

BEGIN'S GENOCIDAL WAR IN LEBANON

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The crises have taken their most monstrous shape now in Israel's genocidal war still ongoing in Lebanon. The wanton invasion of that land and the barbaric destruction which, in six days, caused the death of over 10,000 people and left hundreds of thousands homeless, seems to show there are no limits to the imperialist aims for a "Biblical" Eretz Israel, Begin-Sharon style. Begin the terrorist had from the start dreamed of that type of Eretz Israel (Land of Israel) and fought the Jewish leadership⁴ anxious to found a homeland, no matter how small, for Jews after the Holocaust. And Sharon has rejected even Begin's minor attempts at compromise. Look at what these two are reaping now:

Where Israel's declared aim was to drive the PLO from where it could and did engage in terrorist attacks on Israel, Begin-Sharon have shown total disregard for the civilian population, Lebanese as well as Palestinian, and Palestinian whether or not they were PLO. The destructiveness of their military might does not stop them because the destruction of Lebanon is exactly what they are driving for. It is true that, above all, they want to destroy the PLO. It is not true that they do not want "a single inch" of Lebanon's territory. They want the whole of Lebanon under control of a puppet regime, specifically the neo-fascist Phalangist army that the Lebanese masses had fought and were on the verge of defeating in the 1975-76 Civil War.

That Reagan is presently supporting Begin-Sharon's Israel which is now ravaging Lebanon is clear beyond any peradventure of a doubt. The U.S. has gone so far as to invent a myth that there is "no Lebanon," that supposedly so chaotic were conditions in Lebanon that even Israel's genocidal war can pass for "peace." What they think is the end of Lebanon will prove to be the beginning of the end of global imperialism, headed by the U.S. and achieving its most gory form in Israel's wanton ways of trying to destroy Lebanon.

The opposition to Begin's rule within Israel is as yet small, but it is vocal. It has just had a Peace Now rally outside of Begin's office, in which the Citizens Rights Movement participated and which showed the intensity of its opposition. Professor Benjamin Cohen of the University of Tel Aviv wrote of Begin-Sharon's rationale for the genocide in Lebanon: "These Goebbelsean lies enrage me." (The letter to Pierre Vidal-Naquet, an organizer of the Jewish intellectu-

4. On Dec. 4, 1948, The New York Times ran a letter signed by 28 of America's most respected Jews, including Albert Einstein and Raoul Cardozo, which protested the visit of Menachem Begin, then leader of the Herut Party, which it described as "closely akin in its organization, methods, political philosophy and social appeal to the Nazi and Fascist parties."

als who demonstrated in front of the Israeli Embassy in Paris, was printed in *Le Monde*, June 19.)

Israel's present blitzkrieg has a stark resemblance to nothing so much as Hitler's "final solution" for the Jews. Begin should have learned from that Holocaust that you cannot destroy a whole people and their hunger for freedom. What Arafat could not achieve through all these years, Begin has managed to do for him by giving Arafat an exalted acceptance by the majority of Palestinians and by making him a hero.

If anything, proves that successful revolution is impossible without a philosophy of revolution it is precisely Lebanon.⁵ The 1975-76 Civil War in that land was taking place in the period when, on the one hand, there was the greatest worldwide Recession since the Depression and, on the other hand, new forms of revolution were arising that posed new questions. Didn't, for example, the revolution in Portugal really begin in Africa? The Portuguese Revolution also witnessed a tendency that called for *spartidensme* (non-partyism). The entire decade was concluded with the 1979 revolution in Iran that made revolution rather than oil the characteristic also of the Middle East.

It wasn't, however, the 1970s that had first begun the new age. A whole 30-year movement from practice began in the 1950s when it became clear that the banner of Humanism, raised by the totally new appearance of freedom fighters from under Communist totalitarianism, was so universal a form that it characterized all the freedom fighters of this age—including those fighting Western imperialism as well, be that in Africa, or Latin America, or the Middle East, or right within the U.S.

5. Of all the Arab lands, Lebanon is the one that permits the freest expression for all political tendencies, and included a Communist Party even before Lebanon gained an independent existence in 1943. It was because of the narrow nationalism which the Stalinists reintroduced in the 1975-76 Civil War in Lebanon and which persists to this day that our August 1976 Political-Philosophical Letter on that Civil War ended with: "When history and theory get into each other's way, and philosophy and revolution get separated, there is no exit from counter-revolutionary consequences." It is these counter-revolutionary consequences that we are suffering right at this moment.