Delegation of the National Salvation Front

ruling Maronite bourgeoisie in line with his own class interests. However, the fascists' refusal to give meaningful concessions and, on the other hand, the radicalization of the masses in his West Beirut constituency, prevented him from striking a course contradictory to . Jumblatt and Beri at the conference.

In contrast, the class interests of Franjieh's particular constituency in the North of Lebanon are well served by the present confessional imbalance. Though opposing the Lebanese Front on its alliance with 'Israel' rather than the Arab world, Franjieh reverted to the old school when the question became one of secular-democratic reform.

Though the masses' radicalization had an effect on the alignments at the conference, the nationalist forces were unable to impose the internal reform for which the people have been fighting. This is not surprising in view of the situation surrounding Lebanon. Behind the intransigence of the Lebanese Front looms the red line drawn by the Zionists. Uri Lubrani, Israeli coordinator of affairs in Lebanon, was present in the city of Lausanne. He drew more than one Lebanese leader aside to make threats,

most notably that Israel would disrupt the new ceasefire if new security arrangements were not negotiated with 'Israel'. A week before the conference convened, the Zionists' air raid on Aley and Bhamdoun had shown their intention to continue violent intervention beyond the occupation lines. The bombing of the mountains came the day after fifteen Israeli soldiers were injured in a series of attacks in South Lebanon, and was thus billed as retaliation. It is notable, however, that the attack was staged the same day that the Lebanese parliament convened for the purpose of officially abrogating the treaty.

Seen in this perspective, a clear lesson can be drawn from the results at Lausanne: The demands of Lebanon's majority will only be fulfilled by continuing to combine confrontation of the fascist regime and forces with persistent armed struggle against the Zionist occupiers. In this respect, the masses of the South are leading the way with their ongoing uprisings. This is in stark contrast to the old school politicians who predominated at the Lausanne conference, and again showed their incapacity to solve the Lebanese crisis.   ●

There are differences in the fascist ranks between the wing most closely linked to the Israelis, and those who emphasize their independence as «Lebanese nationalists». As is normal for any force suffering a setback, these differences escalated in the wake of the nationalist advances. A split, however, is not conceivable. If there has been such a tendency, it was precluded by the recent regrouping which was most likely orchestrated by the top fascist leadership. The Lebanese Forces have been reorganized and acquired a political profile, while fascists behind the occupation lines enlisted in what was formerly Saad Haddad's militias.

'Politicization' of the Lebanese Forces

The reorganization of the Lebanese Forces started at the turn of the year. All commanders submitted their resignations to Fadi Frem, to make way for new appointments to strengthen the militias after their rout from the mountains, and to prepare for the army's planned assault on West Beirut. Besides consolidating Frem's leadership, the new appointments created a political center headed by Antoine Bridli. Elie Hobeika, who led the Phalangists in the Sabra-Shatila massacre, remained as security chief. Greater command authority was assigned to Samir Geagea, who is also notorious for massacres, including the 1977 murder in Ehden of 30 Christians, family and supporters of Suleiman Franjieh. Geagea's first responsibility was previously to the Phalangists; now he is seconded to the Lebanese Forces.

This reorganization, especially the creation of a political center, served the fascists well in the wake of the nationalists' February victory. The Phalangist hierarchy enacted a new 'division of labour': The Lebanese Forces continue to propagate the traditional line