

1985 Escalation of Armed Struggle

In the first six months of 1985, there were 92 anti-occupation operations in Palestine, inflicting an estimated 200 casualties in the Zionist ranks, including over 10 killed.

The relative stagnation of armed struggle in occupied Palestine in the months just following the 1982 Zionist invasion of Lebanon, indicates the dialectical relation between the pace of armed struggle in Palestine and overt Palestinian presence in surrounding countries, especially Lebanon. In the wake of the Zionist invasion, the Palestinian revolution's top priority was preserving the fighting Palestinian gun in Lebanon, and regulating Palestinian-Lebanese nationalist relations in a way to warrant this. At the same time, the Palestinian revolution did not ignore the necessity of creating the prerequisites for escalating armed struggle in the occupied homeland in the light of the outcome of the 1982 war.

As a result of these efforts, armed struggle began to escalate, quantitatively and qualitatively in the occupied homeland. This escalation became obvious in the first part of 1985, arousing the concern of the Zionist leaders and

settlers. This renewed the debate in the enemy's ranks as to whether «Operation Peace for the Galilee» had been effective in terms of eliminating the infrastructure of the Palestinian revolution. This infrastructure constitutes the external mainstay for the development of armed struggle inside Palestine.

The rising tide of military operations in Palestine is very significant, especially as they were carried throughout the occupied territories, including the land occupied in 1948. In these operations, enemy patrols were surprised and confronted by militants using rifles and grenades. A new element was introduced: remote- and electronic-controlled explosions which worried the enemy. Another new method of struggle emerged with the abduction and execution of Israeli soldiers. In addition, the enemy has generally failed to apprehend the commandos. Zionist leaders attribute this failure to the effectiveness of cells operating inside Pales-

tine, in terms of structure, organization, planning and execution.

The enemy's worry

The escalation of military operations in the occupied homeland touched off an extensive reaction and debate in the Zionist entity. Zionist spokesmen were forced to acknowledge that between January and June 1985, the Palestinian resistance carried out 37 operations in the part of Palestine occupied in 1948, and 137 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This was in addition to 119 incidents of throwing rocks and molotov cocktails. The Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* published a list of 14 operations in Jerusalem, in June alone, and referred to the authorities' failure to arrest the commandos.

Another important development is that a number of our people have started, on their own, to undertake attacks on the Zionist soldiers and settlers. This is a result of the acute escalation of mass confrontation with the Zionist authorities and settlers. Israeli Defense Minister Rabin acknowledged this fact, saying «The recent attacks on Jewish civilians were perpetrated by scattered terrorists who are not affiliated with any organization. This development arouses great concern, especially as it is very difficult to fight this sort of terrorism.»

Quoting a military official, news agencies reported on June 20th, that in the West Bank a tremendous amount of weapons had been stolen from Israeli army depots. Rabin commented as follows, «It has been proven that some of the weapons found in possession of detained terrorists come from the Israeli army.»

The Israeli newspaper *Hadashot*, relying on official Israeli statistics, reported that during June, 23 operations and attempts were launched as compared with the average of 16 operations monthly during the preceding period. *Hadashot* attributed this rise to fierce competition among Palestinian organizations.

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