

Without any doubt, the Palestinian guerrillas are the principal obstacle to imperial peace in the Middle East. Various plans have been put into practice in order to exterminate them.

The slaughter of Palestinians ordered from Amman during 1970 and 1971 seriously shook but did not overcome the resistance, which reproduces and strengthens its organizations in various regions of the area.

Control of the Palestinians represents a blank check from Wall Street for the Hachemite sovereign. His history of hysteric impotence leads him to search for new roads or the introduction of small changes in those already beaten out by his bosses.

With the coming of 1972, methods and projects were implanted in the zone to lead to the imperialist solution to the Palestinian problem, due to which such events as the following have been occurring:



1) During the last days of February and the beginning of March, the Israeli army attacked Palestinian encampments in southern Lebanon and Syria.

2) King Hussein announced on March 15 his proposal to make Transjordan an autonomous Palestinian province when Israel returns it. The King is disposed to "sacrifice the present structures of the Jordanian monarchy" to make way for a united Arab kingdom.

3) The Israeli government convoked elections — at the end of March — in ten localities of Samaria (in the north of Transjordan). Hussein already has the "notables" of this area in line for his plan.

THE LEBANESE AND THE WAR



by Domingo del Pino

4) King Hussein had an interview with Nixon in the White House. According to press information Hussein and Nixon exchanged opinions related to the Hussein plan, the Allon plan and the Rogers plan. This is the third time that Hussein has met with Nixon since the latter assumed the presidency of the United States in 1968.

In the face of Israel's rejection of the Hussein plan, the Algerian newspaper El Moudjahid pointed out that it would be illusory to think that Hussein had embarked on this enterprise without being assured of the essential guarantee: the consent of Israel, which holds control over Gaza and the entire Palestinian province of the new kingdom. El Moudjahid adds that this plan is imperialism's payoff for the services rendered by the sovereign.

The Hachemite betrayal, now presented in the form of a plan, has been denounced and rejected by the governments of Egypt, Syria, Libya (Arab Federation), Iraq, Algeria, and Kuwait, and by all the Palestinian organizations that continue their offensives for the liquidation of the monarchist regime and the recuperation of the occupied territories.

The fedayeen and Arab governments have decided that together they will take the road of struggle against the present US-Israel-Jordan axis.

AFTER a delay of three years, Lebanon has been the object of a four-day miniwar. The Israeli army, with all the resources of its arsenal—Phantoms, Skyhawks, Mirages, Centurion tanks, armoured cars and infantry—attacked the region of El Arkub, along the slopes of Mt. Hermon, known as Fath Land, in Bint Jbeil region of south Lebanon where the general headquarters of the Palestinian resistance were located; and further north, attacked the Syrian-Lebanese border, presumed supply line for the guerrillas from Syria.

For the four days that the attacks and occupation of Lebanese territory lasted (February 25-28), the Israeli forces confronted the armed Palestinian commandos—most of whom had light arms and fought under flagrantly inferior conditions—and an unarmed and defenseless Lebanese civilian population.

The immediate argument for the aggression was the February 2 commando attack on the Israel interior in which two civilians died. Actually it had much deeper antecedents in Israel's desire to physically liquidate the Palestinian resistance, the only Aram source of authentic preoccupation for Tel Aviv. All possible maneuvers were used. From 1968 and through part of 1969, apogee of the guerrilla after the seven-day war, Israel found a powerful ally in Jordan which, in successive genocidal and terroristic repressions, succeeded in forcing those Palestinians who weren't liquidated physically to emigrate, and those who remained in Jordan to try to pass inadvertently through coldly calculated and fierce continued repression.

The Cairo agreements of 1969, signed by the Palestinian resistance and General Emile Bustany, then head of the Lebanese army, put an end to the national crisis

that kept the country without a government for seven months.

To avoid further chaos such as that noted by the US and French press agencies, according to which the Palestinians found themselves confronted by Israel and simultaneously attacked in the rear guard by the Lebanese army, General Bustany agreed that the commandos could retain exclusive military control of the south Lebanese regions on condition that they didn't fire against Israel from Lebanese territory. This last clause became Lebanon's central and permanent preoccupation in avoiding reprisals against its territory.

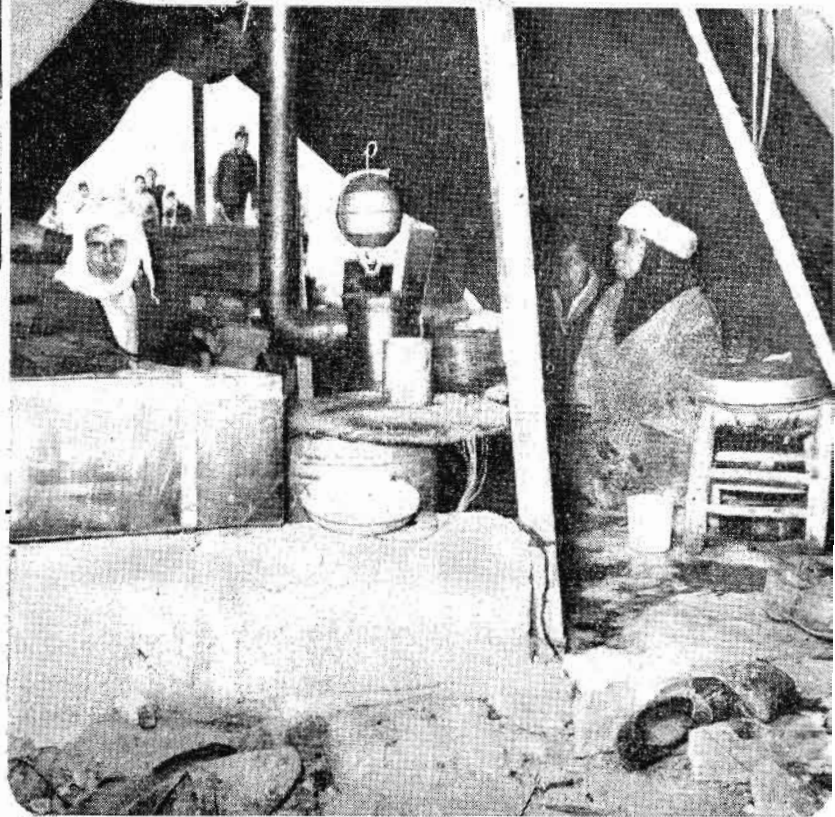
To weaken resistance, Tel Aviv dreamed up some municipal elections in Transjordan where it sought to elect all the Palestinian personalities disposed to collaborate with Israel and create a Palestinian State controlled, de facto, by Israel. This State would sow dissension among the resistance ranks which, at least theoretically, would now be deprived of their necessity for armed struggle. The weariness and depression from repeated blows suffered by the resistance would serve, according to Tel Aviv's calculations, to make this solution seem viable. In the area of propaganda, Israel would try to turn against the Palestinian guerrillas both the UN action and that of the powers that more or less want a rapid solution to a conflict that becomes more complex each day, as well as certain Arab States which, today, evidence greater concern over the activities of the resistance than over those by Israel.

The reactivation of the commando actions, both inside and outside Israel, ascending to the execution of the Jorda-

nian prime minister Wasfi Tal, in Cairo, recalled that despite all the funeral dirges, the Palestine resistance was revitalizing itself. In Tel Aviv they say it is imperative to act rapidly and to hit hard at the guerrilla bases in the south of Lebanon as well as those in Syria. The climate necessary for this was created.

Lebanon, an Arab country where the commandos have a permanent base, is an easy prey for Israel. Various solutions were offered: to force a confrontation between the Lebanese army and the Palestinians to provoke the final liquidation of the latter, hence the numerous threats of invasion and the ultimatum at the end of January; to attack directly destroying Palestinian positions in southern Lebanon which would weaken the fedayeen in every way, and which would cause the Lebanese government to revoke the Cairo accords and very possibly force a new Lebanon-Palestine confrontation with grave consequences for Lebanon — given the always critical election period that exists in the country.

As is known, the solution adopted was the second. The results have been more than 200 houses destroyed in the five villages occupied, some 70 commandos dead and many others wounded, 2000 persons without shelter, the occupation by the Lebanese army of the El Arkub region following Israeli withdrawal, the announced intention of the Lebanese government to revise the Cairo accords in view of the new situation created, the appearance of the first dissensions in favor or against the revision of the accords, and demonstrations in Beirut, with the participation of more than 20 000 people organized by left forces in support of the



resistance and in criticism of the passivity of the government during the Israeli occupation. This is perhaps a forewarning of the fact that no attitude against the resistance can fail to have national internal repercussions.

Lebanon is the only Arab country that, since the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, has kept out of all the Arab-Israeli conflicts, all the initiatives taken at first to eliminate the existence of the State of Israel and those taken later for the reconquest of additional territories occupied by Tel Aviv or for the restitution of the rights of the Palestinian people.

Linked with Israel since 1948 by an armistice treaty, Lebanon was able to retain its immunity in such difficult moments as the conflicts of 1956 and 1967. Nevertheless, given its geographic position, it could not avoid the repercussions. It was the Jordanians with their genocide of Palestinians in 1969 who definitely forced the entrance of Lebanon into the gears of the Middle East conflict against its will.

The reaction to the Israeli ultimatum of the end of January, demanding that Lebanon end the commandos or point out to the Israeli army their placement, exemplified the Lebanese attitude toward the war. Lebanon responded to the Egyptian President El Sadat that it was not disposed to participate in any war force and even rejected an offer of aid to reequip its army. When the Israeli ultimatum was made, the Lebanese Presidency and Foreign Ministry asked for Arab aid in case of aggression, although they preferred above all the guarantees of the great powers and obviously of the United States. But it was precisely with respect

to this last that their hopes were dashed. The ambiguous official US attitude was quite clear in the Security Council when, as is habitual, the changes the US delegate solicited in the text of the resolution permitted a delay in the debates and gave Israel sufficient time to fulfill its objective in southern Lebanon.

Although the Lebanese press now presents the United States more or less as a factor in the Israeli withdrawal, it is no less certain that George Bush, in the name of the US government, has recognized Israel's right of persecution within Lebanese territory, which established a new and disturbing principle against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon. The three roads opened by Israeli bulldozers between Lebanon and Israel — thanks to the US delegate's delays in the UN — allowed the Israeli army to make use of this at its discretion. For the moment, the Lebanese forces that have already occupied the southern region have manifested no intention of destroying these roads, olympically offering their territory for future Zionist aggressions.

In Beirut, it is manifestly clear that the government hopes to avoid a confrontation with the commandos and solve amicably the question of the revision of the Palestinians' permanence in Lebanon. Of course, Beirut hopes to prevent the division of the Lebanese people in favor of or against the commandos as occurred in 1969. Either way they are terribly limited in their margin of action. The Lebanese government will probably be overrun by rightwing forces who will try to capitalize on the situation for their electoral ends.