disillusioned with pan-Arabism as they had earlier become with western diplomacy. The 'revolutionary' pan-Arab regimes that had seized power in some Arab states showed little sincere commitment to the struggle for Palestine, despite its central place in their rhetoric. The standard plea of the new regimes was for patience. The battle for Palestine, they said, would have to await the unification of the whole Arab world or the resolution of pressing economic problems that prevented an effective confrontation with Zionism. For the Palestinians, such arguments rang hollow. The final straw came in 1961 when the union between Syria and Egypt — the only real attempt at Arab unity — collapsed after less than three years amid mutual

THE RISE OF THE PLO

FOR MORE than a decade after the 1948 Palestine war, the exiled Palestinians looked to the international community to attain their rights. Increasingly, however, they were driven to the conclusion that they could regain their homeland only by their own efforts, based on armed struggle and a parallel diplomatic offensive. In this third installment of his series on Palestinian history, Dr Alan George reviews the origins and development of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, which has forged the Palestinian people into a united and effective military and diplomatic force.

recriminations. Palestinians came to see that their homeland could be regained only through their own efforts.

Armed struggle

It was in this period that Fatah was founded. The key figure in its creation was Yasser Arafat, whose family had been expelled from Jerusalem by the Zionists in 1948, and taken refuge in the Gaza Strip. The foundations of Fatah — of an independent liberation movement — were laid, however, in Cairo, where Arafat studied in the 1950s, becoming President of the Palestinian Students Federation. Others who played a prominent role in Fatah's formation included Salah Khalaf, Khalil Wazir and Muhammad Najjar. Later, while working as an engineer in Kuwait, Arafat became friends with other future leaders of Fatah — Farouk Qaddoumi, Kamal Adwan and Khalid al Hassan. (Kamal Adwan and Muhammad Najjar were murdered by an Israeli assassination squad in Beirut in 1972. The others continue to play key roles in Fatah and in the PLO.)

Arafat's Fatah was only one of several small independent Palestinian liberation movements formed around the same time. There was no overall co-ordination, and some of the groups had no knowledge of each other's existence. Military operations against Israel in those early days were modest, usually entailing little more than the sabotage of vulnerable installations such as water conduits. In the two and one half years preceding the June 1967 Middle East war, Palestinian commandos killed only eleven people, and wounded only 62.

Fatah attracted much wider support than the other guerrilla groups. It has never advanced any particular economic or social system for a future Palestinian state. Fatah has always maintained that the principal task was the liberation of Palestine. This straightforward nationalist stance appealed to the residents of the refugee camps, whose prime concern was simply to return to their homes. At the same time, Fatah was able to avert entanglement in the Arab world's ideological disputes, and to forge close relations with governments of widely different political hues.

Pan-Arabism had died with the end of the Egyptian-Syrian union in 1961, but Arab morale reached an all-time low with the June 1967 war, when Israel seized the West Bank and Gaza Strip regions of Palestine, the Syrian Golan Heights and the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula. What shocked the Arab people as much as the defeat itself was the stark contrast between the often virulent rhetoric of the Arab governments, and their disastrous showing on the battlefield. The Palestinian guerrillas, on the other hand, had demonstrated their readiness for concrete military action against the Zionists, and had never exaggerated their abilities. In addition



PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat

to symbolising the Palestinians' determination to attain their rights, the guerrillas now became the flag-bearers of Arab pride. Volunteers flocked to their ranks, both from the Palestinian refugee camps and from the wider Arab world.

Even the Zionists admitted the growing power of the resistance. In January 1968 Israeli defence minister Moshe Dayan told the Knesset (parliament) that 'terrorists' had killed or injured 97 Israeli soldiers in the first six months after the June war.

Karameh

Another key watershed for the Palestinian commandos was the battle of Karameh in March 1968. About 350 resistance fighters attacked a major Israeli force of armour and infantry as it advanced across the Jordan River to raid the refugee camp of Karameh. The Israelis seized the camp, but only after losing at least 21 men and several tanks and other vehicles. The Zionists had never met such stiff resistance, or paid such a high price, during their many punitive raids on Palestinian camps. The guerrillas' prowess at Karameh dramatically boosted their prestige, and their ranks were swelled by a new wave of recruits.

The PLO

The Arab states had not overlooked the Palestinians' growing exasperation, and their resort to independent military action in the 1950s and early 1960s. Palestine was at the centre of Arab politics, and the guerrillas in effect posed a challenge to the weak record of Arab regimes. Arab rulers feared that their

lukewarm commitment to the Palestinian cause might be used as a pretext for their overthrow. Moreover, they feared that Palestinian guerrilla operations might provoke Israel into launching a war that the Arabs could not hope to win.

At their Amman summit in 1964, the Arab states set up the Palestine Liberation Organisation. The aim was to placate Arab panic opinion and to channel — and negate — Palestinian frustrations. Arab rulers wanted to use the PLO to curb military action against Israel that they had not sanctioned.

It was the resistance groups, rather than the PLO, that spoke for the Palestinians, however, and this could not be ignored for long. During 1968 — a year when the influence of the guerrillas grew rapidly in the PLO — Yasser Arafat was included by President Nasser in an official Egyptian delegation to Moscow. A year later he was elected Chairman of the PLO, and other resistance leaders took prominent positions. Gradually the PLO was transformed into a body reflecting all shades of Palestinian opinion.

At the Rabat summit in October 1974 the Arab states formally recognised the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. One month later, Chairman, Yasser Arafat was allowed to address the UN General Assembly. It was a singular honour for someone not representing an established state. The only other non-governmental official to have spoken at the UN prior to

Chairman Arafat was Pope Paul VI. Shortly after Arafat's speech, the General Assembly approved a resolution recognising the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people, and requiring the UN to consult the PLO in all matters concerning the Palestine question.

Headway

The PLO has since continued to make spectacular headway on the diplomatic front. In 1980 112 nations voted in favour of a resolution which reaffirmed the representative status of the PLO. During a visit to Athens in December 1981, Chairman Yasser Arafat announced that the PLO had been granted formal recognition by 117 states — more than double the number that recognised Israel.

At the same time, the PLO has developed into a formidable military force. This was amply demonstrated during the Zionist invasion of Lebanon, when Palestinian commandos engaged the enemy continuously for some three months — longer than any Arab regular army had ever achieved — and had foiled the Zionists' efforts to invade West Beirut. Even the Israelis, who habitually understate the extent of resistance to their occupation of Palestine, have admitted that during 1981 there was an average of one resistance operation per day, in all parts of Palestine.

In less than twenty years, and in the face of a formidable array of obstacles, the Palestinian people have rescued themselves from the obscurity to which they had been assigned in the Zionists' plans. After 1948 the Palestinians were a sheltered society, leaderless and under the sway of different governments. Today the Palestinians, whether living under Israeli occupation or in exile, function as a united people, with a single representative leadership.

The PLO has scored many remarkable successes. But by far the most important has been the transformation of the Palestinian people into an effective military and political force, with the capability of shaping their own destiny.

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EDITORIAL

The war has not ended

THE SAVAGERY of the Lebanon war has quickly vanished from the television screens, and the Israeli invasion is being allowed to fade from the public's mind. At least 7,000 Palestinian men and youths are still being held in conditions of secrecy in the concentration camp prisons in southern Lebanon and Israel itself, unarmed and unsupported, thousands of Palestinian families continue to live with the threat of murder from the armed gangs of so-called Christians which Israel arms and manipulates in Beigin's genocide against the Palestinian people.

But Israel's presence appears to be given some legitimacy. It is being linked to the presence of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, and the Arab peacekeeping force invited into Lebanon by the Beirut government. Newspapers now refer to 'Israeli forces', carefully avoiding calling them 'occupation forces', and never referring to 'occupied Lebanon'.

As sickening as any incident during Israel's attacks on civilian Palestinian refugees, is the current typical manipulation of its surrogate Christian militias to create a situation in which Israel can present itself as the protector of the unarmed Palestinian survivors! It can only be compared to the mass murderer who pleads his innocence on the fact that he spared the cat's life.

Reports from Lebanon may no longer fill the screens of Western television sets, but the horror of their situation still fills the minds and hearts of tens of thousands of Palestinian families. The West ignores the menace of the Zionist regime at the risk of further bloodshed in the Middle East, and renewed pogroms against Palestinian civilians.

The need for a tough international response is long overdue, and a positive stand against Israel is no less urgently required than it was five years ago.

'refugee problem'. Most important it called on Israel to withdraw from the territories occupied during the June 1967 war.

Israel, Egypt, and Jordan accepted the resolution. The PLO said it was unacceptable, and pointed out that peace could not be achieved unless Palestinian national rights were respected. The resolution not only failed on this point, but it did not even accept that the Palestinians were involved.

Of course, 242 was viewed in the West as a declaration of Israel's right to exist, although the character of the Zionist state, nor its borders, were defined. And today Washington insists that the PLO must announce its acceptance of 242 as a signal that the PLO accepts Israel's right to exist.

The PLO stand on this matter is another issue. But what hypocrisy it is to insist that the PLO abides by the principles of Resolution 242, when Israel's actions negate totally any declared acceptance of it.

The Zionists have not acted in accordance with the demands of the resolution that Israel should withdraw from the territories occupied in 1967. In fact, Israel boasts that it will never withdraw from these areas, but instead pushes ahead with a settlement programme which few doubt aims at anything less than the eventual expulsion of the Palestinian Arabs from the West Bank and Gaza. As for withdrawal from Arab Jerusalem and Syria's territory on the Golan Heights, Israel has made clear its attitude by annexing these two districts in outright violation of international law and Resolution 242. Since Israel has chosen to ignore 242, with American acquiescence, it is absurd to hold it up as the arbiter of respectability vis-à-vis the PLO.

Reagan leads Europe off the path to peace

THE ISRAELI invasion of Lebanon brought a new international awareness of the cruel persecution of the Palestinian people which has been the hallmark of the Zionist campaign in Palestine over many decades. And with it came a stronger belief, than previous expressed, that national self-determination for the Palestinian people was long overdue, and fundamental to any lasting peace in the area.

If we accept that Mr Reagan had been genuinely moved by the scale of the bloodbath launched by the Israeli forces against the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, the chance seemed possible that Washington might move towards Europe's acceptance of an independent Palestinian state.

However, with much publicity, suggesting a dramatic shift in US policy, Mr Reagan broke his holiday to present his 'initiative' to the press. But instead of supporting the legitimate rights of the Palestinians, as defined by the UN General Assembly over many years, Reagan announced that Washington's goal was to see the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the West Bank and Gaza, but these Palestinian regions should be taken under Jordanian sovereignty.

Reagan's plan was, in reality, a determined bid to block the Palestinian state to which the inter-

national community appeared more solidly committed.

Washington's clear commitment to the evacuation of Israeli forces from the West Bank and Gaza Strip must be welcomed, and it could be Israel's determination to reject such a move which may in the long term weaken the bonds between the US and Israel. One state contravening international law is quite enough, without Israel's delinquent actions being supported by a super power.

However, critics of US policy are still entitled to question the seriousness of Reagan's call for Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Gaza so long as American aid, military and financial, continues to flow to Israel. Neither the continued military occupation of the 1967 occupied territories, nor the bloody rape of Lebanon, would have been possible had it not been for the aid which flows without a break as a lifeline to the Zionist regime.

Reports suggest that Israel will embark on a new military offensive into northern Lebanon in a matter of weeks. The lives of thousands of Palestinian refugees will again be at stake. Yet the military hardware and the funds continue to flow from the US to Israel. Why should the Arabs have any reason to believe that Washington has really changed its policy?

Does anyone remember 242?

MUCH IMPORTANCE is given to Resolution 242, not least in respect of America's stand that the US will not permit talks with the PLO, or accept PLO participation in any Middle East peace conference, let alone recognise the PLO, unless the PLO declares its acceptance of 242.

To those who have become interested only recently in the Palestine question, Resolution 242 must appear something of a mystery. What is this Resolution by which, according

to the Americans, the PLO must be judged?

Adopted in 1967, Security Council Resolution 242 was seen as marking the end of the war between the Arab states and Israel. It stressed the right of all the states in the region to live in peace; it rejected territorial conquest by force; and since neither the Israelis nor the Americans would admit that the Palestinian people even existed, the resolution referred generally to a just solution of the



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london notes

Wilson too angry for words

SIR HAROLD Wilson has long been Israel's most dedicated apologist, but it seems this is no longer so. The former British Prime Minister and Zionist campaigner is said by the Israeli daily *Davar* to have refused an interview, because, the paper suggests, Sir Harold would prefer to remain silent 'lest he be tempted to announce the end of this friendship for Israel'.

On a recent visit to the United States, however, he was pressed to comment on the Middle East situation. He described Beigin, Sharon and Shamir as three evils, and war minister Sharon as 'the most evil man in Israeli politics I ever met'. Beigin, Sir Harold recalled 'had shot British soldiers'.

'If I ruled the world ...'

WE'VE KNOWN for years that arrogance is a hallmark of the Zionist movement. But we were nevertheless struck by the tone of a recent call by Dr Moshe Mandelbaum,

governor of the Bank of Israel, for the Arab countries to end their trade boycott of the Zionist state. One of the reasons he advanced for the desirability of such a move was that the boycott was 'damaging the world economy'!

From London to Shatila

ELLEN SEIGEL'S decision to appear before the Israeli commission investigating the Sabra and Shatila massacres, and speak for the Palestinians who died during the Zionist planned massacre, will remind many London campaigners, of her commitment to the Palestinians during the early 1970s when she was living in Britain, and was active in the Palestine Action campaign.

It was Ellen, herself an American Jew, who boldly entered the Zionist Federation Office in London. Her mission was to pay for the planting of three trees in the forest being planted in occupied Palestine by the Zionists, allegedly to commemorate the silver wedding anniversary of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip. She duly returned with her certificates, one for each tree and showing them to be dedicated to Kamal Nasser, Kamal Adawan and Abu Youssef, the three PLO leaders

assassinated by Israeli gunmen in Beirut a few weeks earlier. The Zionist Federation could barely conceal its anger when the certificates were reproduced in *Free Palestine*.

It was also Ellen who stood before the Israeli Embassy with a Palestinian, holding a placard protesting her 'right' to emigrate to Palestine, and the denial of that right to a Palestinian refugee born in Jerusalem. Photographs of the protest explained more eloquently the discrimination of the Zionists than any lengthy explanation of the conflict. Perhaps this last point was not lost on the Zionists. Mysteriously the negatives of the photos 'disappeared' from the newspaper library, which held the only photo record of the protest.

A friend in need

COMMENTING ON a recent visit to Costa Rica by Zionist foreign minister Yitzhak Shamir, the *Jewish Chronicle* remarked that the central American state was seen in Jerusalem as 'one of the most loyal friends of the Jewish state'. Presumably out of modesty, the London weekly did not name Israel's other 'loyal friends'. The ones that spring most readily to mind are El Salvador, South Africa, Chile and Haiti.

فلسطين حرة free palestine



Recent London demonstration attracted more than 3,000 people.

PLO peace plan supported by British

A SURVEY of British public opinion shows only one in four supporting Israel, while two thirds find the PLO peace plan acceptable in proposing a single, secular and democratic state in Palestine giving equal rights to Christians, Jews and Muslims, writes Louis Eaks.

The poll was conducted by MORI between 14-17th August, when the Lebanon war was in its eleventh week, but prior to the Israeli organised massacres in the Shatila and Sabra refugee camps. The survey

was commissioned by the London office of the PLO using one of Britain's most reputable pollsters.

The results show a trend away from support for Israel, although the traditional sympathy for the Zionists created by media bias over four decades remains at 25% compared to 36% in a previous poll in 1976 commissioned by *Free Palestine*.

Nevertheless, the results suggest that Britain would have public support for a bolder stand on the Palestine question. 63 per cent backed

the British government's total embargo imposed on Israel after the invasion of Lebanon. The invasion itself was opposed by 57%, and even amongst those who described themselves as supporters of Israel, the invasion was opposed by 30%.

On the issue of British recognition of the PLO, the survey showed no strong opposition. Only 36% felt Britain should not recognise the PLO, while 39% said they would support such a move by Westminster.

Differences of opinion between supporters of the various political parties were limited; on different questions strongest support for the Palestinians ranged between Labour and Liberal supporters. Liberals tended towards the Palestinians slightly more than Social Democrats.

54% said it was unacceptable to leave the Palestinians where they are following their expulsion from their homeland by the Zionist settlers in 1948 and 1967. One solution, the creation of a West Bank/Gaza state, was supported by 55%, but a more popular choice (60%) was for the establishment of a single Jewish/Arab state, giving equal political and religious rights to all citizens. This latter proposal corresponds to the peace plan outlined by the PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat when he addressed the United Nations General Assembly in 1974. Both these plans are rejected by Israel.

Commenting on the results, Mr Nabil Ramlawi, the PLO's London Representative said: 'The results of this survey suggest not only a revulsion by most British people at the invasion of Lebanon by the Israelis and the war being waged against the Palestinian refugees, but more important, for us, there is a firm basis of sympathy and support for the two peace options which the PLO has put forward in its efforts to secure a solution to the Palestine question.'

'Moreover,' he added, 'it is accepted by the majority, by two out of every three people, and even by half of those who support Israel, that the PLO should be included in future Middle East peace talks. We are encouraged by this. It is an important message to the British government.'

Mr Ramlawi noted: 'There is a consensus of opinion throughout the world that there must be a solution to the Palestine question, and that an international initiative is urgently required. The results of this survey suggest that the British government would have the support of the majority if it were to adopt a more active role in presenting, probably with its European partners, a solution based on the resolutions of the General Assembly in which the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people are clearly defined. On the basis of this survey, the two options proposed by the Palestine Liberation Organisation, have a strong measure of support here in Britain.'



PLO man to leave London

THE PALESTINE Liberation Organisation has announced that its Representative in London, Mr Nabil Ramlawi, is to be posted to Geneva from January, and Mr Douad Barakat will move from Geneva to London.

Nabil Ramlawi took over the London posting following the 1978 assassination of his predecessor Said Hammami, and during his five years in Britain the PLO envoy has been at the centre of efforts to build support for the Palestinian cause both at Westminster and in the country through the political parties and trade unions. During this period a UK-Palestine Parliamentary Group has been formed with all party support, and labour movement support mobilised through Trade Union Friends of Palestine. At the same time, Middle East Councils were formed in the Conservative, Liberal and Social Democratic Parties to assist in informing party members of the Palestinian case and to influence party policy. In this time the Liberal and Labour Parties, together with the Trade Union Congress and the Scottish TUC have declared their support for the PLO.

However, it has been under a Conservative Government that Britain has moved towards an understanding with the PLO. There is little doubt that it was Lord Carrington, as Foreign Secretary, who provided momentum for what was promised as a 'European Initiative', and Nabil Ramlawi became a frequent visitor to the Foreign Office, although Britain responded to American pressure by refusing to afford diplomatic status to the PLO Representative in London. Similarly, the EEC plans for an initiative which would have accepted the PLO's role as representative of the Palestinians have also abandoned under firm pressure from Washington in recent months.

During Mr Ramlawi's term in London, he arranged for a steady flow of MPs and trade unionists to visit the Middle East and occupied Palestine, and staged the highly successful Palestine Exhibition at the Commonwealth Institute in 1980. As part of the London office's information campaign, Mr Ramlawi launched the monthly Palestine Report. He will now become responsible for representing the PLO to the United Nations agencies based in Geneva, as well as with the Swiss Government.

Douad Barakat is also an experienced PLO 'diplomat', and faces the task of creating a greater dialogue with the British government at a time when the EEC appears to be shifting its position back in line with the Reagan administration's anti-Palestinian stance.

LABOUR AND TUC BACKING FOR PLO

THE PALESTINIAN cause has registered major gains at this year's Labour and Liberal Party Conferences and the Trades Union Congress, with a string of resolutions approved that call for recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and endorsing the right of the Palestinians to self-determination in an independent state of their own in Palestine.

Meeting in Blackpool on 29th September, the Labour Party adopted a series of resolutions that marked a watershed in the party's thinking on the Middle East. A motion submitted by Dundee East constituency party, and passed by a majority of 270,000 votes, declared 'support for the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination within an independent sovereign state', and called on the Labour Party and the British Government 'to recognise the Palestinian Liberation Organisation as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people'.

The resolution strongly condemned the savage Zionist invasion of



Labour leader Michael Foot and Norwood's Labour candidate Ted Knight.



Lebanon and went on to state that 'the time has come for the Labour Party to state unequivocally its support for the fundamental rights of the Palestinians and its condemnation of the continuing pattern of Israeli aggression'.

An emergency resolution submitted by the Norwood constituency and passed by 10,000 votes recognised the PLO as 'the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, without whom no settlement can be negotiated', and committed

the Labour Party to 'supporting the establishment of a democratic, secular state of Palestine as the long-term solution to the Palestinian problem'.

Historic

The historic significance of the Labour Conference had been foreshadowed at the Trades Union Congress in Brighton. On 9th September the conference approved by a two-to-one majority a motion submitted by the Fire Brigades Union that deplored the death and destruction

caused by the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, and affirmed that 'only the recognition of the national rights of the Palestinian people to self-determination within an independent sovereign state can bring peace and security for all states, including Israel, in the Middle East'. The TUC has never before given such resounding support to the Palestinian people.

The Beirut massacres were strongly condemned by the Liberal Party Assembly in Bournemouth on 24th September, but the major development in the Liberal position on Palestine had come earlier, at the Party's Quarterly Council meeting in Stockport in July. The Council, which is empowered to formulate Party policy, formally recognised the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and called for the establishment of 'an independent sovereign state' in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, to co-exist with Israel within its 1967 frontiers. The Council also urged the EEC to impose trade sanctions on the Zionist state 'unless it withdraws from all occupied territories'.