Introduction by ***Sune Haugbolle***

Revolutionary Socialism in Lebanon

Bassem Chit

Selected Writings (DRAFT COPY)

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DRAFT COPY FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

In the light of Lebanon's October uprising we have decided to rush into publication this collection in English of Bassem Chit's selected writings. Much of the copy has been roughly translated, only one of the chapter has a full introduction.

But we hope this book will be useful to help guide our understanding of the these historic events as they unfold.

Simon Assaf, 19 October 2019

"Rome was not built in a day, but it was built!"
Tony Cliff

"When we marched through Beirut we felt the world had changed. This was the day when you took sides. Either you were with the bombs or you stood out against imperialism. After years of silence the left in Lebanon was able to organise itself and to draw in ordinary people. We felt our little march was part of a global movement that was destroying the barriers between east and west."

Bassem Chit
The anti war demonstrations of 15 February 2003

Introduction

During the 2015 social protests against Lebanon's political elite, I have often read on Facebook threads laments such as, "what would Bassem have said?" and "we miss your voice, Bassem." They refer to Bassem Chit, the Lebanese revolutionary socialist, writer and activist who died from a heart attack on 1 October 2014. For a limited circle of Lebanese, Arab and international revolutionary socialists, Bassem Chit is a rebel martyr, whose life and work continue to inspire. He died at the tender age of 34 after a life devoted to renewing Marxism and revolutionary socialism. His friends and comrades now miss his voice and his sharp analysis more than ever, at a time when they feel that a chink in the armour of the social system in Lebanon may have opened. They also miss his company and particularly his presence in the protests and in the organisation of the ḥirāk (movement).

The life and death of Bassem Chit accentuate the challenges of organising dissent and formulating alternative ideological directions, which have come to the fore in Lebanon's trash protests. In this brief article, I discuss Bassem Chit as an example of the intellectual rebel in Lebanon and the Arab world. I analyse the ideological tradition of revolutionary socialism and the tradition of the Arab left in which his work inscribes itself. I am interested in understanding the place and nature of intellectual production in the organisation of revolutionary activity, and the particular role rebel intellectuals play in bringing about social change. I draw on sociology of intellectuals, in particular Gramsci, in my analysis of Bassem Chit's work and the veneration of him post mortem.

In order to place myself firmly in this analysis, I should make it clear that I was a friend of Bassem's. In 2012 and 2013 I recorded several interviews with him in Beirut, which I use here in addition to his writings to place him in the leftist landscape of thought and action. Finally, I analyse his significance for Lebanese, Arab and international revolutionary socialism through a reading of obituaries as well as the fifth issue of the journal he helped founding, al-thawra al-dā'ima, which is dedicated to his memory.

Rebel Intellectuals and Arab Marxism

The "rebel intellectual" is somewhat of a tautology, as many sociologists see intellectuals as inherently rebellious agents of social change in the modern era. Moreover, many intellectuals themselves define rebellious change as their credo. The intellectual, Vaclav Havel (167) has written, should constantly disturb, should bear witness to the misery of the world, should be provocative by being independent, should rebel against all hidden and open pressure and manipulations, should be the chief doubter of systems, of power and its incantations, should be a witness to their mendacity.

An intellectual who is not rebellious isn't a true intellectual. This ideal certainly excludes many self-styled intellectuals, who uphold the powers that be. It also runs counter to Gramsci's (97n) broad definition of an intellectual as "the entire social stratum, which exercises an organisational function in the wide sense – whether in the field of production, or in that of culture, or in that of political administration."

Conversely, Havel's definition would seem to celebrate the critical intellectual who writes against the grain and speaks, as Edward Said would have it, truth to power. Power, of course, can be located not just in the State but in all hegemonic structures, including institutions that pride themselves on being anti-hegemonic, such as the Eastern European communist parties, which Havel had in mind when he wrote his text in 1986, or the self styled mumāna'a ("rejectionism") of the Syrian regime today. For the same reason,

Karl Mannheim thought that critical intellectuals together must form a free-floating intelligentsia, a relatively classless stratum of thinkers, able to see beyond the ideological blinders imposed by the left and the right, and thus uphold a democratic, critical conversation. Bassem Chit was rooted in a different intellectual tradition, that of international and Arab Marxism. The Lebanese Marxists that he read and knew generally hold dear the Gramscian ideal of the organic intellectual, the ibn al-balad ('son of the soil') who speaks for the subjugated classes. According to Gramsci (5), every social group creates organically "one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields." The trouble in the Middle East is that in reality, very few of the coryphées of, for example, Lebanese Marxism, including the founders of the Lebanese Communist Party, have hailed from a working-class or peasant-class background. Despite their middleclass pedigree (or perhaps because of it), they hold on to the idea that they represent the perspective of the poor and the needy. Therefore, instead of taking their claims to organic status at face value, we must locate intellectuals in their social setting.

In order to do that, grand theory must be complemented by careful, local histories. As Gramsci (18-20) himself was well aware, intellectuals serve different functions in different political economies and cultural contexts. The nature of hegemony must be located before a successful analysis of intellectuals can be made. In this article, I seek to do so by outlining the intellectual tradition and the social milieu that Bassem was a product of and in which he inscribed his work. Bassem certainly loved Gramsci, but not as much as he loved — and had read — Marx. He would pepper his speech and writings with citations from Marx, and he was well versed in the Arab Marxist tradition. This tradition arguably stretches back to the debate between Islamic reformers and so-called materialists in the Nahda period (Rodinson 337-48; Tibi 7-17).

Historical materialism laid the ground for socialist visions of development and independence. Within the larger spectrum of socialism, which also included Salama Musa's Fabianism, Arab Marxism was from the beginning a strictly intellectual tradition of writers and publishers who became enthralled with the Bolshevik revolution and in the early 1920s established communist parties in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Sudan, Iraq and Palestine. The path of revolution in the age of the Comintern was set and defined by the rigours of Marxist-Leninist dogma as imposed by Stalin, as the Arab communist peers discovered when they became enrolled in training and ideological regimentation. For decades, the overall ideological and political authority of the Soviet Communist Party meant that Arab communists struggled to develop the Marxist system of thought into a flexible methodology that might help them

understand the realities and differing conditions of their own countries (Sharif).

In reaction to Stalinism and the domination of the Communist Party of Syria and Lebanon by Khaled Bakdash, a group of Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian intellectuals inspired by the British 'new left' of the late 1950s wrote critically against the party, against Moscow, and against the Arab socialism of Nasser and the Baath Party. This group included people who were influenced by Trotsky and the so-called Fourth International. Traces of Trotskyism can be found in the work of Yassin Hafez, George Tarabishi and others who clustered around the group Arab Socialism in the early 1960s, which later developed into what Tareq Ismael, writing in 1976, called a New Arab Left (Ismael). This current is the intellectual foundation on which Bassem Chit built his own commitment. It also provided the methodological and organisational inspiration for his re-reading of the revolutionary situation in Lebanon and the Arab world after 2011.

Importantly, the New Left was not just an intellectual current but also a political current, albeit far from a unified one. Despite their different strategic approaches to the Palestinian issue, and different accents of Marxism, they shared a sentiment that it was necessary to break with the past leadership of Arab regimes. The late 1960s and early 1970s saw the formation of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) in Palestine, the Communist Party-Political Bureau in Syria, and the Organisation for Communist Action in Lebanon. The Arab Marxist tradition — at least in the Levant — is strongly influenced by the political affiliation of many writers with these groups, and their political and military struggles in the Lebanese civil war, the Palestinian freedom struggle, and the confrontation with the Syrian state. This embattled recent history has certainly lent credence to the image of the intellectual as a rebel. For the New Arab Left, Marxism was for a time being practiced gun-in-hand.

After the end of the Lebanese civil war, the ideological project of Marxism was in a global crisis as a result of the fall of the Soviet Union, confounded in Lebanon by the defeat of the National Movement in the civil war. This led to intense soul-searching in Marxist milieus in Lebanon as well as other Arab countries. While some maintained a dogmatic Marxism (mostly represented by currents around the Lebanese Communist Party), many drifted towards liberal positions. Faleh Jaber (1997) has termed this new landscape post-Marxism, meaning social theory that draws on the broad family of Marxist thought but goes beyond Marxist dogmas.

Some post-Marxists dismiss the claim that Marxism is an infallible scientific theory, and some have moved on to theoretical pluralism. Thus, some post-Marxists maintain class analysis, while others only apply selected elements of the Marxian heritage. In an Arab context, moving on to theoretical pluralism after the end of the Cold War meant critiquing the lack of internal democracy in Arab communism, and accommodation with liberalism. This accommodation also had the practical implication that by the mid-1990s a significant proportion of Arab Marxists left their party and had become free-floating intellectuals (Sing).

Left Melancholia

The soul-searching post-Marxists that Jaber and other scholars like Manfred Sing (2015) and Suzanne Kassab (2009) discuss largely belong to the generation of thinkers and activists born in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. Bassem Chit's generation of Marxists have grown up with a different outlook. They are at once more globalized and more confused than the previous generation, whose struggle was firmly rooted in the great questions of liberation and modernization, national independence and structural improvement of living conditions of the poor. This struggle ended in defeat, manifested by neoliberal reforms in the 1980s and 1990s as well as the breakdown of Arab unity. On the level of social mobilization, Arab Marxists lost momentum to Islamist groups, which was mirrored on the philosophical level by the primacy that Arab Marxists put, from the 1980s onwards, on the notion of ʾaṣāla ("cultural rootedness") as opposed to international class identity (Browers). As Bassem told me, this experience of double or triple defeat "came with the genes" for those who grew up in the 1990s. Their parents' generation had run up against external enemies and had been divided by internal splits, leaving them with severe ideological confusion and no immediate sense of direction. It was clear to Bassem and his leftist peers, therefore, that they had to struggle, both in order to assert their influence on the national political and social scene, and to fight what Jody Dean has called the global 'left melancholia' that followed from 1989 (Dean).

Dean's argument, in short, is that the exhaustion of global Marxism was emotional, physical and generational, but also a more temporary phenomenon than it seemed in the 1990s. The much-trumpeted triumph of liberalism had been premature, in other words. The new revolutions and mobilization of the 2010s combined with the effects of the 2008 global economic crisis have engendered a revival of communist organisation and Marxist theory. Left melancholia, for Dean, was not just the result of triumphant ideas and actors opposing socialism and Marxism, but just as much the outcome of the way in which socialists adopted single issue politics and identity politics, which abandoned the vision of total social transformation. The strength of the 'new new left' of the 2010s is that it embraces multiplicity (and aspects of liberalism), but ties them together in a socialist vision for change.

Bassem shared this view and this optimism, but was also, at the time of his death, becoming overwhelmed with fear that the counter-revolution unleashed by revolutionary fervor in the Arab uprisings threatened to destroy the social fabric of Arab countries. He struggled with bouts of exhaustion and melancholia, the combination of which probably eventually killed him. But he also stressed that the purported "failure of the left" was not simply a failure of socialist ideas and Marxist theory, but resulted from tactical mistakes made by certain people. In his final interview, given just weeks before he died, he underlined the need for an end to what Fawwaz Traboulsi (Revolution) has called "the lacerating self-criticism" of the left. The uprisings, Bassem (and Trabloulsi) believed, provided an opportunity to realize that "history doesn't make mistakes, it just happens". There have been loads of mistakes in the traditional left. But saying that the new revolutionary left could have organized the working class, to organize itself in the past twenty years, this is absurdity. In the last twenty years, we are talking about a revolutionary left

rising in different countries, in Egypt, in Lebanon, and these groups are effective in a small degree but still more effective than traditional left organisations. So it's a very important development.1

The 'new new left' Bassem came to this conviction, that the renewal of Arab socialism was possible from the bottom-up, through his own personal trajectory. Like all intellectuals Bassem Chit was shaped by the concerns of the recent past as much as by the present. Born in 1979, he was part of the "war generation, "who witnessed the Lebanese civil war as children and came of age with debates about post-war reconstruction in the 1990s. On Lebanon's university campuses in the mid-1990s, leftist organisations such as bi-lā ḥudūd ("No Frontiers", AUB), Pablo Neruda (LAU), al-ʿamal al-mubāshar ("Direct Action", Balamand), and Tanios Chahine (USJ), provided spaces for rethinking leftist engagement in an age dominate by the neoliberal policies of the Hariri governments. It involved, as one of its participants remembers, "un mélange de sociaux-démocrates, de militants laics ["secularists"], d'écologistes, d'internationalistes, de nationalistes arabes, de marxistes, de trotskistes, et de militants des droits de l'homme." (Abi Yaghi 41). Seeking to bypass the bureaucratic language and institutions of their older communist peers, this budding 'new new left' worked in networks rather than parties, and preferred public action over engagement with official institutions of the state, which they viewed as corrupt.

At the beginning of the 2000s, this 'new new left' increasingly transformed their student engagement and intellectual debates into activism. Bassem became part of this motley crew of new leftists who protested the WTO meeting in Doha in 2001, organised anti-war demonstrations against US-led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, published journals such as al-Yasārī ("the leftist") and organised activism on many different levels. He was thus an integral figure in the creation of the Socialist Forum (al-Muntada al-Ishtirākī) in 2010, its journal al-Manshour, and from 2012 the journal al-Thawra al-Dāʾima (The Permanent Revolution), which revolved, and still revolves, around a network of revolutionary socialist groups in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and Morocco.

Al-Thawra al-Dāʾima contains Chit's most elaborate intellectual production, not just his own articles but also his editorship and his efforts to create a network for the renewal of revolutionary socialism in the region. He wrote insightfully about racism, the Syrian refugee question, and particularly nationalism and sectarianism. Drawing on Ussama Makdisi's seminal work on the modern roots of the sectarian system, Chit believed that sectarianism is a product of capitalist relations in Lebanon. He believed that the sectarian system was linked to hegemony of the ruling class established under imperialism and perpetuated by the liberal institutions of the state. In this way, he took Makdisi's constructivist argument further by stressing the internal contradictions in the capitalist system and the class structure of Lebanon (Chit 2009, 2014).

From a scholarly point of view there is nothing novel in this argument. It has been elaborated based on original research by other historical materialists such as Fawwaz Traboulsi, Carolyn Gates, and Salim Nasr. But then, Bassem Chit was not primarily a scholar. For him, the important task was to understand the conditions of Arab societies and devise a plan for revolutionary change. He insisted on a class

analysis of Lebanese politics and society, because he believed that a clear, historically founded analysis of the complex structures of Lebanese society was a necessary starting point for the inculcation of revolutionary consciousness. In doing so, he placed himself in a long tradition of critiquing sectarianism and linking social justice to the formation of a secular political order (Haugbolle).

A nineteenth-century rebel in the twenty-first century

Bassem's writings and manner of speech were deeply influenced by Marx and Trotsky. Talking to Bassem could sometimes feel like talking to a nineteenth-century revolutionary in London, ready to organize and theorise all the way to kingdom come. He earned the respect of fellow revolutionaries from his willingness to engage in conversation and debate with all sorts of people, from refugees in methodological workshops that he organised in some of Beirut's poorest neighbourhoods, to Lebanese and foreign academics. In all of this, he stuck to his belief in the necessity of revolutionary change. Just like the first socialists in the mid-nineteenth century, Arab revolutionary socialists today depend on solidarity and comradeship in order to maintain the momentum of their project to change the social order against all odds.

Therefore, Bassem was very aware of the need to unify the ideological line in the Marxist socialist milieu. At the time of his death, deep splits had occurred that existed prior to 2011 but had been accentuated by the uprisings and in particular by the war in Syria. The splits were already visible in 2006, when a group of leftist intellectuals in Lebanon published an open letter denouncing the Democratic Left Movement and the March 14 alliance for their failure to protect and support Hezbollah in its war with Israel. In 2011, some leftists continued to support the Syrian regime in the name of the struggle against Israel and resistance to imperialism, but this position was challenged by the evident and growing violence against civilians. Others stood with the Free Syrian Army, the Syrian National Council and the peaceful uprising, in the name of revolution and the defence of democratic rights. Some supported a middle way between solidarity with the protestors' demands for freedom and rejecting foreign interference, and instead advocated national reconciliation (Dot-Pouillard).

As the Syrian crisis intensified and became an outright war in 2012, the splits on the left in Lebanon and in the region worsened. In May 2013 I asked Bassem to explain how he viewed the chances of a unified left in the region, to which he replied that he thought it was crystallization, but that the war in Syria showed that unity would necessitate a complete rupture with "the old left," which to him was only a left in name. The old left, for him, meant the Stalinism of many Arab communist parties, and the authoritarian legacy of Arab socialism in the form of Baathism and Nasserism. Their support for the Syrian regime and for Hezbollah was not surprising, as they put collective struggle before individual freedom, and anti-imperialism — the notion of mumānaʿa ("rejectionism") — before popular mobilization (Traboulsi, Crisis).

Bassem had great belief in the ability of his generation to distance themselves collectively from the old left in a way that the 'old new left' in the 1960s and 1970s perhaps failed to do. The Arab revolutions were to be the tool of this unification, which would lead to a revolutionary culture that could set the Arab countries on the path of regional redistribution of wealth, resistance to foreign interference, and

socialist states. For the revolutions to become such as tool, the new left of the 2000s, he believed, had to join forces with the hundreds of thousands of Arabs involved in the revolutions. The aim of al-Thawra al-Dā'ima was to theorize revolution with the people involved in the uprisings. Tracing the birth of a new left, he told me that, "In Lebanon it started in the late 1990s, early 2000s. It started with the movement against the war in Iraq. In 2002, the movement here in Lebanon adopted the slogan 'no war, no dictator.' Ironically this is the same position we take today on Syria. We are against any military intervention, even of Hezbollah, and against dictatorship. This position started in 2002."

Others became involved already around the Palestinian Intifada of 2000-2001. But as Bassem said, "that was an easy question compared to the Iraqi war." In the question of Iraq, some of the left, for example what became the Democratic Left Movement, aligned themselves with the imperialists, saying imperialism will bring democracy to Iraq. Our group started off from the position between those who supported Saddam against imperialism and the coalition against tyranny. We came together over this position. And so there was a fragmentation, and that fragmentation has continued... Today [in 2013] the DLM is deteriorating. The Lebanese Communist Party is deteriorating. This is because they have chosen sides. And what we see is that our position — of being in-between, of double-rejection if you want — is gaining more momentum. The position of double-rejection has proven to be difficult, if not impossible, in the context of continuous civil war as in Syria, or authoritarian military rule as in Egypt, where the revolutionary socialists have been imprisoned and persecuted since 2013. For Bassem, the rejection was necessary to maintain against all odds. He did not see it merely as a practical position against particular political forces, but equally as the only tenable ideological position for any democratic Arab left worthy of its name. Ideologically, he linked this stance to the rejection of stagist theory, the Marxist theory that underdeveloped countries must first pass through a stage of capitalism before moving to a socialist stage.

This necessitates alliances with the national bourgeoisie. What might seem like a detached abstract discussion was in fact the central bone of contention between the Arab nationalist movement and new left Marxists in the 1960s. Thus, Khaled Bakdash, on returning from Moscow in 1951, had suddenly learned the Stalinist line of a stagist approach (Tibi 24). Today, Bassem stressed, Communist parties and other leftist currents maintain stagist theory "as a justification for their support for regimes such as the Syrian." "And this is the same stagist theory that led the left in Lebanon to be destroyed That led the left to be destroyed by Nasser in Egypt. By Khomeini in Iran. All over the region. Can you believe it? They are readopting the theory and creating illusions about a certain alliance with the national bourgeoisie. In an era when you have a hugely globalized economy. And the national bourgeoisie is linked to the international bourgeoisie. This is absurd because the line of separation between national and international bourgeoisie, which may have existed in the nationalist era, does not exist anymore. For example, when we look at banking, construction, et cetera, in Egypt, Tunisia, Lebanon, they are directly linked to international capital. And they are linked to the moneyed ties of Saudi Arabia extending everywhere. This is why we think that it is a destructive theory."

Remembering Bassem

The last time I spoke with Bassem we talked about the sense of living in revolutionary times, where history was replayed as farce — both the deep history of international socialism and that of the Arab left. "It's like the old ghosts are coming back, the good and the ugly but mostly the ugly," he said. We talked about how we should all work to improve conditions here and now and build networks of solidarity. We talked about the importance of focusing on local struggles, even if revolution has to be international. Sadly, it was probably his failure to live up to this sound advice — his constant engagement in a million things at the same time — that got the better of his heart. Somebody should have said to him, "take it easy, you're doing too much." Somebody probably did, but Bassem wouldn't have listened.

He lived the struggle. The many obituaries published by Lebanese, Arab, and international socialists are a testimony to his impact on this current. He was one of the few people who could coordinate and develop regional branches of revolutionary socialists. In Al-Manshour, his close colleagues from the Socialist Forum wrote that he "dedicated his life to the liberation of humanity from all forms of hegemony, occupation and oppression. With his sudden departure, we lost more than a rare revolutionary activist. We also lost a unique leader with very creative initiatives. It will not be easy at all to fill the huge vacuum of his absence."2

The revolutionary socialists in Egypt asserted that he "was a towering figure on the Arab revolutionary Left" with a "unique ability to coordinate the issuing of a statement on behalf of revolutionary organisations in different countries and complete all the necessary discussions and corrections in half a day (…) We have lost a tremendous fighting spirit. We have lost a keen revolutionary intelligence. We have lost the theoretical and political contributions we were expecting from him in the long term."3

Beyond the region as well, the legacy of Bassem was celebrated and the lost potential mourned. "It's hard to overstate the political loss the revolutionary left in the Middle East has suffered," wrote Alex Callinicos in the UK-based Socialist Worker. Remembering Bassem as someone who added crucial nuance to international socialists' understanding of the complexities of the Middle East, Callinicos stressed that a sympathetic "cultural translator" such as Bassem is highly needed for international socialists to make sense of it for them.4

Summarising reactions to Bassem's death, the Moroccan researcher and member of the international group RS21 Miriyam Aouragh further wrote, "we have lost one of the very few principled voices in what is becoming a quagmire."5

The Middle East, the left, and popular mobilizations have landed in a quagmire indeed. Perhaps it is worth remembering that for every generation of leftists, the challenges have been huge and the odds stacked against them. The attempt to carve out a path towards socialist change has always necessitated iconic figures, rebel intellectuals, whose words and deeds provided guidance. The most touching indication that Bassem Chit could become such a figurehead for activists in the Middle East is the fifth issue of Al-Thawra al-Dā'ima, where his peers from around the Arab world, old and young, pay tribute to his thoughts and life. These short texts are often quite poetic and deeply personal, and show the extent to which his death

was a collective emotional event, a turning point after which no one was the same. As his friend Walid Daou wrote, Bassem was not quite Christ the Saviour, but his comrades now almost feel like the disciples who must be reminded by the example of the dead to stand against "the attacks that are being waged today. Will we be able to stand on our feet? The answer is certain, it is that we will not accept anything less than a sweeping revolution to lead us towards the other side."6

Bassem himself formed his ideas in a conversation with all of the living people on these pages and many more, and with his intellectual heroes, as he grew up in the 1990s, staring down left melancholia with his Trotsky, his Mahdi 'Amil and his Marx in hand. Ideological formation is a cumulative process, in which the words and deeds of rebels who went before provide guidance for new generations. It was unexpected that Bassem should join their ranks so soon.

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Notes

1 <http://www.turkeyagenda.com/interview-with-the-latebassem-chit-on-the-politicsand-culture-in-lebanon-andthe- middle-east-1302.html>
2 <http://www.al-manshour. org/node/5923>
3 <http://global.revsoc. me/2014/10/farewell-bassemchit- farewell-comrade/>
4 <https://socialistworker. co.uk/art/39121/
5 <http://rs21.org. uk/2014/10/03/bassem-chit/>

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Chapter One
Sectarianism and Class Struggle

Introduction

One of the great difficulties of building an analysis of the complexities of Lebanese society was how to distinguish between its economic base and its social superstructure – that is between the economic relations, which were unashamedly capitalist and proudly "free market", with its social relations that appeared to be "feudal". This was not an academic question, as it had strategic consequences. If Lebanon had a feudal superstructure, then it was a logical step to complete "the bourgeois revolution". This was in effect the central and ultimately disastrous policy of the mainstream left in the run up to 1975-76.

Bassem's approach to exploring this contradiction was to turn to classical Marxism cannon, notable a key passage in Karl Marx's A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy, (1859). Marx notes that, "In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness. "

A mechanical reading of Marx would mean that it is inevitable that the contradictions between the base and superstructure would resolve itself, even if it needed a little push. However the key point in Marx is set out in the subsequent paragraph.

"At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production or – this merely expresses the same thing in legal terms – with the property relations within the framework of which they have operated hitherto. From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure." https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/preface.htm

Marx argues that the contradictions can only be resolved by class struggle.

Bassem's understanding of Base and Superstructure would shape all his subsequent analysis of Lebanon's political economy and its historical development. By the end of the process he totally rejected the idea that Lebanon had a feudal political system riding on the back of a capitalist economy. Lebanese sectarianism

was not an aberration that could be corrected with a dash of "modernism", it was intertwined in the history and survival of the whole system, sectarianism was "the secret of its success." It is with his short piece on Base and Superstructure that we begin. *Simon Assaf*

Base & Superstructure

Still under development, 2005

Superstructure is the manifestation of elaborate social relations, the surface, the face of the core, or the face of base social relations – forces and relations of production. The base give rise to the superstructure, this does not mean that the base dictates the superstructure of society, but that the superstructure does not exist without the base. [1]The base is composed of the direct relations within society, forces and relations of productions, meaning social relations. The totality of social relations once digested by the mass or general consciousness of society manifests the superstructure. This means that the composition of the superstructure is not always consistent with the composition of the base, for example social relations under capitalism is composed of class division, but that does not mean the superstructure is always dominated by class politics, but also class politics cannot appear to the superstructure without the having a class base of society.

This is exactly the relation between freedom and constraint. The formation of the superstructure can also be directly contradictory with the base, and this is basically the heart of Marx's dialectics, since the superstructure is mainly dominated by the ruling class, so when the ruling class goes through political and economic paths which directly contradicts with the compositions of the base and its material and historical development at that stage, at that point the contradictions within the existing social relations (base) appears to the surface, such points can be considered revolutionary moments, where the material conditions of a certain society within a certain historical period have matured enough to be able to produce a revolution, but such revolution will not develop if there is no revolutionary organisation that is pushing forward for it.

So a revolutionary party cannot perform a revolution, it is accomplished by the mass of the working class, within circumstances or conditions transmitted from the past. Nobody has ever explained this better than Marx himself in a famous passage in the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte: "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past."[2]The role of a revolutionary organisation is to build itself and to build the working class, i.e. building a movement that is ready when the conditions of a socialist revolution are mature; this means that such a movement needs to build a developed class consciousness which enables the working class to lead a socialist revolution.

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Revolutionary illusions and sharp schizophrenia

October 2005

History repeats itself

This year, the "Cedar Revolution" was the most prominent event on the Lebanese arena. In order to delve deeper into its influence, we have to look at the historical situation of the region and of Lebanon and their impact on the global development, which was one of the defining signs of the late 19th century, the end of the feudal system in the major industrial countries and the latter's transition to the capitalist system. This transition did not happen suddenly, but was based on stages and fundamental historical changes, including the emergence of bureaucracy, the emergence of the middle class directly associated with the development of trade relations, the need for greater productivity in industries, and the shift to industrial production patterns of civil and non-agricultural.

This development was not smooth, but was full of contradictions and conflicts that produced many revolutions and civil wars. However, in Third World countries, until the second, basic historical stages in the evolution of economic and social systems were skipped. The direct cause was colonialism, which imposed a pattern of capitalist production on countries that were hitherto feudal or tribal systems. Farmers became factory workers without going through the historical transformations, both political and economic, such as the development of industry and commerce and the transformation of villages into cities.

Between 1790 and 1860 farmers in Mount Lebanon staged seven major revolts and strikes against feudalism and were able to win partial ownership over their lands. In the 19th century, capitalism in Lebanon developed in the footsteps of French capitalism. The Marseille Stock Exchange was established to fund the silk industry and relied heavily on the factories in Mount Lebanon until the industry moved to East Asia. The entry of European industrial capital collided with prevailing social and cultural relations, leading many farmers to exchange the field for the workshop or factory.

As the population grew, ownership of the land became more difficult, while industrialisation threatened its social status as landowners. One-third of the farmers, especially males, fled the mountain between 1880 and 1910, while the women remained to work in factories. The period witnessed the birth of an organised women's labour movement that managed to achieve a number of material gains, particularly in terms of wage rises and social autonomy.

A fundamental characteristic of the world as a whole is the imbalance in historical development. This is evident in the "developing countries". Under the global economic pressures resulting from the policies of the major capitalist states, developing countries have to follow the patterns of capitalist countries without going through the same basic historical leaps, and attempting to reproduce these capitalist relations within local conditions leads to a collision with the existing economic conditions.

Fake Revolutions

The feudal system in Lebanon ended in the 1880s, but many of its symbols survived, such as the church, the system of religious sects, as well as family political heredity. But that does not mean that they are feudal forces defending a feudal organisation of society. Lebanon is not unique; in Britain, for example, the judicial, economic and parliamentary system dates back to the 17th century. In Europe in general, the new capitalist system was able to eliminate feudalism in social organisation after a strenuous struggle. This was the demand of the working class, not the middle class, but the alliance between them at the time led to the prevailing confusion about the role of the bourgeoisie in social liberation. We can also remember that the basic demand of the bourgeoisie was not social liberation and democracy, but liberation of capital from the monarchy – the democracy of capital.

That we need a middle class revolution, as some of the Left in Lebanon believe, to move from "backwardness" to a capitalist system is incorrect, because we are already within a capitalist system, even if we did not go through the "usual stages". The "stages theory" [NOTE] inherited by most of the left in Lebanon from the Soviet experience is contradictory to the socio-economic reality of Lebanon.

Since 1880, what Lebanon witnessed was not a struggle between capitalist forces of production and feudalism, but a struggle within the capitalist system itself. The parties to the conflict today are influenced by the pattern of state capitalism, as a result of the influence of Syrian hegemony, while the other is influenced by the free trade regime and the opening of markets, as a result of the domination of the United States and Europe. This paradox exists in many countries, even the developed countries. It is a permanent struggle between monopoly capital or state capitalism, and capital based on market dynamics.

This explains one of the divisions that hit the March 14 group. Part of the struggle against [President Emile] Lahoud and the Syrian authority is caused by a difference in the nature of the economic system, especially since the Syrian model, state capitalism, is no longer accepted by global capitalism. But they do not agree among themselves about the system they want to apply as a replacement to state capitalism. Jumblatt and Hariri / Siniora and others want free trade and open markets. Privatization, for example, is a key item of the ministerial statement.

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In its quest to get rid of a system that does not already exist, the ruling class has been unable to respond to the actual conflict. Exactly what the national movement was in when it placed itself in the position of a revolutionary force that wanted to get rid of feudalism, even though the feudal pattern of production was over. Fatah allied itself with a class of capitalists against other groups, and its choice was towards a patronizing state in the face of the monopolistic capitalist option of political maronism.

Who is the biggest loser?

Just as we can not separate the historical course of a society from its domestic physical reality, we can not separate it from its position in the global historical context. Colonialism, geographical division and the entry of foreign capital, which

have forced the jump over the usual stages of capital development, do not mean that the capitalist system in Lebanon is not developed.

The traditional leftist ideology recognized by its traditionalism (the Communist Party) and the reformist prosecutor (the democratic left) of the working class viewed the Salafist view of Europe in the early 20th century, ignoring the majority of the labor force, ie banking, tourism, media, advertising and informatics. To understand the changes in the working class and not to absorb the unbalanced nature of global development, and to maintain an imported definition of the working class from industrialized countries.

The left in Lebanon, who wants to correct the historical course, is also jumping from basic historical stages. It jumps, for example, from the stages in which Europe has made the left conclude that the class that will bring about change is the industrial working class. Lebanon has not witnessed this development, but has been associated with global industrial production. Because it can not be an industrialized country, it is directed towards the current sectors, the "service sector", where the majority of the working class operates. The problem is not in the absence of a working class, but in that it is not only in factories.

The biggest loser in the alliance with the bourgeoisie and the construction of the state is the working class. The recent civil war was a clear example, and in the end it was nothing more than a war of militias against civilians and the working class who were combatants, dead and kidnapped, with the aim of protecting the same class that had not changed. The left and the national movement bear the consequences of this by involving the working class in a conflict that does not serve its interests. As for March 14, what happened was not a revolutionary class revolution against an "old" class, but a battle, of course, between classes within the capitalist class.

They are the capitalists we are workers. There is no other division of the class situation in Lebanon. We do not live in a feudal system, and we do not need a middle class revolution. But we need to unite the working class in all its classes against the ruling class and we must benefit from its contradictions to achieve the gains of the working class. And the alliance with any of the parties in the ruling class will return negatively, especially after we saw the sleep of sectarian and racial atmosphere does not hesitate sectarian (religious and political) in feeding him.

The ruling class today is composed of old money owners and new money owners, and the majority of them are invested in the services sector. Some of the ruling families date back to the feudal era, others have recently built their wealth, all competing for monopolistic services. This category contrasts with new and different interests produced by the global capitalist system and seeks to regulate capital on a market basis, which also differs from the concept of state capitalism. Syria. The contradiction exists between two economic trends, the largest in the world, the protectionist regime and the World Trade Organization. Therefore, one of the basic requirements of the Organization is to get rid of state control of the economy and open markets.

Hariri's assassination was a catalyst for the conflict, and capitalists against the state's capitalism took advantage of it. The "opposition" launched a violent attack on loyalists to get rid of them, and a conflict was invested within the ruling class in the

street. The opposition had two options, either to ignore the resentment of the status quo or to convert it to its advantage, and managed to convert it.

The show of force that Hezbollah made on March 8 did not completely contradict the opposition. The party wanted to enter the inner chamber of negotiations, ready to move to the neoliberal camp, which would explain its avoidance of the labor movement and its refusal to stand against the accession policies of the World Trade Organization. But he wanted to enter the camp with "gains" that would enable him to face international and internal pressure, and he would deal with the opposition.

What about democracy?

Most of my make-up appearances March 8 and March 14 do not have the franchise yet. In the last elections, the majority of citizens were silent, and still, and this is evident in the rates of participation.

After the series of bombings by the ghosts, according to the Minister of the Interior, and the completion of the "war on the organs", like the "war on terror", the opposition has forgotten all the previous talk about public and individual freedoms. Freedom will be for the market only; today we see the spread of the army and the gendarmerie everywhere, in addition to the surveillance cameras that will record the movements of every citizen, monitoring telephone lines and emails.

What they really want is to get rid of restrictions on market movement, just. We see this in Solidere's recent profits. "We sell madly," some employees say. Privatization projects pass through one another and preparations are being made to join the World Trade Organization without a specific strategy on the role of the Organization and the role of Lebanon in it.

The silent majority

It is in the interest of the classes that have long suffered the consequences of these contradictions and their bloody consequences to unite today so as not to become once again the fuel of a new civil war that will only destroy the poor, the workers and the marginalized ... The success of the March 14 project, in its multifaceted ways, Workers or unemployment and poverty. For this reason, none of my March 8 and March 14 apologists mention civilians who have been killed because of these contradictions. Are forgotten even though they constitute the majority of the victims of the war and constitute the majority of the victims of the peace period, whether in the confrontations between the security forces and the demonstrators or in the recent bombings. There is a common interest among the majority of Lebanese and it is not in the interest of the conflicting groups that made the two events.

Workers and workers from Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, India, Sri Lanka and many others have built roads, built infrastructure and praised buildings. They supply telephone and electricity lines, manufacture and distribute goods, serve restaurant customers, take care of electronic and paper transactions and study in schools. They did all this and many others, not Hariri, warlords, mafias and companies. So why are they getting poorer while a minority is crammed into Solidere restaurants.

We are old and we decide, they have done enough and it is time to produce a better world, our world.

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Individualism in Politics

January 2006, (unfinished)

The relation between the individual and society is an organic and dialectical relation; it is not a relation between two separate entities but rather a relation like the relation between the human cells and the human organic structure. Choices of individuals, the inter-individual relations creates the social dynamic, and the social dynamic sets the condition that an individual live within, so society is affected by the choices of individuals as much as the choices of individuals are affected by society.[7]

The rhetoric that lets those individuals dictate their own history or future, without taking into consideration the role of society in shaping such history and future, is in itself contradictory because individuals cannot exist as a self-conscious individual without its presence within the existing social conditions and constructs.

The self-development relies mainly on the existence of the self within society, individuals acquire language/methods of expression and their self-consciousness within the realm of society; individuals are not free from the dictation of the social development and realization, societal progression and development as well is not free from the choices taken by individuals.

As this link presides over the social dynamic, thus the emancipation of society from one social context to another necessitates the emancipation of the individual that constitutes society itself; also the emancipation of the individual cannot be realized unless there is a mass emancipation of society.

Political individualism is not but a fake realization of the individual, it creates a frame of progressive genuine ideas without any occurring changes within the social construct, it is progressive in comparison with the prevailing ideas in society, but at the same it is unable to relate to the rising contradictions within society, thus it develops as an intellectual ghetto which is able to take a position from the current social realm but unable to change it.

This break in communication between the formed intellectual autonomy and society as a whole requires from these individuals a defence mechanism, an identity that sets them apart from the masses, and with the permanent break with society it develops itself as a lifestyle, and sometimes it develops into a puritan left afraid from its own contradictions, it struggles to stay uniform and enclosed.

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Towards a united front to the left

January 30, 2007

Many see the basis of the crisis in Lebanon as the division between the forces of power and the opposition forces, traditionally classified in a simplified way as sectarian division and power struggle. The dilemma here is not the existence of division, but why does such a division lead to a crisis? Political conflict is the main engine of any parliamentary democracy, and the power struggle is almost the most popular. The issue here is not about a division or division of how the country is managed or managed, but rather the crisis of the system itself for its inability to manage the political conflict and its inability to absorb the political, social and economic changes in the country.

The Lebanese regime or, to the accuracy of the label, the sectarian system is only a vicious circle that generates only crises, relying mainly on consensus rather than conflict as its engine. This contradicts the simplest rules of parliamentary democracy, the struggle for power and political conflict. The existing system is not capable, not through successive election laws or through quiet and heated dialogues, to produce a political majority that can lead the country. It is governed by the production of sectarian majorities, relative majorities that require either consensus or crisis.

Every democratic system must be based on objective conditions, not on immediate, unstable realities. Sectarian division and sectarian demographic proportions are changing by time and are rapidly changing. In Lebanon, instead of ensuring that the political system of society has options on how to manage itself, we see it fall into choices and dynamics that are not commensurate with the social, political and economic realities, so its effectiveness is limited.

Today, we live in the contradiction between the existing sectarian order and the current socio-political reality. We also live a historic opportunity to rid ourselves of this regime forever and to replace it with a genuine democratic system that suits the needs of society and the requirements of conflict for a better life. Reality has changed, and this system has become a major obstacle to the development of society.

What has changed at the social, economic and political level in Lebanon?
Before the last Lebanese civil war, there was a political Maronite. That is, the Maronite community is the monopoly of the country's political leadership. There was also a Maronite protectionist economic system, an economic system designed to protect the Maronite community, and the state was particularly supportive of them.

This pattern has not produced a coincidence, but has its causes and historical and political justification. In the mid-nineteenth century until the beginning of the twentieth century, capitalism in Lebanon and in Mount Lebanon developed specifically in the style of French capitalism. The mission of the Lyon Stock Exchange was mainly to finance the silk industry in Mount Lebanon. The silk industry has led to the development of production patterns in Mount Lebanon and its economic backwardness in other regions such as the North, Bekaa and the South.

The new economy has spread between Mount Lebanon and Beirut. The presence of the Maronites as a major majority in Mount Lebanon and the Sunnis in Beirut made them, especially the Maronites, two races in the central state building project. Central power is not a feudal need but a pillar of the evolution of the capitalist system. The power to centralize capital is the central state.

It was justified in the historical context to be productive political and economic leadership Maronite leadership, and this made the middle class and the bourgeois class with a Maronite majority and comes in second place the year. This may justifiably justify what Mahdi Aamil is saying that Shiites are the majority in the working class.

But the Lebanese war changed that. The last war destroyed the structural foundations of the regime. Militias and armed gangs were established as the main force in the management of society. They destroyed economic, social and political centers, which had a major impact on Lebanese economic and social organization. On the other hand, the economy and its productive sectors suffered a painful blow that forced it to reorganize itself in a different reality after the Lebanese war.

It is no longer true what existed before the war, the working class today includes the majority of the communities. The civil war provided an opportunity for local capital to develop within the same structural and economic conditions, enabling the re-establishment of the working class in a way that became more cross-sectarian.

Today the majority of the Maronites, as the majority of the Sunnis, and the majority of the Shiites belong to the working class. This is true for other communities. Today, the situation is consistent with the classical Marxist definition: the capitalist system produces its own end, that is to say, it produces a working class with a clear majority in society, regardless of its sectarian division, whose interests are in conflict with the interests of the system itself and the ruling class it represents.

This change necessitates that the historical and economic foundations of the sectarian system are over. Today there is no single historically or economically pioneering group. The fundamental division is a class and political divide. This is not what one of the leftists or Marxists says. It is the same analysis adopted by international organizations for Lebanese reality.

According to Marian Khoury of the World Bank, "class division is the basic division of Lebanese society, but it is distorted by sectarianism" (Hugo Bannisa and Marian El Khoury, "Social Mobility and Religion: Evidence from Lebanon," Social Research Network website, http: // ssrn. com / abstract = 293012).

The report concludes that "Lebanon is characterized by a very small percentage of social mobility, compared with the lowest-ranked societies in the world, such as Latin America. It is also noted that social mobility is higher among the Shiite and Maronite communities, the lowest among Sunni Muslims (excluding Palestinian refugees) The report adds: "This mobility is small at the year and due to the behavior of the middle class and the bourgeois class within this community."

For example, in 2002, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in the area of strategic planning for social protection in Lebanon (http://mdg-guide.undp.org/files/Lebanon_SPPD-Social%20Protection _2002.doc) reported that 39% 13.4 percent of GDP, while 14 percent control 43 percent of GDP. 762 (less than 1%) of account holders in the banking sector control 50.5% of the total estimated $ 16

billion and 47% share 2.3% of the total.

This proves that Lebanon does not need financial resources but needs a fair distribution of wealth and a distribution of productive capabilities. The differences between wealth are much greater than the differences in income, which means that the class struggle in Lebanon is blatantly present.

In a report on poverty in Lebanon, the World Bank says that the purchasing power of the nuclear family in Lebanon at the end of the last decade has fallen by about 30%, meaning that the Lebanese family earns enough money to survive the first three weeks of the month.

Another study says that 80% of the wealthiest people in Lebanon do not work but live on the benefit of their accumulated wealth. They are the masters of the sectarian system, but they evade their social and economic consequences.

What are the roots of the current division?

In light of this, we can see that the division in the Lebanese street goes beyond the dispute between the March 14 Forces and the opposition. The main fuel for this conflict is class, but it is distorted by the sectarian system and the inability of the conflicting parties to place the conflict in its place from the socio-economic reality.

Also, the present division has not yet produced a line-up of sects against others. We see a division within each sect on a political basis or on the basis of belonging to either the opposition or the power. The populist discourse of the opposition attracts the majority of the Maronite and Shiite sects, which is the result of the relatively high proportion of social mobility (as we mentioned earlier), compared to the low mobility of the Sunni community, which seeks more for the discourse of power which is more likely to be. He wants to maintain the status quo.

Social mobility is a fundamental sign of the ability to see the socio-economic reality as well as to move towards reality to a better reality. Opposition supporters are therefore influenced by a discourse that is in line with reality, although the speech is illusory.

The fuel of the current division is the product of a daily class struggle that shifts from a clash of economic classes to a social and economic conflict and social and economic strife against government policies. This is precisely what the opposition forces use against the forces of power. They believe that the popular approach is closer to reality than the political analysis offered by the opposition itself, which it uses to attract its audience and manipulate it in its movements. Perhaps the most striking expression of this is the opinion of opposition protesters, even in a playful way, “electricity is in the sit-in and cut in the suburbs.”

But the opposition is reducing the problem as if it were an administrative one, meaning that the current authority does not have the competence to lead the economic reform, more than its criticism of the successive economic policies of the 1990s governments.

This is evident in Aoun’s speech, but it is clear at Hezbollah. His problem with the current authority is to monopolize the government and not to share it. Then it is an administrative, not a systemic, socio-economic crisis.

The powers of the Authority are still stuck with a discourse that is beyond the

current political and socio-economic reality. We see that they are still looking at the Syrian-Iranian conspiracies, while the main concern in the street is to collect a living and improve the economic reality of the people. This led to the destruction of the power of power popularity, after losing the battle against Lahoud, and lost their second battle in the abolition of political sectarianism under the pressure of Patriarch Sfeir, and the battle of elections when they entered into alliances with circumstantial allies like Hezbollah.

The March 14 Forces, unable to cope with the daily developments of the street and society, became forces beyond reality, allowing the opposition to enter the arena and become the first path of conflict and division.

What is the horizon of the opposition coalition and is it a real change movement?
We have to start with the Free Patriotic Movement and Hezbollah, and perhaps it is the basis for the emergence of the current opposition. This understanding is more responsive to current reality, not a voluntary political choice that imposes itself. It is an alliance between two relatively new parties on the Lebanese scene, both in the organizational and political aspects, both mass parties with a huge base and with their constituents, compared to the March 14 Forces, which are parties to a nuclear party that follow the direct dependence of the leader. Most often late from the street. While the Free Patriotic Movement and Hezbollah, although they have some "leadership", but do not rely on leadership as a basis for the political line.

So, we see two types of political organizations. The material conditions of the political conflict in Lebanon produced two forms of political organization, one old or traditional, the other more renewed. This does not mean that the style of Hezbollah and the FPM is progressive, but more progressive than the dominant political forces.

The opposition clashes with the fact that the SPLM it produces is faster, on the ground, than the political discourse it is committed to. We see this clearly, especially in the period between the first days of the open sit-in in the center of the country and the general strike, where most of the voices of the opposition itself called on its leaders to move quickly to overthrow the government and get rid of the enemy of the people, "Fouad Siniora," while the opposition leadership calls for the formation of a national unity government Without specifying any alternative economic plan. On the contrary, they agree to the government's economic policies. Even in this period, we hear a lot about the reluctance of the cadres of the opposition leaders of the lack of speed and seriousness in the confrontation with the forces of power.

What next after the general strike?
The general strike came, and the perception of the leaders of the opposition was to pressure the position of Siniora in Paris 3 and not to drop the conference. But they were surprised by the force of the strike and its extensive spread on Lebanese territory. They were also surprised by the escalation in which the street was heading in terms of direct conflict.

This proves again that the street is more advanced in the conflict than its leaders, and this threatens the opposition leadership in the street to escape their control. So we see the intensity of the organization to control the SPLM. But the movement has

proved more and more that it is the most powerful of the leaders themselves. What began as a general blow to the congestion almost turned into a popular uprising that may produce self-regulatory ability that is difficult for the opposition to control.

Here is the contradiction that we have talked about in the previous issues of the publication about the Progressive Alliance, itself, between Hezbollah and the Free Patriotic Movement and the political leadership of this alliance, which contrasts with the reality produced by such an alliance or convergence.

Who is responsible for the recent confrontations?
Both the opposition and the Authority have demonstrated their inability to manage the current political conflict, thus emptying the arena of their political content and turning more and more to sectarian strife.

The survival of the political conflict in its political framework depends on the existence of the popular center, that is, there is an audience affected by a political speech, not because of its commitment to organize my party, but because it raises questions that the political parties to answer. When the battle is confined to factional charges beyond the political conflict, the conflict between the parties itself is limited and the center is marginalized, that is, the mass majority capable of making any change and bringing a party to the leadership without the other parties.

At this stage there is a marked intervention by the religious institutions that enter it, imposing "public morals" and threats of isolation within the political conflict, putting the sectarian mold in the middle of the arena and further pushing the marginalization of the political conflict into a class struggle or extinguishing it. Within the historical context.

Who bears responsibility for the recent clashes? And here I am not talking about tactical responsibilities in who carried arms and who did not carry them, but what causes us to this situation. Here the opposition has a responsibility not to seize the opportunities for change.

The first opportunity was lost at the beginning of the open sit-in and did not escalate to bring down the government. The second missed opportunity was not to continue the general strike in order to overthrow the government and bring down Paris 3. The delay here means a direct political conflict towards class fighting. Hezbollah's own organizational structure in its regions has led its followers and opponents to comply in the same way to fight it. Hence, we see the development of the pattern of sectarian purity within the regions.

However, the Authority bears the greatest responsibility for its failure to comply with the public opinion calling for its overthrow. That is, under the pressure of a popular majority it fell into disobedience to direct democracy. How can it maintain public security or its legitimacy in imposing its authority? It tends to impose its authority as a minority in Lebanese society. The issue here is not in numbers, but in the voice of the highest. It was clear that the opponents' pulse and voice were louder than those of loyalists.

Also, there is the militia style followed by the power parties, which extends back to the organizational form of the civil war. To convince the Authority that it is in the midst of a civil war has encouraged its leaders to comply with forms of gang

and militia organization to fight political opponents. This is the most prominent of Geagea, Hariri and Jumblatt.

Historical responsibility is borne by the ruling class and its sectarian system and its pillars of religious institutions that undermine the conflict, from its political status to its class and regional status. We see the Grand Mufti of the Republic threatening everyone who approaches Beirut and declares it to be a Sunni region. On the other hand, the Patriarch demands that "everyone loves each other" and that they preserve the "unity of the Christians". As if the tendency to avoid the crisis is to preserve the sectarian purity of each sect.

The direct responsibility is borne by the left. With such a split in the ruling class, the left could not afford to get the support of a popular change movement that represented the interests of the underprivileged and the working class in particular. Especially as the discourse on the street is heading towards a more "class" conflict point, that is, determined by living demands.

The problem goes beyond what he did, or has not done, the left in recent days. The street has lost its confidence in the forces of the left for its constant reluctance to take the steps of confrontation in the historical path, and its tendency towards tactical steps that are meant to rid themselves of sectarian reality rather than to confront this reality. Perhaps the most striking sign of this is the failure of the Communist Party to take any escalating steps to inflame class struggle. That is, class struggle is the loudest. If not directly concocted, but it would express a general displeasure and resentment from an economic reality that increases the poor and the rich.

Instead of starting the day-to-day escalation from March 14 until the open sit-in of the opposition and then the general strike pushing the conflict into class struggle, the party resorted more to taking the ethical stance of the sectarian and economic systems. He saw no historical opportunity for the people to produce a better future that would begin to confront the existing regime. Structural and socio-economic.

The Communist Party may say that it has faced this, but the issue is not confrontation for confrontation. It is not a matter of confronting the reality in its entirety in principle. Historical materialism and "Marxist concepts" require us to face reality from its place in the general historical path.

This calls for abandoning the idea of Stalinism and the Leninist style of organization and movement. The production of a movement that responds to reality with its direct political questions and strategic historical questions: what we must do today and what we must build to face tomorrow. Our criticism of the Communist Party is not for the sake of gossip, but for our belief that it is the most prominent leftist force that can make a change in the current political arena and establish a strategic change movement that is starting to influence today.

What do we have to do today?

On the left to organize itself in the framework of a unified front, tolerates the internal intellectual conflict and faces in the general political conflict, but is moving towards transforming the current conflict from the form of the class and the emptiness of political content to the production of class struggle that draws the opposition from the leadership to go to a direct conflict with the existing system.

This does not mean that we have to be in direct conflict against the opposition leaders. We will meet with them, but with their public in a battle to topple the government, and here we must overcome the opposition's speech towards direct attack on the regime and the elimination of its sectarian structure and its starvation economic path. It protects the rights of people and the rights of workers. We must strive to build a movement that sees it in the interest of society to produce a democratic organizational framework commensurate with its needs, not with ethical needs imposed by religious and sectarian institutions.

On the left today to build itself quickly and produce a network of communication between the public and organizational and start confrontation, not procrastination, because confrontation is the building of people's confidence in it, not media maneuvers to justify its position.

The structural division in society today is a class split with a distinction that is distorted by sectarianism and class conflicts. The left has the most prominent role in defining this conflict and pushing it to be the main conflict in the country.

The limits of the opposition are the state, the left's borders are in the interest of the people and a better future, although this means getting rid of the current state and producing a better organizational framework. It is the fear of sectarian war that leads to war, not the confrontation of the sectarian system that establishes sectarian war.

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Start the riots

April 2007During the past few months, the country has been living in an environment of fear and worry about a possible coming civil war, the main scenery that encourages such feelings is the current political split as well as the continuing tragedies that are occurring in different parts of the country.[8]

Recently, last Monday to be more accurate, two kids disappeared, they were later found dead, and this case directly links us to our memories of the last civil war. Directly after the murder was discovered army troops moved into the streets, heavy and light tanks were being spotted in almost all of the main streets of Beirut. In a couple of hours, we moved from one danger zone into another, most probably in some more days the danger zone will drop again.

These ups and downs throughout the past two years and with the recurrent bombings and killings, in addition to the July war on Lebanon, has set the general moral in a state of readiness for something worse to happen, something from the past, memories came gushing again about the last civil war. Every event, every social appearance, every political argument is being linked and interpreted in relation to our past and more precisely to the times of the 20-year old war and the sectarian conflicts.

In addition the ruling class has been for the past two years "threatening" from the dangers of internal armed conflict. The ruling class's rhetoric that is being used

contains more threats and despair then hope, it is transmitting anxiety and instability. Well this can only say one thing: the ruling class is unable to control the country, they have failed to produce and to build a socially secure society, and they were unable to build a stable and fair economy.

The start of any internal armed conflict is a sign that the democratic system applied is no longer efficient or consistent with the needs of society in general. It indicates a problem or a concrete contradiction as the path that base structures of social relations are becoming more and more divergent with the democratic system [that] is applied to manage these relations. Many relate that the crisis is developing from an underlying problem of social-sectarian relations, which would be in any case of political crisis the womb for sectarian divisions and the development of a civil war.

But when we try to understand these structural social relations we tend to lose the argument for popular sectarianism and we see it more as an inflicted norm of relations rather then an evolutionary form of social relations. The basis for pure sectarian conflict does not exist, but at all times it is the outcome of political conflict, the latter unable to resolve itself through the institutions of the state and the dynamics of the present so-called democratic system, the ruling class turns towards sectarian mobilization, trying to win the political argument by inflicting a fragile political and social balance, breeding super-structural sectarian division which in the daily lives of people was not existent prior to that period.

The burdens of the past are haunting our present; this is the reality that we live in. The last Civil War has taken place in our near past, yet society has not been able to reconcile with it, nor to evaluate and draw lessons from it. Many would just blame it on the people, while since the Taif Agreement the ruling class has been threatening that no one is allowed to return to the past, and anyone who did was accused of troubling national unity and wants to put the country on fire. Such rhetoric holds the main responsibility that our past is still haunting our daily lives. The warlords are not the ones who can or are willing to build peace and equality, and they have been clinging to the system that has been one of the main causes of the prior war.

You cannot ask a murderer to sympathize with the victim, what you can do is organize the victims together and get rid of the murderer. No one should be still waiting for a god-sent solution for the crisis we are living in. We should be engaging more and more with building a movement that first acknowledges that we need change and that change is the outcome of people's actions, of our own actions. We can build history by our involvement and active participation in creating it. Some might say they want "Lebanon the state", or "Lebanon the security", well none of these is relevant if Lebanon is not a people's Lebanon.

This ruling class since it took power along with its elders and contradictions have only been inflicting despair, poverty and war on us, well I think we should try something different now. Democracy is the translation of people's hopes wants and needs, and since this democracy we are living under is not delivering any of these things to us, then we should change it. Struggle is the lever of history; it is the beating heart of social and human progress. Let us start the riots.

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The facade of imperialism

May 11, 2006

The United States suffered a major failure in its "democratization" of the Middle East, or in other words, the creation of authoritarian powers. In Iraq, American democracy has produced overwhelming sectarian chaos and has been attacked by most political leaders in Iraq as the main cause of the chaos. The second blow was from Palestine, where Hamas won the last legislative elections in an election supported by the White House. "I have no doubt that Lebanon can be a model of what is possible in the Greater Middle East!" Bush said.

The March 14 forces, in the first stages of its vague revolution, bet that with the expansion of US control in the Middle East, it could join the project and enter the "free" space of the world as it likes to call the United States. For Lebanon, as it may represent the best way out of its crisis in its "democratic" project in the Middle East.

But the failure of the American democratic project is not only dependent on the Palestinian situation, the Iraqi situation or even the Ukrainian situation, where the Orange Revolution was defeated in the last elections. The phenomena of his failure also appear in Lebanon. American democracy depends firstly on the popular demands for democracy, and imagines that if it invented a civil disobedience and a superficial change, it would deceive people that it had created an effective democracy, but this did not happen.

In Ukraine, for example, American democratic change was a model of changing power from a Russian mafia to an American mafia. In Iraq, the idea was to separate the sects and create a sectarian federalism. But this division produced a sectarian war that was not the product of religious extremism; it was the result of a political system based on sectarian conflict that encouraged and supported extremism and fighting.

The American view of the Middle East is superficial, based on seeing the conflict in the region as a conflict of ethnicities, tribes and sects. And thinks that the best way to govern is to divide it in such a way that it can "singled out" the resolution and deviate from the Islamic ideological systems, such as al-Qaeda and others. It is the same way Western imperialism dealt with the early 20th century.

This already conflicting view of reality can not predict the many changes and divisions within Middle Eastern and Arab societies. These societies have many other divisions as in any other society. Political currents compete from the extreme left to the extreme right, religious and secular intellectual currents, as well as the already intense class struggle because of economic policies that depend on the destruction of all gains made by labor movements in the century. the past.

This racist reading of reality in the Middle East is the root cause of the beginning of the collapse of the American democratization project in the Middle East and the failure of democratic propaganda that collided with a reality more sophisticated than its superficial vision. Even Islamic organizations have produced democratic indicators that have helped them to rise to the leadership of pro-democracy cases.

Those who say that the United States is the one that brought democracy to the

region forget that the United States has not produced any democratic system in this country under its control, and that the existing democratic systems are being destroyed by the pro-American authorities and replaced by repressive and criminal dictatorships Egypt, the Arabian Gulf and Jordan, and has supported the repression of the Syrian regime throughout the previous period. By its own admission, it does not want to change the regime in Syria, but wants it more loyal.

The Middle East may be the only region in the world where the United States has direct military, political and economic rule, from the Arabian Gulf, to India and Pakistan to Egypt, Jordan and Iraq.

But what does this have to do with Lebanon?
Since the US administration began to be weakened by internal opposition to its Middle East policy, and by the intensification of resistance in the Middle East and the organic connection between the struggle for democracy and the struggle against imperialism and the collapse of the "democratic" amulets the administration wanted to build, the United States had to find a trump card To ease the pressure on it internally and in the region, was the choice of Lebanon. Wanted to benefit from the resentment of the majority of the Lebanese to the Syrian hegemony, became the slogan in Lebanon that the crisis of democracy in Lebanon is only the presence of Syrian hegemony. This stupidly ignores the weight of the sectarian system in disrupting the democratic system and its total surrender that sectarianism is the main driver of the conflict in the region.

So that its interest in Lebanon has increased since last year. Hariri's assassination constituted the appropriate conditions for the collapse of the American intervention in Lebanon, pushing it towards the production of a pro-regime, and the March 14 movement was supported as the democratic revolution in the Middle East.

Niels Lytham in the New York Post says that Si. Which. Which. Gives logistical and financial support to anti-Syrian demonstrations in a secret program similar to the existing program to support movements in Ukraine and Georgia, which also produced this form of "peaceful" objections.

Some in Lebanon, especially those who stayed within the March 14 project, may think that the US democratic project can be joined and disengagement from what is happening around it. We see this in the "Lebanon First" project and try to separate the internal changes from what happens in the region. However, this trend is in direct contradiction to the reality of the geographical and political presence associated with the changes taking place in the region, from resistance and wars, and it is stupid to say that separating Lebanon from what is happening in the region is possible. This can only be achieved if they put everyone in Lebanon in a huge iron prison. The media cut them off, they are prevented from moving, and they may all have been buried in mass graves.

Today, we must work on two lines: the production of a democratic movement and a direct struggle against imperialism and capitalism, since there is no possibility of the former without the second or the second without the first. Their interdependence is organic because those who stop and destroy democratic movements in the region are American support for repressive regimes (dictatorship and neo-democracy).

In the last meeting between Bush and Siniora, Bush said: "Beirut will regain its financial, economic and cultural status if Lebanon is a free, independent and democratic country." The question here remains: What are the American conditions for freedom, independence and democracy? We have seen that these borders end when the popular will departs from the policies dictated by the American administration, as happened with Hamas in Palestine.

Here, we cannot rule out the economic aspect of the issue. American hegemony is directly linked to economic plans that are in line with their protectionist economic objective, which aims to control as many global markets as possible through the policies of the World Bank and the WTO. This is part of the "New American Century" project, which the neo-conservatives view in the United States.

Our struggle against dictatorships must be comprehensive and comprehensive. We must see that there is no real correlation between the American project and democracy in the Middle East. There is a link between dictatorships and the American administration, and our struggle against dictatorship is the same struggle against imperialism in its economic and military form.

War is nothing but a commodity within the capitalist system, which is a sign of a crisis in capitalism that is crystallized in the accumulation of production and the inability to discharge, which calls for arming, launching wars and opening new markets by force.

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Towards a united front to the left

January 2007

Many see the basis of the crisis in Lebanon as the division between the forces of power and the opposition forces, traditionally classified in a simplified way as sectarian division and power struggle. The dilemma here is not the existence of division, but why does such a division lead to a crisis? Political conflict is the main engine of any parliamentary democracy, and the power struggle is almost the most popular. The issue here is not about a division or division of how the country is managed or managed, but rather the crisis of the system itself for its inability to manage the political conflict and its inability to absorb the political, social and economic changes in the country.

The Lebanese regime or, to the accuracy of the label, the sectarian system is only a vicious circle that generates only crises, relying mainly on consensus rather than conflict as its engine. This contradicts the simplest rules of parliamentary democracy, the struggle for power and political conflict. The existing system is not capable, not through successive election laws or through quiet and heated dialogues, to produce a political majority that can lead the country. It is governed by the production of sectarian majorities, relative majorities that require either consensus or crisis.

Every democratic system must be based on objective conditions, not on immediate, unstable realities. Sectarian division and sectarian demographic proportions are changing by time and are rapidly changing. In Lebanon, instead of

ensuring that the political system of society has options on how to manage itself, we see it fall into choices and dynamics that are not commensurate with the social, political and economic realities, so its effectiveness is limited.

Today, we live in the contradiction between the existing sectarian order and the current socio-political reality. We also live a historic opportunity to rid ourselves of this regime forever and to replace it with a genuine democratic system that suits the needs of society and the requirements of conflict for a better life. Reality has changed, and this system has become a major obstacle to the development of society.

What has changed at the social, economic and political level in Lebanon?
Before the last Lebanese civil war, there was a political Maronite. That is, the Maronite community is the monopoly of the country's political leadership. There was also a Maronite protectionist economic system, an economic system designed to protect the Maronite community, and the state was particularly supportive of them.

This pattern has not produced a coincidence, but has its causes and historical and political justification. In the mid-nineteenth century until the beginning of the twentieth century, capitalism in Lebanon and in Mount Lebanon developed specifically in the style of French capitalism. The mission of the Lyon Stock Exchange was mainly to finance the silk industry in Mount Lebanon. The silk industry has led to the development of production patterns in Mount Lebanon and its economic backwardness in other regions such as the North, Bekaa and the South.

The new economy has spread between Mount Lebanon and Beirut. The presence of the Maronites as a major majority in Mount Lebanon and the Sunnis in Beirut made them, especially the Maronites, two races in the central state building project. Central power is not a feudal need but a pillar of the evolution of the capitalist system. The power to centralize capital is the central state.

It was justified in the historical context to be productive political and economic leadership Maronite leadership, and this made the middle class and the bourgeois class with a Maronite majority and comes in second place the year. This may justifiably justify what Mahdi Aamil is saying that Shiites are the majority in the working class.

But the Lebanese war changed that. The last war destroyed the structural foundations of the regime. Militias and armed gangs were established as the main force in the management of society. They destroyed economic, social and political centers, which had a major impact on Lebanese economic and social organization. On the other hand, the economy and its productive sectors suffered a painful blow that forced it to reorganize itself in a different reality after the Lebanese war.

It is no longer true what existed before the war, the working class today includes the majority of the communities. The civil war provided an opportunity for local capital to develop within the same structural and economic conditions, enabling the re-establishment of the working class in a way that became more cross-sectarian.

Today the majority of the Maronites, as the majority of the Sunnis, and the majority of the Shiites belong to the working class. This is true for other communities. Today, the situation is consistent with the classical Marxist definition: the capitalist system produces its own end, that is to say, it produces a working class with a clear majority in society, regardless of its sectarian division, whose interests are in conflict

with the interests of the system itself and the ruling class it represents.

This change necessitates that the historical and economic foundations of the sectarian system are over. Today there is no single historically or economically pioneering group. The fundamental division is a class and political divide. This is not what one of the leftists or Marxists says. It is the same analysis adopted by international organizations for Lebanese reality.

According to Marian Khoury of the World Bank, "class division is the basic division of Lebanese society, but it is distorted by sectarianism" (Hugo Bannisa and Marian El Khoury, "Social Mobility and Religion: Evidence from Lebanon," Social Research Network website, http: // ssrn. com / abstract = 293012).

The report concludes that "Lebanon is characterized by a very small percentage of social mobility, compared with the lowest-ranked societies in the world, such as Latin America. It is also noted that social mobility is higher among the Shiite and Maronite communities, the lowest among Sunni Muslims (excluding Palestinian refugees) The report adds: "This mobility is small at the year and due to the behavior of the middle class and the bourgeois class within this community."

For example, in 2002, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in the area of strategic planning for social protection in Lebanon reported that 39% 13.4 percent of GDP, while 14 percent control 43 percent of GDP. 762 (less than 1%) of account holders in the banking sector control 50.5% of the total estimated $ 16 billion and 47% share 2.3% of the total.

This proves that Lebanon does not need financial resources but needs a fair distribution of wealth and a distribution of productive capabilities. The differences between wealth are much greater than the differences in income, which means that the class struggle in Lebanon is blatantly present.

In a report on poverty in Lebanon, the World Bank says that the purchasing power of the nuclear family in Lebanon at the end of the last decade has fallen by about 30%, meaning that the Lebanese family earns enough money to survive the first three weeks of the month.

Another study says that 80% of the wealthiest people in Lebanon do not work but live on the benefit of their accumulated wealth. They are the masters of the sectarian system, but they evade their social and economic consequences.

What are the roots of the current division?

In light of this, we can see that the division in the Lebanese street goes beyond the dispute between the March 14 Forces and the opposition. The main fuel for this conflict is class, but it is distorted by the sectarian system and the inability of the conflicting parties to place the conflict in its place from the socio-economic reality.

Also, the present division has not yet produced a line-up of sects against others. We see a division within each sect on a political basis or on the basis of belonging to either the opposition or the power. The populist discourse of the opposition attracts the majority of the Maronite and Shiite sects, which is the result of the relatively high proportion of social mobility (as we mentioned earlier), compared to the low mobility of the Sunni community, which seeks more for the discourse of power which is more likely to be. He wants to maintain the status quo.

Social mobility is a fundamental sign of the ability to see the socio-economic reality as well as to move towards reality to a better reality. Opposition supporters are therefore influenced by a discourse that is in line with reality, although the speech is illusory.

The fuel of the current division is the product of a daily class struggle that shifts from a clash of economic classes to a social and economic conflict and social and economic strife against government policies. This is precisely what the opposition forces use against the forces of power. They believe that the popular approach is closer to reality than the political analysis offered by the opposition itself, which it uses to attract its audience and manipulate it in its movements. Perhaps the most striking expression of this is the opinion of opposition protesters, even in a playful way, "electricity is in the sit-in and cut in the suburbs."

But the opposition is reducing the problem as if it were an administrative one, meaning that the current authority does not have the competence to lead the economic reform, more than its criticism of the successive economic policies of the 1990s governments. This is evident in Aoun's speech, but it is clear at Hezbollah. His problem with the current authority is to monopolize the government and not to share it. Then it is an administrative, not a systemic, socio-economic crisis.

The powers of the Authority are still stuck with a discourse that is beyond the current political and socio-economic reality. We see that they are still looking at the Syrian-Iranian conspiracies, while the main concern in the street is to collect a living and improve the economic reality of the people. This led to the destruction of the power of power popularity, after losing the battle against Lahoud, and lost their second battle in the abolition of political sectarianism under the pressure of Patriarch Sfeir, and the battle of elections when they entered into alliances with circumstantial allies like Hezbollah.

The March 14 Forces, unable to cope with the daily developments of the street and society, became forces beyond reality, allowing the opposition to enter the arena and become the first path of conflict and division.

What is the horizon of the opposition coalition and is it a real change movement?
We have to start with the Free Patriotic Movement and Hezbollah, and perhaps it is the basis for the emergence of the current opposition. This understanding is more responsive to current reality, not a voluntary political choice that imposes itself. It is an alliance between two relatively new parties on the Lebanese scene, both in the organizational and political aspects, both mass parties with a huge base and with their constituents, compared to the March 14 Forces, which are parties to a nuclear party that follow the direct dependence of the leader. Most often late from the street. While the Free Patriotic Movement and Hezbollah, although they have some "leadership", but do not rely on leadership as a basis for the political line.

So, we see two types of political organizations. The material conditions of the political conflict in Lebanon produced two forms of political organization, one old or traditional, the other more renewed. This does not mean that the style of Hezbollah and the FPM is progressive, but more progressive than the dominant political forces.

The opposition clashes with the fact that the SPLM it produces is faster, on the

ground, than the political discourse it is committed to. We see this clearly, especially in the period between the first days of the open sit-in in the center of the country and the general strike, where most of the voices of the opposition itself called on its leaders to move quickly to overthrow the government and get rid of the enemy of the people, "Fouad Siniora," while the opposition leadership calls for the formation of a national unity government Without specifying any alternative economic plan. On the contrary, they agree to the government's economic policies. Even in this period, we hear a lot about the reluctance of the cadres of the opposition leaders of the lack of speed and seriousness in the confrontation with the forces of power.

What next after the general strike?

The general strike came, and the perception of the leaders of the opposition was to pressure the position of Siniora in Paris 3 and not to drop the conference. But they were surprised by the force of the strike and its extensive spread on Lebanese territory. They were also surprised by the escalation in which the street was heading in terms of direct conflict.

This proves again that the street is more advanced in the conflict than its leaders, and this threatens the opposition leadership in the street to escape their control. So we see the intensity of the organization to control the SPLM. But the movement has proved more and more that it is the most powerful of the leaders themselves. What began as a general blow to the congestion almost turned into a popular uprising that may produce self-regulatory ability that is difficult for the opposition to control.

Here is the contradiction that we have talked about in the previous issues of the publication about the Progressive Alliance, itself, between Hezbollah and the Free Patriotic Movement and the political leadership of this alliance, which contrasts with the reality produced by such an alliance or convergence.

Who is responsible for the recent confrontations?

Both the opposition and the Authority have demonstrated their inability to manage the current political conflict, thus emptying the arena of their political content and turning more and more to sectarian strife.

The survival of the political conflict in its political framework depends on the existence of the popular center, that is, there is an audience affected by a political speech, not because of its commitment to organize my party, but because it raises questions that the political parties to answer. When the battle is confined to factional charges beyond the political conflict, the conflict between the parties itself is limited and the center is marginalized, that is, the mass majority capable of making any change and bringing a party to the leadership without the other parties.

At this stage there is a marked intervention by the religious institutions that enter it, imposing "public morals" and threats of isolation within the political conflict, putting the sectarian mold in the middle of the arena and further pushing the marginalization of the political conflict into a class struggle or extinguishing it. Within the historical context.

Who bears responsibility for the recent clashes? And here I am not talking about

tactical responsibilities in who carried arms and who did not carry them, but what causes us to this situation. Here the opposition has a responsibility not to seize the opportunities for change.

The first opportunity was lost at the beginning of the open sit-in and did not escalate to bring down the government. The second missed opportunity was not to continue the general strike in order to overthrow the government and bring down Paris 3. The delay here means a direct political conflict towards class fighting. Hezbollah's own organizational structure in its regions has led its followers and opponents to comply in the same way to fight it. Hence, we see the development of the pattern of sectarian purity within the regions.

However, the Authority bears the greatest responsibility for its failure to comply with the public opinion calling for its overthrow. That is, under the pressure of a popular majority it fell into disobedience to direct democracy. How can it maintain public security or its legitimacy in imposing its authority? It tends to impose its authority as a minority in Lebanese society. The issue here is not in numbers, but in the voice of the highest. It was clear that the opponents' pulse and voice were louder than those of loyalists.

Also, there is the militia style followed by the power parties, which extends back to the organizational form of the civil war. To convince the Authority that it is in the midst of a civil war has encouraged its leaders to comply with forms of gang and militia organization to fight political opponents. This is the most prominent of Geagea, Hariri and Jumblatt.

Historical responsibility is borne by the ruling class and its sectarian system and its pillars of religious institutions that undermine the conflict, from its political status to its class and regional status. We see the Grand Mufti of the Republic threatening everyone who approaches Beirut and declares it to be a Sunni region. On the other hand, the Patriarch demands that "everyone loves each other" and that they preserve the "unity of the Christians". As if the tendency to avoid the crisis is to preserve the sectarian purity of each sect.

The direct responsibility is borne by the left. With such a split in the ruling class, the left could not afford to get the support of a popular change movement that represented the interests of the underprivileged and the working class in particular. Especially as the discourse on the street is heading towards a more "class" conflict point, that is, determined by living demands.

The problem goes beyond what he did, or has not done, the left in recent days. The street has lost its confidence in the forces of the left for its constant reluctance to take the steps of confrontation in the historical path, and its tendency towards tactical steps that are meant to rid themselves of sectarian reality rather than to confront this reality. Perhaps the most striking sign of this is the failure of the Communist Party to take any escalating steps to inflame class struggle. That is, class struggle is the loudest. If not directly concocted, but it would express a general displeasure and resentment from an economic reality that increases the poor and the rich.

Instead of starting the day-to-day escalation from March 14 until the open sit-in of the opposition and then the general strike pushing the conflict into class struggle, the party resorted more to taking the ethical stance of the sectarian and economic

systems. He saw no historical opportunity for the people to produce a better future that would begin to confront the existing regime. Structural and socio-economic.

The Communist Party may say that it has faced this, but the issue is not confrontation for confrontation. It is not a matter of confronting the reality in its entirety in principle. Historical materialism and "Marxist concepts" require us to face reality from its place in the general historical path.

This calls for abandoning the idea of Stalinism and the Leninist style of organization and movement. The production of a movement that responds to reality with its direct political questions and strategic historical questions: what we must do today and what we must build to face tomorrow. Our criticism of the Communist Party is not for the sake of gossip, but for our belief that it is the most prominent leftist force that can make a change in the current political arena and establish a strategic change movement that is starting to influence today.

What do we have to do today?
On the left to organize itself in the framework of a unified front, tolerates the internal intellectual conflict and faces in the general political conflict, but is moving towards transforming the current conflict from the form of the class and the emptiness of political content to the production of class struggle that draws the opposition from the leadership to go to a direct conflict with the existing system.

This does not mean that we have to be in direct conflict against the opposition leaders. We will meet with them, but with their public in a battle to topple the government, and here we must overcome the opposition's speech towards direct attack on the regime and the elimination of its sectarian structure and its starvation economic path. It protects the rights of people and the rights of workers. We must strive to build a movement that sees it in the interest of society to produce a democratic organizational framework commensurate with its needs, not with ethical needs imposed by religious and sectarian institutions.

On the left today to build itself quickly and produce a network of communication between the public and organizational and start confrontation, not procrastination, because confrontation is the building of people's confidence in it, not media maneuvers to justify its position.

The structural division in society today is a class split with a distinction that is distorted by sectarianism and class conflicts. The left has the most prominent role in defining this conflict and pushing it to be the main conflict in the country.

The limits of the opposition are the state, the left's borders are in the interest of the people and a better future, although this means getting rid of the current state and producing a better organizational framework. It is the fear of sectarian war that leads to war, not the confrontation of the sectarian system that establishes sectarian war.

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Who controls the past controls the future

April 11, 2007

The struggle to control national or "collective" memory is at the heart of post-conflict accounting policies or the fall of power. Victims and human rights activists often feel deeply embarrassed by the efforts of the new or old government, even if they are a democratic government, to create an "official account," a state-created account of the past. Transitional justice strategies - such as the establishment of a truth commission - are sometimes seen as a necessary step towards remembering, but also as an insufficient step at the same time. The reason for this is that keeping the memory alive is very difficult. Indeed, the official truth commissions become part of a rigid, formal account of the past. The challenge that arises from this perspective is "never forget." - The International Center for Transitional Justice

Societal memory, the fabric of events, dates and changes, the fabric of ideas, words, languages and traditions, vivid visualization of history and past. Our consciousness, our environment, our thoughts and our ways of life, our stability and our concern is an extension, a vital accumulation and a natural evolution of our existence and past. Present is not the product of the present itself, it is directly a proof of our past consciousness.

Community memory is our living identity, it is who knows about us, who determine our existence, our life and our being. The memory that is lacking or absent leads to a path of remembering. Memory is a double-edged sword, and whoever wants to destroy it must pay attention to his neck.

The destruction of memory was and remains a tool and a bloody weapon used by the Authority to control, used to break with the past, so that its rule becomes a reality. It is amazing how many examples we can find in history about the ruling authority preventing people from understanding their past. One of these examples was the emergence of the Chinese Empire in 221 BC. The emperor then decided that all the books that speak of the previous period and the old customs and traditions should be burned: "Some of the people of the word do not put themselves in the mold of the present, but study the past to criticize the present, disrupt and irritate people. People who use the past to criticize the present must be killed and their relatives. "

This parable does not depart far from what is happening today from the systematic destruction, albeit indirectly, of our collective memory. Every time the ruling authority commits a crime or terror, it makes a decision that relieves it from the past and works to erase and distort the memory of the past. After the civil war Taif came to forgive the past, considering it historical absurdity, reduced by 15 years by a charter written by the warlords themselves.

After Al-Ta'if, Hariri's death and the departure of the Syrian army, came 15 years from our history and our past. To absolve the ruling class of the past period, they have renounced collusion, pillage, robbery and starvation, pardoned themselves and decided to build the present state, cut off from history, found today with divine power or will. They impose a reality is their reality, the truth is their truth, fairness is at the expense of the fairness of people. They determine the charge to leave it and replace it

with a distant national memory that has nothing before it. Let's go back to zero, what before it does not exist because it does not happen, and consciousness starts from now and here.

Every time the Lebanese ruling class tries to free itself from the sins and burdens of the past and history, it comes to say history begins here and before it did not happen. Every time, the ruler comes to say that independence is starting today.

Memory in its conscious and complete existence is in itself an accounting of the past, itself a criterion for building the present and there is no possibility of fairness without accounting for the past. From here we see that there is no way forward without accounting for the mistakes and crimes of the past. Whoever kills his people in time of war is not entrusted with building the peace. Whoever is kidnapped and tortured based on sectarian division and racism can not and should not be the one entrusted with building civil peace.

The process of destroying the collective memory of the people is a clear repression, the first step to building a totalitarian system. As George Orwell puts it in his 1984 book, which describes totalitarian power, "who controls the present, controls the past, controls the past, . Our struggle for memory is not a class struggle or an accusation. Is the triumph of life on the culture of fear and destruction, there is no place for freedom without the right to memory.

The recent civil war, which many political figures have seen from the past, is a continuous reality in various forms; from the continued secrecy of the kidnapped and the missing, the continuing suffering of the victims of the war, the displaced and the loss of their families and relatives. War will end only by knowing all the facts and facts that shape our present.

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Class Struggle is the Basis of Change

November 21, 2007

Whenever we talk about change, someone comes and begins to defend the reality of the situation, beginning with explanation, presentation and analysis. "The reality and society in which we live can not be reformed or changed." Then he goes an extra mile to throw his anger and discontent at people, because they are interested in "minor" matters and do not care about their interests or the interests of "the country."

The exhaustion of the subject that we have to hear this speech from many leftists and communists, who revolve daily, but at the same time kneel before reality and justify submission and defeat. As the representative of one of the veteran leftist parties at an international conference said, "People are full of bread and salt and forget the basic issues." But I always thought that the issue is bread and salt?! Is not this the demand of the workers and peoples of the world demanding a better life and a better world?

The two sides of the same coin

It is strange that the left in these times is known as either an attachment to power or

as an adjunct to the system. The difference between adjoining is a logistic difference, but the goal is the same. For example, both the Democratic Left and the Communist Party are clearly seeking a process of change through the same system, one joining the forces of power and the other still waiting to enter power in some way.

What is clear is that the Lebanese left has lost hope from the street and the working class, and has decided to achieve social justice and democracy through the system itself, that is, through its direct and theoretical alliance with the ruling class.

In their view of the process of change, both the Communist Party and the Democratic Left are two sides of the same situation. Both see change as the imposition of a new and better reality through power. They both openly or implicitly see that the street has lost the ability to change or is unable to realize its interests, so they have to play this role on its behalf. For both parties, the elections are the direct means for achieving the legitimate of change. The revolution turned in its contents and form into a law-abiding process that adheres to the regime and its structure. If one wanted to prove this approach, one had only to read or hear the speeches and statements from the two organizations.

The democratic left denounces the "democratic" change, that is, through parliament, and sees daily the importance of building the state and restoring its right to monopolize violence and order. The Communist Party continues to call for a "democratic national" rule, a system of national bourgeoisie and a democratic system at the same time, that is, parliamentary, but requires that the bourgeoisie to be non-sectarian.

Some may argue that the working class tried in 1975 and failed, so it is imperative to work on a "bailout" for the people rather than change. But the experience of the national movement crystallized itself at the time under the leadership of the national bourgeoisie, not the working class, because the left went to escalate Arab national discourse at the expense of class solidarity between the Lebanese, Palestinian, Arab and international working class. Therefore, we can not say that change through the working class failed, as long as the left handed its leadership to the national bourgeoisie.

Attitude of the working class

"Even if we can not achieve a secular state, there are goals we can pursue, we can achieve a non-sectarian parliament, we can work to establish standards to ensure the independence of the judiciary, we can work on decentralization," says Ziad Majed, former deputy secretary of the Democratic Left Movement.

On the other hand, the Communist Party said in a statement on 26 January 2007: "Our party calls on all Lebanese youth, all its workers, cadres, intellectuals and artists to engage in activities that press the government to accelerate its departure. The opposition must correct its program in two complementary directions: In the region and Lebanon, and to formulate a program for democratic reform that will save the Lebanese people from crises and threats. "

Both readers view the process of change as an administrative path within the system itself. The former sees from his place of residence in the state the possibility of establishing a gradual process of democratic reform, starting with as little as

possible. The other contends that the opposition must take over the government after the overthrow of the current government and then implement a "democratic and reform project".

Neither sees in their position any role of the working class in presenting itself as a movement that imposes its demands on political reality, but sees it as a proponent of a bourgeois party over another, the party whose interests "intersect" with them. This is clearly reflected in their political discourse. The Communist Party highlights the concept of "saving the people," and in the speech of the democratic left, the appeasement of the ruling regime emerges.

The first problem here is that the two speeches leave the working class and see themselves as representatives, and hinder the building of a movement of the working class. The reason for this is their view of the Lebanese capitalist system as a "distorted" capitalism that must be "corrected". Here comes their justification for the absence of a labor movement in Lebanon, the biggest barrier to crystallize class struggle is the sectarian system. The Lebanese left to help and raise awareness of the national bourgeoisie about the importance of abolishing the sectarian system so that the (left) can then develop the class struggle which, as we know, aims to destroy the bourgeoisie!

This approach determines the roles of the wrong players. The bourgeoisie has goals that contradict its immediate interests, exploitation of workers for profit. Therefore, it is in their interest to control the class struggle and the working class not to work on their liberation.

The limits of modernity

Here lies the basis of the error in the leftist approach, believing that modernity and the concept of a modern state necessitate the abolition of sectarian and discriminatory systems, and they see it as a prerequisite for awakening the class struggle. When building a modern state only, class struggle becomes feasible because the modern state requires that everyone be seen as citizens without sectarian discrimination.

In the words of Ziad Majid about Samir Kassir (one of the intellectuals of the democratic left), Majid says: "He was concerned with the issue of the Renaissance in the Arab world of two concepts: the first recovers Abdul Rahman al-Kawakibi and Ahmad Fares al-Shadiq in their rejection of tyranny in their quest to reconcile our societies with modernity, And the establishment of the French Revolution of the concepts of freedom and citizenship, diversity, secularization and enlightenment.

On the one hand, the Communist Party, Karim Marwa says: "In contrast to what is seen as the capital of globalized capitalism, it is the objective need to ensure social order, but on the condition that it is fully transformed into a modern democratic state, a state of institutions and laws, (Karim Marwa, on the eve of the fall of the empire, questions about our position in the world of tomorrow, Dar Al-Farabi, Beirut, Lebanon, First Edition, 2003, p. 44) .

But the sectarian regimes known as Lebanon, Ireland, Palestine and Iraq were not created in the pre-modern era, but were the result of the extension of the modernist trend in the world, in its colonial and imperial form.

In Lebanon, the 1860 sectarian war was the first result of the policies of imposing

modernity on Mount Lebanon. Sectarianism was spontaneous resistance to the modernist concepts of modernity (in the integration of various societal identities within national fusion and loyalty to the state). "In other words, sectarianism is a modernist knowledge, which means that it was produced in the context of European domination and Ottoman reforms, because theologians at the colonial, European, To themselves as modernists using the past to prove the present and future developments "(published in Arabic on" House of Arts ").

The role of imperialism

In Ireland, the example is clear, sectarianism is the result of direct policies of British imperialist control over Ireland, and the systematic division of Catholics and Protestants. The British Empire imposed on Northern Ireland to join the British Protestant state. The sectarian strife arose as a direct response to the attempt to impose a unified identity on a society with multiple societal identities. "The imposition of modernity and capitalism on society, founded the sectarian state of Ireland". (Eamonn McCann in his seminar on the sectarian system in Ireland, the center of civil society, Beirut, 1/8/2007).

Palestine is a living and daily example. Later British and American policies were based on the imposition of the "modern Israeli state" on the Palestinian reality, which produced the Israeli racist regime. The effects of this "modernization" are still a daily reality of millions of Palestinians.

In Iraq, the first player in the creation of the modern Iraqi state was the Soviet Union. The modern one-party state, followed by the Americans, was the modern sectarian state. The war that came under the banner of "democracy, modernity and freedom" is the day that builds the sectarian system, the day that separates the Kurds, Sunnis and Shiites.

Achieving socialism

In today's left-wing quest for the production of the state of "modernity", it seems as if the situation should remain as it is. Today we live in an age of modernity, and we do not lag behind it. The moral pronouncements of the description of the modern state are echoed by the utopian socialists of the sixteenth century, such as Thomas Moor, "that socialism is moral and that socialist foundations can be applied without alienating or exploiting anyone" (http://www.marxists.org). /subject/utopian/ index.htm), the utopian socialism of his failure in the French Revolution proved to be true socialism.

It is impossible to produce an organization of society that represents the interests of the working class without the working class being the ones who adopt it and impose it through its direct struggle against the bourgeoisie. This has been proven over and over in history. In the Soviet Union, for example, if the regime were truly the working class, why did not the workers defend it after the fall of the Berlin Wall? It is clear that it was a capitalist system as it is now. The difference is between state capitalism and market capitalism. The relations of exploitation existed during Stalinist rule, and they are today in the era of market capitalism in Russia.

The achievement of equality and the abolition of racial and sectarian

discrimination cannot be achieved through the bourgeois class, because this distinction is in the direct interest of the bourgeoisie. “Inequality, exploitation and repression remain as long as there is a minority that controls wealth, and without the common ownership of means of production, there will be a gap between the poor and the rich, and because of competition for work, housing and education, there will remain inequality in the working class itself, fertile conditions the rise of racism and sectarian and sexual discrimination “(Tony Cliff, Marxism in the New Millennium).

“The liberation of the working class is the work of the working class itself” (Karl Marx). It has been shown that any attempt to assign or “liberate” the working class through the bourgeois class or the imposition of the modern state will lead to an extension of modernity itself, the working class will continue to be oppressed and exploited, thus delaying the process of crystallizing the class struggle.

Class struggle

Any process of change must start by fueling the class struggle to make it sound louder than the voices of discrimination within the working class. This process also begins with the recognition that we are within a capitalist system divided by class. Therefore, the class struggle exists, and sectarianism, racism and sexual discrimination are at the heart of the capitalist system and among the characteristics of the modern state, and not a mistake in its formation that can be corrected.

You cannot get rid of the pain without getting rid of the disease, and try to reform modernity or reconciliation with them is what will keep the situation as it is. Reform is a means of weakening the regime and imposing laws that are not in line with its interests. At any subsequent opportunity, the regime will abolish these reforms, as is happening today in industrialized countries. Reform is not done by the bourgeoisie they have pity for the working class, but when forced by the working class.

Leftists, socialists, and Communists see reform as a means of fueling class struggle and building the working class movement against capitalism and the bourgeois state in their quest to build a socialist system. Reform is not a bridge to socialism, and it is not a precondition for class struggle, but a consequence.

Class struggle is the basis of any change process, but imposing it above class conflicts will lead to the abolition of discrimination, not through appeasement of the national bourgeoisie or the pursuit of the building of a modern state.

Today we live in the attempt of the bourgeoisie to silence the class struggle, either through innovative wars such as Nahr al-Bared and the spread of racism within the Lebanese and Palestinian working class, as published in the Metn elections when Amin Gemayel launched his racist attack against the Armenians or during the May 10, Workers protesting that they are coming from the countryside of Damascus because they are demanding the abolition of the draft contract, or by stopping the opposition leadership of the demonstrations and the general strike for fear of receiving two million to take over. All these attempts were to divide the working class and prevent it from crystallizing a movement representing its interests.

The working class rises

The bourgeoisie in Lebanon, as in all the Arab region and the neighborhood, cannot

and will not be the pioneers of change, and it is unable to suppress the class struggle for a long time. "The regimes of the Middle East must create 80 million jobs in the next 15 years ... , Since 1995 so far, the number of unemployed 34 million people, to be the number of unemployed at the beginning of 2006 is estimated at 192 million people. (Statement by the Director-General of the International Labor Organization in his address at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, 25 January 2006).

The voice of the class struggle is rising day after day in all the countries of the region, and it is seriously present. And the media and the politicians are absent, we hear it in the voices of local workers and immigrants in the Arabian Peninsula, which demands the increase of salaries and other matters (the class struggle is a reality that is crystallized by the increasing labor movement, Heba Abani No. 8), labor strikes in Egypt and protests in Iran ...

"Over six months, the number of workers who have been unemployed has raised demands and managed to implement more than 200,000 workers, a huge figure in a country governed by the Emergency Law for more than a quarter of a century. The labor law restricts the right to strike, (Mustafa al-Bassiouni, Workers' Strikes in Egypt: A New Phase of the Labor Movement, No. 9).

All this indicates the rise of the class struggle in the general political arena in the region, especially in the case of rising prices, increasing rates of poverty and unemployment in the world, and the rates of exploitation and the obvious lack of purchasing power. The intensity of the class struggle will accelerate, and its political form will be either in riots, as happened in France in 2006 and in Lebanon in 2004 in the neighborhood of Salm and 2006 in Tabaris. Or in an orderly manner depends on the existence of labor and trade union movement. It is the absence of movement that causes riots to emerge as the only outlet for the expression of class struggle.

Today we live in Lebanon, a state of silence before the storm, and on the left to build itself to keep pace with the battles of the coming. It must keep the pulse of the class struggle vigilant, illuminate the current class contradictions, and win the trust of the working class again. It must cope with the organized and unregulated trade union struggle in order to be able to meet it. It should be concentrated within the movement of the working class and not as its guardian. It must provide the means that the working class needs to express its interests, from publications, sit-ins and statements. This role is not a technical role, it is a direct involvement in class struggle, a process of building the movement from within the working class and not from outside.

Today, the picture may seem bleak, but at precisely these times we have to build and organize wherever we are, in the workplace, in universities, in trade unions. We must establish a political and trade union discourse for the coming period through the daily details of the class struggle (high prices, racial discrimination, police state ...), common trade union issues (raising the minimum wage, employment contract, privatization ...) General about system change.

This process is the way to destroy the sectarian system, racist laws and laws that call for sexual discrimination. The issue here is to break down the sectarian order and abolish it, not to appease it or to wait for its "decay." The regime is not going to go down into the abyss, we have to push it towards it.

Towards a revolutionary labor movement in Lebanon

February 18, 2008

"We are not going to hide behind the loaf, these things belong to the unions, the opposition has the courage to take action under political headlines, the participation is right and we will face the political right, and we have full confidence in our negotiators." (Secretary General of Hezbollah, Hassan Nasrallah in a speech on the tenth day of Ashura on 19/1/2008)

They will not "hide behind the loaf". There are more important things to do. The loaf is secondary to ministerial portfolios and to the formation of the next government, the loaf is secondary to the presidential vacuum.

Perhaps those who can answer these words to Mr. Hassan Nasrallah, one of the bourgeois members of the Egyptian People's Assembly in 1942: "We have stood on this podium before and warned the government of the danger of hunger, and it has been ratified by those who said that hunger is infidel who knows no compromise and no refinement. History tells us that hunger was the cause of many revolutions, though history tells us that the revolutionary people in one of Europe's largest provinces cried out one day from the core, "We want bread." We heard similar cries in the same tone before the end of Eid al-Adha in the streets of Cairo, Issued from the mouths of the hungry as they attack bread carts in order to get Food "(Egyptian Gazette January 6, 1942).

As the Egyptian spokesman said, hunger is infidel and will not distinguish between a presidential chair or a ministerial portfolio and will not distinguish between a political right or a right to participate. The Lebanese opposition has long sought to represent the popular majority in the face of the majority of imaginary loyalists. Today it falls in front of the interests and concerns of the people, hiding behind the vacuum (including the expression of symbolic significance) and the political crisis. Soak up the loaf, paint the hunger in bright colors, soften it and pose it as a casual question, sacrifice it to the "most important" questions, questions about the homeland and partnership with the "other"!

They are more important than they are to look at the living things of the majority of the people. They are more than the screams of a hungry child. They are more than looking in the eyes of a woman who has lost all her family in order to liberate the country. You can get what feeds it; the master of the Prophet's dynasty, and the help sent by God to us, Savior, de Gaulle Lebanon! Nabih Berri is the contractor, the teacher and the poet.

They want to partner with those who carry out American policy in Lebanon, with those who have eaten with Condoleezza Rice while American and Israeli planes have been bombing and killing thousands. They want to partner with His Highness the Great Satan.

Without going into a detailed discussion, if the opposition says that pro-government forces are puppets of the United States, why would they want to partner with them? Why does the resistor want to put his hand in the hand of the client? The reason is simple, because they do not want to face the people when they get angry

on their own. They see that the ruling class must unite in the face of popular anger, and not be divided. The coming days may be difficult for both sides. They are losing control of the street, and the events of the southern suburbs to protest the cutting off of electricity are only the first signs of what leads to it. The situation in Lebanon; loyalty to the individual is characterized by a degree of acute stupidity resulting from a heavy brain that has the capacity to absorb, or is betting on military imperial support if the situation worsens.

In any case they all want national unity and want a strong state and a strong security and want to participate! I hear these slogans, and the thunder clouds rise over my head. If they are the ruling ruling class, why do not they share with us their billions, riches and cars? Why separate a living from national coexistence and principles of participation? Why is participation in politics limited only, and why does the concept disappear when it comes to living? Why do they separate the street in opposition and loyalty, and do not separate it in its division between rich and poor, between the exploited and the exploited?

Are not we entitled to live? Or that this country built them only? Are we entitled to a share of the offered shares? When Mr. Hassan addressed these words to the masses, what did you see, was he hungry?

They say that the vacuum and the political crisis are the reason for the deteriorating social economic reality, but we do not see any of them lost his job or did not have enough money to complete the month or had to beg; rather, they see them staying at the Phenicia Hotel. $ 320, equivalent to 160% of the minimum wage, and per week, the cost of accommodation per person is equivalent to one worker in one year. One-third of the Lebanese people earn less than $ 200 a month. Twenty deputies, who live in Venice, pay the equivalent of 56 families a month of money to live. This is if we assume they did not rent the royal suite.

Do these funds come from the state treasury or from their own funds?

The reality of the crisis today is not in the political and constitutional void, but in the few people who control the lives of millions. There is a lack of capitalism that deprives us of our right to a decent life. “The difference is clear,” and day after day the cries of pain will turn into painful blows, and we will only have stones left in our hands. Will we throw it at each other or on them, who robbed, looted and killed, who threatens our lives and our strength?

The question is simple, but the decision begins today. If we are Christians, Muslims or any sect, there is a certain fact that we all suffer. We are all vengeful on a reality that transcends the limits of tolerance and patience. Today, only the bourgeois leaders differentiate us. No argument to have to be sparse. Our reality is one and the region is different, sect, color or nationality. The main difference in the country is between us and them, they are the owners of palaces and luxury cars and money and we are the owners of pockets empty.

The “void” can be filled with our struggle for a better life, which can be filled with demonstrations, moves and strikes and the struggle against poverty and injustice. It can be perpetuated forever by the triumph of the working class over the system and its exploitation for the benefit of the people and workers rather than at the service of capitalists and bourgeois.

Many may say that this will not work, and justify that the working class is not capable of confrontation and not united, and is not aware of its ability to change. But the working class achieves and builds its own capacity and awareness for itself through confrontation. The emancipation of the working class is the product of the working class itself.

In addition, the projects that worked on the production of the National bourgeoisie and the working class all ended up beating, destroying and dividing the working class. Is not it time to receive the working class, which today comprises about 70% of the people while the bourgeois class comprises only 5% of the Lebanese? In comparison with the 1970s, the working class comprised 63% of the people and the bourgeois class, comprising about 8% of the Lebanese; we see clearly that class dissonance is increasing and that national capital is being receded more and more in the hands of a few people. Today, after the July war and rising prices, we must conclude that there will be a decline in the middle class that is slowly dissolving, increasing the class contradiction. Let us not repeat many of the statistics you may find in a number of newspapers, in previous issues and in this issue.

The increasing class distinctions foreshadow revolutionary material conditions, and we can only revolt or triumph over the bourgeois reaction or enter into civil violence or riots. The retreat here is a defeat that will crush us from the back. If we leave this bourgeois class, it will lead us to the abyss.

The situation in Lebanon is not far from what is happening in the region as a whole. We can clearly see the reality of other Arab bourgeoisies and their contradiction with the realities of the peoples of the region. From Egypt and Saudi Arabia to Jordan, Iraq and Iran, to Lebanon, Palestine and Syria, we see the behavior of the national bourgeoisie as similar. All of them seek to build alliances with imperialism or carry out all imperialist orders to appease them. From Mahmoud Abbas, the spoiled child of the White House and the European Union, Hosni Mubarak is the stubborn policeman of US policies and the Jordanian king, who is almost the official spokesman for imperialism. This census may be sufficient, but under the pretext of fairness, everyone must be mentioned; the Saudi king is the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques; he is the servant of the American killing machine; the Iraqi authority is built on the remains of innocent people and destroyed houses.

As for the countries of reluctance, what do you mind? Resisting resistance and resisting rights and freedoms and living a decent life? A lion devouring the pockets of the poor and building his glory on the oppression? In Iran, the ruling power there is that the resistance begins by beating and suppressing the labor and student demonstrations.

As we know well, all of them are owners of money and property, no one is strange about the expenses of the Saudi royal family. The family's wealth is estimated at about $ 1 trillion, not more than 7,000, while 30% of Saudis are unemployed. In Egypt, however, there is no embarrassment; more than 43% of Egyptians are below the poverty line, while Mubarak has palaces. The situation is repeated throughout the region. But popular uprisings have begun, in Egypt, the Gulf, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. Day after day, labor movements and strikes are increasing in protest against the bitter reality. But this uprising needs support and to build itself as a

change movement in the region. Here lies the role of the revolutionary left in fueling this revolutionary movement to impose itself on the local and regional political scene. This movement will not come running to the left, but the revolutionary left must obtain the confidence of the working class through conflict and confrontation.

The Communist parties in the region have been and are still adhering to their protection and coverage of the bourgeois class. For example, a few days ago, one of the Communists spoke about the socioeconomic situation: "We have to wait until we have a strong state, . On the basis of this approach, Secretary-General of the Lebanese Communist Party, Khaled Haddadah, summarizes the current crisis on November 26, 2007: "Our party has for more than a year and a half already been the person of the current crisis in the country. The legitimacy of its concern by the half of the Lebanese, a government that is questionable by the other half, and a disbanded parliamentary council and challenging its representation by law, practice and distribution, and at the time proposed a rescue initiative that presents a simultaneous solution to the three crises based on forming a national salvation government. And directed. "

In the face of division within the national bourgeois class (between opposition and loyalty), the Lebanese Communist Party views the solution to unify the national bourgeoisie. I do not think it requires a major analysis to know which bank of the class struggle puts the party itself.

But let's not hurt the party very much. It has already gone through the socio-economic situation and put forward a solution: "The establishment of the Economic and Social Council, after taking into consideration its successive role by successive governments to facilitate the passage of its destructive economic policies and, in particular, Linked to Neoliberalism and the implementation of the policies of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which left Lebanon under the debt of nearly $ 50 billion lying on the shoulders of the Lebanese people, which led to the destruction of purchasing power of the popular groups and stopped the development of wages despite the rising cost of madness, To destroy the future of the youth of Lebanon by shutting down employment opportunities and forcing them either to emigrate or to become mercenaries in this or that leader "(Secretary-General of the Lebanese Communist Party Khaled Haddada on 26 November 2007).

The solution to the growing class strife in Lebanon is by rethinking the role of the state in governing between workers and employers. The state is not a bourgeois instrument, but rather a neutral party in the process of class struggle. This approach is not new to the party, it is the same Stalinist approach since the 1940s. As long as there is an imperial threat, the first national duty becomes national unity and the class class interests are reduced to second class.

Some may think that the criticism of the Communist Party is premature or that it falls within the framework of distinguishing the essential elements of a change movement in Lebanon. However, the establishment and building of a change movement in Lebanon requires first that there be a conviction of our ability to change. But the Communist Party is falling every time for the test of initiative and escalation in the class struggle. It follows class interests and begins by giving advice to the bourgeois class on how to manage the country and bury the class contradictions.

But what we have reached today in our living conditions under such rulers

does not allow us to compromise with the ruling bourgeois class or to beg for it. The Authority's response to the demand for an increase in the minimum wage was "impossible" and kept investments away. They are ready to make us work as slaves, only to increase foreign capital, so that we can exploit us to the maximum degree and produce the highest rates of profits.

Who said that the state to serve the people. The state is no more than a tool for the bourgeois class to impose its control over the working class. Today, it has been armed by imperialism with the latest weapons and equipment in order to defend itself and expose this class to taxes and prices that are indifferent to the conditions of the people.

Today the first word is spoken on the street, not in the context of bargaining or humility, but in the context of confrontation and struggle. The January 24 move must be the beginning of a serious and direct labor struggle against government policies and against this bourgeoisie that has been on our shoulders for decades.

If we retreat today, it is possible to use the "political solution" as a tool for oppression and repression, and that the opposition and loyalists agree to silence us all or use us as a tool to settle their accounts. The national bourgeoisie has never and will never lead a liberal project or a popular benefit, but will continue with the same economic and political approach that seeks to weaken and silence us day after day. If the opposition actually supported its own public, it would have been better for Hezbollah to support the protest movements on electricity as well as the Free Patriotic Movement and to raise the issue in the other suburbs of Beirut. But they are afraid to get out of their control and find the street leadership that really represents them instead.

However, we must provide full support and engage in labor movements and work through them to organize a movement that seeks to change and impose itself on the political scene, not Esperance and begging the bourgeoisie. It is wrong to cover up the class divide, but it must be highlighted more and more to turn the political conflict in the interest of people, not their interest.

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After the failure of the national project the working class will lead the liberation movement

May 2008

The interdependence between "what is local" and "what is regional and global" is not, as some preach, a political option that can be taken by a state or a political group. The reality of intervention in our daily lives as individuals and societies determines the great space of our economic, social and political reality. The world today is a set of points intertwined in different forms of relations and interests, affected by itself, affecting the form of relations and interests that bind them together and are also affected by the change in the form of these relations and interests.[9]We see this clearly in the simplest of things, in the price of loaf bread, in gasoline pricing, in the political space and in the impact of funding on social and cultural programs. Affects

the reality of migration and housing, the number of jobs, and the determination of the cost and value of labour. Our reality is the result of interaction between what is local and what is regional and global, and separation is only a denial of reality and does not change anything. Acknowledging the interconnectedness of the realities of our daily lives with the realities of the lives of millions in the region and the world is the starting point for producing a movement that can influence and change the reality we live here.

For example, we cannot view the occupation and ethnic cleansing of Palestine as an internal Palestinian matter, because the occupation and perpetuation of crimes are the result of the protection enjoyed by the Israeli authority from the international community and the Arab regimes, their accomplices and their inhibitions. Nor can we speak of a solution in Iraq as long as the US occupation continues to enjoy the strength and political support of the international community and existing regimes in the region. Nor can we talk about stability in Lebanon, while stability is missing at the regional and global levels. Some may see such an analysis as initiating and encouraging chaos. But has not chaos today become a reality at all levels? The regime that rules our world today is a chaotic system of excellence: a system that encourages fighting, conflict and competition, rather than building complementarity and parity. Peace, poverty and exploitation cannot be talked about if our lives continue to be dominated by relationships that encourage exploitation and war.

If you want to work, you have to compete with thousands of others; if you want to live up, you have to take advantage of many people and workers; if you want life, you must silence oppression and oppression. Existing systems can never build a better future. It destroys, kills, displaces and impoverishes millions of people just to satisfy capital and investments. Was this not the answer to the Authority when asked about raising the minimum wage? "Raising the minimum distance foreign investment," they said, and then began to talk about sovereignty and independence!

The Arab ruling bourgeois power has always been intertwined with imperialism and cannot be separated between its domestic ambitions and the interests of regional and global powers. It is not possible to speak here of a national liberation process through or with the national bourgeoisie. The process of liberation from occupation and imperialism is linked to the struggle against the national bourgeoisie as the striking hand of imperialism. Its function begins as an organ of the local police of imperialism, which is very clear in all the Arab countries. Therefore, the struggle for liberation necessitates conflict for liberation and vice versa.

From this point of view, we cannot look at the workers movements in the region as local cases confined to local policies. Rather, we should view them as the upsurge of the accumulation of the crisis and the accumulation of direct and popular resistance. These resistance situations should take up more of their direct characteristics. The bread crisis today in Egypt will extend to Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and other countries. And the cost and impact on people's ability to live without any controversy is an undeniable global reality. The direct response to these global changes is not to limit the resistance to these effects at the national or local level, but to look at it as a historic opportunity to build a global movement against capitalism and imperialism. This does not mean abandoning the specifics of the local conflict, but rather strengthening

it and linking it to the conflicts taking place in the world as a whole. This is not done through the establishment of national relations with the bourgeoisie, but through the establishment of solidarity and class solidarity that binds the workers in their struggle for liberation and liberation. The bourgeoisie is the owner of the editorial project.

Those who resist actually are not owners of funds and palaces. They are the ordinary people, the workers, the students and the farmers. They are the ones who built the resistance and are still building and fighting. They themselves are suffering and facing policies of high prices and poverty. They are those who walk in demonstrations and those who stand in strikes and who will carry the gun to repel the aggression. The demarcation of the bourgeoisie as a natural command of the movement of its core and the majority of its workers and industrious classes is like giving empty ammunition to those who face the occupation.

The reliance on the European experience in building the state as the best means of liberation and liberalization is a dependence that has nothing to do with our reality. The European experience itself today is unable to answer many of the questions raised Europe, Arab or global. And the defenders of this experience are waging wars and committing atrocities in the world in the name of democracy and nation building.

Capitalism is also a reality in our daily lives, although its forms have changed from place to place. But the core of capitalist relations is the same everywhere, and the re-fabrication of capitalism is nothing more than an attempt to explain water with water, or to reinforce an existing reality. Change begins first by acknowledging reality, and by acknowledging that the bourgeois recipes used to this day were only an extension of the system itself. The bourgeoisie and the middle class are indeed a hindrance to the progress and advancement of peoples. The interests of these two classes entrench the progress of any possible change movement. We have seen what these two classes did on March 14 and 8, as they abandoned the SPLM and its demands and went to a struggle over ministerial quotas and the "cultural sphere".

It is the direct and historical interests of the working class that can build the movement of change, and the leadership of this movement must be the product of the movement itself, that is labour leadership. Democracy becomes popular in everyday practice and not exclusive to the middle class and the bourgeoisie. Some may want to interpret democratic change as a change that adheres to parliament as a basis for change, that is, a process committed to the bourgeois laws to bring about an anti-bourgeois change. However, how this is done and the entire parliamentary democratic system is based on the protection of the interests of the ruling bourgeoisie, as in the Lebanese electoral system, in which the electoral district is divided, divided and narrowed to fit the interests of the ruling parties. And then argue in the concepts and philosophy of democracy!

The working class today is the one who pays for wars, who resist and who defend the living, and who works and produces, why workers are not entitled to represent themselves in their own right. This does not start with the parliamentary elections, but rather by building a revolutionary labour movement that seeks real representation. Some may argue that the working class does not have enough class consciousness to

do so, but the consciousness does not solve the working class with the Holy Spirit or Divine Revelation, but through its process of struggle and conflict and the separation of class consciousness from class struggle is an act and logic lacking the same class consciousness Which he seeks to build in others.

Changes in the economic, political, social and military levels necessitate the emergence of popular resistance situations originating in their surroundings and places of existence. First, we must connect, defend and build between these movements and with them to produce a movement that rises at all levels of confrontation. The struggle is the first step in the construction process, and waiting is an opposite act of construction and a barrier in front of it. All indicators indicate that there is a crisis that arises at the local, regional and global level, and we must be present in every battle, controversy and conflict.

Today, the workers of the Mahalla spinning at the employers are beating and clinging to this system, which is pounding on the stick and cracking the price of the loaf on the other hand. One police force, the same government, Mubarak himself is mixing exploits with truncheons, high prices, prisons and closing the border to the Palestinians trapped in Gaza. In Lebanon, both the government and the opposition are either beaten or covered by beatings against citizens; whether they are Nahr al-Bared people or demonstrators in Mar Mikhael or farmers from Zahle. The government refuses to raise the minimum wage in defence of investments and the right of the market to exploit. They meet with [US] ambassador Flin (Feltman?), and they conspire with those who kill and destroy, such as Condoleezza Rice, or defend a despotic dictatorship such as the Baathist regime.

The enemy is clinging to its ranks under the banner of Arab unity and under the banner of initiatives, plans and summits. How can we face such a conglomeration of batons and rotten regimes that enjoy international protection by the imperialist forces and the "international community" if we are still scattered and uncooperative? The onslaught on the people has not stopped, but is continuing, with tanks and with batons sometimes, with exaggeration, exploitation and expulsion sometimes, and in most cases these coincide at the same time and place. The Mahalla workers began to struggle, and the time has come for the infection to spread to Lebanon and to the countries of the region as a whole. We may note that in the last few years we witnessed the rise of successive movements of the working class, rejecting racism, oppression and exploitation, of the labour movements in 2004 in Lebanon, the labour uprising in Egypt. All these movements are clear evidence that class-consciousness has become a reality and this is the nucleus on which to build on in order to reach a broader revolutionary movement.

In Lebanon, economic policies of power and high prices threaten to cripple people's ability to live, threaten many of them with hunger, and the PA continues to refuse to raise the minimum wage, and refuses to protect basic commodities. It seeks through its policies to increase the exploitation of the right of the people to collect more profits for the owners of companies and funds and lands, which they are the ruling authority.

Hunger is an infidel, it does not abide by public morals and private property, and the cry that has begun to escalate must be the only and unequivocal indicator that

confrontation must begin. The First of May should not pass as a memory or a holiday, but must be on the street. Something from the houses, or in front of the television. The First of May must turn into an uprising against exploitation, destitution, hunger and poverty. We must tip the scales of conflict from the struggle over the ministerial seats to a struggle for a better life.

The First and Fourth of May (the day of labour solidarity with the workers of the Mahalla in Egypt) must be points of solidarity between the workers of Lebanon and Egypt, and workers of the region and the world. May 1 is a day when we will build the conflict in its local specificity and in its area of solidarity among all workers. But the success of the labour struggle in Egypt is a success for the labour movement in Lebanon, and the rise of the movement in Lebanon is a stronger push for the movement in Egypt. The rule here is not exclusive to the two countries but is pushing for a broader, more inclusive and more influential labour movement at the regional and global levels. The fall of the Mubarak regime will be a severe blow to the Arab bourgeoisie and imperialism. It is a turning point for the resistance in all its forms in the region and the world, and striking and halting the policies of starvation and impoverishment in Lebanon is a victory for the movement in Egypt.

As factory workers, office workers, hotel workers, restaurants, construction workers, teachers and nurses, we have to go down the street, all in the same confrontation against the enemy itself. Waiting here is a retreat, and progress is beginning to confront. The truce must end today, enough to disregard our lives and enough to violate our rights. No to high prices, no to impoverishment and starvation, yes to raising the minimum wage to minimum 960,000 pounds!

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Sectarian Divisions and class struggle in Lebanon

September 2009

The dominant image of Lebanese society is that of denominational confrontation. Most imperialist propagandists present it as “a consequence of the failure of nationalism” while others claim that confessionalism is “the triumph of tradition over modernity.” Yet the reality is very different.

Historical roots of confessionalism

The confessional communitarianism in Lebanon emerged in the context, on one side of the Ottoman reforms in the nineteenth-century Mount Lebanon and, on the other, the development and expansion of European capitalism in the Middle East. The confessionalism cannot be extracted from this historical context because it is the basis of its existence as a system of governance and as a trend of capitalist expansion. The Book of Osama Makdissi The culture of the confessionalism perfectly explains its development in the culture of Lebanon and dates its appearance as follows: ”When the former regime of Mount Lebanon, which was dominated by a hierarchy in which the

secular rank Rather than religious affiliation defined politics, was discredited in the mid-nineteenth century. These changes were a reflection of social transformations, more specifically related to the development of the silk industry, concentrated in the Maronite villages of Mount Lebanon, which began in the eighteenth century.

Feudal structures and production relations were slowly disappearing, while a nascent bourgeoisie, whose wealth came from the silk industry and commerce, gained greater control over the economic resources of Mount Lebanon. Of these types of developments at the level of the ruling classes, it resulted in discredit for the hitherto dominant feudal production system: the early nineteenth century saw several peasant revolutions brutally suppressed by the feudal lords.

However, these revolutionary conditions did not result, purely, from class divisions. Indeed, here, Trotsky's theory of "unequal and combined development of capital" is useful in understanding the reason for the mutation of a class antagonism in conflict between religious communities. The development of capitalism in Mount Lebanon was uneven between the various communities of the region (Maronites and Druze) and, within itself, each of these communities. This heterogeneous development was not the simple product of a local context. The capitalism of Mount Lebanon at this stage of its history was mainly dependent on the colonial economic investment from Europe. The conceptions of the European bourgeois elite led him to conceive the conditions of modernity in Mount Lebanon as an intra-religious dynamic. For her, the conditions of nationalism and modernity existed within a religion or tribe, or, as the European intellectuals for Mount Lebanon described, through the Druze and Maronite "Nations".

Such an understanding of history led the European capitalist investment in Lebanon to focus in the community they considered to be the closest to Europe through its cultural and religious traditions: the Maronites (Christian Catholics recognized by Pope Hormisdas since February 10, 518).

A modern history, not a product of tradition

European capitalist investments were concentrated in the silk industry. Thus, in 1852 the French capital had five of the nine silk factories and the British capital had two. These investments have helped to develop wealth and shape the nature of the nascent local bourgeoisie. Between 1873 and 1902 silk production in Lebanon and Syria increased by more than 350 percent, due entirely to the increase in foreign demand (mainly French). Moreover, the weight of silk products in exports from the port of Beirut doubled by about 25 percent in the mid-century to 50 percent in the years 1890. Production in Lebanon and Syria grew more rapidly from 1873 to 1915 when dependence on France became almost total: 40 percent of silk exports were sent to France in 1873 to reach 99 percent in 1914.Just before the war silk production comprised 73 percent of the added value in agriculture and industry and 36 percent of gross national product in Mount Lebanon. "[1]

Since European investments were concentrated in the Maronite community, it was within the latter that economic developments were important, while the Druze community remained organized in feudal structures.

Thus, the economic power within the Maronite communities was increasingly

concentrated by the nascent Christian bourgeoisie (composed of orthodox and Maronites) while the feudal lords were mainly Druze. Such contradictions in the socio-economic structures of Mount Lebanon resulted in revolts of the Maronite peasantry against the feudal lords in the years 1860. These could have resulted in an alliance between Druze and Maronite peasants if the feudal lords, armed to the teeth, had reacted so quickly, breaking the peasant revolt and preventing any uprising in the Druze peasantry.

The events of those years were the main marker of the new consensus that was forged between the European powers and the Ottoman Empire. It was this consensus that allowed the formation of the denominational system of governance that still dominates Lebanese society. The latter consisted of the establishment of an administrative council whose members were appointed by the leaders and clerics of each of the two denominations (based on the eleventh chapter of the 1861 protocol of Mount Lebanon, amended in 1864 to allow the election Of these officials while preserving denominational distribution). Such a system of governance is still in place in Lebanon with the intro confesduction of seventeen other confessions following the construction of Greater Lebanon in 1945.

Understanding these historical developments allows us to see that confessionalism is not a tribal or religious identity. Thus, because the confessionalism refers to the deployment of religious heritage as the first marker of modern political identity, it is important to distinguish it from religious conflicts that took place in the medieval world and at the beginnings of the time Modern (e.g. between the Huguenots and the Catholics in France) [2]. The confessionalism in Lebanon is a reflection of modernity; it is a contemporary history. It is neither a profound identity nor a tradition; it is a reflection of the contradictions within capitalism and fundamentally, a distorted expression of the class struggle.

The impact of the war of 1975

Such distorted class contradictions are not confined to the nineteenth century Lebanon but are still present at the beginning of the Civil War of 1975 when, for example, 40 percent of the highest government officials were Maronites for 27 percent of Sunnis and only 3.2 percent Shia. This status was not an independent political and administrative feature: It was a reflection of the economic power within Lebanese society. To grasp this is essential to understand, both the civil War and the post-war period, and the nature of the political forces that now run the Lebanese society. Some of them predated the war, while others, which have more influence today, are mainly the products, on the one hand, of the civil War (its effects on the economy and politics) and, on the other hand, inequalities of Wealth among all communities. There is no need to see the civil war in Lebanon as a denominational conflict. As in 1860, it was, on the one hand, the expression of a distorted class antagonism and, on the other hand, the synthesis of the contradictions stemming from a destabilization of the region (resulting from the expansion of international and regional imperialist powers in Middle East).

Before the war, the government and the ruling elite were challenged by a secular nationalist movement: Al Hakarat al-Wataniyah. It was mainly composed of

communist and far-left parties and Arab nationalist parties allied with sections of the bourgeoisie, such as Kamal Jumblatt. These were influenced by the Arab nationalist movement and especially by the Palestinian revolution or the Nasserite movement in Egypt. However, whether in power or allied with the left, the bourgeoisie did not hesitate to use the confessionalism as the main weapon to counter any class policy and protect itself from the threat of the workers ' movement and the movements Leftist policies. Through the civil war, the regional imperialist powers (Syria, Israel) and international (United States, France) have come to the aid of the Lebanese ruling class: this confrontation has become a decisive battle for both the powers Imperialists to stop the movements of resistance (especially Palestinian and Lebanese) than for the local ruling classes to weaken the movement of workers in Lebanon.

This war destroyed the country's economy. It has been replaced by the so-called ' militia economy ', i.e. an economy based on the takeover of resources by militias, the submission of economic objectives to their particular interests and the collection "Protection Taxes" (a system for collecting money from families in each zone controlled by a militia). The militias maintained permanent trade relations between them, since none of them could achieve economic independence in the region under their control. This system could only survive through international economic and military assistance. During the last years of the Civil War (years 1980), it was far from a situation of inter-community violence. In fact, it was rather a militia war against the population. On the one hand, this has greatly reduced the popularity of the militias and, on the other, has led large sections of the population to poverty and migration. The turning point in the policy of the Syrian regime in Lebanon, as well as the invasion by Israel in 1982, led to the emergence of new political forces such as Hezbollah, the Aouniste movement (linked to Michel Aoun), the Amal movement (linked to Parliament's spokesman Nabih Berri) and the Lebanese Forces (movement originally called "Les Phalangists", launched by Bashir Gemayel in 1976). Only the last two were included in the Taif peace agreements which led to the end of the conflict in 1990.

Distorted class struggle

In general, the war has diminished the heterogeneity of wealth and political power between the different faiths in order to achieve a balanced representation in Parliament and in the administrative structures of the Lebanese State. At the same time, it allowed the bourgeoisies of the different faiths to use the state as a means of financing their power: by using the country's economic resources for their own community, they succeeded in creating a relationship of Economic dependence between the workers and the bourgeois leadership of each denomination. But, subjecting the population (especially the working class) to a total economic dependence on its bourgeois denominational leadership is not an easy task: This system has been shaken by the growth of the population and the dynamic of urbanization (the majority of the population migrated to cities, creating slums overcoming Beirut).

Moreover, with the neoliberal turn of the years 1990, large sections of the working class, of different faiths, were brought to converge in the same working places and to live in mixed zones in the suburbs. While normalizing life together,

this has revealed common class interests among workers of different faiths. Thus, it has happened many times that class antagonism takes over the interfaith opposition. Between the years 2000 and 2005 we witnessed a slow fall in the confessionalism replaced by stronger adherence to union struggles. This popular feeling is expressed in common phrases like "the problem is politicians" or "when leaders disagree they use us in their wars and when they agree, they agree to make us war". More recently a popular song describes this sentiment by "leaders have left the country, now one can live in peace".

While it is always very important to take into account the inequality in the distribution of wealth between communities and the respective economic dependencies, it is also necessary to look at the overall image of class antagonisms in Lebanese society in Out of denominational affiliations. Many confessionalism propagandists present the last conflict between Shia and Sunni Muslims of May 2008 as a reflection of community hatreds and political conflict between Hezbollah and the ruling coalition dominated by Saed El-Din Hariri (son of former prime Minister Rafik Hariri, assassinated in 2005, current leader of the current of the future, dominant Sunni political party). However, these people are unable to explain why many Sunnis in the southern town of Saida supported Hezbollah rather than taking sides with Hariri.

To understand this situation we must observe the economic dependencies that exist within the Sunni community. Hariri, as head of the richest capitalist family in Lebanon, has succeeded in creating important relations of economic dependence between the Sunni workers, its businesses and its economic investments. He did this by primarily employing poor Sunnis in his businesses and institutions creating, thus, a confessional dependency relationship for their basic livelihood. Through this system he has managed to nurture popular political support for his own interests. These conditions exist on a large scale in Beirut and northern Lebanon but, much less in Saida: This is what made possible in this city the opposition of sections of the Sunni community to Hariri on 7 May 2008.

If these dependency relationships exist in each of the communities in Lebanon, they do not weigh the same weight. The Shia bourgeoisie is mainly established in the low-employment property and trade sectors of the Shia working class. Shia workers are therefore led to work in areas dominated mainly by the Christian or Sunni bourgeoisie. At the same time, political institutions have managed to establish a social and political dependence on themselves. This is the case of Hezbollah, for example, which built a huge network of social solidarity for the Shia community (both in the southern suburbs of Beirut and in southern Lebanon) during the years 1980 and 1990. While these structures have begun to change in nature in recent years (mainly supplying the middle classes), it remains that this social network and, the effectiveness of the resistance that Hezbollah has managed to build against aggression Israeli in southern Lebanon (mostly Shia), have increased popular support for its policy.

At the same time, the Christian community is becoming increasingly a demographic minority in Lebanon because of an earlier trend (from the years 1860) to urbanization resulting in a drop in births. The oldest and most organized

Christian bourgeoisie needed more workers and began to employ workers from the Shia community especially in Beirut (Tourism and food industry) and in the Bekaa (Agriculture and Power supply).
Although not all Christian industries are mixed, the proportion is much greater than in the Sunni-controlled sectors, while the Shia enterprises are Labour-poor. Partial community economic integration and the development of class antagonisms associated with declining purchasing power for the majority of the population (more than 30 percent of the population lives below the poverty line and 60 percent of Lebanese families have Not enough income to finish the month [3]) brought back the contradictions of class.

Class and confessionalism
Class antagonism between the ruling class and the workers results in concrete struggles within the working class [4].That's why many analysts are confused about Lebanon: They describe this distorted class struggle as a civil conflict based on community hatred when in reality, these are unequal class contradictions which are the main engine Clashes. If the Lebanese society was simply characterized by denominational division then the union fight should not exist since, even in the Lebanese context, it is described as a secular and economic struggle. Moreover, this leads the dominant elite to strongly insist on the need not to link unionism to politics. Indeed, she is afraid that the non-denominational aspect of this fight will spread to the political arena and threaten her control over society. The Lebanese political reality is dominated by an incessant conflict between a direct class struggle (brought forward by trade unions, revolutionary organizations and the Communist Party) and a distorted class struggle characterized by confessionalism (put forward by the ruling class).

Here are several examples of this conflict. In 2004 a general strike was called by the trade unions. The demonstrations have spread throughout the country. Christian and Muslim workers marched side by side to protest against rising prices. The country was paralyzed: demonstrations took place almost everywhere. The dominant parties then had to support the strike in an attempt to control it and prevent it from spreading. After a while the union bureaucracy, under the pressure of the dominant elite, wanted to stop the strike. But workers (especially in the transport sector) have called for further work. The union branches withdrew from the strike, thus allowing the army to intervene. The strikers gathered in Hay el-Sellom, one of the poorest Shia neighborhoods in the southern suburbs of Beirut: The Army opened fire on the demonstrators killing five workers and injuring dozens. Quickly the media began to portray the strike as a "barbaric attempt by the Shias to attack the army." The main parties (including Shias such as Amal or Hezbollah) supported the army saying: "The army is the red line". The combination of the overwhelming propaganda machine and the recoil of progressive forces (unions and Communist Party) have led to the deviation of class rhetoric from confessional rhetoric.

In May 2006, the teachers ' union called for a protest against the precariousness of the work. While a quarter of a million workers and poor people mobilized and the government decree was withdrawn, the ruling class began attacking the movement,

saying that they were mostly Shias and that they were infiltrated by " Syrian workers! [5]. She claimed that the protest was not a manifestation of workers but an attempt at a coup d'état planned by the Shias to take overpower. In reality the workers present at the event came from different sectors. Christians and Muslims walked side by side, because they were opposed to the precariousness of the work and hated the government, both of them. The banners saying "We are neither Christians nor Muslims, we are poor" or "the piece of bread has no religion" were numerous. In this even t it was felt that denominational divisions were false propaganda and that ordinary people were not afraid to show their unity in the struggle. This made it possible to see that the ratio of forces is not of a denominational but of a class nature.

Hezbollah, class and resistance

In January 2007, a few months after the Israeli aggression of July 2006, Hezbollah and its allies (such as the Aounistes, the dominant Christian party) called for a general strike. Starting out as a bureaucratic strike, it quickly turned into a popular uprising. A Hezbollah official, overwhelmed by the events, then said: "What was planned as a normal strike, became an Intifada". Hezbollah and its allies quickly called at the end of the strike, lest the street movement be oriented according to its own interests. Ironically, the pretext given to stop the strike was that it "created sectarian tensions"! This clearly shows that, although Hezbollah is the force of opposition to occupation and the most influential and strongest imperialism, it recedes before any class struggle for fear of losing its control over the Shia community.

In response to the trade union demonstrations of March and April 2008, Hassan Nasrallah (leader of Hezbollah) said: "We will not hide behind a piece of bread", echoing his organization's refusal to respond to the economic demands of the Population. Another example of these contradictions in Hezbollah's policy is the riots against blackouts in the southern suburbs of Beirut. Violently suppressed by the army that killed at least fifteen people and wounded hundreds, Hezbollah's response was to call for a halt to the fight and bring in private generators. Basically, Hezbollah has, then, administered a shot of morphine to calm the masses.

In May 2008, Hezbollah deployed to West Beirut and inflicted a defeat on government militias in what can be characterized as a surgical security operation. However, this operation prevented the mass demonstration, which had been planned by the Trade Union Confederation, from taking place. This operation substituted the action of armed groups with that of the masses. Although this meant a setback and destroyed some dreams of US imperialism in Lebanon, this also stopped the mass movement by pushing everyone to stay at home.

These contradictions are growing within Hezbollah all the more quickly as it has become the largest political party in the country and also because, especially since 2005,Hezbollah's leadership is struggling to make a place in the ruling bourgeoisie. The contradictions are developing among the combatants, because it is the same workers who are confronted with economic policies (approved by the Hezbollah leadership) and who are fighting the Israeli army in southern Lebanon. Nasrallah called the July victory "victory of God." But in reality it is a victory achieved by ordinary people, workers and students, those who took up arms against the Israeli

tanks and who brought aid to the displaced families. This is the real face of resistance in Lebanon: that of workers and students fighting against imperialism and, at the same time, striking and demonstrating for better pay and better living conditions.

As Marx said, "Men make their own history, but do not do so arbitrarily, under the conditions chosen by them, but indirectly given conditions and inherited from the past." The tradition of all the dead generations weighs a very heavyweight on the brains of the living. [6]

The fight against confessionalism in Lebanon is not a fight that takes place essentially at the level of ideas. It is not a struggle for a more tolerant society. It is a class struggle both a fight against the dominant ideas and a fight of the oppressed against the oppressors. This struggle cannot be waged by the bourgeoisie, on the contrary, it can only be waged by a fight against the ruling bourgeoisie. This is where the centrality of the working class is no longer a theoretical question. Indeed, the only line of defense of the Lebanese people against denominational divisions and the brutal attacks of the ruling class is the unity of class. We know that ideas survive in history at the material conditions that gave birth to them. Although some of the material conditions that gave rise to the confessionalism have disappeared, it continues to be an obstacle to emancipation. The class struggle is at the heart of our fight: It is the only way to destroy the confessionalism in Lebanon.

[1] Carolyn Gates, Merchant Republic of Lebanon, Centre for Lebanese Studies, p. 13.
[2] Voir Sandria B.Freitag, Collective Action and Community : Public arenas and the emergence of communalism in North India, Berkley - University of California Press, 1989, pp 6-18
[3] « Enquête sur les conditions de vie », Ministère des affaires sociales, Liban 2004
[4] Voir Tony Cliff, Parti et classe.
[5] Il y a une importante immigration syrienne pauvre au Liban qui permet à des sections de la classe dirigeante de mêler le racisme avec la critique de l'ingérence du régime syrien au Liban (NDT).

[6] Karl Marx, Le 18 Brumaire de Louis Bonaparte, Livre de Poche, 2007.

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Between Sect & Class

April 2010

Not long ago, protests over electricity and high prices were worsening at the gates of the southern suburb of Beirut, Hezbollah's stronghold. At that time, many intellectuals, analysts and experts who expressed their enthusiasm (intellectual) and determination (cultural) and firmness (political) in reading these things being alert to those who are of little civilization and culture, how these protest power cuts and price rises of living by burning tires![3]The brains of these intellectuals and experts have been activated to explain that these protesters are driven by the Shia self, the Husseiniya desire, and Hezbollah's determination to diminish the prestige of the

state! The brains of another notebook also protested the environmental damage caused by the burning of tires. Others objected to the security chaos encouraged by these protesters through their cries that do not adhere to the protocols of civil protest.

But the main point that each of these brains relied on is to focus on the fact that this protest is a sectarian rebellion and not a result of the exacerbation of class differences. Some have prevented the economic classes from being hidden under tons of mud and sectarian mud, and the justification is based on the fact that the logic of sectarian affiliation is the main driver of these protests.

Then, we said that these protests are evidence of the class strife that is already in Lebanese society. Many of these intellectuals replied that this is not true and that these protests are only a Shia attempt to overthrow the regime and impose a new reality. Today, these protests in form, form and the same happen in another area, in Minya and Denniyah in northern Lebanon, where the Sunni majority, protesting the power outages too, has not yet ascended any intellectuals to analyse or explain to the people thirsty for culture and political analysis of what happens this year too!

Of course, the rise in the frequency of these protests in different regions confirms that these revolutions are not sectarian in nature, but are the result of contradictions and economic differences, some may seek to be directed to sectarian logic, but at the core is a depiction of the existing class contradiction in society regardless of sectarian affiliation, and that these protests are first identified by the economic conflict rather than "sectarian culture".

This is exactly what the demonstrators expressed in Minyah and Denniyah, where they issued a statement to Hariri, pointing out that "the residents of the affluent areas and neighbourhoods are always in constant flow because they have special generators if the current goes out, while the children of poor and rural areas live at the mercy of codification. Program of rationing?"[4]Sectarianism or sectarian politics are mechanisms followed by the ruling class to contain sectarian strife in its confessional form. In other words, sectarianism is not a historical trait in the social structure; it is at the core of the ruling class, seeking to mould social strife within sectarian frameworks. Hence, sectarianism is not a social structure in itself, but rather a product of the contradiction between the superstructure and the infrastructure of the Lebanese capitalist society.

The ruling class, which controls the superstructure of the society, seeks to preserve its power and authority, and believes that its authority is objectively linked to the interests of the system on which it is valued, the capitalist / sectarian system. Therefore, any threat to this regime is a threat to its authority over society. Hence, its continued rule is linked to its ability to impose "order" on society. The bourgeois competition that exists between the sections of the ruling bourgeoisie is a sectarian rivalry, since the bourgeoisie has acquired a sectarian and unbalanced strength among them.

The imbalance in the balance of growth of the capitalist bourgeoisie dates back to the formation of capitalism in Lebanon in the 8th and 19th centuries, and the fact that Lebanese capitalism did not arise out of subjective circumstances. It was a result

of the European capitalist expansion, which saw the easiest way to build bridges with religious institutions. That religious institutions are actually able to power religion and divine power, to impose discipline on people to enter the labour market. On the basis of this political and ideological structure of the extension of the power of capital, the newly adopted bourgeoisie has developed on this fundamental relationship between the power of religion and money and, indeed, no dispute between them.

The pattern of these relations encouraged the crystallization of the competitive relations between the emerging bourgeoisie on the basis of economic conflict, but among the political and ideological instruments that used the religious affiliation, which became (when the growth of capitalist relations) became sectarian.

The use of sectarian instruments is intended to move the conflict from its class-oriented level against the bourgeoisie to the logic of national / sectarian conflict, just as a fascist dictator would justify economic exploitation for a higher goal, such as "national interest" or "the interest of the nation." Workers under this fascist dictatorship, for example, have no real (objective) reason to place them in direct conflict against workers from another nation. Here lies the crux of the national bourgeois argument, which says that the continued economic well being of the nation lies over the nation's ability to achieve victory over others. But this logic is wrong, and what is meant by national well-being is actually the well-being of the national bourgeoisie, or so-called national bourgeoisie.

From here we can see how sectarian politics and tools play the same role and that sectarian conflict is actually an economic / political conflict between sectarian bourgeoisie, seeking to protect itself from class struggle in the status of society as a whole in a state of permanent sectarian war, The Sunni factor and the Christian factor against the Muslim worker, and so forth. But the picture is not complete here. By living together for decades, the bourgeois bourgeoisie has not been able to maintain sectarian purity among the workers it employs to produce its wealth; it has been forced for demographic and economic reasons for investment (different employment capacity among economic sectors), to employ workers from other communities, but in varying degrees, that is, there are sectarian bourgeoisie was able to hold a large part of its employment capacity in the workers of the same community, while other bourgeoisies could not.

Thus, it is normal for the modern state — the Lebanese bourgeoisie to always oscillate between the interest of the sectarian bourgeoisie in imposing its authority on a sectarian level and its collective interest in the imposition of its authority over society as a whole.

This reality does not depart from the Marxist definition of the role of the state, as Engels put it in his book, The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State: "The State is not in any way a force imposed on society from outside. The state is not 'the reality of the moral idea', 'the image and reality of reason' as Hegel[5] claims. The state is the product of society at a certain degree of development; the state is the disclosure of the fact that this society has occurred in contradiction with itself can not be resolved, and the division into intractable antagonists is unable to salvation from them, and to prevent these opposites, these classes of interests class strife, To accuse each other and society in a futile struggle. This requires a force that stands

above society, a force that softens the collision and keeps it within the boundaries of the 'regime.' This power that emanates from society and which, however, puts itself above it and separates it more and more is the state."[6]But the role of the class state does not have to be organized on the basis of a national bourgeoisie but is organized on the basis of bourgeois competition existing between the sections of the dominant bourgeoisie, and if not so when the need for elections and political conflict? Accordingly, we can clearly see what the consensus / competitive agreements that impose a consensual authority on society as a whole are translated by concessions from certain economic and security spheres of influence (Hezbollah allows the security forces to enter the southern suburb to remove the irregularities. E.g., helping to give up his rejection of Hezbollah's weapons on his return from exile); sharing and quotas preserve their right to bourgeois-sectarian rivalry among themselves.

We return to the issue of electricity in Minya and Dhinniyyah and how the ruling class responded through its deputies on the subject. The news published in its issue on Tuesday January 19, 2010, the response of the follow-up committee to the case consisting of deputies from the opposition and loyalists, which initially rejected the decision of rationing but quickly retracted it and summed up the reason for its retreat with the following words: "What we faced by Hariri and Bassil made us unable to stick because the former asked us to facilitate the implementation of the program so as not to show that one of his areas of influence impede the start of his government, which will open the objections of others, and ask them to treat other areas similarly. While Basil said that the collection of electricity bills in Minya is very low, and that the arrival of Mina and others on the current trend will affect the supply of the capital need of it."

This is not a static picture, because the bourgeois interests are not necessarily confined to one pole in each sect, as we see in most Lebanese communities, there are those who want quotas and harmony but under different conditions (sectarian federalism promoted by Sami Gemayel, for example). To compete within existing sectarian representation frameworks, the abolition of political sectarianism (such as the Beri example), and not the abolition of the sectarian system as a whole because it needs to ensure discipline within the community.

The question here is not whether the class actually exists, but whether the sect actually exists?

The sectarian issue is not as conceived by the ruling class as an inherent logic; it is a basic pattern within the framework of the extension of capitalist power and the reflection of economic / political rivalry between the poles of sectarian bourgeoisie on society. This reflection is not limited to politics or media, A large number of economic policies and legislations legislated through the state apparatus to create economic and social relations between the sectarian bourgeoisie and workers, whether through state institutions (sectarian employment and sharing of positions at the sectarian level) or from outside (pumping money on the basis of Sectarianism through the private sector and through the religious and charitable institutions). All these methods are to contain people and link their fate and economic advancement through sectarian frameworks.

Therefore, sects are not structures in themselves; they are the sum of the dependable and loyal relationships used by the ruling bourgeoisie (in its alliance with religious institutions, which are either subject to or subordinate to the bourgeoisie or a balanced relationship) to extend control over the working class and disadvantaged classes, its authority and the existing class system.

Here is the basic objection to the definition of Fawaz Trabulsi of the sects as: "structures that penetrate all aspects of social life and interfere in the distribution of labour (sects in the public service) and services and resources and the distribution of wealth between regions and social groups. And sects, such as networks of favouritism and social mobilization that generate small privileges, small deprivations, disparities in opportunities and opportunities for social advancement through the state (as well as through their social roles in the fields of education, health, charity and others). But these privileges and deprivations are all within the divisions and major class differences. Not in isolation. Nor are they done on their behalf. Thus, small sectarian social differences play a role in disguising the great class divisions." (Al-Akhbar, January 19, 2010) Fawwaz Traboulsi in his response to the report published by al-Akhbar (January 16) about a lecture entitled "Are there social strata in Lebanon?"

The sect does not exist objectively, while the class exists objectively because it is the result of actual physical contradictions. The community determines its existence based on reliable economic, political and social relations, produced by economic and political policies and interests. Therefore, the community is not structured in society, just as a commercial company is not a social or economic structure, it is a network of economic exchange relations, divided as the sect divides class contradictions exist objectively.

Sectarianism does not end with bourgeois restoration, but through the socialist revolution. The elimination of sectarianism cannot be the product of the sectarian bourgeoisie itself, but its elimination can only be achieved by fuelling the class struggle against the bourgeoisie, the regime and the bourgeois state as a whole. Is the separation between the sniper and his weapon, the demilitarization of the sniper, will not prevent him from bringing another weapon, and get rid of the sniper without getting rid of arms will not prevent another sniper from using it.

Here the logic of the elimination of the sectarian system is at the heart of the process of building the socialist workers' revolution, just as the concept of eliminating racism coincides with the logic of labour emancipation. Sectarianism is the most prominent weapon of the ruling bourgeois class in striking the growth of class-consciousness. On the left, the link is between class struggle and the struggle against sectarianism, not by spreading illusions about a national bourgeoisie that could rid us of the evil of sectarianism.

The interest of the working class in liberating them from oppression and exploitation entails joining together (at the level of class and political awareness) in their rejection of policies and approaches to sectarian division and directing their discontent against sectarian bourgeoisie and its allies of religious institutions and the state. The logic that a bourgeois state can be restored or redrafted on a national basis is a logic that seeks to delay the growth of the class struggle and not to fuel it.

The change will not begin by consensualising or giving advice to the bourgeoisie,

but by facing it directly, and by building the organisational frameworks capable of correcting that confrontation, and here the need to build a revolutionary organisation capable of this task and can look at the class contradictions that arise within the network of sectarian relations.

The sectarianism of the working class can only be achieved through its struggle against the existing capitalist system, against the ruling bourgeoisie, and through the revolutionary takeover of political power until the latter collapses to the growth of the working class to organize itself within the new socialist society. Those who burn the tyres today in the southern suburb or in the Minyan, or in any other place, is the one who holds the nucleus of the revolutionary process that can end the sectarian system.

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Class is the main defense for Lebanese society against civil war and barbarism

Interview with Turkey Agenda, August 2015

First of all, could you briefly tell us about yourself and the Socialist Forum?

Bassem Chit: The Socialist Forum is a revolutionary socialist organization in Lebanon. It appeared the merger of two Trotskyist groups in 2010, each of which has its own story. One of them started in 2000 and the other in 1970. In the Socialist Forum, we have in principle two publications. One of them is Al-Manshour , an online edition, the other is a periodical in Arabic, Al-Thawra al-Dayma (Permanent Revolution). It is published twice a year (in book format), in collaboration with groups in the region, particularly in Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, Morocco and Iraq.

Our group supports Arab revolutions and revolutions around the world. We consider that the current situation requires a position that combines resistance to capitalism and against dictatorships with the struggle for progressive democracy. The main focus of our strategy is the formation of a political party, a revolutionary party in Lebanon.

In the Lebanese political system, where parties based on the system of “zouama” / clientelism dominate politics, what are the difficulties of being a socialist?

First, the Lebanese electoral system is based on sectarianism. But this does not mean that political parties are, by default, based on sectarianism. The dominant political parties in Lebanon, on the other hand, are sectarian parties. But we also have political parties that are out of power, many of which are secular or non-denominational parties. We have a long tradition of leftist movements in the country. Even in the 1960s and the 1970s, even more so in 1997, we had big demonstrations in the country where the people of east and west Beirut were joined by the labor movement.

From the 1990s and later, we constantly had anti-sectarian movements. In 2011, we had a great mobilization against sectarianism in the country. But that does not mean it's not difficult to play politics. It's very difficult. But it's not really because of sectarianism. This is a problem in itself, but the difficulties are mainly caused by the security apparatus of the political parties and the state. This means that the margins of militant action are reduced, some regions are controlled by certain political parties. They are controlled with weapons. This is the problem. It must be taken into consideration that Lebanon is a very small country. So, for example, we do not see a revolution in Lebanon without a revolutionary movement in the region.

This is why we consider that change in Lebanon is very much related to change in Syria and vice versa. Because of the way the colonial powers have established the borders, one of the tasks of the revolution consists in the effective destruction of these borders. It is a very difficult task since we are talking about a small country of three million people and a regime or state that is not afraid to start a civil war just to preserve its power. For these reasons, the revolutionary left has to organize and arm itself with a solid strategy on how to manage the state and sectarianism and all other issues.

Do you consider the uprisings in the region as a chance for Lebanon?

Not only for Lebanon, but for the region as a whole. In fact, it is not a simple uprising in the region. We are talking about the international economic crisis, the crisis of capitalism. If you look at the economic numbers around the world, you find out that this crisis is deepening. It is also a crisis of neoliberal ideology and a crisis of reform policies. States around the world are failing to make reforms, not even neoliberal reforms. Because the level of contradictions and injustices that cross the capitalist system is quite high, complicated enough that each reform leads to even more serious contradictions.

This means that the current revolutions are a reflection of an international crisis in the Arab region at the moment. But that does not mean that it will be limited to the Middle East. Look at how in Greece, Spain or Chile the totality of their social gains are threatened while in the USA, a gigantic battle is waged between the Democrats and the conservatives around health care. In this perspective, this is just the first wave, like the first days of the Russian revolution, just the beginnings of the coming revolutions.

The contradictions that led to the revolutions in the Arab world are far from being resolved. This means that it is a first attempt of the Arab popular masses to fight the state and the regime. Through this process, people are beginning to learn that we need more organized revolutionary groups and that we need a more organized working class to not only defeat these regimes, but also the reactionary movements.

In one of your speeches you argued that “sectarianism is not a tribal or feudal tradition, but has been developed by capitalism in Lebanon. It is rather a modern history and not a traditional story. Sectarianism is in fact a distorted class struggle, unrelated to tradition. Can you say more about class consciousness in a society that is claimed to be sectarian?

We must distinguish between two questions: on the one hand class struggle as a material existence, in other words an objective reality within any capitalist system, and on the other hand, how people acquire the ideas to understand this reality. Within these contradictions, for example, if we look at the development of the economy in Lebanon, we discover that France was the first who began to invest in the Christian regions of Lebanon during the domination of the Empire. Ottoman, thanks to agreements. This means that the new economy has developed in one region and the other regions have remained in the old economy. It was then that silk factories were established in the Christian areas of Mount Lebanon, giving rise to the development of a new workforce, the shrinking of the feudal class, and an increase in the bourgeoisie.

In 1860, we had what they call a civil war which was in fact a peasant uprising, which included Maronite, Shia, Sunni and Druze peasants, against the feudal lords. But the new Christian bourgeoisie and Christian feudal lords allied themselves with feudal feudal lords to crush the peasant revolt. It was not a civil war, but rather a peasant uprising. Later, we saw the leaders of this peasant uprising change their rhetoric about the peasant revolt by a sectarian speech on the protection of Christians. But we must understand that this first attempt was aimed at crushing the revolt and that it was a shift towards a sectarian position of the ruling classes at the time.

So, in this sense, we must understand that there are two dynamics that have occurred. On the one hand, there is the emergence of the conditions of the class struggle that people are beginning to perceive, although their perception results from a tradition of thought. And later, after independence, a very powerful Christian political elite formed because of economic developments. At the same time, a very powerful business elite has been created inside Beirut within the Sunni community. Meanwhile, the feudal structure has been considerably weakened in the mountains of the Druze regions and the Shia areas in the South. At the beginning of the civil war in the 1970s, due to the deterioration of feudal structures that also meant the deterioration of the peasant economy, people were moving more and more towards the cities. It was in the cities that we could see injustice in the economic structure. This meant that the state that was controlled by kataeb (Lebanese Phalanges) [1] or the right wing of Christian parties tried to gain legitimacy through sectarian practices. For example, by providing Christian workers with job opportunities while making Shia workers less able to take advantage of them or vice versa.

Sectarianism is therefore a policy; a policy of segregation of the working class. The great mistake of the left during the Civil War was that it considered the sect itself as a class. So, they argued that Christians are all bourgeois and Muslims are the working class, but all of this is absolutely false. In this regard, they have tried to use the classroom as a means of mobilizing on a sectarian level rather than a means of disintegrating sectarian discourse. That's why we talk about consciousness, which is not something that develops freely. This is something that is developing in the current political struggle and in the ideological struggle. At the same time, the dominant ideas within society try to modulate mass consciousness permanently which serves the capitalist economy and class domination.

One of the methods used is sectarianism. At the same time, there is the human experience of crowds living together and working together that actually poses a threat to that ideology. The role of the revolutionary left is to push this human experience even further and to theorize it as well as to develop the ideology of the working class. As an example, we had a strike in the Lebanon a few years ago. It lasted about 90 days. They claimed work contracts of indefinite duration. The state attacked them for being a majority of Muslim workers. It was then that the other workers got up, and the Christian workers among them put themselves in the vanguard to defend their Muslim colleagues against the Christian militia that was attacking them. We also had a strike at the Jounieh Power Station in support of a strike at another power plant in the Muslim zone. If things remain at this stage, it is not certain that we can get anything out of it. For that we must bring the battle back to its proper place, where it is not only a question of defensive strategy, but of offensive strategy against the State. This means, of course, that the system of sectarianism must be fought until it is completely destroyed. In the class struggle, we are used to resorting to defensive ideas and mechanisms.

However, it takes an understanding of history and all the contradictions not only through a specific battle, but through the general struggle against sectarianism by linking all these experiences together. Because by bringing back these experiences together, we can develop a new ideological form of resistance against the State and against sectarianism. It is in the absence of this new form of ideological resistance that our class consciousness itself is being diverted to the field of sectarian consciousness. How is this done in practice? Let's go back to the strike of the electricity workers. The Free Patriotic Current (CPL) [2] said that the existence of a majority of Muslim workers will eventually destabilize the sectarian quota within the company. But what he really meant was to undermine the unity of the workers and the creation of sectarian relations. It is solidarity and unity among the workers he wanted to attack.

This is also what Nabih Berri [3] does , for example, with some trade union leaders against the workers. They tried to deflect the class struggle from its unitary base to a sectarian base. To take another example, to clarify matters, the Amal movement

and Hezbollah, which are Shia political parties, have adopted a singular method of interacting with discontent and popular riots in the southern suburbs. If, for example, there is a protest against power cuts or unemployment, these parties are more afraid that protesters or strikers will be able to meet and build relationships with protesters from other regions. Instead of pushing for mobilization to improve the electric cover in Lebanon, they buy electric generators and provide funds to the gas stations. For example, in the Akkar [4] , Saad Hariri [5] gives money to some charities and some poor people just to calm the class contradictions and strengthen the economic dependence of the workers on the capitalists.

It also means that money from the most cruel regimes in the world such as Saudi Arabia, Iran or the United States is making its way here to create an addictive relationship of Muslim or Christian workers to the world. respect of the Muslim or Christian bourgeoisie. This dependency creates an illusion of protection. It's an ideological myth. Instead of saying that our problem is the bourgeoisie, they find it easier to say that the problem of Muslim workers is the Christian bourgeoisie. So the problem for the Christian workers becomes the Muslim bourgeoisie, and the rivalry finally settles among the workers. In the meantime, the media is getting really popular with people telling them that Muslims take jobs from Christians or Christians take jobs from Muslims! Finally we create a competition environment.

It is, in fact, a struggle for bourgeois power to sleep, which is reflected as a popular culture deep down in the working class. The main question here is to fight against the strategy of the state, the strategy of the bourgeoisie and their methods to defeat the class struggle. We must understand that in fighting against the state, we are not only conducting the class struggle economically but also politically and ideologically. This means that our resistance must be economic, political and ideological, which, unfortunately, the left in the region does not take into consideration. It does not attack on the ideological front. It militates only on the economic and political level. But when it comes to ideology, what kind of state we want, what revolutionary ideology should we adopt, this topic has not been discussed. We must have the ideology of counter-hegemony in interpreting Gramsci's ideas in the sense that since the bourgeoisie has hegemony, we must create real organizations to destroy its hegemony and create counter-hegemonies that reflect the interests of working class.

So we can say that class consciousness in society is a safety valve against sectarianism and the threat of a civil war.

Class consciousness is not limited to economic consciousness. Even at Marx and Engels it's not about economic consciousness. But there is usually a tradition within the left to understand the class only from an economic point of view. The highest form of the class struggle is a political struggle. At the same time, you have to combine economic, political and ideological aspects during the struggle. The important part

in all this is the organization of the class struggle. Because we must not rely solely on spontaneous reactions or unorganized actions. They are important, but we need to organize them further. That is why it is very important that the revolutionary left in the Arab region be organized. Since the state and political parties are effectively organized, have multiple funding and a political tradition, they are able to respond. That means, if you want to fight them, you have to be as organized and as effective as they are. But you must not compromise your policy or organizational methods or your democratic practices and mechanisms.

This is a very difficult but very important question. Class struggle and class consciousness are central issues because without them, you will not be able to build bridges between Christian, Sunni and Shia workers. And we need this bond of solidarity and affinity to fight against the ruling class. For me, class consciousness is not just an economic conscience. Class consciousness is necessary to understand the role of the class in determining economic, political and ideological parameters at the same time.

Do you think that the main mistake of recent uprisings in the region is that they have turned into a sectarian struggle?

Revolutions do not fire under conditions we choose in advance. Thus, the revolutions took place in the Arab region after a total retreat of the left because of many reasons. Among them, the active collaboration of most of the Stalinist left and the nationalist left with the regimes. There are obviously trade union structures in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and the rest of the region. But there has been a great decline in political action since the 1980s. It is in these circumstances that the revolutions broke out. However, two realities emerge: the necessity and priority of organizing the working class. These are the revolutionary tasks to be accomplished.

History does not make mistakes, it only happens. The traditional left has made many mistakes. But it is absurd to say that the new revolutionary left could have organized the working class, and organized itself in the last twenty years. The last twenty years have seen a progression of the revolutionary left in different countries, particularly in Egypt and Lebanon. Over time these groups have diminished to some extent, but are still more effective than traditional leftist organizations. It is therefore very important to develop these organizations.

Since then, a lot of water has flowed under the bridges. Compared to Lebanon, for example, the Communist Party, which had claimed 10,000 members, now has 3,000 or less. In Beirut, we mobilize more than them. In Egypt, the Revolutionary Socialists, similar to our current in Lebanon, make their voices heard on the left more than the rest of the traditional left, though more numerous. We have therefore been able to improve qualitatively, but not quantitatively, in terms of expanding our base. People

understood the importance of the political party in the revolution, especially after the defeat of the first phase of the revolution. This is very important because people have understood that a movement can not win its battles by relying solely on its own efforts and spontaneous reactions. This kind of populism has disintegrated with the rise of counter revolutionary forces. This is an opportunity for the revolutionary left. However, you cannot already rely on the hypothesis of a possible popular front. It was the logic of the traditional left in the 1960s and 1970s. It declared itself with the popular movements, which means with everyone.

However, recent events have proved that this strategy is totally false. We need a united front, a revolutionary front, but not a popular front. This means fighting against the ruling class and at the same time against reactionary forces, such as Daesh (or the Organization of the Islamic State) or similar groups. But also to defend reformist organizations, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, against the repression of power. Moreover, there is the experience of the Ennahdha movement in Tunisia who, after understanding the fate that has been reserved for the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, has maneuvered intelligently, allowing the left to come into play. And to take part in the liberal institutional battle. It's a crisis of the left. In Tunisia, for example, they carry out democratic demands, but it is in the framework of a new liberal policy with the endorsement of capitalist imperialism. These are the conditions in which we must work. There are two main tasks that are building a revolutionary organization and at the same time going towards the workers.

The union bureaucracy is a crisis. Look at how the trade union bureaucracies in Egypt - including those at the head of so-called independent unions - have all supported Sisi and the military regime. It is not difficult to conclude that these directions are ineffective and useless for the revolution. As for the trade union movement in Lebanon, it continues to make concessions so much that it can no longer mobilize masses of workers, as it did before. Currently, it mobilizes barely thirty or fifty people [6] . The left must work at the grassroots level to raise awareness among workers and lead them to adopt a revolutionary ideology and political line, but also to install and revitalize a tradition within the working class, that of the need to organize more. The reconstruction of the working class organizations to challenge the state is a completely different situation from what we had in the 1960s. At the time we had a small working class, a large layer of peasants and the issue of liberation which was the main element in the whole struggle.

Today, it is not a matter of national liberation in the sense of liberating occupied territory, but of national liberation from the yoke of imperialism. We must therefore stop the interference of the United States, Europe, Saudi Arabia and foreign capital in the region. It means that we need a revolutionary situation. What we call the permanent revolution. This implies that we have the conditions not only to achieve national liberation or democratic reforms, but also the opportunity to deepen this

revolution and turn it into a socialist revolution.

It is necessary to engrave in the minds the important distinction between national liberation and capitalist state. In the 1960s, the people supported the national bourgeoisie against the international bourgeoisie. Today the national bourgeoisie, even if it claims to be anti-imperialist, is inseparable from liberalism. They do business and they cooperate. For example, Hezbollah receives money from Lebanese bourgeois living in Africa who exploit African workers. He also receives money from Iran, the state that exploits Iranian workers. Saad Hariri receives money from Saudi Arabia that also exploits the workers.

The intertwining of capitalist relations is obvious. So these "resistance" movements cannot fight against imperialism. All they can achieve is a kind of physical liberation, just like what happens in Lebanon. But they will stop where they begin to harm the capitalist relations in which they are involved. This is what happened when the revolution broke out in Syria. Hezbollah has gone to Syria to protect the Assad regime, under the command of Iran, which also wants to protect its own interests. This resistance movement has been transformed into an army fighting to serve the interests of the capitalists in Syria. This is a contradiction because it is not a small army, but a huge army in the state. When Hezbollah decides to engage in a battle, it is not enough to brag about its feats of arms, but one must be able to win the people who support Hezbollah to a different revolutionary position. This is the most important question.

In comparison with other "left" organizations, you supported the popular revolution in Syria. How do you explain the distance between left-wing organizations?

In Lebanon, we have the nationalist left that includes Arab nationalists and the Stalinist left as the Communist Party. These groups have adopted an old strategy that considers national liberation as a sine qua non of the revolution. They adopted another strategy for democratic change. This means two things: first, if there is a conflict between the national bourgeoisie and the international bourgeoisie, they will side with the national bourgeoisie; the second, they do not seek to challenge the state, but they try to win in elections and to gain power. This conception of things puts them in a position of non-confrontation neither against the international bourgeoisie nor against the national bourgeoisie, but the confrontation of these two bourgeois is an important element to be a revolutionary group.

In Syria, therefore, according to this logic, supporting the regime means supporting anti-imperialism in the region of which it claims, when it is completely false. We have seen how the Syrian revolution caused a defeat, at least moral, of imperialism. The growing economic crisis is an opportunity in that it forces many imperialist powers to withdraw. This does not mean that they have no presence, but they have

weakened. Instead of exploiting this fact to push for a revolutionary situation against the Arab bourgeoisie and imperialism, some of these leftist organizations are coming together with the regimes for several reasons. One of the main reasons is that they are concerned about how to win a representation in power or how to gain power without having to prove their credibility or legitimacy. This is the mistake of the reformist parties whose ideology is in crisis. The nationalist ideology itself is in crisis. We see a weakening of national identity and the emergence of a perspective to develop a revolutionary ideology that transcends illusion and overrides the fear of a separation between Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Palestine.

Because it is impossible to revolutionize the region without the destruction of the borders that were fixed by colonialism, then consolidated by the Arab regimes that were forced to separate the Palestinian struggle and the struggles of Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Egypt and Gulf countries. These borders helped the Arab regimes to crush the popular movements that developed in the 1960s and even before. But reformist parties cannot conceive of their existence outside the nation-state. They need national borders to exist. Moreover, they have no strategy to change the capitalist nature of the state and have a mechanical understanding of history. For them, a revolution is not a revolution as long as people have not claimed socialism from day one. Yet neither during the Russian Revolution or the French Revolution did people claim socialism from the first day. During the Russian revolution, a demonstration was led by a pastor, and many peasants were killed during the protests! After many years, people have realized that you can not negotiate with the state. This is what the Arab people learned. We can not negotiate with the Arab States.

However, the Communist Party and the Stalinist parties have chosen to side with the Arab regimes. This implies that they no longer belong to the left. They are part of the state apparatus ... the bourgeois state apparatus that defends itself against popular movements. Moreover, it looks like what the reformist left did in Germany during the rise of Hitler. This position of the left allowed or at least was favorable to the rise of Daesh and similar groups. Secularism has become synonymous with alliance with despotic Arab regimes. That is why it is necessary to distinguish between those so-called secular states that have nothing to do with secularism, and that consecrate sectarianism, and secondly, revolutionary laïcité (secularism) based on social justice and democracy and equality.

Some political parties besides the Socialist Forum also have an anti-imperialist and "resistant" discourse. What are your similarities and differences? And what are the differences between the definitions of the term "resistance"?

When Hezbollah fought against Israel, we supported the resistance. We support anyone who resists imperialism. But when Hezbollah goes to Syria to fight against the popular revolution, it is no longer resistance. He became a militia of the authoritarian

regime and the regional power, which is Iran.

The question is: can groups like Hezbollah or Hamas liberate Palestine or crush imperialism? The answer is no, they cannot. But at the same time, in the absence of organizations capable of resisting the Israeli offensive every time Israel attacks, we support anyone who takes up arms and fights the Zionist entity. But that does not mean that we support their policy. This is the major difference between us and the other segments of the left. They support Hezbollah in everything it does. This is the main problem. They agree with Hezbollah's domestic policy, which is fundamentally neoliberal, economically speaking. They apply a policy against the interests of the working class because of their alignment with sectarian policies. This explains their silence on all questions. By refraining from criticizing Hezbollah over these issues, they have contributed to deepening the sectarian consciousness within the working class. This has weakened their position in the working class and in the class struggle in general.

We are developing an alternative understanding of resistance. We call for secular resistance, not national sectarian resistance. However, it is based not only on armed resistance, but also on political resistance against capitalism. Because we observed in 2006 how some people benefited from the misery of others during the war. Even after the end of the war in 2006, several Hezbollah leaders raised a lot of money. Can we consider this an act of resistance? Was it an anti-imperialist action? Hezbollah and Hamas are not anti-imperialist. Anti-imperialism also means facing all states, positioning itself against the intervention of militias in Syria and Saudi intervention in other countries. For example, we cannot support Russia's intervention in Ukraine. That's imperialism, as you know.

The nationalist left chooses to support segments of the bourgeoisie against others. This attitude could be an interesting strategy in the beginning of the last century, at the birth of capitalism, with the existence of the national bourgeoisie. At the same time, there is a great illusion about the stateism of those who say to themselves: when we reach the industrial economy, we will have socialism. The capitalist economy is a world economy and not a national economy. The national bourgeoisie will never achieve democratic reforms in the countries it dominates because it benefits from the absence of democracy. For this reason, all democratic and socialist and anti-imperialist demands must be included in a single strategy. That's the difference between them and us. We regard resistance as an element of the revolutionary struggle, and not a separate phase before the revolution.

Some leftist groups in Turkey have taken a suspicious stance against popular revolutions in the Middle East, particularly in Syria. How do you explain that ?

The majority of these leftist groups are either nationalist or Stalinist fascinated by

state fetishism. Revolutions are not something pretty. They are very ugly. If we go back to history, the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution were not pretty at all. Because society itself is ugly. And to get rid of this ugliness we have to face it. I think that this negative position of the Turkish left stems from the nationalist ideology. It is partly a reflection of the nationalist ideology within the Turkish left, nourished by the ideas of Mustafa Kemal, and supporting the army.

At the same time, if you have a high dose of Islamophobia, you will not support the Muslim Brotherhood. However, we must understand the contradictions of the Muslim Brothers who constantly do things on the left as on the right. Their movement is far from being an organized army. That does not mean you have to support the Muslim Brotherhood against the army. You should rather keep your bearings and consider that the Turkish, Egyptian or Syrian army can potentially develop into a fascist regime. This happened before in Turkey and is happening now with Assad in Syria and Sisi in Egypt. The Muslim Brotherhood, because of their multiple contradictions, is not able to stay in power. This is a sign of their great weakness. You can criticize them, you can mobilize against them, but you cannot call them fascist. Because they are not a fascist organization.

So they cannot destroy all democratic gains when they come to power. In reality they use them for their benefit. The army, on the other hand, will destroy all democratic gains. In my opinion, the nationalist left in Turkey supports fascism against Islamic reformism, because of the word “Islam”. All this has a name: Islamophobia. We have to look at the last 20 or 30 years to understand the huge leftist nationalist and Stalinist mistakes. To understand what pushed people to look for something else. Some have found it in Islamic movements. So to overcome them, one must first destroy a type of consciousness by acting on two levels. The first is to sweep away the defeat of the nationalist movement, which means that nationalism in itself is not a weapon against Islamism. The second comes in light of the ongoing defeat of the Islamic project, which was presented as an alternative.

For us, there is only one alternative: socialism. The nationalist project and the Islamic project are two bourgeois projects. And the left must take a stand against bourgeois projects. That’s how I see this big problem. It is because of all this that Arab revolutions are viewed with such suspicion. Now with the deepening of the crisis of nationalism but also the deepening of the crisis of the Islamic projects, they try to save the nationalism while trying to face Islamism. Daesh, for example, uses the deep crisis of reformist Islamic parties. Since the defeat of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, that of Ennahdha in Tunisia, and the crisis of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria, Daesh represents a realistic model for the people who are in addition potentially mobilizable. This terrorist organization is attempting to recruit more reformist Islamic parties from the bases of reformist parties. His presence is proof of the crisis of reformist Islamism. What the nationalist left does is put all these movements in

the same bag.

But this delirium is also doubled by a high dose of hypocrisy. For the nationalist left in Lebanon for example - which is the same reading of Islamist movements - Hezbollah is no longer an Islamist force. As for the Turkish left, which supports Bashar al-Assad, the ally of Iran and Hezbollah, it abstains from any criticism of Iran or Hezbollah! So she supports Shias against Sunnis. This is the true nature of nationalism. Nationalism in the Arab world, as in Turkey, has always been sectarian in the sense that it has constantly manipulated religion. He did not dissociate himself from religion. Atatürk has made Islam a Turkish religion. Gamal Abdel Nasser used the al-Azhar Mosque (the highest authority of Islam in the country) to confront the Muslim Brotherhood. Bashar al-Assad has no doubt built more mosques in Syria than the brotherhood of the Muslim Brotherhood in the region. They all used religion to defeat the opposition. So, in fact, they were never laymen. They used the official or institutional religion to appear as secular, but they never established a separation between religion and the state.

Translation into French by Rafik Khalfaoui

Source: http://www.turkeyagenda.com/interview-with-the-late-bassem-chit-on-the-politics-and-culture-in-lebanon-and-the-middle-east-1302.html

[1] The Kataeb or Lebanese Phalanges are a nationalist and militarized political party, essentially Christian, founded in 1936 (Translator's note).

[2] The Free Patriotic Current (CPL) is a political party of the Lebanese Christian opposition that was founded in 1992 by General Michel Aoun. The CPL is represented in the Lebanese parliament as the "Bloc of Change and Reform" and has become the most powerful Christian party in Lebanon.

[3] Nabih Berri is a Lebanese politician. He is the president of the Lebanese parliament since 1992 and the leader of the Shia Amal movement (founded in 1975 and becoming one of the most important Muslim militias during the Lebanese civil war, the Amal movement is well represented in parliament).

[4] Mountainous district of northern Lebanon and one of the poorest regions of the country .

[5] Politician and businessman, Saad Hariri is a former prime minister. He is the son

of Rafiq Hariri, a former Prime Minister assassinated on February 14, 2005. Saad Hariri is the leader of the Sunni (but officially secular) Courant of the Future political party and the majority leader in the Lebanese parliament. He currently lives between Paris and Riyadh .

[6] Reference to the General Confederation of Lebanese Workers (CGTL).

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Chapter Two
On the State

Resistance and the State

March (?)[10]The relationship between resistance and the state today in the Middle East may be the key issue to determine the reality of the political forces and their ability to change. The state and its apparatus appear to be a network that is thrown at the resistance movements to silence them and their masses. Those who cannot answer the question of the state and its role cannot complete the process of liberation. This is precisely what the Islamic resistance movement, when confronted with the state and economic and life issues are committed to the dominant bourgeois discourse.

The proverb applies to both Hezbollah and Hamas. In their practical and political reality, their resistance project aims to improve their conditions in the equation of power, because of the nature of the interests of those who represent class. Hezbollah represents a large part of the Shia petty bourgeoisie and rising bourgeoisie that are working to find an advanced place in the existing class system. Hamas also relies mainly on supporting the petty bourgeoisie in Gaza, which is trying to find some place in the existing power. From here we see their choice to hold on to power and the beginning of gradual retreat in her speech and not to sever ties with the regimes that were partners to the Zionist authority in the war on Gaza and the aggression of July 2006.

This does not mean that we stop supporting these resistance movements. On the contrary, our support is unconditional, but we have the right to criticise. We must not neglect these movements, because they are unable to complete the process of liberation. It is necessary to continue the conscious support of the resistance, but, directly, we must work to produce a revolutionary movement that links liberation and liberation. It can effectively answer the questions and build a movement that seeks real change rather than the goal of becoming a dominant bourgeois class.

The retreat to 'national unity'

We are witnessing in Lebanon this process of accession, especially after the Doha Conference, where the consensus and the "national unity government" is the recipe adopted by the Arab ruling classes in order to accommodate the resistance movements and resistance movements. Obama did not pass through the hours until these authorities preached the next US covenant, saying that, according to Walid Jumblatt, "hope for the region and its people." But even this evangelisation was dealt a severe blow after the war in Gaza, leading to political silence and only lighting candles and crying over the martyrs.

Hezbollah's pursuit of a national unity government after the July War and the events of May 7 confirm that it does not want a real confrontation with the existing regimes and is seeking to find a place in power. This is due to the lack of an alternative

project to the reality of the pension. During the war in Gaza, Hezbollah also refrained from going out into the street and faced the confrontation of the partner regimes in the aggression. He made his speech to heaven without any real step in the local political confrontation of the reality. His movements were meagre and indicated a decline in his political position.

In light of this political decline that has hit both sides of the sectarian class ruling, the left has found itself the most prominent party in building a movement of support and solidarity with the resistance and resistance in Gaza. The sit-in in front of the ESCWA building was the most prominent place for this movement, which gathered the left from most of its spectrum, to take a steady step, although it is often difficult to build mobility among the leftist organisations and parties.

But in the first attempt of its kind after the July war, he was able to engage in an advanced position in direct political conflict and a position that effectively linked the resistance of the Arab peoples to liberation from their regimes and the direct resistance to liberation, which was an extension of a leftist political legacy built through an open sit-in against The siege of Ramallah in 2002, and the "No to war - no to dictatorships" campaign in 2003.

Left and Elections

In the other face of the conflict in Lebanon, the current government is witnessing skirmishes between the parties to power, especially in the preparation of the elections, and all to its positions simmering and preparing for the next battle. We saw the February 14 festival, in which the March 14 Forces tried to regroup their forces for the next battle, and today we are waiting for the reaction of the opposition forces.

The next election battle remains a political one. The opposition's rhetoric calls for minor reforms that are committed to the limits of the power of the bourgeoisie and at the same time face a battle to protect the resistance, thereby gaining a wider public presence than the March 14 Forces. But its decline in many of the political positions that concern people's lives (minimum wages, privatisation, etc.) has led to a decline in votes in favour of it, and many people have turned to the "middle," to look for an alternative, or to lose hope.

This is what encouraged Jumblatt to conduct a manoeuvre to create a middle pole that did not last long, especially as this attempt was clear that it is only an attempt to reduce the voices of the opposition.

On the left to go to the next political battleground and introduce a serious alternative to the dominant political forces, exposing the false democracy, which reproduces the forces themselves and protects the dominant bourgeoisie of popular resentment and opposition. But the entry of elections should not be within the logic of parliament or for sitting in seats, meetings, compensions [?] and sterile agreements, but in order to expose the system and incite public opinion against it, because change will not be approved in a parliamentary council in which the bourgeoisie historically occupies the majority of the seats, On the ground minority. But this change will be imposed on the system by mass movements rising from the street, from workers and students, from the people themselves.

Hence, on the left to put forward a progressive political project that can benefit

from the resentment of the dominant forces in order to produce a wider political movement and move to the heart of the political battle, without abandoning its positions on the electoral law or its positions in economic and social affairs and the civil rights of the Palestinian people, equality and justice. Elections are an instrument to galvanize public opinion on the reality in which we live in order to build a revolutionary movement in society, not an end in itself. This is what should be the basis from which the left goes to the next battle.

The proposition that we should fall into the arms of the opposition is only to escape the battle. We must be bold to say that we are with the resistance and we will protect and build it, but we will not accept to be false witnesses to what the opposition is doing in partnership with the loyalists in tightening the screws more and more on people and leaving them to the mercy of the market chaos that threatens thousands of poverty and hunger. We will not accept that this stinking sectarian regime will continue to control our lives and our future.

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State terrorism kills in cold blood

June 16,2007
With Heba Abani and Ghassan Makarem

In the past years, the state has adopted a policy of generalization and profiling against the Palestinians and portrayed them as criminals outlawed, depriving them of their most basic civil rights, such as the right to work, build or own. They control the entrances to the camps to keep the social, economic, political and security situation intact, Civil and political. Today, the siege of the Nahr al-Bared camp enters its fourth week, and the PA continues to order the army to take decisive action and block the camp and hit it with missiles and aircraft, ignoring the civilians taken by Fatah al-Islam as hostages.

Since Hariri's assassination, the Lebanese state has been preparing to disarm the Palestinian factions after the Cairo treaty has been abandoned. The issue of weapons is old, but the problem is not the weapon itself. Today the issue is raised in principle, that is, if the authority is the one who monopolizes the violence or not. However, through this form of submission, the authority is forgetting and refuses to consider the history of this weapon and its relationship with the Lebanese weapon in the civil war and its relationship with the reality of the Palestinians in Lebanon.

Before 1982, the Palestinian armed forces were accompanied by the National Movement in its war against the Lebanese authority and its internal conflicts. Following the departure of the PLO from Lebanon, Palestinian weapons were essentially turned into a tool of self-defense. "Before the 82, the headlines of the Palestinian martyrs were martyred in the operation," said Walid Taha of Ain el-Hilweh camp. "After 82, the headlines of the pictures were said to be in defense of the camps."

For the Palestinians in Lebanon, the weapon is a guarantee to stay in front of a painful memory of the relationship with the political power historically and

its leaders today. Both Berri, Samir Geagea, Jumblatt and Aoun were directly or indirectly responsible for the wars of liquidation and abductions of the Palestinians from Tel Zaatar to Sabra and Shatila and War The camps. For Palestinians, arms are a guarantee of life and rights. As for the Lebanese authority, it is an obstacle to its desire to tighten central political and security control.

In a simple way, the Palestinians have the right to ask, what is the guarantee that the state will provide for their lives and their right to life? This is where the basic problem is based. The Lebanese government's politicians can not be trusted, and how is the weapon handed over to those responsible for shedding Palestinian blood in the recent past?

Today, the history of each blessed sect is equal in its shedding of Palestinian blood. The Sunni community, by circumventing the leadership of Hariri junior, is performing its national Lebanese duty to kill Palestinian civilians. The Druze problem remains because they have not formally participated in the shedding of Palestinian blood unless we consider Jumblatt's support for Berri at the beginning of the camp war.

After the civil war ended, the Palestinian arena became a market for political exploitation and extortion. Here we may have to remember the role of the organs in "shaping" and supporting many organized groups - and those that are not disciplined - by some power poles and intelligence agencies. Today, lack of discipline is required by the terms of the Lebanese political game.

We know that any group violates a security device that can be hacked from any other device. We know that Syrian intelligence and others supported various organizations, including organizations that take shelter from the camps. We know that the camps were so besieged as to prevent tombstones from entering. And we know the names of ministers and politicians during the Syrian era and their names before and after, they have not changed. We also know that power support for groups can be used when the sedition order comes in. Only a few days ago (and here it might be useful to wait a little before judgment). We know that for most of that period, the ruling party was the same, whether under Syrian, American or Iranian pressure.

Today they speak of Fatah al-Islam as being outside the political reality and its balance as the new national enemy of the Lebanese authority. Every nation or nation needs an enemy to adopt its identity. The political class has not been able to find this enemy in either Israel or Syria, and now it is found in the Palestinians, not in Fatah al-Islam. The official enemy is the opening of peace, but the actual blood in which the Lebanese national citadel is painted is Palestinian blood.

The maneuver to build a Sunni front to counter the alleged Shiite tide has turned into a scenario for the liquidation of Palestinian civilians in the war of building the prestige of the state against terrorist Salafist organizations related to political analysis directly to the Hariri leadership.

Fatah al-Islam joins the Ta'if state

The Lebanese authority led Fatah al-Islam from Beirut to Nahr al-Bared in "black pockets with their weapons," according to many residents of Nahr al-Bared. Seven years ago, clashes broke out between a group calling itself Takfir and Hijra in the Dhinniyyah area. Many members of this group were imprisoned and the state

released them under the amnesty law that freed Samir Geagea.

It can be an electoral reason or to support a Sunni movement to compete, if not confront, Hezbollah, which "takes up the resistance." Elias Atallah's influence on March 14 "thought" could be greater than we think, but what is important here is that the relationship exists. The "humanitarian" argument in the amnesty request should be excluded because there are thousands of prisoners, some of whom are oppressed, living in deplorable conditions, some of whom are Sunnis, not covered by the amnesty law.

Hariri's death was the right cover to connect with sectarian groups and protect them through the Future Movement and Sunni religious leaders. It is obvious that the policies of the Lebanese government are directly linked to the policies of the "international community" led by the United States and France, which play a central role in Lebanon to restore the mandate period and the era of the Vichy government in particular.

The interdependence here is not only internal but is the result of chaos and creative political upheaval that governs the Middle East in general. Chaos may be the most appropriate word today to describe the reality of the region in its political, as well as security and economic. Many may ask whether this chaos is intentional or merely chaotic, but its reality and results are clear. Is essentially a US-led struggle for control under the pretext of the war on terror. And imposed in this war a pattern of security policies and dictatorship and conflicts and sectarian and sectarian.

The United States today is acting through the same ideological line as the al-Qaeda, ie, destabilizing the status quo through terrorist security breaches that spread an environment of fear and impose its laws on the map. As the same rule is imposed on the American map, the United States imposes itself on the map of the Middle East; the base through individual terrorism and the United States through state terrorism.

The general political reality imposes itself directly on domestic politics. In foreign affairs, we say TVA in French, in the neoliberal Anglo-colonial economy, at the meeting "Levi Strauss" , And perhaps find the misfortune of Ahmed Bezun, the army whites face and resolute Saghya who justified the killing of civilians hostage to an oil militia and seized his pension from the newspaper of the point, perhaps we find in the cultural policies, 300 stupid in a cinema. Chaos and an alleged war on terrorism.

This direct communication between internal and regional reality negates the ability of any of us to separate them, and the separation becomes a logic out of reality and an enmity to it. To those who indulge in realism from the thinkers of the series of building the state, they must first stop barking and start listening to the reality of the reality and watch the fire penetrate all the gaps and geopolitical boundaries.

Lebanese territorial interdependence is not mysterious, it is apparent to all who can see, read or hear. The United States in its daily adventures in the jungles of the Middle East produced some loyalists and supporters of the regimes, some of whom promised projects and were terrified of American brutality and obedience to their will. In this mess, US companies record huge profits either by stealing Iraq's oil and its effects or by selling arms, ammunition and explosives, and securing contractors, including a Lebanese who is linked to Lebanese (pardon) parties.

This mess is being confronted by anarchy created by the Syrian and Iranian

regimes in Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon. The chaos has become the motto of today, and Saudi Arabia, Iran and Syria see that whoever can be the best policeman to control that mess will be the pivotal player in the next phase of the new Middle East. Within these battles, the role of pro-opposition or pro-regime power becomes essentially police power, under the pretext of controlling the chaos it produces.

The spread of chaos is easy, even outside the circle of military intervention, especially in Lebanon where corruption is the rank of minister, president or deputy. What is going on is a modified version of Iraq, where the occupation uses the "Badr Brigade" for instance to counter Sunni disobedience and then supports Sunni groups to curb Shiite expansion. Divide and conquer. In short, when the American administration finds that the threat comes from Shiites, we see it supporting Sunni groups like al Qaeda. When the threat comes from al-Qaeda, it belongs to the Shiites. This old and new strategy was used in the 1990s when the United States supported Syrian influence in Lebanon and later opposed it.

Spreading chaos

in March 2007, Seymour Hersh announced (the journalist in the magazine "New Yorker") that after the crisis situation in Iraq and the defeat of Hezbollah , Israel inflicted on the tourist season the US administration has decided to oppose Iran, Syria and their allies Shiites by supporting Sunni groups jihadist. Hersh stressed that the current violence in Lebanon is a result of the Lebanese government's intention to support these armed groups to confront Hezbollah.

Let's say Hersh is a "Syrian agent", or to say that he is not an "expert" in the region. What about Michael Young, editor of the Daily Star (an imperialist newspaper) and a friend of politics celebrities, and some of its activists, supporter of the Cedar Revolution and the Independence and Truth uprising? "It may seem that the Hariri family has financed Islamists, but the fact is they have done what they usually do when they face problems: they are trying to buy them to get rid of them," Young says.

There is no need to read opposition newspapers to know how far the involvement is. Walid Jumblatt received a telephone call from MP Bahia Hariri, explaining to him that the Jund al-Sham group in Ain al-Hilweh camp does not belong to the Fatah al-Islam gang, Jumblatt expressed his interest in these clarifications. " Jumblatt may also be interested to know that financing terrorists and even going for a walk is a crime the size of terrorism. To ask INTERPOL.

So, the authority is responsible, with the international community, for Fatah al-Islam (Islam is ignorant, Fatah?). The latter, when it emerged, announced its confrontation with the Shiite expansion and its control of the resistance against Israel and the US, and that it did not want a confrontation with the Lebanese army and that it had many things to do with the ruling party regarding the opposition of Hezbollah and Iran.

Among these "many things" is the sectarian discourse used by the March 14 Forces to mobilize against the resistance last summer, which became the broad title of Lebanese state policies. One such mobilization was the clashes that took place several weeks ago in the vicinity of the Arab League in Beirut, which later turned out

to be snipers belonging to Saad Hariri's private security institutions.

Terrorism became the main argument of the March 14 militias, official, private and civil, and with the participation of the opposition choir to unload the hateful messages broadcast by its media. And politicians, some of whom are steeped in the blood of the Lebanese and the Palestinians, are massacred or used in their personal battles and projects, or the projects of their fathers, who have fallen physically and morally.

CPJ called for the protection of correspondents. This came after a series of attacks by pro-Hariri and Jumblat gangs against the correspondents of al-Jadid, al-Manar and others. The attacks were not spontaneous, as one of the senior cadres of the Jumblatt militia, Akram Shahib, claimed after the explosion of Aley, which got the eyes of the representatives of the state, the security forces that responded to barbaric attacks against Syrian workers by arresting Syrian workers.

This situation was expressed by Trotsky almost 100 years ago in the Austrian Social Democrats' article, "Why do Marxists oppose individual terrorism?" When he rejected terrorism because he "underestimates the role of the masses ... detracts from its role and makes it surrender to its helplessness and draws its attention to an avenging and saved hero." "Those moralists who respond to every act of terrorism with statements about the absolute value of human life are themselves ready. Other occasions and in the name of other absolute values such as the honor of the nation or the prestige of the king to push millions of people into the hell of war. "

Control of chaos in Lebanon

The "addressing security issues of the present and the future" takes its new form between 2004 and 2005 after a few years of training, processing and "seminars" held by United Nations security organizations. Al-Salam massacre has shown that the new security doctrine will not give up some of its historical principles, especially the shooting of the poor if they dare to demonstrate outside the frameworks outlined in advance.

Hariri's bombing added new arguments for surveillance, eavesdropping, cameras, multi-color devices and interests. The doctrines of the apparatuses have shifted from the Syrian Baathist doctrine, where every citizen has an informant to every "informant citizen" of the older brother. Which of them has more pictures in the streets of his cities, Rafik Hariri or Hafez Assad?

The erosion of these rights came in line with the withdrawal of a majority of those who claimed democracy to the Democratic Left and Democratic Renewal movements and their alignment behind Jumblatt, Ja'ja 'and Hariri. This ensured that their work as experts on poverty, democracy or health would continue as a report of the poor and the Democrats, A post with the United Nations or another international organization promoting the March 14 ideology.

We are concerned here with one subject, perhaps the democratic ambassadors (the leftists and the renegades) explain it to us. Why did some United Nations organizations move their headquarters three days before the northern clashes? And not after security developments as they try to suggest in interviews. Does this measure relate to information or analysis? If so, would it not have been better and

more sustainable to alert and vaccinate the camps instead of the billions that would be spent in relief, development and development?

You cannot tell the future that some of us will believe it all the time. But a wise man can not believe the leaders of Hariri's group around the international tribunal and their "need" to reach Chapter 7 unless the record of George Bush's advisers' On the Air Force One flight en route to the G8 summit on June 4, 2007, which says, "The President spoke with Saad Hariri this morning." Saad Hariri wanted to talk to the president and show appreciation for the support provided by the United States and the leadership of the UN Security Council Chapter VII The past and the judge to form an international tribunal to consider the assassination of Hariri. " The memo refers to Hariri's thanks to Bush for the aid he received in the army, which the White House linked to the crisis in the north.

Saad did not mention truth or justice. His talk was about Chapter VII and the weapon. This is important. The weapons arrived and ammunition would arrive in succession, and modern equipment and machinery. It will not be good for fighting Israel or even to prevent Syria, and it is no different from the weapons of other regular armies, in particular, the US military.

In his book Planet of Slums, American writer Mike Davis points to the development of poor communities into huge civilian enclosures containing hundreds of thousands of unemployed and informal workers. The labels are many, and in Lebanon, we prefer words like "suburbs" or "belts of misery", but they are no different in their relationship with the economic system than "favela" in Brazil, for example.

One of the many examples that Davies gave was Karantina, where hundreds of workers were slaughtered once a day in "the beginnings of civil war." We can add Tel Zaatar to its example, but today we see dozens of Krentina in the suburbs of Beirut, southern and eastern and northern and in Tripoli from Zahariya, Qubba and Tabana, an extension to Beddawi and Albarard and to the towns of Dennia and Akkar.

This is where Fatah al-Islam grew up. Every day, a new Islam is opened in one of the cities of poverty in a city without any Syrian or American support. But the biggest problem is not the US role in allowing Fatah al-Islam to grow, but the American military doctrine of responding to these phenomena.

"The future wars will be in the streets, streams and skyscrapers of the expansions of residential areas that make up the broken cities of the world ... Our modern military history is interspersed with the names of cities - Tuzla, Mogadishu," Davis said in an article in 1996. Los Angeles, Beirut, Panama City, Hui, Saigon, Santo Domingo - but these clashes are just an introduction, and the actual drama has not yet taken place. "

Chapter VII, which thanked Hariri, said that the Security Council, after "suspending economic, rail, maritime, air, postal, telegraphic, radio and other means of transportation, partially or completely suspended and severing diplomatic relations" (Article 41), "may Air, sea and land forces shall take necessary action to maintain or restore international peace and security, and such acts may include demonstrations, embargoes and other operations by means of the air, sea or ground forces of Members of the United Nations. " (Article 42).

Observe how the demonstration (for example, an open sit-in) can be prevented under the tutelage of Chapter VII or that the United Nations may use military force

against it. In other words, Ahmed's insistence on suppressing the right to demonstrate and assemble through his heresy about organizing demonstrations when he was acting minister may be done tomorrow with a blue gun. If one of the UNDP staff (an unarmed United Nations program) says in the coffin that with the bombing of Nahr al-Bared by aircraft, imagine what the UNIFIL mercenaries might do?

The answer may come from Haiti, where the United Nations "preserves security" after the intervention of US states in the affairs of this poor island to block the local democratic process that may lead one day to the arrival of a president refuses to be a dog of the White House. In addition to an official report adopted by former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, which refers to the involvement of United Nations soldiers in "repeated patterns of sexual assault and rape by soldiers presumed to maintain the rule of international law", the Haitian police , At the disposal of the international community and trained by the United Nations and prepared by the US military, to kill unarmed civilians and slaughter children under the sight of the generals of the blue caps.

On 2/2/2007, Haiti Action reported on a massacre by United Nations and Haitian security forces during the storming of the Cité Soleil (Sun City) neighborhood after the massacre of 6/7/2005 in which UN forces 22,000 ammunition launchers facing a gang of 30 individuals. But in February, eyewitnesses confirmed that the source of the fire was only the United Nations troops, one of whom had entered the house of Marcius Lupine, hit him in the arm and killed his two sleeping daughters, Stephanie (4) and Alexandra (7 years).

For the international community, all of the above falls within the context of the re-establishment of the international system to match the priority of the "war on terror". "The US government is trying to turn the whole world into a battlefield in the context of the" war on terror, "a vague war that is not clear and probably will never end," Human Rights Watch said.

"The current framework of international law and multilateralism is one of the most systematic attacks since its inception half a century ago. Some challenge direct international human rights law and international humanitarian law as incapable of addressing current and future security issues, Under the pretext of the "war on terror", some Governments are wasting the principles, standards and values of human rights, and the international community appears unable or unwilling to put an end to this trend, while the armed groups continue to ignore their responsibilities under international humanitarian law.

Will there be those who will benefit from the right of return?

After the brutal attack on the soldiers of the Lebanese army, the State of the Cedar Revolution has achieved its purpose. Their clients in the United Nations and the "civil" community may have advised them that the racist mobilization against the Syrians is unsustainable. They can leave if they wish, but cheap labor that Lebanese and Syrian capital can not completely dispose of. Racism against Shiites may create some problems, especially for some intellectuals who may become infected with intestinal infections from what they see from bodies.

Racism against the Palestinians is rooted in the Lebanese state and its political

parties, right and left. Right, we know what he says, we can read the creations of life lovers on their websites and there is a "legacy" full of "LBC." To regain it, and restore it, without reference to Amin Gemayel and his return to the fascist rhetoric frenzied during the Sunday food in the village.

The position of the left is "more complicated." With most of the Lebanese left today adopting the serious statements of Pierre Gemayel regarding the army and the patriotism (and every patriotism is fascism), the "right of return," in practice, remains the repression and abuse of Palestinians, They congratulate Lebanese people on their refusal to return. This, on the moral level, is no different from the attitude of Europeans who prefer to see Jews in a state that oppresses them.

The Lebanese state will not regain its lost prestige since 1943 by attacking refugees in camps that are like detention camps. The PA wants to perpetrate a massacre against the Palestinian refugees by "implicating" the army in a battle in which a group (under surveillance and prosecution) of thousands of civilians will take "human shields." But what if she decided to open Islam instead of stealing Hariri's bank in retaliation for not paying salaries - as they say, of course - what if she decided to hijack a plane? Do you see the airport and the plane explode? What if the security forces, preoccupied with assaulting every Palestinian or Palestinian youth, noticed the group that placed the explosives here and there and took them to the building where the family of the Palestinian Samir Kassir lives? Were the tanks sweeping Sassin Square and firing their shells?

The state, opposition and loyalty, exploits the Palestinian cause to pass its political agenda. The Free Patriotic Movement, as a whole, declared its solidarity with the army and ignored the lives of civilians inside the camp. It seems that "reconciling" the current with the Arab regimes may mean adopting this Republican Party to the methods of the Syrian Baath. The exception was Hezbollah, which considered the lives of civilians and the camp red lines.

Since the first spark of the events of the cold, racism in Lebanon has increased through the political propaganda of the Lebanese state and through the media institutions that have supported the army unabashedly by the current humanitarian catastrophe in the camp. This is at a time when the displaced from the cold that the Future Movement had opened fire on them while fleeing the bombing, at a time of arrest and humiliation of Palestinian civilians in Beirut by the army and the Internal Security Forces, as well as a series of random killings and accounts of human rights defenders on the arrest Foreign workers, especially the Syrians, were put in trucks with their hands tied.

This racist and chauvinist atmosphere has turned to civil society, with the majority of organizations claiming to work under the title of human rights refusing to sign a statement demanding the respect and maintenance of the rights of civilians. This rejection came from representatives of institutions and groups that claim to work with the marginalized and the poor, including Communist Party organizations, human rights organizations, liberals and leftist "democrats". Even the Anarchists began to lick police boots.

The role of the left

The basic question we ask for all who defend the prestige of the army and stand behind it is, why should Palestinians sacrifice their lives for a state that does not recognize their existence as human beings? Why should the Palestinians respect the prestige of a state that is devouring them and violating their most basic civil and human rights and depriving them of a decent life and controlling them with humiliation, oppression and poverty?

We do not say that there is no value to the lives of the soldiers, what happened is a terrorist crime in charge of which is Fatah al-Islam, which financed and covered and armed Fatah al-Islam. But the soldiers' lives are no higher than the lives of Palestinian civilians. If there is absolute value to human life, there is no place, and it is totally unacceptable, that there are ranks for the value of the life of a soldier and the life of a Palestinian.

Lebanese army soldiers are victims like Palestinians. They are the victim of power and their dirty and criminal political maneuvers. Solidarity starts here, and the threat of Fatah al-Islam to the Palestinian and Lebanese peace is the result of the threat posed by the present Lebanese authority to the Lebanese and Palestinian communities. Solidarity starts a Lebanese Palestinian in a common struggle for equality and rights. Solidarity starts with class solidarity, not national spinning.

Persecution, racism and the killing of civilians are unacceptable. Fatah Islam is a direct expression of state terrorism, which today supports US policies that were allied to the Syrian regime at a previous stage, not at all interested in building a secure and balanced society. Those thugs and criminals will continue their attack on the working class, so the Lebanese and Palestinian working class must stand hand in hand to get rid of the vampires of the ruling class. The Lebanese must rise up to extend solidarity with the Palestinians in a common confrontation against a political authority that created, financed and supported Fatah al-Islam and other death squads like Jund al-Sham in Sidon.

In the first place, the responsibility of the left requires solidarity with the Palestinians because today's battle is the reality of tomorrow, and its avoidance only means more racism, poverty and defeats of the working class. On the left, he must stop taking political and popular cover for political power. He must seize this opportunity to push for a common Lebanese-Palestinian class struggle against oppression, oppression, poverty and a dignified life.

No sanctity of life when refugees are deprived of their fundamental rights, not the sanctity of a homeland or an army when most of these "refugees" are born and have lived their lives in Lebanon. The Lebanese worker, like the Palestinian worker, suffers from the same pain and the policy of oppression itself, and they have to unite in order to stand against this political authority that relies on murder and criminality in order to build its prestige. As a woman from Kesrouan said on LBC: In the palaces we hold in the graves. " This is the words of one of the soldiers who were killed in the war of power over the uncontrolled elements of the now opening of Islam.

The fear is not to be met, not by its commitment, and here is the need to move and work to eliminate the bloody projects of the Lebanese authority. On the left to get out of collusion and hide behind the national violence and to respond to this attack on the working class of Lebanon and Palestine, we hear from time to time about some

of the elements of the security engine kills Lebanese civilians, and the outcome of the martyrs here similar to the outcome of terrorist bombings that occur every two or three days. If the situation is to defend the homeland and stability, should not this stability protect Palestinian and Lebanese citizens?

The defense of power today is the betrayal of the left by those who claim to be represented and the leftist parties, which evade a direct stance on the subject, are only poles in support of the rise of the fascist state in Lebanon. If the traditional left has given up its role in favor of building a political system in which some reforms can be imposed, the Palestinian and Lebanese working classes have no doubt that the dustbin of history will extend to all of them, power and the state and Fatah al-Islam.

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The Lebanese State Unleashed

The war between Fateh el-Islam and the Lebanese Army, May 2007

The Devastating attacks in Achrafieh, Verdun and Alley as well as the brutal clashes that are taking place in Nahr el-Bared Palestinian refugee camps and inside Tripoli, are the most direct result of Lebanese state policies and the destabilization of the region by US policies. The necessity here is to look at the situation and its developments in the context of Lebanese politics, regional politics and imperialism and its superpowers. It is a necessity to understand the underlying conditions and the possible outcomes of such events.[11]The US 'war on terror'

The US, since the attacks of 9/11, decided to launch the "war on terror", even some aestheticians still debate either it was a "war on terror" as it was more likely a "war of terror". This war was the awaiting dream of George Bush and the neo-cons, and the 9/11 attack gave them the best excuse to start unleashing hell on the Middle East — the war on Afghanistan, then the war on Iraq, Israel's July War on Lebanon, the continuing ethnic cleansing in Palestine. Now the US is threatening to attack Iran because of its nuclear program, and it is gathering its troops and weapons in the Gulf in one of the biggest military shows in our recent history.

Excuse me here as I fail to see it in any way a fight for democratizing the Middle East or a fight against terror, I see it more like an expansion trend of a great imperialist power supported by the international agencies and other Great Powers, such as Europe, which most of them are supporters of US policies or came out to be. The last win in US supporters in Europe is Nicholas Sarkozy in France who he screams loudly in support of the war in the Middle East.

But the mess that Bush got himself into in Iraq, the last record of dead US soldiers in Iraq is 3,343, and the lost July Israeli war on Lebanon, put the Bush administration in a tight position both locally and internationally. Due to such situation the US is looking for a way out, or maybe a total and open war in the Middle East, which might shuffle the cards of regional powers and put the US in a winning position.

Last March, veteran journalist Seymour Hersh, reported that American policy in the Middle East had shifted to opposing Iran, Syria, and their Shia allies at any

cost, even if it meant backing hard-line Sunni jihadists. In an interview on CNN International's Your World Today, Seymour Hersh explains that the current violence in Lebanon is the result of an attempt by the Lebanese government to crack down on a militant Sunni group, Fatah al-Islam, which it formerly supported.[12] The Changes in US policies are not yet that clear, but we can see a change related to the development of US politics and their stands on regional issues, for example the US senate agreed to fund the Bush war in Iraq with $120 billion USD and send an additional 30,000 US troops to Iraq. Bush declares that the battle against the armed gangs in Iraq will be brutal and decisive. (www.aljazeera.net) Also both the US and Lebanese ambassador "refused to enlist a section related to putting the responsible of the last attacks in Lebanon to court" (www.aljazeera.net)

In addition in response to the recent clashes in North Lebanon, the US has declared that it will open an air route for the Lebanese army in its war against Fateh el-Islam. Even though that US policies does not have a direct link with Fateh el-Islam, but we can be sure that the US is responsible for preparing the general or the regional environment for the mobility and emergence of such groups in response to the continuing US war in the Middle East. Also the destabilization on the political, economic and social level that the US war created all around the Middle East allowed high mobility for these groups and the ability to organize, especially with the rising feeling of anger and rage against US policies in these regions, which has allowed fundamentalist groups to recruit a lot of members from all around.

Fateh el-Islam is no alien to such environment and might seem to be a direct result of such policies, When the organisation came to Lebanon they declared to be against the Shia Expansion and their monopoly over the resistance to Israel and the US, and also declared to be against the UNIFIL forces in South Lebanon, and they still till now say that they did not want any confrontation with the Lebanese Army. It seems more that they are in line with March 14th movement in relation to Hezbollah and also in line with US policies in relation to Hezbollah and Iran.

The regional context

The Attack on Afghanistan and on Iraq destabilised the balance of power between the different regimes in the Middle East, Syria lost a lot of its weight in regional politics and Iran grew considerable especially due to the degrading situation for the occupation forces in Iraq and also because of the failure of the Israeli war on Lebanon, and also these same events undermine the Syrian presence as it lost its backyard and a main economic and political weight due to its occupation of Lebanon.

Iran and Syria worked together as Iran needs an ally in the region especially since all the other regimes in the region are Pro-US. Also the Syrians after they lost their main position as a regional power needed a strong regional ally to support it. The Syrian-Iranian Coalition represents what is called to be the Anti-US regimes in the Middle East. But their policies are not driven from anti-imperialist or an anti-war tendency but rather related to conflicting interests with the US administration.

The rest of Arab regimes in the Middle East are direct allies of US policies, and they now share an equal weight in regional influence, from Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, etc.… these regimes as well as the Syrian regime are no less then direct dictatorships

who live by oppressing their own people and cutting the road against any genuine democratic or anti-imperialist movements. The Lebanese state or regime also does not fall far from these regimes, the recent developments after the assassination of Rafic Hariri allowed the rise of a pro-US and a neo-liberal movement March 14 who is mostly composed of warlords from the last Lebanese civil war, and who themselves were the main allies of the Syrian regime when it was controlling Lebanon. After the July war in Lebanon, Hezbollah went to the offensive against the government and managed to create a wide opposition front especially with the FPM (Free Patriotic Movement), but the unwillingness of the opposition in continuing the battle against the government led to a bottleneck within the Lebanese political scene, where both the government and the opposition stands with an iron-wall position against the other, and with the absence of a left movement in the country, this bottleneck resulted in opening the country for many scenarios and also encouraged the infiltration of many international and regional intelligence services.

Lebanon, the Palestinian situation and the emergence of Fateh el-Islam

Lebanese army troops have been for the past few years tightening the grip around the Palestinian camps driving its population into despair and revenge. The economic and social conditions of the Palestinians camps might be considered of the worst refugee camps in the world, absence of all state services, education is concentrate in UNRWA schools who lack any proper curriculum or facilities, many camps had to fit in 40 to 50 students per classroom and with two periods, a morning and an afternoon period. The urban conditions of the camps are very poor, with houses built on top of each other, no structural basis, and with a ban imposed by the state disallowing the import of any construction materials inside the camps. Palestinians have no civil rights, they are not allowed to work, not allowed to own and not allowed any social services from the state.

For the past decades the Lebanese state have been generalising and stereotyping Palestinians in Lebanon as standard criminals and terrorist and in most times the media has merged between the two identities, being Palestinian became an equivalent to being a terrorist or an outlaw. A Racist State will not create an environment of peace and tolerance but will only create or build for ecology of fear and violence.

These kind of policies have drove the majority of the Palestinian population in Lebanon to the defensive which led the outmost majority of the classical and new Palestinian organisations to stand back from the political scene and not daring into putting a confident step and to demand their civil rights and their even basic human rights from education, work, living services, etc.…

These kinds of policies, allowed for the camps to be reduced to be transformed to concentration camps where Palestinians are not allowed to leave the camp and their lives were reduced to the few square kilometres they are kept in. And through the past few years and especially since the assassination of Hariri, the Government has been planning to disarm the Palestinian camps in Lebanon arguing that the state should have a monopoly over violence. But here the government fails to give any sense or feeling of security for Palestinian refugees especially when they talk about the state's monopoly over violence as this government and its members as well as

the historical ruling class in Lebanon has been known as a historic enemy for the Palestinians.

The state's history with the Palestinian refugees have been a history of blood and terrorism, from the curfews during the rule of 2nd office or the secret police, and the massacres which were inflicted against the Palestinians in Tel el-Zaatar, Sabra and Chatilla, and the Siege of the Camps, all these policies were not considered to be acts of terrorism or oppression but in many cases were called episodes of Lebanese liberation. The Lebanese state is formed by it most majority by war criminals and murderers and committed convicts on crimes against humanity.

All these conditions allowed the camps to be an easy hideout for Fundamentalist groups and in many times these groups get a facilitated entry to the camps by the Lebanese state itself, for example Jund El Sham a Lebanese Fundamentalist group who believes in Terrorism as a its main policies were pushed away from the Ta'mir Area in Saida which is a Lebanese area and pushed by the army inside the Ain el-Helweh Camp.

As for Fateh el-Islam, this group was rejected by all Palestinian camps in Lebanon and the only place they could base themselves into was in Nahr EL Bared camp, and many say that their entry to Nahr el Bared was also facilitated by the Lebanese State. Also all Palestinian officials in Lebanon said that Fateh el-Islam is not the result of the social and political fabric of the Palestinians in Lebanon. Assafir (The Second Largest daily paper in Lebanon www.assafir.com) wrote that Fateh el-Islam is mostly composed of non-Palestinians especially Saudis and Lebanese militants.

This shows that Fateh el-Islam is more likely to be an implant that was pushed into the camps. In addition the name of Fateh el-Islam have been on the news and in the general political discussions for the past six months, the organisation had tons of money which allowed them to rent apartments in the Meatein area in Tripoli which is quite a wealthy area where the apartment costs between 60,000 to 100,000 USD (Al-Akhbar Newspaper).

To understand the emergence of Fateh el-Islam and its ability to organize fast needs local cooperation and local networks, and North of Lebanon is the best place for the establishment and the growth of such a group. North Lebanon with a Sunni majority has been since the 80's a breeding ground for Islamic Fundamentalism who managed to destroy the Secular, Nationalist and Communist Movements in the North. When Arafat left Tripoli in 1983 after brutal clashes against Fateh El Intifada, the city was taken under the control of the Islamists backed by the Muslim Brotherhood who fled Syria after the Syrian regime's attack on them and especially in Hamah.

The North is historically neglected by the Lebanese State and the conditions of poverty, unemployment, and bad living conditions, allowed the area to move more and more towards Islamic fundamentalism as a way out of such conditions.

Seven years ago, clashes broke out between the Lebanese army and a group called "Al-Takfir wal al-Hijra" in the hills of Dounniyeh, the clashes resulted in casualties from the two sides. And many of the members of such organisation were locked into prison to be released later by a general pardon put out inside the House of Parliament to release Geagea from Prison. The pardon included the Islamist detainees because Saed Eddine el Hariri, the son of late PM Rafic el Hariri, in an attempt by him to gather

the Sunni votes with him and in a way gather support from the Fundamentalist currents in North Lebanon. The assassination of his father gave him the best cover to release them and also allowed him to be able to communicate to such groups by the rising sectarian rhetoric propagated by the Future Current and its supporters from the Sunni religious leaders.

In the North Parliamentary elections these groups went out on the streets supporting Hariri, and basically Saed el-Dine proclaimed to be the main leader of the Sunni Sect in Lebanon. The Mufti of Akkar told Al Jazeera two days ago that the Lebanese state was covering on the funding that Fateh el-Islam is receiving from the Future Current and more specifically from Saed Eddine el Hariri, in the purpose of a local Sunni agenda against a local Shia agenda. But soon enough the Future Current retreated from supporting these groups and removed the political and religious cover from these groups especially after the last visit of David Welch to Lebanon. Also this information was confirmed by an ex-Future Current Leader in Akkar as well.

The rise of a highly sectarian rhetoric from the side of March 14th has been a common scene in local Lebanese politics, and it was clear from the Arab University clashes in Beirut few months ago, the condemned shooters and snipers were seen on TV with their faces known to everyone, but still these people were either released from detention or have not been taken to justice. Al-Akhbar mentioned a few days later to the events that the gunmen and the shooters belonged to private security companies owned by Hariri.

Also two days ago, Future Current militants or members attacked a writer and a theatre actor Muhammad el Awgi and have beaten him and told him that if he reported them to the police the building owner who is also a future current member would kick him and his family out of the building. In Alley directly after the explosion, Walid Jumblatt supporters attacked many journalists from Al-Manar TV, NewTV, Al Alam Tv, and 2 Syrian workers; all of this and the police was watching and did not intervene to stop the attacks.

Such general environment of poverty, and violence and the rise of the sectarian rhetoric who is mainly the product of the state policies and the sectarian system in Lebanon, which is also supported by all ruling class actors and the religious leaderships are the main causes for the ability for groups like Fateh el-Islam to grow and organize. The tragic scenes we are witnessing today in Lebanon are the bitter fruits of policies pursued by the Lebanese State and the Lebanese ruling class.

Palestinian and Lebanese working classes have one common enemy

Today the Palestinians in Lebanon are the victims of state policies and its racist nature and acts. The State's brutality in dealing with local situation and its history of violence and crimes against its own people is the direct and the main reason for the deterioration of the situation in Lebanon and is the main responsible for the bloodshed and the massacre that is happening against the Palestinians in Lebanon.

Statesmen, Political Leaders, Ministers and MPs within the Lebanese State are speaking on terrorist outrages, denouncing those responsible as "evil terrorists" with no regard for "the sanctity of human life". But the sanctity of Human Life does not show or appear when the state decides to ban Palestinian refugees from their basic

rights and more often from life itself, it does not show when the army or the police attacks and kills protesters demanding better living conditions like what happened in Hay el Sellom in 27th of May 2004, were the army started shooting live bullets against protesting civilians, killing five workers.

The Lebanese State and its composition from Loyalists and Opposition is a brutal enemy to the working class in Lebanon, it is the reason behind massacres against the Lebanese and Palestinian working class. Day by day driving people to poverty and despair by outrageous economic policies hiking taxes like the VAT, the high inflation, high unemployment, high concentration of capital in the hands of fewer bunch of people, the spreading of the suburbs to eat out the majority of the cities, a huge expansion of the working class with a dead trade union movements which were destroyed by the Lebanese ruling class.

Today the attack is against the Palestinian working class, Fateh el-Islam is the best-laid opportunity for the state to start a massive attack on the Palestinian refugees and in a plan to control and limit their mobility and their own existence. A screaming statement by one of the Nahr el Bared refugees is a clear statement of what are the Lebanese state policies all about, when asked where he is heading by a news reporter while he was fleeing the Nahr el Bared camp the man paused then a cry came by and said: That cannot be, we are Palestinians, we are malice, then throw the chemo, and kill us all, we cannot live, we're not allowed, get rid of us for we are heavy load. The man never managed to stop crying, he left home for the first time and now he is leaving his second home again.

Till now about 15,000 left the camp, most of them gathered in Beddawi camp the nearest to Nahr El Bared. The Army is continuing its arbitrary shelling of the camp, reports say that 40 percent of the camp has been destroyed; many eyewitnesses say that bodies are spread out in the streets of the camps and under the ruins. PM Seniora is calling to a decisive strike against Fateh el-Islam and is collecting support for the Lebanese Army, he did not mind to gather any support for the Palestinian refugees, he is not planning to change any of the military tactics that is being used by the army to avoid the killing of civilians. Yesterday he said that the Palestinian political parties should remove the cover from Fateh el-Islam in response the State will secure the civilians, it is exactly the same policies that the Israelis used during the July war on Lebanon, it asked the Lebanese to stop supporting Hezbollah and deliver Nasrallah in response it will stop attacking civilians.

The Lebanese army is committing a massacre against the Palestinian refugees by the shelling of the camps, and this definitely will not build any peace nor tolerance nor it will bring the peace of mind for the Palestinians to be able to build trust with the Lebanese state. And the government and as well as the opposition is not feeling any distress because of their acts and they are both using Palestinians as an excuse to pass their own political agendas, the March 14th are demanding the army to go in inside the camp, also the FPM (Free Patriotic Movement) is attacking the government of intelligence and security breaches and corruption and is also demanding that the army should go inside the camp. Hezbollah is mainly using the issue to attack the government; none of the ruling class parties has put any consideration for the Palestinian refugees. And they are all propagating to gather support for the army in

its war against terror, it reminds us all of US policies to gather support for the troops in the war against terror.

When the clashes took place the army was brutally attacked by Fateh el-Islam killing many soldiers, the State's weight and sanctity was breached and now it is being built or won again by killing Palestinians. A racist trend is rising due to State propaganda and due to the Media campaigns in support of the army and neglecting the humanitarian disaster that is happening. The Lebanese State is the main class enemy of the Lebanese and the Palestinian working class, and it is a necessity that the left in Lebanon should stand in solidarity with the Palestinian working class in defiance against state policies and the attacks that are taking place against Nahr el Bared camp. The communist party in Lebanon should be disgraced and condemned for being a silent collaborator with the killings of civilians, since it has declared its support to the Lebanese army.

With such attitude of one of the main blocks of the left in Lebanon we need to stand today and start building a working class solidarity between Lebanese and Palestinians and try to prepare for the battle against oppression and the massacres committed by the state and its armed and security forces. The Army has the state and the international community in its support, and under any logic it is not accepted for any proclaimed leftist, socialist or Marxist organisation to take a position supporting the armed state's machine of oppression.

For us we are quite clear in such cases we abhor violence, and oppose indiscriminate bombings of civilians. Fateh el-Islam should be looked at as an alarming consequence and direct result of state terrorism and the general destabilization of the region and also as a result of the Syrian occupation in Lebanon. The rule of the thugs and war criminals and ex-collaborators of the Syrian regime and present-collaborators of US policies, would in no means build a society of peace and tolerance, but instead it will be a society full of hatred, sectarianism and racism. And this would only bring more attacks on the working class.

The Lebanese and Palestinian working class need first to build class unity between them and not a unity build on identity politics, and hand-in-hand need to make a stand and get rid of the blood-stained officials, ministers, MPs and build a people's Lebanon. The Left in Lebanon should step out of its ghettos, either being in the Palestinian camps or in alleys and streets of Beirut. It is first the responsibility of the Lebanese left to make a courageous step towards the Palestinians and start building networks of solidarity and unity.

There is no space today for any defeatist or a defensive position, today's battle is tomorrow's reality and avoiding this battle would mean more divergence and more racism and a bitter defeat for the working class in Lebanon. The conditions for a strong working class movement in the political sense are very weak, but in such times if the left was able to relate between the oppression that the Palestinians are facing with the oppression that the Lebanese workers are facing, there is a good chance for a movement to emerge to the surface. Such a movement is hard guarantee against the possible deterioration of the situation that might lead to more violence and clashes and might be able to stop the State's highly possible offensive against the Palestinian camps, especially that now the State is using what is happening in Nahr el-Bared as

an excuse to demand the removal of Palestinian weapons from the camps.

At the end there is no one who better explained the dangers of such issue, than Leon Trotsky, written about 88 years ago. Trotsky's writings remain an invaluable guide. First of all Trotsky dealt brilliantly with the hypocrisy of our rulers. Socialists, he argued, have "nothing in common with those bought and paid for moralists who, in response to any terrorist act, make solemn declarations about the 'absolute value' of human life. Trotsky wrote: "These are the same people who, on other occasions, in the name of other absolute values-for example, the nation's honour or the monarch's prestige are ready to shove millions of people into the hell of war." He also understood that terrorism arose because of the tyranny and oppression of our rulers: "We understand only too clearly the inevitability of such convulsive acts of despair and vengeance." Trotsky put it like this: "The smoke from the explosion clears away, the panic disappears, the successor of the murdered minister makes his appearance, and life again settles into the old rut, the wheel of capitalist exploitation turns as before — only police repression grows more savage and brazen."

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Chapter Three
Revolutionary Practice

\intro text here

Aiming for alternative media[13] August 2003

Introduction
In the last few weeks there has been a lot of talking about "alternative media" as a notion and practice. The issue here is much more far than some specifications we can set and then we can say that this media outlet is alternative or not. Alternative by the English explanation is mainly something different from what is existent but as for Marxist Leninist, international socialists, social democrats, the new tendency "evolutionaries"; and us leftist there should be a common understanding on what alternative media is.

Alternative media first of all requires and alternative reading of society and the interactions and the events inside of it. For me, this reading was clarified quite specifically by Marx, many years ago: "History is made by the actions of the millions not by the actions of individuals like generals and kings" (something like that I can't remember the exact sentence).[14] Mainstream media and corporate media mainly takes on describing the events, from the ruling class points of view, hiding away by terminologies like "professionalism", "objectivity" and many other things. Being other than mainstream media is not the objective, it is one of the requirements, but the objective is establishing an alternative reading of society, being on the side of the people not the ruling elite. Mainstream media would state that the US gave 30 billion Dollars to a country "A", but they wouldn't say that these 30 billion came at the price of taking out the country's resources, establishing a new government, more oppression, a high rate of unemployment, privatisation plans etc...

Alternative media, however, should be explaining the crisis, finding it's causes, not only the direct causes, but all its manifestations; it should establish a theoretical and ideological headquarters for the movement, and here I quote from a poster I once saw "I give money to the poor, they say I'm a saint; I ask why are the poor hungry they say that I'm a communist". Alternative media should be dealing with the causes and explaining the crisis, not only dealing with its symptoms.

An alternative paper should be a tool for the movement and not outside of it, it should run on the same pace of the movement and sometimes push it forward tackling issues which are somehow sensitive and undiscussed, it encourages activists, it gives a clearer view of the achievements and the mistakes done, without being an intellectual elite, people who are writing in the newspaper or the site should be involved directly in the current discussions, actions, and decisions, and should write about them.

What kind of newspaper do we need?

The left in Lebanon is now in the process of building and realignment, it is establishing the basic grounds for a new movement, and which has shown its will and dedication through the "No War No Dictatorship" campaign. This process of building requires the proper theoretical and analytical backbone to establish a strong coalition that is connected by a vivid and vital space of thoughts and ideas; this struggle of ideas is crucial for the movement, as it cannot go forward without it. In a movement we need to know our objectives and our strategies, everyone in the movement also has to know theory and analysis as everyone should have the ability to convince discuss and fight for his/her beliefs.

And here I am not speaking about like general purposes, like we need "equal rights between men and women" we have to move forward with ideas and we need to know why do we need equal rights, why is equality crucially important for us, why is it beneficial for us to have such equality. All these questions have to be answered and it is the duty of the movement as a whole to provide these answers to each individual within the movement.

"The role of a newspaper, however, is not limited solely to the dissemination of ideas, to political education, and to the enlistment of political allies. A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organizer" (Vladimir Lenin). An Alternative or what we seek to be a revolutionary newspaper aims to help erect the building of a revolutionary movement. A revolutionary newspaper prepares the ground for the creation of the revolutionary movement, both ideologically and organisationally, and it educated a whole generation of professional revolutionaries. The paper combines propaganda with the development of theory.

There is uneven consciousness within society and the working class, thus a newspaper aims to raise the levels of consciousness within society thus more people would be aware of the threats and the consequences of capitalism, and gradually would try to exile indifference within society for the sake of building a much larger movement. The newspaper is an educator and an organizer for the movement; it promotes consciousness and provides revolutionary education.

The role of a newspaper here is crucial, as I have described through the paragraphs above, the revolutionary newspaper is the ground base of the movement, and we have to see the movement as the university of activists and what is special within this university is that everyone is an instructor and a student at the same time, it is an permanent interaction of thoughts and ideas and experiences, it is somehow an organic body of continuous manifestations of actions, thoughts and ideas.

A revolutionary newspaper is the one that takes these manifestations and experiences and archives them and concretize them and make them affordable to all the people. The role of the paper goes more to be the holder and the translator of these experiences into a more acceptable format to let other activists know about them and also trying to let people from outside the movement to know about our beliefs and thoughts, thus it works somehow as a recruitment unit. And from here we need to know that an alternative paper should at all times [be] subjective and as it must take sides. Hereto I say that the subjectivity of an alternative newspaper is a crucial requirement of the newspaper for being alternative, it has to take sides: no question about it.

As for the layout: that's another thing
The layout always reflects the democratic structure and the ideas of the staff within the newspaper. If we take [liberal British daily newspaper] the Guardian as an example, you can see the hierarchy within the layout and formation of the newspaper. The so-called professionalism is reflected by the blocks put in a refine hierarchy: the order of the text, the categorization, the separator lines that define importance, (etc.) and also the excessive conformity of the layout. What you choose for layout reflects the orientation of the newspaper and its tendency.

An alternative newspaper should reflect the openness and the direct democracy that this newspaper has within its staff and it's direct relation to the struggle, it should be a propaganda unit for the struggle and the movement. Here I am not talking about another Baath and Teshrin newspaper. These are the state's propaganda, it isn't the people's nor the movement's newspaper.

Internal democracy and decision-making
Democracy inside of an alternative newspaper is a key issue for the newspaper to be alternative, and when speaking about democracy, I don't mean consensus, as for me consensus is anti-democratic as sometimes, the minority could block a decision, and thus it would be the rule of the minority. We wouldn't need democracy if we have a system than can perfectly reflect the wishes of everyone. Democracy is on-going battlefield of ideas and proposals and it's crucially important to have a democratic procedure within a paper to have an alternative paper. A newspaper is an interactive ground for political currents and views and readings: this vital space of battling ideas. A newspaper is a place for discussion, ideology and analysis. An alternative newspaper is the carrier of the goals and aims and the identity of the movement.

An alternative newspaper is the backbone of the building process of the movement. Thus the internal organisation of the newspaper should reflect the internal organisational structure of the movement itself. Internal democracy is an on-going process of building, not a fixed system as blue's article [?] described. This process is built by experience by trial and error in the purpose in fitting the needs of the group and the group's perspective of democracy.

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Lebanese Communist Party & revolutionary practice

October (?) [15]"The real link between the struggle of the masses and the breeding of party cadres has a single course that leads to the building of the revolutionary party by linking theory with revolutionary practice. The first condition for building revolutionary leadership and cadres is to abandon superstitious practices, arrogance, and consumer theory claims far from revolutionary education."

"The theory remains an orphan theory, if not connected to the real class struggle, and the ability of its holder to transform the class consciousness of the working classes into a revolutionary class consciousness that leads to the desired socialist goal."[16].

I expected when I began to read in Comrade Diab's article that there might be some part of the article or even the number of the appeal in which one of the leaders of the Communist Party tries to prove that "communist options" are actually "right" or are actually aimed at socialist construction.

If we look at most of the publications and articles written by the communist leadership in the previous period, we find nothing that tries to approximate revolutionary theory and current party practice. Rather, we find rhetorical attitudes that define general goals similar to the goals of a democratic movement than those of a revolutionary labour party.

What is the revolutionary struggle?

Marx defines the class struggle as revolutionary: "The emancipation of the working class is the product of the working class itself." But this does not mean that this liberation is automatic emancipation, but rather a part of the struggle within the working class in the effort to unify it against the dominant class, the bourgeoisie. This was the beginning of the above-mentioned Marxian maxim: "The ideas within the working class are the ideas of the ruling class".

Hence, the revolutionary path is determined by class struggle (economic and political) and the balance of class forces that determine the reality of the conflict in which we live. So the right options are not right unless they can actually intervene and influence the conflict, and most importantly fuel it and raise it to a revolutionary level. It is also correct if it can move the movement of the spontaneous masses into a conscious movement of its political and economic power, that is, a movement that transcends class consciousness (economic) to revolutionary class-consciousness.

But the process of building revolutionary public consciousness is not only self-will; it is a compromise between objective and subjective conditions. The objective conditions are the result of the embryonic and direct economic class-consciousness, but this awareness does not automatically turn into a revolutionary consciousness. Rather, there are political factors, and a fundamental role for the revolutionary forces in transforming it from its direct economic reality into a consciousness that looks at the historic goals and tasks of the working class and the revolutionary transition to socialism.

But how true is this dialectic in the political practice of the Lebanese Communist Party? To this day, there are no statements or positions calling for revolution in any of his official and public speeches, but most of his leaders' writings call for either political reform, radical change, or national "rescue" plans.

Revolution without revolutionary powers!

The first question here is how do we speak of a revolutionary speech that is not aimed at producing a revolution? How can there be a revolutionary process while the goal is a democratic reformist that is far from advocating that the working class be the revolutionary alternative to the current bourgeois rule?

For example, in an article in al-Akhbar[17], Sa'adallah Mazarani said, "Where are we from the revolutionary moment?"..."The second aspect of the crisis of the forces of the revolutionary alternative lies in the inability of these forces to unite behind

a rescue program. Simple and clear: to save the Lebanese people from sectarian and sectarian division and order … and also to understand minimum economic and administrative reforms."

Maurice Nahra also speaks in an article in Al-Nahar[18] under the title "Reforming the condition of nation-building and open democratic development". He says: "Removing Lebanon from the mercury situation that it is shaking, and to break the internal unity and make the concept of the homeland absent, without serious reform begins with the laws of municipal and parliamentary elections, and the application of administrative decentralization and development, and the formation of the national body with the active participation of secular forces, to discuss the agenda for the abolition of sectarianism and adoption, and to adopt an alternative social economic policy."

In a speech at a dinner party for the party in Damour on 8 August 2010, Khalid Haddadah (Party Secretary) called for "a comprehensive national project in which the enemy will be confronted with the process of building a democratic state. – Continues to keep home on the list of cancellations for external projects account."

None of these prominent leaders ever thought of speaking for a moment about a role for the working class; it was missing from the changing equation of the party leadership. It is clear that for them the process of change is a process of "extricating" or "lifting" the working class and the people exploited by the clutches of the bourgeoisie and the regime until they reach the call of the ruling class to the mercy of the workers and the people through the adoption of policies that lift the injustice of citizens.

In his article, Diab explained his (if not the party's) vision of party education, which must be reconciled between revolutionary practice and actual class struggle, abandonment of superstitious practices, and arrogance. My question here is, are not the rescue projects of the people and the nation actually superfluous practices that implicitly imply the inability of the people and the workers to produce change themselves, but they need to be saved, recovered and freed?

The political discourse of the Communist Party is a populist discourse, but it is not directed at the working class, it is directed at the bourgeois class, trying to convince it or to find its possible ally within it to fight or carry out its national democratic project. What the party hopes is nothing but an attempt to ask the people to delegate it to defend its interests, that is, it wants to replace the party's working class with a clear belief that these people are incapable of implementing the desired change.

Therefore, it must be assigned a device that seeks to change the reality, which directly contradicts what Marxism calls for, or the revolutionary labour experiences around the world, that true revolutionary change is only the product of the working class itself. Here we can only say that the party leadership of the communist is not committed to revolutionary theory and practice, or that the claim that the Communist Party is a revolutionary party is a false claim.

Is the legacy and history of struggle enough to produce a revolutionary party?
Some may say that this is a bid on the site and history of the revolutionary and revolutionary party, but, as far as I know, history alone does not produce the revolution and the heritage alone does not produce consciousness, but rather the words of

Comrade Diab: "To transform mass and labour movements into a materialistic act of change, Revolutionary, not by name, in the sense that we, as a supposed revolutionary party with all its implications, and far from bureaucracy and the narrow interests of a privileged partisan faction, have nothing to do with the independent activity of the masses, the pain of the working class, In this slider etc. T come out party (any party), though its history was full of victories and achievements, how a communist party dig their national history and the Arab and internationalist. "

Therefore, revolutionary heritage does not make revolutionary practice; it is the revolutionary practice that creates the revolutionary legacy. For a moment the party stops this practice. The legacy becomes a nerve weapon to defend the party and to maintain a certain bureaucratic dominance that is incompatible with the necessity of struggle. This is precisely what is happening today. In several attempts, the party leadership has published an ideological speech in which it tries to control the party and its base, as it failed to serve as an example of this rule in the struggle. Instead of reviewing its mistakes and working to absorb this serious and sincere rule in its militant commitment, it has further removed it from the actual conflict and limited its mobilization in conferences and party celebrations.

Instead of political and intellectual discourse and political practice being the main motivator of partisan commitment, party affiliation is determined through class mobilization, placing the communist base against the rest of the left rather than seeking to push the communist base to play an active role in activating the leftist situation in general in Lebanon.

Where is the Communist Party of revolutionary practice?

Instead of being the main players in pushing the street forward, we see them absent or absent in many important movements and stations in the recent period. We enumerate some of them: In the sit-in outside the Egyptian embassy to lift the siege on Gaza on 23 January 2010, the Communist Party leadership did not seek to incite or even invite its organisations to participate in the sit-in of about 200 participants, where the Communists constituted a minority.

In a letter sent by one of the leaders of the party to the parties participating in the left-wing consultative meeting organized for the sit-in, he said: "The lack of preparation is related to the behaviour of the Communist Party, leadership and organisations in preparing for the move. The party organisations were not invited to participate and were not symbolic, and none of them was asked to prepare or even participate, even in a symbolic number of its members, at least in the areas in which I was directly aware of their status."

This situation is not limited to the aforementioned movement, but we see this tendency or orientation in many other movements, the most important of which: the demonstration in front of the US Embassy on June 6, 2010, which was invited by leftist organisations. Only about 150 demonstrators attended the demonstration. There was disagreement during the demonstration between the young party cadres and the leadership. The latter wanted to prevent demonstrators from facing the barbed wire. There was a public disagreement between the two about the mechanism of preparation for the demonstration and the size of the crowd.

Another demonstration at the local political level was the demonstration of the civil rights of the Palestinian people, which took place on June 27, 2010, which included thousands. The first demonstration was held for civil rights, which was based on the progressive solidarity of the Lebanese with the Palestinian refugees. The Communist Party's participation was virtually non-existent, with many activists likening it to paper participation.

The situation does not depend on this, but the logic of the leadership of the party transcends this shell to the logic of "boycott" political sectarian and cheap. For example, the Communist Party refused to participate in a seminar organized by the Socialist Forum entitled "Towards a Left Fighting for a Revolutionary Democratic Program for Change" on the grounds that it would not come if the seminar was presented by a member of the leftist Rally for Change, which the party leadership accuses of ".

I will not defend the position of the assembly. The reality is very clear, especially since the communist party base does not lack political awareness until it is manipulated and incited against its leadership. In particular, there is clear resentment against the party leadership, which was evident on more than one occasion. Not least of the Communists either in the press or publicly in many of the frameworks and seminars.

The question arises again: where is this revolutionary practice and its connection to the real conflict, and how are the Communists a pillar of building revolutionary awareness if they are absent from most of the moves that have taken place in the political arena recently. Where are they from the intellectual and political debate that spans the leftist and cultural seminars? Where are the Communists to advance the leftist situation in Lebanon? Even if the Communist Party is the largest and oldest left-wing arena, this can not do the left-wing situation and the construction of a revolutionary movement if the objective is not associated with partisan exercise away from the factional and progressive and bold in pushing the moves forward and not to evade movements and the reluctance to participate in the invitation cards and data Journalist.

But this is exactly what happened again, and not long ago, in a press conference in solidarity with the sit-in of the Future Pipe Factory Workers (see article 4). The party participated in the call to the conference and then was absent from the audience, although this is not just a passing demonstration. A trade union movement, with distinction, takes place in Akkar against one of Lebanon's most powerful people (the Makhzoumi family), and even one of the party's leaders did not visit the sit-in. Where is the working class party, then? Unless the working class is confined to the concept of the party exclusively by communist workers.

Go ahead?

The time has come for the party leadership to stand firmly in front of its base and for the left in general, and tell it clearly what its strategy is. Is it a continuation of ubordination to the poles of the "national" bourgeoisie to seek a parliamentary seat?, to run for municipal seats ?, or to sing for the glories of the past and memories. Or do they really want to build a "revolutionary consciousness?" Diab says in his article.

No one on the left wants to destroy the Communist Party. Criticism to push the party for greater involvement in the political movement and conflicts of class and trade union is not aimed at the abolition of the party, but quite the contrary, is demanding a wider mobility of the largest and the role of the communists in the political movement, a demanding engagement party in the process of revolutionary to build a revolutionary change of Capricorn, is to combine theoretical work and not to turn the theory into a tool to suppress the practice, and that party commitment does not become a tool for the dissemination of the class on the left, but be a catalyst for the construction of the revolutionary party, which can influence the community and incite the working class to the revolution,

The core of Marxist theory is based on the ability of the working class to liberate itself, in its awareness of its own power and historical functions, not the demand, the elation and the subjugation of the ruling class for "reform." Reform is the result of the decline of the ruling class to the progress of the working class and does not come from the influence of the bourgeoisie on workers' pain.

The hard work, the direct confrontation with the regime, the call for a socialist revolution, and the serious effort to build bridges between the working class in Lebanon is what sets the foundations of revolutionary practice and discourse. The revolution does not come through cheering, but comes through engagement Direct conflict of the day and the process of accumulation and construction and categorical renunciation. If the Communist Party wants to be a revolutionary party, it must first demand the revolution and not repudiate it.

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Electricity workers in Lebanon strike back

July 2012

Some 2,300 electricity workers in Lebanon have been on strike for the past 79 days. They are demanding permanent contracts from Électricité du Liban (EdL), the state department that manages electricity in the country. The electricity workers are currently employed through casual or daily contracts. They do not receive any social security, pensions or benefits. They are banned from striking or forming unions. And thousands of other state workers in Lebanon are in a similar situation.[19]The strike has been entirely self-organised. Workers have formed committees to represent them, bypassing the structures of official politics — and bypassing the sectarian political climate that dominates in Lebanon. One reflection of that organisation is a sit-in by striking electricity workers inside EdL's headquarters. Shifts are organised every day with delegates reporting back to a general assembly.

These assemblies take decisions regarding the sit-in and its organisation. They also include daily reports on EdL's accounts and losses to demonstrate the economic strength of the strike. The state has responded to the strike with extreme hostility. Power minister Gebran Bassil refused to even shake hands with strikers' delegates.

Bassil is affiliated to the Free Patriotic Movement (FPM), a Christian party allied

to Hezbollah. He has pressured other Lebanese political parties to take a stand against the strike. On Monday he mobilised FPM thugs to try and kick the workers out of the EdL headquarters. The arguments used by Bassil against the strike are fundamentally sectarian in nature. He says giving the casual workers fixed contracts would destabilise the Christian-Muslim balance in state employment. The majority of the casual labourers are Muslim. The workers' response to Bassil's arguments has been forthright. They insist that permanent contracts and benefits are a right and not a sectarian deal to be manipulated by politicians.

Three workers were injured on Monday when FPM thugs, including former special forces members, threw bricks at them and attacked them with knives. The three workers' names were Omar, Ali and Edgar — one Sunni, one Shia and one Christian, symbolising workers' solidarity across the sectarian divide. The strikers issued a statement after the attack that declared, "We are neither Christian nor Muslims — we are workers who have rights, and we won't step back until we get them."

Another attempted mob attack on the sit-in was foiled on Thursday. Socialists and activists gathered in support of the workers and stood their ground until the thugs had sloped off. Political leaders in Lebanon fear the electricity workers could trigger a wave of strikes across the public sector. Civil service workers have already held a one-day general strike. This took place on Tuesday and received strong support across the country.

Successive Lebanese governments have promoted the casualisation of labour under the guidance of the World Trade Organisation and World Bank. These attacks on workers' rights go hand in hand with the privatisations that have been driven through over the past couple of decades. The ruling class is also worried that the mutinous spirit could spread to the private sector. Private companies have been encouraged by the state to adopt similar employment practices, taking on workers on daily contracts with no benefits.

The EdL workers strike has radicalised a new generation of workers in Lebanon and inspired them to fight back against casualisation. And their solidarity has demonstrated the central role of the working class in overcoming sectarian politics in Lebanon. For all of these reasons we urge trade unions and socialists across the world to send solidarity messages to the striking workers of Lebanon — and to support their battle against sectarianism, privatisation and casualisation.

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Chapter Four
Samidoun & the July War

\intro text here

A comprehensive and open conflict

September 2006

Thirty-three days of the Israeli aggression on Lebanon, and a comprehensive war between Israel and the resistance may be one of the most important Arab-Israeli wars, as Hezbollah was able to achieve a victory not achieved by any Arab country during more than a century of conflict with Israel. The victory here is not limited to the heavy losses from the Israeli side. As many Israeli military leaders say: Hezbollah needs 20 percent victory to be considered a winner, and the IDF must win 80 percent to be a victory.[20]"For the first time, the IDF could not succeed in an open war," says Olivier Roy, author of Globalized Islam in the Financial Times. This is what Uri Avnery, the Israeli writer, explains: "Hezbollah remained as it was, did not destroy, disarmed, did not get out of its place, its fighters proved their worth on the battlefield and they even admired Israeli soldiers ... Disappointment and Delivery." What began as an organized and orchestrated Israeli attack to annihilate and destroy Hezbollah ended up humiliating Israel. This result was not only surprising but also a blow to American policy in the Middle East in trying to salvage its hegemony in Iraq. The plan was simple. The United States authorized Israel to strike Iran's influence in Lebanon, represented by Hezbollah, as a blow to Iran's influence on Iraq's Shias.

Hezbollah's loss would have placed a central pressure on Iran, from its nuclear file, to its internal stability, its interests in Iraq and its ability to play a strategic role in the region. The Israeli war plan was clear, lay siege on Lebanon and its people, and then the start of the liquidation of the hostages, one after the other, ten after ten hundred and one hundred, expelling thousands of people from their homes, depriving them of food, water and electricity and destroying the blood. To Bush.

This gamble came a year after the so-called Cedar Revolution, and the rise of an old trend that claims renewal on the Lebanese political scene, March 14 Forces. From the outset, this movement itself has built on a growing sense in the Lebanese street against the Syrian military presence in Lebanon and explained in its political speech that its main enemy at this stage is Syria and that it wants to disengage from the region. It is no secret that this movement was the basic card of the United States and Israel to incite the Lebanese street against Hezbollah. But the plan failed.

Betting was wrong from the start. The March 14 Forces, almost a year after their rise, are no longer able to incite public opinion and become a pole in contrast to the socio-political changes taking place in Lebanese society. The last parliamentary elections were fought in a radical political dispute against Hezbollah, but it was also locked in an electoral alliance with him. The March 14 Forces lost much of their

credibility in the street.

The second point was its declaration of an open political war with the Free Patriotic Movement, the oldest political trend in the anti-Syrian line in Lebanon. This was also lost by an audience that was instrumental in activating the popular movements on which it was based, and demonstrated the lack of a clear political vision. The main blow was the alliance or unification of the Free Patriotic Movement and Hezbollah, which produced a memorandum of understanding that gave the two sides a clear position in the political arena and the March 14 Forces could not yet trade them. The government's policies have lost its credibility and its ability to gain the confidence of the people, especially after the cancellation of the workers' demonstration that dropped the commercial contracting project.

This put the March 14 Forces in the position of defending power, even if the popular majority is dissatisfied with it, making it unable to seriously influence the street and public opinion. The lack of success in putting the street against the resistance is also a result of social, economic and political changes in society in general. The split between March 14 and March 8 between the fragility of the sectarian system and the inability of state institutions to manage the interests of society, but only to manage the crisis. For this reason, political leaders have turned to dialogue. Consensus is nothing more than a crisis from a democratic system that does not represent the actual political majority.

Between the divisions is a struggle over the nature of the regime. The debate was about the foundations of the state structure and the dispute over the state's monopoly on violence and weapons; the state's association or secession with the regional conflict; the identity of the state; Lebanese nationalism or more; the concept of security and political security; All this is a discussion of the ideological and systemic structure of power. This is evidence that the existing system can no longer continue, and its continuation is a recipe for instability, if it continues to become more violent in its social, political and economic line.

What did the state do?

The community has proven that it is capable of managing itself without the need for authority over it, and we saw the act of popular solidarity. The civil and political bodies were able to support the people, especially the one million displaced. All this and the official bodies did not move, but when the state intervened, the obstacles began and the problems started and the fear of sectarian division began. Non-interference by the state furthers the possibility of civil war and intervention has increased this possibility. The significance here is that the fabric of society and the conflict of ideas within it and its social and grassroots systems precede its social, political and organisational structure from the authority itself, that is, the existing system has become too late for the reality of social consensus.

This proves that change is possible, and that the abolition of the existing regime does not threaten civil peace and does not fuel sectarian tension. It helps to prevent it. It shows that there is no need to despair and to lose hope in the ability of society to produce a system capable of serving its interests. The other contradiction is classy with distinction. We have noticed that ordinary people are the ones who have

done solidarity, not moneylenders. The palaces have not opened their doors to the displaced, but ordinary homes and apartments in the suburbs. Solidere, hotels or luxury buildings did not open to help people; they put iron bars and used security companies to protect them and prevent displaced people from shelter.

During the war, too, many companies arbitrarily expelled workers without compensation and other companies cut off amounts of wages. The argument was that "the situation is not allowed." But if workers are to bear the burden of deteriorating economic conditions, why should they not be allowed to share in the economic gain, prosperity and money that employers earn in peacetime?

Another order clearly showed why there were about one million people unable to get food, and the shops and consumption were full of food and supplies. This question may be at the level of the structure of the economic system, but it is a fundamental question here. Why should the economic system be absent from the debate and recognized as a fair system aimed at prosperity? In such situations, the mask falls and we find that the existing economic structure is nothing but an anarchic entity that can not meet the needs of the people and can not save the people from its crisis, it contributes to its increase and contributes directly to aggression and aggression against the poor and the workers. Solidere remains steadfast in front of the displaced and people remain resilient to poverty.

All the above proves that the existing regime is unfair and exploitative to the majority of the people, is a system built to protect a minority of the owners of funds and their allies in the existing political power. During the war, the state did not protect people but protected itself from the people and protected the money holders.

We recall Siniora's speech, in which he wishes not to strike Beirut. During the aggression, the Authority protected investment and buildings and did not seek to protect its people, which were bombed and killed daily. The existing system, its capitalist economy, its unrepresentative political power, a parliament without accountability mechanisms, and a sectarian system that seeks to impose an unpopular division, are in complete contradiction to the justice and equality we aspire to.

Is Hezbollah a movement for change?

After the victory many went to support Hezbollah, and some leftists and communists joined it. This support came as a result of the resistance action, but we have to see if Hezbollah will go beyond the party that is resisting the change party. The Islamic resistance played a key role in the development of the Shia party's popular base and produced popularity outside its own community. The reason for this was the military ability to carry out unanticipated real operations from the enemy and hit the Israeli army directly and even in order to liberate southern Lebanon in 2000.

Hezbollah had to make a lot of changes within it to adapt to the Lebanese political arena, especially after the Taif Accord, and it had to convince other communities to exist and prove itself politically. This popularity and its entry into the Lebanese political arena led to the emergence of many contradictions within the party. Was forced to relinquish parts of his religious faith, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and turned to explain that the emergence of the Shia Muslim state is linked to the conviction of the majority of Lebanese. Which placed his demand within the framework of the

historical demand and not in direct political action.

A second thing is that its popularity, which emerged from its Shia framework, led it to change it political speech so as to address a new audience, which led to the establishment of a political line gradually moving away from its basic faith [tenets?]. This does not mean that Hezbollah will turn into a non-sectarian party or a liberal party, but it is indicative of an ideological struggle over the issue.

The possibility that the party would evolve into a far-reaching party at the country's level may be impossible, as it means abandoning its Shia faith. Actually, this can completely destroy it. Its military wing is the basis of the party's structure and its political plan. This wing operates within a Shia ideological and religious framework and cannot change course so easily [even] if it wanted to.

Another is that its base is among the poor — mostly workers and peasants. But includes a group of business owners, financiers and traders. Its institutions have evolved, but these institutions directly benefit party members and the privileged, and the vast majority of Shias do not benefit from them, which promote class division and some partisan fascism [?].

Hezbollah remains a big party, but it is always threatened by class struggle and has to keep up with popular demands or workers movements. We all recall what happened in the events of peace and his position at the time to reject the demonstration, which led to a curse against him by the people, and had to rearrange the political situation seriously. He recently recognized his mistake by claiming compensation for the martyrs of the Al-Salam neighbourhood. The second thing was when the 10 May labour demonstration, which was forced to enter, even to benefit by recording points on his peers in the government or to control and neutralize the demand to overthrow the government.

Where is the left of all this?

The Communist Party believes that the main issue today is twofold: building the state and building the anti-imperialist path as a regional political line. In the building of the state, the thesis of the Communist Party depends on the dilemma that there is no central authority within the sectarian system, and for the establishment of a central state we have to get rid of the sectarian system. The first problem in this analysis is that it denies the existence of a central state at the present time. The second problem is that it speaks of building a central state without defining what it is. This puts it in a clear direction, creating a national bourgeois authority within a reform program and a welfare state.

The claim that there is no central authority under sectarianism contradicts the reality of the sectarian structure of the Lebanese regime. This view sees the sectarian system as a social structure, and to liberate the state from political sectarianism, we first have to abolish sectarianism from society, that is, the act of hatred between a sectarian and another element. This analysis defines sectarianism as a system of moral and psychological relations and does not place them within the framework of the political system, and considers the latter as the product of the social and sectarian structure. The start of the sectarian system is fundamentally linked to the development of capital in Lebanon in other regions, and in one group without

another. This allowed the more developed capitalist region / community to form the new economic powers that, with the help of imperialism at the time, could impose the capitalist system through a central state that would bind the rest of the regions with their systems and laws. These are the economic roots of sectarianism. Unbalanced development led to class hatred divided into sectarian lines, and sectarian hatred was fed by French colonialism.

The conclusion is that sectarianism is a true social structure, but a result of the imposition of sectarian order by unbalanced development and the domination of French colonialism, not vice versa. In addition, this situation dates back to the nineteenth century, and the situation is now different. The sectarian system changed, especially after the civil war, which eliminated the superiority of some sects.

Today, the working class extends across sects and is not confined to one sect. The development of the capitalist system and the introduction of neoliberal laws led to the production of pressure and economic exploitation on the whole working class regardless of their sectarian affiliation. The sectarian system has become a burden on all workers, not part of them. This requires us to realize that the central state is actually present but unstable and fragile by the contradictions generated by the sectarian system and demographic changes and by its contradiction with society itself. Therefore, the sectarian system is not a societal scourge, but a structural scourge in the Lebanese state.

In the case of central state building, there is no need to build anything that exists. Rather, it is necessary to mobilize against its central power of domination and exploitation and to mobilize the gains of the working class and not to help the bourgeoisie find solutions to its problem in managing the bourgeois state. It is in the interest of the working class to eliminate the bourgeois state and aspire to a direct democratic labour authority. Why should we build something and it is in our historical interest to destroy it?

In the struggle against imperialism, the communists tend to join day after day in Hezbollah's confrontation with the Israeli occupation and its vision of the situation in the Middle East, as well as with former Kamal Jumblat. Which means that it constitutes a movement resisting one type of imperialism, political and military, and seriously ignores its economic division. Imperialism is not an end in itself but a product of the capitalist system, so the struggle against imperialism is in a struggle against capitalism, and here are the limits of Hezbollah. So it is a resistance movement and not a change movement. The communists' embrace of them limits them to being a movement of change.

Democratic Left

The democratic left sees no need to resist imperialism. But sees it doing what the peoples of the region have not done: developing existing systems of state capitalism into global capitalist systems. For them, this develops the social and moral structure of the people, since the development of capitalism will develop the democratic system so that the left can be active within the parliamentary activity of change. It is really a confusing, senseless and defensive plan that is meaningless and is only a ridiculous justification for their adherence to the March 14 Forces.

The Democratic Left also sees a priority for building the state and sees the March 14 Forces, and Hariri and Jumblatt in particular, as pillars of state building in Lebanon. This state must have a monopoly of violence and weapons, and the absolute right to determine the course of people's lives. But the basic crisis is on track. They speak daily about state building but have not changed any of the laws and regulations in this country. No sectarian system was abolished, and they could not get rid of the President of the Republic. The concept of the state is to jump and run behind the Arab and international embassies and complain. When they can not convince an effective majority of their views on the Lebanese street, they resort to change from outside and against their people.

The March 14 forces launched racist insults against the demonstrators on May 10, 2006; in the labour demonstration, they demanded a better living and the abolition of the employment contract. This style of politics is in the status of social fascism. Parties that rise up against people and attack them as not understanding or not, and turn into direct racism when the atmosphere becomes anti-policy.

Is there a new movement on the left?

These two poles do not define the actual map of the left in Lebanon, but interact within a wider audience, streams and groups. The emergence of a more serious leftist movement is possible, and it exists.

In 2003, the left managed to produce an anti-war movement that carried out three demonstrations that succeeded in presenting a vision and a political discourse that proved their validity in the local and regional political arena. After the fall of Baghdad, many acknowledged that there could be no struggle against imperialism not associated with the struggle to change the regime at home and get rid of dictatorships, because imperialism extends in the Middle East thanks to these dictatorships.

There is also an example of an open sit-in in 2002. Forty-five days of sit-in on the street enabled the left to establish a base and an audience to talk to and get out of isolation. Several political and ideological struggles emerged, such as the leftist newspaper, which was a major engine of the anti-war movement in 2003. Today, there is a new movement emerging from the framework of the two poles mentioned, and so far it has been able to prove its view in many political conflicts before the war and during the war in Lebanon, enabling it to play a leading role in the steadfast campaign, And to impose the recognition of many organisations, associations and parties as an essential campaign in the work of relief and support steadfastness in Lebanon.

Change is possible today and it is necessary. Building a movement that really seeks a fundamental and revolutionary change is the basis for producing a better future. Parliament was and still is a laughingstock in change work, and it is only a place for review. Change begins with the emergence of a movement of people working for them, a movement that looks at workers and students as an essential engine of what is new and progressive in this society. Our battle today is against the political, economic and social reality, and for progress and development in confronting the policies of self-destruction of Lebanese power. We must combine anti-imperialism and resistance to occupation and our struggle against exploitation and poverty. The

two complement our struggle for democracy and freedom in Lebanon and the world. We are not in a marginal battle, what we love today internally and globally will decide the fate of millions of people in the world. We have to stand in the face of and be essential in establishing an anti-imperialist and occupation movement based not only in Lebanon, but also in Syria, Palestine, Iraq, Egypt, Jordan, Turkey and all the surrounding countries, and join the global anti-war movement.

Building an anti-war movement is the basis for a broader movement, because it takes a direct view of what imperialist powers and their allies are offering from existing regimes. We can not just stand up against the war. We must build for real economic and social change, to break the sectarian order, to fight neoliberalism and capitalism, and to fight for the rights of workers and people to confront policies of exploitation and impoverishment, which are clearly the only policies pursued by the regime. This is accomplished only by a liberal movement of social constraints, for the rights of women and students and for the release of individual and sexual freedoms. It is a comprehensive and open conflict for a better world in which we live.

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Memory of the July war: victory for people, not divine victory

From the meetings of the steadfast campaign in 2006

On this day we were with other groups carrying out a sit-in in solidarity with Gaza in the centre of Beirut. We stayed in the street that night while the Israeli air force began its bombardment. We heard the sound of the explosions and we saw them dominating the sky that night.

Which contributed mainly to Beirut in breaking the Israeli strategy, which was trying to "flip" the Lebanese street to the resistance, so that it was able to show the true face of the people, and solidarity with the displaced people from the villages of the south and the southern suburb of Beirut, overcoming sectarian and regional ideas.

The majority of the homes of the wealthy and wealthy areas of Beirut (of all sects) closed their doors and reinforced the presence of private security to prevent people from entering their empty property. Solidere remained empty, and locked out the displaced, throughout the war.

On the other hand, many experiments have gained steadfastness, giving hope that can not be ended by the greatest amount of defeatism and blackness. There was the woman of the fifties of Keserwan, which was going to pick up every two days to collect aid in kind from its neighbors in Kaslik and neighboring areas and bring them to the headquarters of the campaign, and there was the young Akkari, who left his family and presented to the headquarters of the campaign (at Zico House) to volunteer over a month to help, as well as there were those young Zgrtawiya that "destroyed" her car as it tries to deliver aid, and many others / N of the experiences

that memory can not be confined to the faces or features or names, and those who took the act of resistance dimension non-sectarian and national and solidarity and community, No one can cancel E in the salons of sectarian games.

The victory was not a divine victory or a promise from God; it was and remains a human victory, the victory of ordinary people to carry arms to confront the enemy, and to carry out aid for the relief of the displaced. The first is to repel the military strategy of the Zionist enemy; the second is to break the political strategy of the Israeli aggression and its bets the popular solidarity was the area where the Israeli enemy was defeated politically. These were human beings who carried only their bodies and ideas, they were not "men of God in the field," or exclusively men, but they were women and men, N and humbly exist They have achieved what they have achieved because they are real people, not messengers of gods or divine texts.

But since then, we see how this human victory is being traded in the theaters of sectarian strife, or to defend the old regimes or the service of despicable bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie did less than it did when it traded with aid and people, while ordinary people shared modest tables, The owners of the companies (of all denominations) expelled the workers and workers and locked their doors on the goods to increase their prices. Some of them joined the Hezbollah leadership and bought the destroyed properties in the suburb to sell them after a few years at high prices, forcing the expulsion of many residents from their areas.

The victory of humanity today is erased in the name of defending the community and its stances, in the name of breaking imaginary plots. The victory of social and humanitarian solidarity in the July war is only fair to non-sectarian resistance and the overthrow of all regimes and sectarian and bourgeois leaders. In the face of those leaders who sell their blood and human heritage in the bazaars of contractors, traders and bureaucrats who saw in the July victory only an opportunity to increase their wealth or an opportunity to offer allegiance to the Baathist regimes and the dictatorships of the clerics. R Bangrarha and sank in lobbying and sectarian bickering that Israel wanted to implement in the July war strategy, Valgosair and Sidon most proof over the sinking of the leaders in this bloody mud.

In the memory of the July War, the first and last lesson remains the unity of peoples in confronting their rulers and occupiers. The lesson remains that it is the peoples who make victories, not gods.

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Chapter Five
Journalism & Analysis

\intro text here

The dangerous mood after the assassination

26 February 2005[21]

The funeral of assassinated former Prime Minister Hariri saw hundreds of thousands take to the streets in a parade of strength by the Lebanese opposition. The word on the street was that Syria organised the assassination. Lebanon is filled with rage against the Syrian presence.

The US is using the killing to weaken the Syrian regime. The US withdrew its ambassador after the assassination and has stepped up its rhetoric. And there is rising tension over UN resolution 1559, drafted by France and the US, which calls for the immediate withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon. Syria doesn't want to leave Lebanon because it would lose a considerable stake in the Middle East peace process. There are also around one million Syrian workers in Lebanon – mainly in unskilled, low paid jobs. Their earnings represent a way round the sanctions forced on Syria by the US. A large section of the Syrian economy depends on it staying in Lebanon.

The Syrian regime is becoming more isolated in the region and is in great confusion, with the US now on its eastern border in Iraq and Israel to the west. The situation could spell serious trouble for the Baath regime.

The pro-Syrian Lebanese government coalition is also losing its grip. Neither current Prime Minister Omar Karami nor President Emile Lahoud has come up with a view on what happened. Hariri's death means the government is getting weaker and the opposition stronger, especially as the opposition captured public sentiments by claiming Hariri as a martyr. The opposition is stirring up anger towards the Syrian regime and channelling it for its own benefit.

A clear split in the Lebanese ruling class is forming, and it is getting more and more severe. The government's call for discussion and a general reconciliation was refused by the opposition. Hariri represented the centre in Lebanese politics and stood for neo-liberal policies and privatisation. He was a key character in the Lebanese economy and owned 10 percent of the shares in Solidere, the firm that owns the "centre-ville" city centre development in the capital, Beirut. He also represented a political welcome for foreign investment in the country, especially from the Gulf states. The Lebanese opposition is formed from a wide range of organisations and coalitions. The past few years has seen the rise of the Free Patriotic Movement led by Michel Aoun – neo-liberal Lebanese nationalists, whose politics can be summed up in the slogan "Lebanon for the Lebanese". They a call for a complete withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon and the expulsion of Syrian workers.

Another part of the opposition is Qornet Shehwan, which gathers together a range

of Christian parties. They call for better Syrian-Lebanese relations, but they have adopted a more confrontational tone in recent months, especially after the passing of UN resolution 1559. The Progressive Socialist Party headed by Druze Muslim leader Walid Jumblatt is another element in the opposition. Jumblatt recently shifted into a total confrontation with the government and Syria. This led the Democratic Left — a Lebanese version of European social democrats – to join the opposition.

Before his death, Hariri too was leaning more and more towards the opposition, although he also tried to hold the centre. Together the Lebanese opposition is maintaining a strong front and there are fears the government may resort to violence against it. The opposition has declared that they will stick to democratic methods. But most leaders of the Lebanese opposition were formerly warlords, like many in the government. They may use the situation to push for a more violent confrontation. In the wake of Hariri's death, the opposition is also tapping into deep-rooted racism in Lebanese society against Syrian workers.

They hope to use this to gain more votes in the coming elections. In the past few days there have been at least two attacks by anonymous groups on Syrian workers and racist sentiments are expressed in the street. On the streets there is a feeling that either the government or the opposition might resort to armed conflict at some point, which could drive the country into another civil war. Walid Jumblatt has said that all taboos have fallen, and everything is possible. He even called for a Western mandate over Lebanon. The opposition is calling for support from the US and Europe. If there were war, people would not be surprised to see US or European troops in the country.

The opposition has clearly chosen to be the next US ally in Lebanon and has quickly shifted from calling for mending relations with Syria, to supporting the UN resolution 1559. But while the opposition is clearly accusing Syria of killing Hariri, the US and France has stopped short of saying so directly. The situation should become clearer in the next few weeks and after forthcoming elections.

But for the left in Lebanon it is important not to get caught up in the political debris caused by the split in the ruling class, but to build a political alternative. We are trying to build a movement to stand against the ruling class that might lead the country towards another civil war. At the same time we reject the Syrian regime's control over Lebanon. And we firmly reject any attempts of the US or Europe to start a war on Syria.

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Lebanon protest backed by rich

March 2005[22]The US has hailed the resignation of the Lebanese government as part of a democratic wave sweeping the world. What they are calling the "cedar revolution" – modelled on the "orange revolution" in the Ukraine and the "rose revolution" in Georgia – is less a revolution and more a medium sized demonstration of the supporters of the opposition, which is mainly made up of right wing parties.

Most of these parties have participated in ruling Lebanon since the end of the

war. All these parties had militias during the civil war, all took part in sectarian massacres and terrorism. All the parties have, at some point, co-operated in eroding Lebanon's democracy. They have all supported the rule of the security services, both Lebanese and Syrian, and have voted for harsh neo-liberal policies that have seen rises in poverty and unemployment, and cuts in pensions and health provisions.

One of the demands of the opposition is independence for Lebanon, yet they are happy to support the policies that allow the US to dominate the region – most of them do not object to the presence of 150,000 US troops in Iraq. The main opposition leader, Walid Jumblatt, supports the US and France meddling in Lebanon. The US ambassador to Lebanon, Jeffrey Feltman, was active in helping to coordinate the opposition.

Feltman's previous post was as the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority in the Irbil province in Iraq. The US is using the political crisis in Lebanon to put pressure on Syria – next on its target list for regime change. The demonstration in central Beirut – there were no other protests around the country — was more like a business sponsored event.

The 12,000 demonstrators were a fraction of the 100,000 who attended former prime minister Rafiq Hariri's funeral. The mainstream media supplied a giant screen for them to watch the parliamentary debate that led to the government's resignation. The tents and public toilets were sponsored by the powerful Hariri family and Solidere, the company that owns most of the downtown area.

The demonstrators even sang the theme tune to one of the main television stations. As Lebanon heads to the polls in May, the opposition will take part in the carve-up of ministries and government jobs. They have already suspended the "cedar revolution" and instructed their supporters to return home. Meanwhile the real problems faced by ordinary people will be ignored.

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The cost of US policies in Lebanon

December 2005[23]War on Iraq and the destabilization of the region:
The war on Iraq was even by the words of the US administration a war for economic control and to keep the oil flow from the Middle East. Sunday Herald newspaper (UK) stated: "President Bush's Cabinet agreed in April 2001 that 'Iraq remains a destabilising influence to the flow of oil to international markets from the Middle East' and because this is an unacceptable risk to the US, 'military intervention' is necessary."

Achieving control over the oil in Iraq, is not simply taking control over the oil refineries there, they need also to create a political environment in Iraq and the region to guarantee their control over such resources. This means US interference in the region is not only limited to Iraq, but it would exceed to start fingering the present regimes in the Middle East like Syria, Iran and Lebanon. The impact of the

war was direct and fast, high fuel prices, refugees, destabilization of the political regimes in the region.

Syria was never away from being fingered by the US, During the war on Iraq, and the first stages of the occupation, the US has repeatedly attacked Syria for helping "insurgent" groups to flee through Syria or to attack from Syria, or even to transport weapons through the Iraqi-Syrian borders. These attacks present a real threat to the regime in Syria, especially when the American troops are just miles away from Damascus. This resulted in tightening the grip of control of the Syrian regime in Syria and also in Lebanon this can be seen when Syria pushed for a change in the Lebanese constitution extending Lahoud's presidential mandate.

Class, sectarianism and the re-alignment of the ruling class

The local political scene in Lebanon at this point was witnessing an intensification of the class struggle as a result of the continuous clash between Hariri's neo-liberal policies and the semi state-capitalist model pushed by the Syrian regime, and what added to the situation was the war on Iraq, which led the players inside the Lebanese political scene to re-align, which all in all created a highly unstable political scene.

On 27 May 2004 mass demonstration took place all over the country, protesting against the socio-economic policies as well as the rise of fuel prices; in reaction the army marched towards one of the poorest suburbs in south Beirut and started shooting live ammunition against the demonstrators, killing five workers. At that point there was a rise in class antagonism, especially due to the repeated attacks and destruction of what is left of the trade unions. There was a clear threat to the ruling class in the country, which forced a re-alignment of the ruling class and an intensification of the conflict within it. This was clearly seen in the repeated attacks between Lahoud and Hariri, and the forming opposition known at that point as the Bristol Coalition. Parts of the ruling class saw that the US is determined in reshaping the regimes in the Middle East, and in an attempt to maintain its rule, two options where put to the table either the Ukrainian Model or the Iraqi Model.

But due to the high unpopularity of the present political leadership, the opposition or the Bristol Coalition was not able to attract any support from the people, their demonstrations was no more than small assemblies of some of their political leaders. The opposition was mainly formed of the Druze leader Walid Jumblatt and his party the Progressive Socialist Party, which is neither progressive, nor socialist and merely a party. Also inside the opposition is quite a collection of Christian parties that go from center right to the far right like, the Lebanese Forces. In addition to the Democratic Left which is no more than an opportunistic attempt to form a Lebanese version of the European social democracy.

At the same time Lahoud's Coalition was in the same position, having no popular support at all, leading a coalition of mafia leaders and very corrupt politicians and Baathist propagandists. As for Hariri, he maintained the center between both coalitions, but was leaning a bit towards the opposition. But Hariri also was far away from having any actual support from the people, except for the forced support of his several companies' employees and the beneficiaries from his student grants. Hariri is responsible for the privatisation plans, the VAT in addition to privatising most of

Beirut's Center known as Solidere, in reference to the company that actually bought the area, and where Hariri has considerable shares in it.

After the elections in Iraq and Palestine, the US seemed more determined on continuing its new Middle East Project, with their new developed theory of constructive disharmony. The theory claims that by creating a general political disharmony or in other words destabilizing the political scene in the region, they can benefit from the resulting chaos in pushing for the creation of new puppet regimes that can serve of best interest in this new era of US politics. This strategy was highly present especially in the obvious and direct interference of US ambassadors in the local policies of the countries they were in. In Lebanon, the US ambassador as well as the Europeans played a determining role in the local policies and allowing considerable amounts of money to flow into the country in support of political and civil society movements.

The situation was moving rather timidly, and needed somehow of a breaking point, a curve, somehow a push to move things forward.

Hariri's assassination

On Monday, February 14, 2005, the motorcade carrying former Lebanese Prime Minister, Rafic Hariri, was torn to pieces by, what it seems, 350 kilograms of TNT. The explosion killed Hariri, seven of his companions, and 11 bystanders. After 10 minutes of the assassination, the words "civil-war" was on every tongue, the blast reminded everyone of the horrors of the civil war that finished not so long ago.

The following days saw hundreds of thousands of Lebanese turn to the streets. People went to the streets, expressing their refusal to any violence that might start, the opposition at this point saw the situation as a golden opportunity to continue with their plans, and move to the offensive, the first step was by directly shifting the fingers of accusation towards the Syrian regime, the argument was easily won because of know history of confrontation between Syria and Hariri and because of the History of the Syrian rule over Lebanon. But still the opposition needed to fill in the huge gap between them and the people, and at this point they declared a political war, somehow of a civil unrest, which was enough to gain them enough support.

Revolution of the ruling class on itself

The opposition saw this also as a way to deflect the class struggle to a confessional and racist conflict, religious sectarianism was encouraged, which is a strategy that has been used historically by the Lebanese ruling class to oppress and demolish the class struggle by emphasizing on confessional, religious and ethnic differences, the same strategy was used during the 1860 civil war, and 1975 civil war. And this strategy also coincides with the politics used by the US administration to deal with the Middle East, and especially in Iraq.

At that point the events were accelerated to point where there was a real threat of a new civil war; tens of racist attacks were carried out all over the country mainly directed against Syrian workers, and Palestinians. This rhetoric was highly encouraged by the media, locally and internationally. The CNN and most of the western media where always emphasizing on the Christian religious identity of the

people who were assassinated after Hariri even though that the two main figures who were assassinated (Samir Kassir and Georges Hawi) were from the communist and leftist tradition, Samir Kassir was of Palestinian origin, member of the democratic left. Georges Hawi was an ex-secretary general of the CP.

The local media, was filled with racism and confessionalism, Pamela Tannouri from Annahar newspaper said in one of her articles about the Syrians: "you know them from their faces ... they want to enforce their culture and history on us", other newspapers showed testimonies from the opposition demonstrators saying "you know them from how they smell and how they look" placards showed statements like "100 percent Lebanese" during all this time the political leadership of the opposition stayed silent refusing that there is any confessionalism and racism in the streets. The loyalists camp being totally driven out of the political scene, allowed Hezbollah to go in into the scene by holding a demonstration to wave goodbye for the withdrawing Syrian troops, and actually used the same rhetoric as the opposition, Hezbollah was able to marginalize large section of the Lebanese society mainly the Shiaa, and hold it to fuel the tension which would allow him to put himself as a considerable power in the country, and he did exactly that, by holding a demonstration of nearly a million demonstrator. This actually put the whole of the country in a state of strong sectarian confrontations, many confessional and sectarian incidents were recorded, and most of the time the media stayed silent on them.

Michel Aoun, another warlord, who was living in exile, came back to country, and destabilised the opposition and withdrew from it. When the parliamentary elections were due, the country saw three massive blocks, formed mainly out of Hezbollah, the opposition led by Rafic Hariri's son: Saed Hariri and the third pole was Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement, which is mainly an anti-Syrian movement.

The elections also showed a high interference of the US ambassador and diplomats as well as for French and European diplomats, and their role was not of an advisory role only but it extended itself in actually selecting candidates for the elections, especially in Beirut. Also a big collection of electoral monitoring organisation spread all over the country, the participation rate in the elections showed there is still a silent majority; in some cities the electoral rates didn't exceed 20 percent, which still showed the unpopularity of the political leadership despite the mass mobilizations. This high unpopularity was due to the successive betrayal of the popular movement by the leaders of the opposition.

For example, the coalition in south Lebanon which was considered a pro-Syrian coalition was formed of Hezbollah, Amal, Jumblatt and Saed Hariri. In Beirut, where the coalition was considered anti-Syrian was also formed of Hezbollah, Jumblat, Saed Hariri and the Christian Parties. The dishonest politics were quite obvious, and this led to many people losing interest in the electoral process, especially after the Maronite Patriarch pushed not to lower the age of voting to 18 years old instead of 21 year, so that mainly meant that most of the people who actually fueled the demonstrations where not allowed to decide what happens to their country.

The Elections: a glass coalition

The elections resulted in a winning majority for the opposition, but still Hezbollah

and Aoun Managed to get a considerable number of seats in the parliament. Lahoud was still on the presidency. Parts of the opposition were calling for the resignation of Lahoud, but the patriarch objected to these calls since the presidential seat in Lebanon is a Maronite seat and Lahoud's resignation meant weakening the position of the Maronites in the country. This also led to the loss of trust deepening inside the supporters of the opposition.

Many of the opposition forces were hoping for a national unity coalition, but the dream didn't last long and that is because the ruling class in such a fast attempt to reconstruct its political organisation, did not manage to resolve the contradictions that are highly present in the local political scene, such as sectarianism, also the weapon used by the ruling class to mobilize the masses backfired in pushing confessional and civil-war related questions to surface again, which did not hold the coalition for long. Hezbollah and Aoun are now growing closer and closer to each other; you can see the early formation of such an alliance in the recent student elections in the universities, where hezbollah and Aoun formed an electoral alliance on a national scale.

The glass coalition will not last as long as it was intended, especially that many of the Lebanese parties are structurally unable to cope with a lot of the changes in the Lebanese society, and through the past 10 years, many of these parties has encountered many structural problems related to the internal democratic process. So basically we will see a lot of changes in the political formations in the country.

Mehlis Report: Syria, Lebanon and the free market

Mehlis, the commissioner of the UN International Independent investigation commission, was on the front pages or most of the Lebanese local newspapers in the country for most of his stay, actually in his report he points out the extraordinary media coverage of the investigation.

Without even going into the detail if his report is actually telling us something, Mehlis report is being used consecutively by the US to corner and to "punish" Syria, which in the most probable cases would lead to economic and political sanctions like the ones that were put on Iraq. Quite recently Syria decided to link its economy to the global market by freeing up the Syrian Lira, such policy would drive large sections of society into poverty, and if the sanctions happen these people would be condemned into strong poverty and unemployment. The White House has decided long time ago that it is essential to guarantee US economic hegemony over the world market, that is why still the currency used at OPEC is US dollars, and these policies are essential for the US also in the new open Markets in the Middle East, Iraq, Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon, and now Syria they have all linked their currencies with the US dollar.

It's not only that, this requires also opening up the markets, through WTO, privatisation plans, grants, etc. ... Recently, the Lebanese government is systematically attacking the majority of the population, by a series of neo-liberal policies that would condemn a large majority of society under poverty, unemployment and social discrimination. Not a long time ago, the government decided to cut aid to the agricultural sectors, they also decided to cut disability funds to 50 percent. Rising fuel and gas prices, there have been threats on raising the price of bread also. It doesn't stop here, there have been serious talks on raising the VAT from 10 percent to 18

percent, and with a $200 minimum wage, and Beirut being one of the most expensive cities in the Middle East, this would actually mean a crisis.

Solidere, the company that owns Beirut's downtown, has sold a considerable number of shares and property in the few months after Hariri's death, money poured in from Europe as funding plans or grants, also the CNN recently did a documentary on Lebanon, which is more an advertisement for investors to come to Lebanon, we can see the first traces of market globalisation with the communication sectors, which witnessed an instant drop of prices, as a result of the first steps in opening the sector for competition, which will most probably end-up in closing many service providers making hundreds jobless, exactly what happened with the mobile phone sector. Also another indicator is the rising prices in the housing sector. Lebanon will experience a boom, which most probably will be expressed in high prices, and more class antagonism, which is slowly manifesting especially after the political scene has cooled off.

The surfacing class issues are pushing the Lebanese ruling class to use the International Investigation to maintain its dominance over the political debate in the country, and to divert attention from issues like racism, class and confessionalism. The international investigation is used as the main propaganda tool to create the state enemy which would allow them to maintain their status, a Lebanese version of George Orwell's 1984.

Is there any hope?
Saadallah Wannous, a well-known progressive Syrian playwright said: "We are committed by hope", hope for change is always present as always as there are people. The movement is alive and we can see it re-emerging all over the Middle East.

Iraq: Thee recent weeks, we have seen that the last US led attack in west Iraq, has pushed for its own allies in the government to turn against it, and actually the choice of resistance is winning more people on the ground. The US arguments of democracy in Middle East is not getting more support but rather loosing support, IRAQ has been a live example of such democracy.

Palestine: The recent elections inside the Fatah faction in Palestine, the results came giving the majority of votes to Marwan el-Barghouti, he is one of the young members in the party, and imprisoned for life in Israeli prisons, and we can also see quite a dominant choice for new militant voices, this shift can be translated in a shift for keeping the intifada going, keeping the resistance alive.

The Gulf: We have seen in the past few years, especially after the invasion of Iraq, a rise in movement in the Arabian gulf, we have seen a lot of reports emerging out of the area, where five years ago it's somehow impossible to get any bit of information, now we see a rise in genuine civil society organisations, we have also seen anti-war demonstrations, rising movements in Saudi Arabia calling for democratisation and for workers rights.

Egypt: We are witnessing a rising movement against the state, against imperialism and against capitalism, such as the Kefaya movement, and if the movement in Egypt manages to win more support, which is what its doing, that will mean that it will give

more hope for the movement in the region as a whole.

Lebanon: The left has been highly present over the past few years, and has been under attack since the 1975, but still has the ability to revive itself, in 1996 the coalition drown between the left and secular organisation collected somehow of 25 percent of the votes nationwide, but due to sectarian structure of the electoral system didn't manage to get seats in the parliament, in the years following the trade unions were leading a strong workers movement. In 1998 we have seen the rise of the independent leftist groups inside universities, between 1998 and 2001 the new left built the anti-globalization movement, and was able to break the ban on political activities in the country, as well as leading many activities against imperialism.

In 2002, the new left formed a coalition that led a 45-day sit-in in martyr's square in Beirut, and managed to lead the anti-war movement against the Israeli aggression on Jenin and Ramallah. In 2003 the No War, No Dictatorships campaign managed to win the argument against both war and imperialism, as well as the argument of people's democracy versus US driven democracy, the same thing that is happening in Egypt right now in the Kefaya movement. On 27 May 2004 mass demonstrations took place all over the country, protesting against the socio-economic policies as well as the rise of fuel prices; in reaction the army marched on one of the poorest suburbs in south Beirut and started firing live ammunition against the demonstrators, killing five workers.

After Hariri's assassination and the so-called revolution, the newly formed far-left has been able to win the arguments over the questions of class, sectarianism, and managed to answer the questions over the economic changes, and proved to be right in its assessment of the current political changes. The Democratic Left, the new left centrists, allied with the government, are losing arguments in the face of radical politics, they are losing control in universities for more radical politics, and their leadership has moved to the defensive.

A movement is on the rise and this time it is coming out from ordinary people, and shows a necessity to organise, mobilise and agitate. Waiting was never an answer and it will never be, the movement in the Middle East has encountered many defeats, and is still recovering, but at the same time, it is showing progress it is winning more and more support, and this time not in middle class coffee shops or bars, but now it is gaining support among ordinary people, the movement is more and more recognizing its place in the class struggle and moving from being dispersed to being more organized and more clear in politics and theory and action.

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Anger on the streets as the Cedar Revolution wilts

20 May 2006[24]A quarter of a million workers, students and professionals marched through the streets of Beirut on Wednesday of last week in one of the biggest workers' demonstrations in Lebanon's history. Schools, shops and businesses closed for a day in solidarity with the demonstrators. Christians and Muslims poured in from the poor suburbs, chanting that "our rights are a red line" that can't be crossed

and calling on the government to resign. The march, organised by the teachers' union and the Union Coordination Committee, has heralded the return of class politics in a country divided by religious sectarianism and pro and anti-Syrian political parties.

For the Lebanese Communist Party, one of the oldest parties in the Middle East, the demonstration is its biggest mobilisation since the civil war ended in 1990. The anger of the marchers was directed at Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora. His reforms will slash pensions, increase VAT from 10 to 12 percent, raise fuel prices by 30 percent and impose short-term contracts on government workers and teachers.

The head of the teachers' union and veteran communist, Hanna Gharib, told the demonstrators, "We have come from all over Lebanon to say 'no' to the short term contracts, 'yes' to protecting our right to medical care, salaries and pensions." Siniora has just returned from a visit to the US where he was warmly welcomed by George Bush. His reform package is hailed as the economic version of the anti-Syrian Cedar Revolution of 2005 that he hopes will attract more foreign investment.

But the demonstration has turned Lebanese politics on its head. The Cedar Revolution was held up as proof that the invasion of Iraq was creating democratic ripples across the region. After the anti-Syrian protests, US diplomats celebrated their success by colonising the restaurants and bars of downtown Beirut. US military officers surveyed the capabilities of the Lebanese army to tackle Hezbollah, the guerrilla movement that drove the Israelis out of southern Lebanon. Now their optimism has begun to melt away. The promise of a new Lebanon looks very much like the old Lebanon, with rising cost of living and unpopular neo-liberal policies.

The government has been confronted by the return of class politics, and it is finding it can no longer wave a wand, cry "Syrian plot" and shame people off the streets. The biggest failure belongs to the leaders of the Cedar Revolution. The government is an alliance of the far-right Phalangists, the Socialist Party of Walid Jumblatt and Saad Hariri's Future Movement. The demonstration was a public defeat for them. As the unions began to organise the protest, Future Movement activists toured schools to dissuade teachers from joining the protest. They were given short shrift. So the government accused the protest organisers of being the paid hirelings of Syria. Saad Hariri, the son of slain former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, denounced the march as a "Syrian-backed attempt to destabilise Lebanon".

Siniora has made tackling the country's massive £21 billion debt a priority. The debt, which is owned by local banks, was run up during the breakneck reconstruction following the end of the civil war. Whole areas of the capital were rebuilt while infrastructure projects — dubbed "highways to the sky" — bypassed deprived areas. Ordinary people began to object to the billions of dollars being thrown at prestigious development projects while large swathes of the country sank into poverty, with intermittent electricity, poor services and unemployment.

The demonstration was backed by several opposition parties, among them Michele Aoun's Free Patriotic Movement and Hezbollah. Although they were on opposite sides during the Cedar Revolution, they were united in the hope they could stop the demonstration calling for the resignation of the government. Both these parties want to use the rising antagonism against the government to boost their popularity ahead of parliamentary elections.

The left has to push for more mobilisation and radicalisation on class issues — especially now that ordinary people are fed up with the current order. The demonstration is a historic moment that the left in Lebanon cannot afford to miss.

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Targeting the Arab rulers over inaction on Israel

January 2009[25]

Demonstrations and sit-ins have been organised daily in Beirut and other cities in Lebanon since the beginning of Israel's aggression against Gaza. During the first few hours of the war, groups of students and young workers from Palestinian and Lebanese left wing and socialist organisations organised a sit-in in front of the United Nations headquarters in Beirut.

This sit-in has become the centre of a wave of protests and demonstrations. There was a march from the city centre to the Egyptian embassy on Sunday 28 December. Barbed wire, soldiers and riot police were in place to protect the embassy. Demonstrators chanted against Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak and called for Egypt's borders with Gaza to be opened. The demonstration drew in people from the surrounding neighbourhoods and there were clashes with security forces. Similar demonstrations and sit-ins took place in other major cities and the Palestinian refugee camps.

That evening the Lebanese resistance group Hezbollah called for a big gathering in the southern suburbs of Beirut the following day, which drew in tens of thousands of people. These protests spilled over to a mass rally on New Year's Eve and a new round of demonstrations. When news of the Israeli land invasion came through, the sit-in called for a march on the US embassy located in the hills above Beirut. The army and police fired water cannons and tear gas at the protesters after we broke through three lines of security forces.

Our battle is to break through the silence of the Arab regimes and convince people to take to the streets in support of the resistance and against the collabouration of our rulers. Regime change" – removing the Arab rulers by a movement from below – is now the phrase on everyone's lips. Our regimes are politically weak and have failed their people on all questions. Only the masses can create the necessary change and their voice is beginning to be heard.

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Anger in Lebanon

January 2009[26]

Since the start of the aggression on Gaza, on Saturday 27th 2008, actions, demonstrations and sit-ins are being organized on a daily basis. During the first few hours of the aggression, groups of students and young workers from different leftist and socialist organisations (The Union of Democratic Youth, Leftist Assembly

for Change, Students sector of the Lebanese Communist Party, People's Movement), Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Democratic Front for Liberation of Palestine, Socialist Forum) organized an open Sit-In in front of the UN house in Beirut and released a statement calling for action in support of the resistance in Gaza and to resist against the Arab regimes and the Israeli aggression. A demonstration was called at the Egyptian Embassy in Beirut.

On Sunday the demo started from center Beirut to the Egyptian embassy, starting with 300 protestors and by the time it reached the Embassy it had grown to 500 demonstrators, the Embassy was encircled by barbwires with heavy military and anti-riot police reinforcements. The demonstrators chanted against Mubarak and calling for the opening of the borders with Gaza, soon enough the demo drew in more and more people from the surrounding areas and clashes started between protestors and the police and army, where water canons were open and tear-gas bombs were thrown at demonstrators, many have fainted and been slightly injured.

At the same day, small demonstrations and sit-ins were called in Saida and Tripoli and inside the Palestinian camps around the country. The Sit-In in front of ESCWA grew by the hours, as it drew more people and became slowly as a coordination and mobilisation camp for actions and demos. Sunday evening, Hezbollah called for a big gathering in the Southern Suburbs of Beirut on Monday and cancelled all Ashoura activities, joining them all together in one place. The gathering drew in thousands of people. Tuesday witnessed more small actions and demos around the country, the Sit-In organized mobile demos and leafleting around Beirut calling for a demonstration on Wednesday at the Arab League Office in Beirut, about 400 to 500 people showed up the next day to the demo and it marched towards the office of the Arab League where it managed to push the riot police a few hundred meters to the back.

During the same day more than 10 demonstrations and gatherings were organized around the country, at night (New Year's Eve) a big gathering was organized in center Beirut, drawing about 300 people, where chants calling in support of the resistance and against the Arab regimes were heard till the early hours of the morning.

On Thursday a direct action was organized in front of the Egyptian embassy where banners and Palestinian flags were put all over the barbwires which were set in a 1 km2 perimeter around the embassy. On Friday another direct action was organized at the Egyptian embassy after the police have removed the flags and banners, where a call was released from the Sit-In to throw shoes at the Egyptian embassy, in the early afternoon, a march was organized from Hamra to the Egyptian embassy drawing in around 500 demonstrators, after the march has finished, the police closed the road leading to the Egyptian embassy.

On Saturday a big demo was organized by different political groups in Tripoli, North Lebanon, Saturday night, the Israeli troops started the land attack on Gaza, and in a few hours the Sit-In called for a demonstration on Sunday against the US embassy in Awkar Beirut, the next day, people started gathering from 8:30 in the morning reaching 500 people by 10.30 where people gathered in buses and head towards the US embassy. Many people joined the demo later, the army and police were quite aggressive and water canons started and tear gas bombs were thrown

at the protestors, the clashes kept on, protestors managed to cross over the first three blockades, then the army started shooting the tear-gas bombs directly at the demonstrators, six people where injured and taken to hospitals, and 15 have fainted.

Protestors went down directly from the US embassy to the Egyptian embassy where a demonstration was held at 5:00 in the afternoon. On Monday different opposition political parties (Hezbollah, Amal, Al Tawhid, Haraket Shaáb, etc…) called for a demo at the Egyptian embassy, having around 250 protestors. The Next Demonstration for the Sit-In is on Wednesday January 7th 2009, at the office of the European Commission in Beirut at 3:00 PM against the European position and more specifically the Sarkosy so called "peace initiative".

Actions and gatherings are still being called, The Left Alliance (Communist Party, Leftist Assembly for Change, Socialist Forum, Democratic Youth Union, etc…) are currently for a big demonstration in the coming few days. The political position on the Attacks on Gaza are split in four trends, one which is the official position (March 14th) which is calling against the aggression but sticks with the Mahmoud Abbas Government, actions are mainly done for gathering money and giving it to the Palestinian Authority (Fateh). Hezbollah, Free Patriotic Movement and the rest of the March 8th coalition (Opposition) are calling against the Israeli aggression on gaza and calling for resistance within Gaza and popular resistance in Egypt against the Regime of Husni Mubarak, put at the same time they are retaining from participating in any actions or demonstrations in Lebanon.

Islamic Groups which support Hamas are organizing some gatherings and public meetings the official position is support to the resistance and call for opening of the borders at Rafah. The Left has called towards an adherent popular resistance against the Arab regimes and in Support of the resistance calling that the Israel would not have been able to shoot a bullet if it did not have the indirect or direct support of the Arab Regimes and what is called to be the International Community.

Currently the most active body on the streets is the left calling for actions on a daily basis, trying to brake through the general environment of silence in the streets put out by the March 14th and Opposition coalitions, with especially the opposition is still keeping their supporters out of the streets and trying to push back any popular anger against the regimes.

The battle now is to break through that silence, to push and convince as many people to the streets in support of the resistance and against the aggression on Gaza and against the collabouration of Arab states. Regime change is the word that everyone speaks about when asked on how we can support the resistance in Gaza. These regimes are politically weak and they have failed their people on all questions, and it is not allowed anymore to let them steer us to another defeat. Resistance against the aggression on Gaza, resistance against the Arab Regimes, only the masses can create that change.

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2009 Elections: scenes of the class struggle

Perhaps the most important electoral battle in Lebanon's history after the 1975-90 civil war ended in its military form with the Taif Accord, which established the civil warlords in power and the state. The importance of these elections is that they witness changes in Lebanese society and in the reality of the dominant forces: the rise of new political trends in the 1980s and 1990s such as Hezbollah, the Free Patriotic Movement and the Future Movement, the expulsion of the Israeli occupation from the south in 2000 (except the Shebaa Farms) In 2005, and the rise of neo-liberal economic policies led by Hariri the father since he took office.

If we are to analyse and read such changes, we must first refer to the methodology by which we will build the analysis. Marxist methodology in reading the reality of parties, state and elections political parties in capitalist society

"For Marxists, the direct explanation for the existence and multiplicity of political parties is found in the economic structure of society, that is, in the infrastructure of society," says John Molinio in his famous book Marxism and the Party, which mobilizes popular support and continues to act as class representative. As a result of class struggle rooted in society. " But here we must point out that representation of parties to specific class interests does not mean that such representation is direct, clear and correct, and at all times. Class interests in their historical course are not necessarily direct economic interests. On the other hand, the actions and positions of the parties can not be explained only by their presence within a certain class.

There are parties that try to represent the interests of two or more classes at the same time, such as the reformist parties (such as the Labour Party in Britain), and there are parties representing the interests of certain parts of one or more layers, such as racial parties or Sectarianism.

It should also be noted that the layers are not rigid structures, but social groups come into existence through a certain historical process and go through stages of growth and maturity. However, in general, the strata themselves are identified by and influenced by conflict, influenced by their growth and aturity. Individuals in a particular class form a class when they share a struggle against another class. In the conflict these classes win or lose harmony, organisation, conviction and awareness, while political parties are the tools and weapons of this class struggle.

Class struggle takes many forms, it can be a clash within a single layer or a clash between two or more layers, or even a clash between parts of several layers against other parts. If we look at the class struggle as just a vertical conflict, we fall into economic determinism, which is one of the most systematic threats on the left.

The bourgeois state and the elections

Elections are the formal framework for political conflict within the bourgeois democratic system, one of the foundations on which the concepts of the bourgeois republic have been established in determining the relationship between the individual and society. It is not, as Hegel puts it, "the reality or the reality of the moral idea" or "the image and the reality of logic."

The state is the product of society at a given time of its historical development;

the state is the recognition that this society has come to be entangled In a state of contradiction, there is no possibility of reconciling it, and it is divided into contradictions that are incompatible and can not be escaping, but so that these opposites, which have conflicting economic interests, do not commit themselves to futile conflict, the need for power (or power) Above society is necessary for the purpose of managing this conflict, and keeping it encapsulated within the boundaries of "order".

"For Marx, the state is a system of class governance, a system of repression of one class for another; it is the creation of the process of creating the system, the legislation and the perpetuation of this repression through the management of inter-class conflicts," Lenin says in his State and Revolution.

In this sense, the elections are part of this conflict run by the ruling classes, in accordance with their own laws that contribute to the establishment of their existence. This does not mean that political and economic gains cannot be achieved through elections, but these gains will not be able to bring about any change in the class structure of the ruling regime. Therefore, the class revolution becomes a need and necessity. Also, this does not mean that there can be no improvement in the conditions of the working class readiness in the process of building the socialist revolution, and that the revolution cannot be replaced by elections.

Hence, our view of the parliamentary elections within the bourgeois state is no more than a political tool that can be used to serve the socialist revolution. The decision to participate or boycott elections depends on the possibility of political benefit from them (through participation or boycotts), the possibility of improving the conditions of confrontation, the conditions of homogeneity, organisation, conviction and awareness within the class through which we struggle to represent their interests.

But the class and political balance alone does not decide who will win the elections. In many cases, the loss of elections leads to a popular rally around the loser (for example, bribery, etc.). The boycott can also be a way of mass mobilization (as the FPM did in many previous election battles). Elections a specific space at a specific time by the bourgeois authority for the management of political conflict. Through this methodology we will read the upcoming electoral battle and the role of the left in improving the conditions of the working class in the conflict and the political equation and class.

The electoral campaign today and the changes in reality Lebanese society, Lebanese civil war and neoliberal economic policies

The Taif Agreement was a means of raising the role of the state in the management of sectarian strife as a struggle between classes and within it on a sectarian basis. This is due to several reasons, most notably the unbalanced growth of these classes on a sectarian basis. The Lebanese Constitution expressed this fact in its introduction: "The balanced development of the regions culturally, socially and economically is a fundamental pillar of the unity of the state and the stability of the regime." (Introduction to the Lebanese Constitution, paragraph g). This property is not exclusive to the Lebanese reality, but also exists on racial racial basis in the United

States and European countries, for example between whites and blacks.

Unbalanced growth is at the heart of the capitalist system, in the process of growth and underdevelopment, and allows the existence of layers other than the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, such as the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry, but undermines the spread and existence of these classes with the positive growth of capitalism. The spread of capital to larger areas leads to the decline of the petty bourgeoisie (the decline in the number of small shops with the emergence of shopping centers), the decline in the number of farmers with the entry of capital to invest in agricultural production (for example, small farmers and owners of food factories and large farms) To two opposing classes: the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

We live in Lebanon in a clear economic backwardness, especially in the absence of any productive economy, full dependence on imports, external financing and the lack of sufficient raw materials to produce competitiveness, especially after neoliberal policies abandon any kind of economic protection for local production. This has led to a dense presence of a petty bourgeoisie that grows mainly in the suburbs due to the absence of capital investment. The number of farmers is declining year after year because of their inability to compete in the market and import movement.

According to a study conducted by the Ministry of Social Affairs, 37.4 percent of the heads of Lebanese households are working "for themselves" (ie, owners of shops or public drivers, farmers and fishermen), while 53.8 percent are workers and monthly workers and 8.1 percent are employers Labour (Ministry of Social Affairs, Central Administration of Statistics, United Nations Development Program, "National Survey of Household Living Conditions 2004", 2008). Here we see that the petty bourgeoisie and the farmers occupy an important place in the Lebanese economic reality.

It is possible to understand the emergence and rise of the most influential political currents today in Lebanese society and in its political reality.

Hezbollah, the Free Patriotic Movement and the Future Movement

Hezbollah's flourishing in the southern suburb, which in turn expanded as a result of the large migration of Shia farmers from the south to it and to a number of economically backward areas compared to the economic situation of the center of Beirut, Kalbaa and Sin Alfil and others.

This economic reality led to the emergence of a petty bourgeoisie, due to high unemployment and lack of economic investments in the region. Hezbollah's structure began with the pumping of social and economic aid and services in the southern suburbs with the support of Iran, and the party was placed from the beginning within the Shia petty bourgeoisie, collecting aid from it and calling it a valuable class to society. Hezbollah's Secretary General Hassan Nasrallah's appeal to the world's liberals, in solidarity with the "poor and the deprived", clearly expresses the fact that the party is not positioned in a single class. Poverty and deprivation are not exclusive to one class, but a certain bourgeois may be deprived of his ability to compete because of the monopoly of a particular category of bourgeoisie on a given market; But this appeal also has a religious and sectarian face, addressing the Shia parts of these affected classes.

At the same time, we see the party's upper and middle bases receding into a petty bourgeoisie and a middle class Shia whose interests appear more representative in Hezbollah's direction. This is evidenced by the party-run schools serving the children of the middle class and the small Shia bourgeoisie, and by its position on the minimum wage, which is based on what he calls "a policy that satisfies workers and employers," that is, the bourgeoisie's historic demand. It also represents a large segment of farmers and landowners from the south, the most affected by the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon.

The Free Patriotic Movement is located within the middle class (managers and senior cadres), due to its establishment in the middle and upper cadres of the army, for example, in addition to its electoral representation and its presence in the unions of doctors, engineers and universities, or in the information, communications and media sectors. This is evident through the results of the trade union elections (especially professional) and through the current cabinet reshuffle. The current discourse is directed at strata affected by the rule of the financial and banking bourgeoisie, that is to say the Christian bourgeoisie who were besieged by Hariri on the one hand and the Syrian occupation on the other, A middle-class niche that finds no place in the current economic structure and a small Christian bourgeoisie in the new sectors.

The current does not represent all these classes, but represents the interests of parts of them; sectarian and sectoral parts (the industrial bourgeoisie, for example). It is capable of mobilizing a large part of the Christian working class and others through an unclear reform promise. Do not talk about wages, for example.

From here, we see that the convergence between the current and Hezbollah was not strange, because of their common economic interests. Some of the workers and the middle class are employed by the Christian petty bourgeoisie (technical workers in information companies, restaurant workers, etc.), in addition to the weight represented by both in cities and suburbs, where the main political weight is not necessarily electoral (Southern Suburb, Nabaa, Elephant, for example). On the other hand, we find the popular representation of other parties in the parties, for example, the Future Movement, the Marada and the Lebanese Forces in the north, the Progressive Socialist Party in the Mountain, the Phalanges in Keserwan and the Metn. Accordingly, the class interests represented by Hizballah and the current have been affected by the financial and banking bourgeoisie (Hariri and large parts of the Christian bourgeoisie operating in the financial and banking sector) over the past years.

The Future Movement represents large parts of the Sunni bourgeoisie, especially the interests of its president, Saad Hariri. However, by virtue of his class reality and political performance, many people disowned him, resorting to public use of political money and pumping him out of the unemployed in areas such as Akkar and Tripoli, employing a large number of Sunni workers in his institutions. This produced a dependable relationship between him and the Sunni workers on the one hand and between him and the Sunni petty bourgeoisie, which benefited from the existence of this capital on the other. For example, a large proportion of the small Sunni bourgeoisie relies on banking transactions and financial investment on the banks

owned by Hariri. Therefore, polarization tools are almost purely economic.

The emergence of the "future" is also linked to the 1980s and 1990s, especially after the Taif Agreement, which paved the way for Hariri's capital to enter the Lebanese market. "Peace is a necessity for investment!"

Summary

The elections, in addition to their testimony on fundamental political questions, also represent class and sectarian class interests, necessitating confrontation against the rise of class struggle within and between classes. Escaping from confrontation is a threat to the working class, especially if political battles are left without interference of the revolutionary forces in society, which calls for the unification of the working class in Lebanon on the basis of anti-sectarian and anti-exploitation and class oppression, because non-confrontation will allow the dominant class / The sectarian and sectarian logic of the class struggle conscious.

On the other hand, the dependence relationship between local capital and regional and global capital is crystallized by high debt on the one hand and trade and economic interests between large parts of the local bourgeoisie and the Arab and international bourgeoisie on the other (the economic interests between Hariri and Saudi Arabia; Iran's support of Hezbollah) Since its inception so far and their association through common economic interests; the services sector, which depends mainly on foreign investment; the deficiencies in industry and agriculture, which leads to economic dependence on imports and other interests).

In light of this reality, it is very difficult for any of the poles of the opposition and loyalists to escape from external influence, but will remain the structure of the Lebanese economy within a material reality lacks the main raw materials and economic plans and suffer even the small local market, which will weigh on the ability of local capital To compete with the regional and global market, especially after the removal of a large part of the economic protection enjoyed by the industry and local agriculture.

The actual forces capable of seeing these contradictions and objectively capable of organizing on the front lines are the workers, but we know that the labour situation in Lebanon is not good, as large parts of them work in small workplaces with a small number of workers, Strong labour. But the presence of trade unions as an expression of the political, historical and strategic will of the workers gradually imposes on the market to evolve in turn. The workers' systems themselves and their combined market capacity will force the market to deal with them collectively, that will promote the emergence of larger workplaces and greater employment capacity, Thus changing the objective conditions of trade union organisation. But this can only be achieved through a politically conscious and pressure-making labour movement.

Therefore, the main task by which the left and the revolutionary socialists must work is to build that movement and call for trade union and labour organisation. As Marx says, "Trade unions are schools of socialism. In trade unions ... large parts of workers, regardless of their party, begin to believe in the need to improve their material conditions." The course of work to establish a serious labour movement in the Lebanese reality begins to raise the demands of workers to the largest possible

area in society. Therefore, the upcoming elections, although the main competition between the opposition and the loyalists, are also witnessing a disintegration in both camps, due to the great decline of both parties and the inability to answer important political and life questions for a large part of the workers such as sectarianism, minimum wages and education And the cost of living ... Workers today are dragged behind parties that do not represent their class interests, although they are part of them.

The participation of the left in the elections in general and the entry of the Communist Party in the elections is positive if it is employed in favor of escalating the class struggle and pushing the workers' demands to the core of the electoral political struggle. However, this is not clear. Since the announcement of its candidates to this day, we have not seen the party do any direct action in the political struggle to mobilize public opinion about its program, but rather see it as a domestic work within its bases, instead of mobilizing its bases to work with the outside. Hence, the party must distance itself from the parliament in dealing with the elections, which are confined to reform demands, without a revolutionary vision.

Finally, the basic interest of the left in the elections is to work on its political and internal structure by positioning it in the conflict rather than escaping it, and by raising labour issues effectively and harmoniously, because the fragmentation today between the left reduces its ability to build an independent non-sectarian labour movement and organisation Fundamental in building a revolutionary and revolutionary situation in society.

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A fragile balance and opportunity for change

January 2010 [27]

For more than four years, we have seen daily conflicts between both poles of the political equation in Lebanon. This equation was formed before the parliamentary elections in June 2009, which, as everyone knows, resulted in the loss of the opposition and the March 14 Forces retaining the parliamentary majority.

It is essential that we not only look at the election results in terms of narrow electoral figures and calculations, but also in the context of the political conflict that has been going on since the last few years. Perhaps one of the biggest mistakes is justifying the loss of political money and sectarian sedition only; although these factors are one of the main determinants of the electoral process, their use by both sides has made them less authoritarian.

The most prominent question here is why the opposition could not attract even the fraction of the March 14 crowd. If the parties have implicitly agreed to mobilize within a predetermined audience, what is the need for elections? The reality is that the sharp division between the two sides has reached a stage of dissonance that cannot be resolved by electoral logic unless one of them takes a step toward the other. This is what neither of them has done on the one hand, and on the other hand it is not possible for one of them to do it because they are incapable: to overcome their class and sectarian reality.

A brief reading of historical reality

Since the beginning of modern Lebanon, the development of the bourgeoisie was associated with the expansion of European capitalism. This was the first of the European pressures on the Ottoman Sultanate to "modernize", which translated practically giving economic and cultural privileges to European countries in Lebanon, and thus weakened, through this penetration, feudal authorities, part of which went to the style of capitalist ownership for fear of collapse, With other parts of feudalism. This was accompanied by the rise of a new class of traders who built their wealth and capital through capitalist expansion (the movement of export, import and credit). The interests of this emerging bourgeoisie were linked to the economic and political interests of the great Powers.

Subsequently, the new means of production and economic infrastructure in Lebanon were used mainly to serve the global market, while neglecting production for domestic drainage. In his book Introduction to Lebanon's Economic History, Dr. Boutros Labaki tells how the silk industry, which was the most prominent industry in Lebanon until the beginning of the Second World War, was in most of its production (75 percent) devoted to export to the European markets, while only 25 percent is for domestic consumption.

This pattern in the organisation of the economy continues to this day. Most of the capital and investments are in the services, tourism and real estate sectors. They are mainly aimed at serving Western and Arab money holders. Production frameworks targeting local consumption suffer from a large investment decrease, which is managed by the middle classes and the petty bourgeoisie: such as service investments aimed at serving foreign capital.

This reality in the economic structure of Lebanon has great political implications. The March 14 team does not stop talking about neutralizing Lebanon from the conflicts of the region, the need to encourage tourism and cultural openness, the importance of relations with major powers, adherence to international law, Security Council resolutions and interrelationships with Arab moderation regimes. It is no secret that these demands are accompanied by many economic interests benefiting the Lebanese bourgeoisie.

This was evident in the media campaign and the great stimulation of the media of the major countries such as the Cambridge, Newsweek, New York Times and others, as well as the Saudi and Gulf advertising campaigns, which all promoted Beirut as the city of tourism and the first month of 2009. The basic question here is: would they have carried out these propaganda campaigns if the opposition had won the elections? Of course not, as was clear when the United States explicitly said it would reconsider its support for Lebanon if the opposition wins.

What does this mean today?

The opposition, composed mostly of a small and emerging bourgeoisie, is smaller capitalist blocs than the March 14 Forces and has a broad domestic economic connection. Which makes them more prominent national positions, to link their interests more local reality. It is wrong to say that its connection is purely a matter of internal interests, but it is confronted by a bourgeoisie representing the interests

of foreign and Arab capital, and is in a position of conflict compatible with other bourgeoisies in the region and the world.

The interests of the latter contrast with those of the March 14 bourgeoisie, for example the Iranian and Syrian regimes affected by the capitalist and military hegemony of the United States, the European states, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. For the Iranian and Syrian regimes, weakening the March 14 power is a weakening of the political position of the supporting countries, which opens up more room for the two regimes to benefit and play a role in protecting their entity.

But it is also important to note that this regional and global conflict does not move local forces on the one hand, but local forces are intertwined with the interests of global and regional powers, becoming local, regional and global, and vice versa. The opposition, represented by economic and class forces, wants to have a larger share of the economy in the face of the economic control of the March 14 bourgeoisie.

The struggle over the main portfolios in the formation of the new government is the strongest proof that there is no intention of the opposition forces to change the reality of the political and economic system because of its constant insistence on participation and non-exclusivity of governance. And since the opposition acknowledged its inability to escape from its class reality. In order to maintain its existence and to promote its class strength, it must share and control the bourgeoisie because its primary objective is to preserve those class interests. The opposition has declined in every popular case in which the people have been attacked when those demands threaten the interests of those who represent class forces. The most salient example is wages. March 8 forces have been silent about rising prices and increasing rents. The class forces of the petty bourgeoisie benefit from all these things. It is in her interest to stand against her.

Why did the opposition lose the elections?

From here, we can understand the inability of the opposition to obtain an electoral force capable of winning, because in the end it wants only to serve as the dominant bourgeoisie and does not want to abolish it, so it silenced the methods of electoral mobilization used by the March 14 Forces because the opposition itself, Economic promotion, used and will use the same methods. Perhaps it was the loss of not having enough money to buy votes.

Conflict 8 With March 14, in the end, he sought to strengthen the class equation and the interrelationship of local bourgeois interests with the interests of regional and global bourgeoisie. The opposition was asking for a better place in this equation, so it did not use popular resentment in its favor, to counter that resentment with its own interests as well.

The change in the general political discourse in the region, which saw Barack Obama's "open" rise to the Muslim and Arab worlds and the fall of George W. Bush, gave March 14 an essential opportunity to shore up its line with global promises of economic stability, while Ahmadinejad was waging war. However, the Lebanese reality is still suffering from the recent Israeli war, and the reconstruction process has not ended. This prompted many, despite their dislike of the March 14 Forces, to vote for them out of fear of the reaction of the major powers to the success of the

opposition in the recent elections. The policy of intimidation (the suspension of aid and perhaps the economic blockade) and the Arab- Vote for March 14.

In addition, the neglect of the total opposition to the consequences of the Syrian occupation of Lebanon and the effects of repression and terrorism suffered by many was an additional factor used by the March 14 Forces to intimidate people from the possibility of a return to this occupation. We saw this clearly in northern Lebanon, in the areas most affected by the Syrian occupation, and voted in total for the March 14 Forces.

The adoption of sectarian politics, especially through the imposition of an electoral law that is the most vocal of the sectarian voice, came as a negative reaction to the opposition, which claims to reject sectarianism. The sectarian system derives its core force from the political money that is pumped to serve the development of sectarian allegiance, for example through "charitable" institutions, which are primarily aimed at ensuring the interdependence between the citizen and the sectarian institution from the service standpoint. Thus, the sharing of service and ministerial portfolios between sectarian strata would strengthen sectarian affiliation by providing services that are fragmented classically and culturally.

On the other hand, the events of 7 May by the opposition as a reaction to the attempt by the loyalists to attack them using the state's security and judicial apparatuses and with international support enabled the loyalists to take some steps backwards. But they provoked terror and fear of the return of civil war, Was also an additional reason for the opposition's loss of its balance, especially among other communities.

Left, Communist Party and Elections

The Communist Party entered the election alone after its attempts to join the electoral opposition regulations failed, and the result was a few thousand votes. This outcome is actually matched by the political enthusiasm and conviction with which the party entered the elections.

First, the Communist Party was delayed in launching its campaign pending the consensus with the opposition on something. Second, he led a side-by-side political campaign whose primary purpose is to prove the existence, not to engage in political conflict and to confront the political projects being put forward.

Third, its electoral work was limited to the regions and the central political work in Beirut was neglected, where more than two million people (originally elected in the territories) live in the city.

Fourth, it was adopted in its electoral campaign to address the communists themselves and did not do the partisan organisations in the process of political mobilization, and relied on the candidates in the collection of votes without running the electoral battle in an orderly and effective.

Fifth, the party's intellectual and political structure continues to suffer from repeated and partisan divisions in political action. The conflict was based on the historical and political heritage of the party itself. It was surprised by its rigidity and its inability to keep pace with the reality in which we live. After the results emerged,

this crisis led to the awakening of the party from his coma and alert him to the lack of readiness and the lack of large cadres organized for political action in addition to the complete absence of educational frameworks, political, political and political.

Sixth, the party's permanent volatility in the political situation, sometimes with the opposition and others against it, without the existence of a clear vision seeking political persuasion instead of publicizing the positions of "passively" on people in the history of the party.

Seventh, the permanent reluctance and delay in the party's practical positions in most things (declaration of movement and then repeal or postponement) as well as the policy of venting instead of the policy of accumulation, led to the loss of people's confidence in the party, and often to the generalisation of despair among its members.

Eighth, the inability of the party to establish any link with the movement in the street, trade union, political or youth. For example, Al-Nidaa magazine is limited to political commentaries without following non-partisan, but fundamental, movements in building the labour movement and without interviewing nonpartisan activists and trade unionists, making it a platform for political positions rather than an essential tool for polarizing, educating and producing inter-party relations. The discussion of the electoral battle was neutralized and the political support (albeit modest) that the left was able to offer to the party's electoral battle was reduced.

Our mission today

The left in Lebanon today faces important questions to answer, either to "keep up with the events and the political conflict and comment on it from time to time or be active in it. The left today has to move from the logic of appeasement with reality to initiative and intervention, and mainly to intervene among workers, to organize itself within the working class and to build cadres and mechanisms for self-education and militant links with the labour movement, even if it is embryonic movement and affected by sectarian division.

We have to organize ourselves to organize our work and the mechanisms of polarization, debate and education. We have to study and learn and design the mechanisms of intervention in the working class. This requires us to begin to research and try all possible means to turn into the nucleus of a revolutionary labour movement that moves us from the margins of political conflict to its center. Effective in and impacting events.

From this, we began to assemble left-wing for change by building the organisational branches that will be based in the coming period on education, polarization and political and union incitement, in places of presence. Hence, the economic, political and social relations in our places of presence can be kept more closely in order to establish the appropriate mechanisms for intervention.

The establishment of these organisational branches will also allow for the improvement of the performance of committees and central frameworks such as the

publication, for example, or bodies (such as the Gender and Gender Body), which should start building organic relationships in the branches and collect lessons and information from branches to analyse them, produce publicity materials and lessons learned Public. The production of such a dynamic will allow moving from the logic of the active group to the logic of effective and effective organisation in reality.

The basic task is to build a revolutionary organisation that is organically interconnected with the working class, to be able to work within and influence it. Today we take the first steps in this direction, and as Spinoza says: "We can not laugh nor cry, but we have to understand", and then practice in its educational, practical and organisational space.

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About the province and other matters

Journal of the Socialist Forum, Spring 2012

In 2002, a left-wing youth movement emerged following the Israeli siege of Ramallah and the Jenin massacre. Activists and activists searched the street in the centre of the country and held an open sit-in for 45 days. The sit-in was then an essential centre in activating the street movement, in solidarity with Palestine, and as an expression of popular rejection of the Israeli occupation.

The sit-in has become a main focus in the history of the leftist movement in Lebanon after the end of the civil war. The evidence for its importance is the launching of many initiatives and the emergence of political groups that expressed themselves through publications such as the leftist magazine, The most important political propaganda was the new Left, the Independent Media Centre, which promoted the emergence and crystallization of boycotts campaigns, feminist workshops on sexual and gender rights, the seeds of the leftist revolutionary movements, and the wider crystallization of left-wing groups from the traditional atmosphere. Yoon, for example.

These initiatives and campaigns were not created in a vacuum. They were an expression of a remarkable development in the political discourse of the new left, the close link between militarization, capitalist expansion and globalization, especially as this relationship became more evident through the economic policies of the major industrialized countries, Imperialism and support for the Israeli occupation of Palestine. The slogans of the global and local anti-war movement took a deep political and economic dimension. The slogan "No to the war of the rich against the poor", in response to the American war on Afghanistan, and the slogan "No to war for oil" In response to a War on Iraq.

The movement sought solidarity with the Palestinian people to devise new tools to be used within the popular and civil resistance frameworks of the occupation. From this point of view, the boycott movement began as a political and practical expression at the same time. It was not strange then to use this tool (boycott), to counter the support of multinational companies of the Zionist entity, while at the same time against the cheap exploitation of farmers and workers. This was actually reflected in the activities and sit-ins organized on the sidewalks facing companies

such as Starbucks, Burger King, and others.

This approach was not the result of purely life choices, and was not only an expression of the will of some individuals but of the political space through which the new left expressed its vision of imperialism and war. Or exclusion, towards that emerging movement, especially youth and rights.

Hence, the success of the boycott, as a political tactic, is always linked to the reality of general political changes, the development of the movement itself and its rhetoric, it can not be an abstract tactic, and outside a broader strategy of confrontation. This is evident, for example, in the presence of several campaigns for the boycott, including leftist and human rights, and Islamic and nationalist.

The political fabric of the boycott must be recognized, and it must be implicitly recognized that these different currents are, at least, in a permanent political conflict. As a tactic, it is, in fact, a weapon used to achieve broader objectives. It is a tactic that the Zionist entity also responds to through the mouths of its opponents, by accusing them of anti-Semitism, of criticizing Israeli policies. We cannot look at the boycott as an end in itself, but at what it must have to do, in advancing a broader strategy of confrontation with the Zionist enemy and imperialism.

Accordingly, in Lebanon, in a situation of direct confrontation with Israel, we can not adopt the same strategy adopted by the boycott movements in Europe, or in the United States, for example, or commit ourselves to its borders (with the need to coordinate or unify efforts where necessary); The boycott movement in Lebanon cannot develop a strategy of action, apart from a serious vision of how to liberate Palestine, especially in light of the revolutionary tide in the Arab region.

Palestine is under Israeli occupation, of course, but it is also under Arab siege; from the south it is bordered by the Camp David Accords, to the east by the Wadi Araba agreement, and from the north-east by a quiet border, guaranteed by the Baathist regime, Lebanon, which has a racist sectarian system, is bordered by the aggressor of the Palestinians and their rights, whatever they may be. This is accompanied by the decline of the resistance movement, from its non-sectarian and national umbrella, to a sectarian body, which failed to unite Lebanese society under its banner.

Under this siege, the Israeli authority devotes itself to further partition projects, striking the Palestinian resistance (with the help of moderate Arab regimes, as well as the "resistance"). Today, it can stand alone against Gaza and the West Bank. The question of the liberation of Palestine transcends the issue of confronting the Israeli authority alone. It requires, as a basic condition, a comprehensive confrontation of Zionism and the existing Arab dictatorships, which effectively and practically contribute to the survival of Palestine under occupation.

This is exactly what the new left expressed, on the eve of the war in Iraq in 2003, when he raised the slogan "No to war, no to dictatorships". We said that Palestine cannot be liberated and wars avoided. That day was a dream for a new generation of activists and activists. But by the beginning of 2011, the dream has taken on more space in our daily Arab reality, which is beating the revolution from the ocean to the Gulf.

The actual democracy in the Arab region, which expresses the hopes and aspirations of its people, will prevent the Egyptian authority from allowing the

American fleet to pass through the Suez Canal, to strike Iraq, for example, or to build an apartheid wall on its borders with Palestine; And Syria's democracy will not allow its role to be to protect the border with Israel for 40 years and to give up the Golan Heights.

The existing Arab regimes have always sought to neutralize the issue of internal liberation from the local political conflict, under the pretext of "national unity" and the conflict with the Israeli enemy, but at the same time they have intervened in the framework of the balance of interests of imperialism itself and have become essential pillars of the imperialist strategy itself. From Syria to Lebanon, Egypt, the Arabian Gulf, Jordan and the Arab Maghreb, the regimes have always tried to strike any attempt to rise up popular resistance against the occupation. They were trying to absorb it, on the one hand, to be another tool to support the policies of regimes and their hellish plans against national liberation. Dismantling these popular resistances and liquidating and arresting its members.

Hence, the boycott cannot be a tactical tool, outside the reality of confrontation with existing regimes and imperialism, as a tool of popular resistance, not an instrument used by regimes to strike popular movements, within a policy commonly known as the policy of treachery (and " There are hieroglyphics of the ruling authorities. These idiotic terms are precisely what regimes are using today to counter Arab revolutions. Today, more than any other time, boycott campaigns are required to commit themselves in principle to the movement of peoples, and to help these peoples' movement by providing them with additional political tools to counter imperialism and existing regimes.

The role of the boycott movement in Lebanon can not be limited to confronting normalization with the Israeli enemy. Rather, it must play a pivotal role in supporting the movement of the Arab peoples in order to liberate them from the existing dictatorships as an essential step towards the liberation of Palestine by rooting the concept of popular and civil resistance , And to clarify the nature of the neo-colonial control, the region and its capabilities, and the least to face the shameful position of some of the world left supporting dictatorships, or the only anti-US imperialism, nothing else. In this case, it is not feasible to restrict the work, especially in the field, to reactions against a company, or a figure, supportive of Israel, when the main problem is the relations of normalization and complicity carried out by the existing regimes and the ruling class with the Zionist enemy and its tools. This is a lack of policy, a political course of excellence, and an unintended adoption of the approaches of non-governmental organisations, which some provincial theorists despise.

The two most prominent examples in the process of disappearance, recently, were the trial of the client Fayez Karam, who proved his work to the Zionist enemy, and the second Syrian revolution and the position of it, two cases that raised a number of questions among the supporters of the province, before their enemies, the campaigners decided to confront them, through "Distancing oneself" and turning a blind eye to counter-terrorism, led by dissenters, in the name of the campaign.

In the first question, the boycott campaign had to issue a brief statement criticizing the failure of the trial of Fayez Karam and criticizing the Lebanese authorities and the government for complicity in the amnesty case because he was close to the

Free Patriotic Movement, Hezbollah's ally. At least to confirm its originality and independence from the division between the two sides of the Lebanese authority. On the second issue, it must have stated, directly, its support for the Syrian revolution against the Assad regime and at the same time declare its rejection of foreign interference Or American or European or Chinese), because this position guarantees its independence from Arab dictatorships and protects it from the use of boycotts as a means of portraying a true conflict (the direct conflict against Israel) and an incorrect conflict (the struggle against dictatorship).

The boycott is a popular weapon, and it must never become a weapon used by the regimes to divert attention from what is happening to the Arab peoples in general, and the Syrian people in particular. It is not the intention here to accuse the activists and activists in the "boycott of Israel's supporters" or "against Israel's floral image." The majority supports the Syrian revolution, which is outside the Al-Azhar line-up in Lebanon. But there is a great use of it by the Stalinist and nationalist left to push the boycott issue as an attempt to divert attention from what is happening in Syria. This is clear and explicit in many debates, on social networking pages, especially when any movement demanding something other than "liberating Palestine" is portrayed as part of the occupation and a client. Of course, they ignore the extent to which the Syrian regime has historically dealt with the Israeli authorities, and they also overlook the civil rights of Fayez Karam.

The double standards strike the credibility of the province as a tactic of political action and weaken its front against the liberal right, which accuses it of intellectual terrorism. It draws on ideological support from the Lebanese regime, the policy of amnesty for war criminals and agents, and the appointment of ministers and heads of government. In Lebanon, and its complicity with the Baath regime, and from the openness of the movement, rejected, to the forces of fascism and Islamism. This undermines the work of boycotting and restricting it to a single political environment within an authoritarian sectarian alignment that contradicts the principle of civil resistance, prevents the spread of movement within society and, most importantly, threatens to turn it into a closed political group that is submerged in fact and incapable of influence.

In light of the ferocity of the liberal, sectarian and racist right, and the press with the Israeli authority, which is trying to strike the boycott, branding it as a kind of "censorship" and suppressing "liberties", we must all realize that the battle against this right can only be won by politics, And that the boycott movement is committed to a political discourse that goes hand in hand with the Arab revolutions. The issue of the liberation of Palestine, as part of the Arab revolutionary process, is not seen as a balance between authoritarian regimes, in one form or another.

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A step forward labour movement and Barack Obama

Find full text!

The rise of Obama expressed the desire of millions in the United States to see change,

and the huge numbers that accompanied him in his campaign is the biggest proof of the existence of this desire on the American street. The most important thing here is that African Americans have won the right to vote only 50 years ago, and today we see the first black president in the White House. She received the idea that racism was deeply rooted in the American people after his election.

"Obama's victory is a big deal, but it will change little," says Gary Young in The Guardian. From the very beginning, Obama has carefully set himself up as a candidate for "change" and is well aware that the votes he will be making are not votes of support for the Democratic Party candidate, but rather an expression of outrage on the American street, on the one hand against Bush's expansionist policies and policies, Which has thrown many people into the open sea and threatens to throw two million families out of their homes.

Obama can only be seen through changes in the mainstream of the movement on the one hand, and on the other, the actions of the American administration, and we can never build illusions about the new US president. Faced with anger at the economic crisis, Obama has confirmed his commitment to US capitalism and has agreed to give $ 700 billion to the bankrupt giant corporations, without any suggestion that would restore hope to millions of workers affected by these companies.

In contrast, we see a lot of labour movements in the United States. The Bureau of Labour Statistics recorded an increase in the number of trade unionists for the first time since 1983, with 311,000 new workers joining trade unions. The most prominent moves were the 27,000 workers from the Boeing Company, who staged a strike to protest the company's attempt to replace their jobs with outsourcing to escape payment of social security and health insurance benefits. This is like one about the movements organized daily by angry workers in the United States.

In foreign policy, Obama has been silent about the attacks on Gaza and has confirmed his support for Israel's protection. This also confirms his commitment to American imperialism, in light of the many popular movements in the United States against the war on Gaza. This places a huge burden on Obama's shoulders that he will not be able to respond to, which could produce a golden opportunity for workers' and leftist organisations to rebuild economic and political resistance to capitalism and American imperialism.

The saying that "American workers have sold themselves to the American dream" has now become a fait accompli. In spite of fear and anger over war policies and economic crises, there is resistance and greater potential for rebuilding trade unions, and greater potential for linking white, black and Latin workers. There is a serious desire in American society for change, but we must be aware that this change will not come from Obama, but will come from the working class, whose history has long been erased from television and capitalist media.

Israeli aggression on Gaza

It should be noted first that there is a link between the end of Bush's term and the beginning of Obama's term and the Israeli war on Gaza. There is also a link between the war and the Israeli elections, but it is not the main point in the causes and objectives of the Zionist aggression on Gaza. The Zionist ethnic cleansing policies

have been going on since 1948, and the specificity of the recent aggression is that, first and foremost, it is an attempt by the Israeli authorities to put new equations on the ground, which can give the occupation a greater ability to take over.

Resistance and steadfastness in Gaza hit the Israeli equation and forced it to retreat and did not enable it to achieve its goals and to prevent any real achievement, which constituted an important political loss to the resistance movements in the region. The plan has failed, but the Israeli attempts are not over, and the biggest proof is a big rise to the Israeli right, especially the Likud, where Netanyahu (Likud leader) says he will "end the mission in Gaza" and threatens to use force against Iran to prevent it from acquiring nuclear weapons.

It was also clear that after the war in Gaza, the Israeli authorities no longer had the upper hand in inciting international public opinion. While the Israeli war machine destroyed homes and homes in Gaza, millions around the world were shouting loudly against aggression and supporting the resistance and steadfastness in Gaza .

How is Palestine liberated?

The Israeli authority wanted to use the most appropriate time to launch its war without confrontation, but it was shocked, as the Arab moderation regimes, with the readiness of the Arab and international street and its ability to mobilize and act against this war. The Arab and international regimes that support the Zionist entity have fallen due to the popular pressure produced by the anti-war movement, which, without any doubt, is a serious and serious extension of the movement that preceded the 2003 (anti-war Iraq) and earlier.

The war on Gaza has also proved that a two-state solution is impossible and unjust. And proved that the Zionist authority and its basic support cannot accept the United States of an independent Palestinian Authority or an independent state. On the other hand, it is not realistic and material to create a Palestinian state under the cantons, geographical fragmentation and the wall of apartheid.

On the left today to restore the discourse on which he built his resistance and the liberation movement and founded the global extension, which is the proposal of a single secular democratic state, where Muslims, Christians, Jews and atheists live in one entity. This is through the joint struggle of the Palestinian and Israeli working class against the Zionist entity. It has also become clear that the liberation of Palestine can only be achieved through the struggle of the Arab peoples against the regimes of oppression and tyranny that are partners in the aggression and siege on Gaza.

Today, the struggle for liberation is the struggle for liberation. Who stands in the face of liberation is itself the Arab bourgeois class that exploits and oppresses the peoples of the region every day, and who is resisting today is the one who stands in strike and demonstrations for a better future.

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Chapter Six

The 2011 Revolutions

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Egypt and Tunisia: People make history

17 February 2011

Less than two months ago, no more, the dominant language in the Lebanese street, and the Arab in general, was dominated by frustration. The street was characterized by indifference. If we thought to say the word "revolution," we would be automatically classified, within seconds, into dreamers, idealists and proponents of the language.

Frustration and indifference were common emotions, dominant culture. But after the revolutions of the Tunisian and Egyptian people, talk about the revolution has become a daily occurrence. The whole question is how we can make the revolution extend to Lebanon! The situation of the coup against this dominant culture, which was ignited by Tunisia and Egypt, has pushed millions around the Arab world and the world as a whole to a different political and social awareness, although it is still in its early stages of development, but we see how this social, cultural and political situation takes on a large political space Between people and peoples.

Peoples make history

The importance of the revolution of Tunisia and Egypt goes beyond the end of 23 years of Ben Ali's rule in Tunisia and more than 30 years of Mubarak's rule in Egypt, but they were able to refute all the arguments and analyses that the intellectuals of the right, regimes and intellectuals of "moderation" Decades, which used to say that the Arab peoples are incapable and not ready for change, and that the era of revolutions is over.

Valotopia and revolutionary idealism, which has long been acclaimed by everyone who speaks of the revolution, is no longer only present in some books and articles, but has become a reality that moves from one country to another. The slogan "revolution of revolution to victory" has become a popular slogan for millions. The language of revolution, and the language of appeasement and reform became the "wooden language", the language of empty promises, the language of order and business, the language of corruption, lies and hypocrisy.

The people wanted to topple the regime and topple it. Today, the revolution of building another regime is taking place, a new system whose features are determined through daily struggle and struggle. What has happened in Tunisia and Egypt has made the entire world vibrate, pushing it to a new reality, into a different era. Today no-one can say that intellectuals, intellectuals and technocrats make history. On the contrary, that history actually begins when people move.

The revolution of Egypt and Tunisia proved unquestionably that the peoples are the ones who make their destiny and history. There is no luck strike, or "national hero" or divine power produced by them. It is only the political, social, economic and organizational capacity of the Tunisian and Egyptian peoples in their attempt to

overthrow the regime. Drop it!

Here we recall a saying that was dropped by most of the reformist and traditional lefts from its literature and from its political discourse: "The peoples are those who make their history, but do not manufacture it as they wish. They do not manufacture it in circumstances that they chose, but under conditions that existed before. The dead generations throw their weight as a nightmare on the thoughts and minds of the living people. "Karl Marx, 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, 1852.

Perhaps this is the most accurate account of what is taking place today in Tunisia, Egypt and other countries that are being swept by the SPLM day after day. In the era of Facebook and the Internet, and what Fukuyama calls "the end of history" and in the "postmodern" era and the intellectual delusions of newspapers and television channels, we see how Marx's statement is blatantly reflected in the streets of Tunisia, Egypt, Algeria, Iran, Bahrain and other countries.

That people are challenging the legacy of the past and dead generations (existing systems and their security and intelligence agencies). This struggle was clearly manifested in the battle of Tahrir Square rebels against the thugs and the security forces, in order to put an end to the change they hope for, which has spread to itself in most areas of Egypt. It becomes a glimpse of the future that the people want to build and the legacy of the past. The future and stifle the movement of change and prevent it from progress.

This contrast between the will of the people and the interests of the regime in control is not limited to direct battles between the rebels and the mercenaries of the regime, but also the difference between the political, social and humanitarian movement pursued by the rebellious peoples and the regime's attempt to spread chaos, panic, terrorism and discrimination. The metal of the rebellious peoples and who knows who is actually behind the discrimination of sex, age, social, ethnic and sectarian.

We found that the problem is not in the people, but in the system, then stammered the tongues of the intellectuals of the regime and advocates of defeat and surrender, and stopped mouths who was always angry and blame people being sectarian and backward and unable to change, and occupied the slogans of millions shouting " Civil, civilian, civil, civil, civil, civil, civil, civil, civil, civil, civil, civil, civil, civil, civil and civil.

Spontaneous masses, organization and working class

Many people have spoken about the spontaneity of the masses in the production of the revolution of Tunisia and Egypt, and this spontaneity has often been used to say that something new is different from the previous revolutions in the world. For example, Tunisia and Egypt are embracing the idea of organizing, In bringing about change.

The basic problem in this thesis is that it summarizes the revolution and the revolutionary movement in its entirety in its spark, namely in its embryonic "spontaneous" and forgetting that the extension of the revolution and its success in the overthrow of Ben Ali and Mubarak would not have occurred without the movement of the masses from spontaneity to self-organization and the crystallization of political and social positions Clear. Spontaneity was the catalyst for the revolution, while the masses organized themselves in new revolutionary frameworks, and threatened

the whole system when it produced a regulatory power to counter the power of the system, showing its ability to organize society in a radically different and contrast with the logic of the central organization of the bourgeois state.

The popular committees formed in Tunisia and Egypt played a central role in defending the revolution and defending the movement as a whole. This organizational capacity is not marginal. It was at the heart of the movement from its spontaneity as a popular uprising to its organization on the basis of a popular revolution.

Spontaneity is the act of bursting the embryonic consciousness of the masses, but to move this consciousness from embryonic position to a revolutionary political consciousness that needs the movement of the whole movement from its spontaneous state to its revolutionary state, turning the feeling of anger to a will in the comprehensive change to a will to overthrow the regime.

The survival of the movement in its spontaneous sphere threatens its continuity. This is what is meant by an organization that depends not only on the ability to establish popular committees, but also on the issue of producing revolutionary political demands for the movement. This ability is what enables the revolution to continue.

In both Egypt and Tunisia, we saw that the moment of decisiveness — the moment that threatened the regime as a whole - was that the working class joined the revolution through mass public strikes. In Tunisia, the pace and persistence of protests determined the call of workers for public, local and national strikes. Strikes were the direct coordination of the mass movement.

The continuation of the strike means the continuation of the movements; in Egypt, the general public strikes that swept through Suez, Alexandria, Mahalla al-Kubra and other governorates and cities were the force that led the revolution to threaten the entire Egyptian regime, forcing Mubarak to step down.

"All classes participated in the Egyptian revolution. During his rule, Mubarak managed to antagonize large sections of the social classes in the Tahrir Square and found the sons and daughters of the Egyptian elites standing side by side with the workers, middle class citizens and the urban poor. But we must remember and not forget that the regime actually began to collapse when public strikes began on Wednesday, and then the army was forced to pressure Mubarak to resign, fearing the entire regime would collapse.

"Some may be surprised by the sight of striking workers. This is naive. Workers are the longest and most continuous strike in the history of Egypt since 1946, which began with textile workers in Mahalla. It is not the workers' fault that the world pays no attention to their strikes. In the past three years, there has not been a single strike in a factory in Egypt, whether in Cairo or in other cities. These strikes were both economic and political." (Hossam al-Hamalawi, Demonstrations in Egypt complete in factories, British Guardian, February 14, 2011).

From here we see the fundamental role of the working class in the development of the movement and give it a more radical space. After the resignation of Hosni Mubarak, we saw how "middle class activists began to look to the Egyptians to stop the demonstrations and strikes and return to work under the slogan of patriotism and to build a new Egypt and seek the most ridiculous chants" to work harder than

we did before - and for those who do not know, The most hard-working people in their work in the world. "(Hossam al-Hamalawi," Workers, the middle class, the army and the permanent revolution ", 12 February 2011 -http://www.arabawy.org/2011/02/12/permanent-revolution/).

The issue of class struggle, the role of the working class and revolutionary consciousness is not new, and most importantly, it is not a side role. The working class is the only class in society that can threaten the structure and structure of power and the existing society. In their political and economic sphere they threaten the existing capitalist exploitation pattern, Around the world, especially in the Arab region, tightly controlled trade union organizations and clamped down on the workers movement. We saw how the basic demand of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces in Egypt, after Mubarak stepped down, was to stop strikes and workers movements. Continuation of the labor movement will increase the radicalization of the revolution in Egypt to take more space collided with a built system as a whole, that is: it will threaten the stability of the existing caste system.

Revolutionary consciousness and the congruence of economic

and political demands

One of the most important observations that we have seen in both the Egyptian and Tunisian revolutions is how the street, which has long been characterized by backwardness and backwardness, has shown a radically different face than what the Arab ruling classes, the democrats, and the liberals of Western countries have tried to stigmatize the Arab street because sectarianism and racial and racial discrimination are rooted in it. , Tahrir Square in Cairo and the squares of Tunisia were the safest and most liberated places in the world.

The men and women, the workers and the workers, the Muslims and the Christians stood together, united in the struggle and united on the basis of equality, N their access, and ended sexual harassment, stop worker / artist of his / her lawyer and his / her side-by-side in order to defend the revolution, stood against the thugs and the police and stood in order to build their future. Then we saw the greatest manifestations of freedom and progress, and this time did not come from the funded programs and not from the mouth of UN experts, but came from the people themselves.

Only then did we see that we could dream, we saw that the revolution was indeed possible, but necessary, we saw that what we wanted to achieve was possible through our common struggle and through our solidarity and solidarity and the firmness of our resistance against the regime.

But this awareness can not be born of the moment or fate, it is the product of political movement and economic demand, which did not stop at all was the result of thousands of movements and bold strikes pursued by the Tunisian and Egyptian streets during the past years. This readiness for the revolutionary transformation of the collective consciousness of the Tunisian and Egyptian peoples came through repeated calls for change, revolution and unity in the struggle and never stopped and met with the objective conditions that produced the Intifada.

To say that revolutionary consciousness is automatically produced by the act of pretence is wrong and superficial. We can only look at the day of anger that swept through Tripoli on the day the Hariri government fell. Let's say that spontaneity and demonstration alone do not produce revolutionary awareness. We need a revolutionary speech. Of sectarianism, sexism and class exploitation, that is to say, the production of a culture against the culture of the capitalist sectarian system, and then when the spontaneity of the masses explodes, it can become a revolutionary consciousness.

The issue here is to produce a revolutionary political hegemony over the street movement, that is to say that the policy of the street is a revolutionary progressive policy, and that we do not leave the dominant sectarian class forces to exploit and impoverish the people to convert them to their own account and to defend the existing regime or to transform the universal demands into reactionary sectarian demands.

Hence we see the need for economic demands and political demands to be combined, and that they can not be separated. Each of them feeds the other. The uprising in Tunisia started from the unemployed university graduates, moving to the political demands of the university. The slogan was: "Work, freedom and national dignity." In Egypt we saw the many chants that combined injustice, economic exploitation and political repression. Freedom and democracy and the abolition of the security system with demands to end the rule of businessmen and the people and end the cost of living.

The correlation here between the political and economic demands gives another dimension to the revolution, after seeing some that it has reached a dead end. Many supporters of the regimes and the existing media systems want to portray them now as a crisis of government and lack of leadership, but what these people do not know and what they want to forget is that these The movement moved the street to another dimension in the process of revolutionary development.

We saw how this revolutionary gathering brought down a large part of the legitimacy of the existing regime and the legitimacy of official and non-official political opposition movements. Before And in Tunisia, we saw how Rashid Ghannouchi, the leading figure in the Islamic movement in Tunisia, says upon his arrival in exile: "There is no law in Tunisia." The revolutionary movement itself revealed the inability of these reformist political movements to meet the demands of the people.

Building parties

In light of these huge changes, we see that the groups that keep pace with the revolutionary movement and follow it along the same lines and see themselves as an extension of the movement of the masses are regaining their ability to grow. We mean here in particular the leftist revolutionary groups that we see produce a more organic link with the revolutionary movement. During the simple comparison of parties and groups data, we see the large reformist parties retreat from their statements and positions, while the positions of the revolutionary groups escalate day after day to be more consistent with the street movement.

In these periods the parties are built, because in these periods the political and class blocs are formed on a different approach than the period before. The difference between what is reform and revolutionary and between those who try to maintain

order and those who want to change it seems clearer and that the lines of the future conflict are clear one day after day. Hence the necessity of revolutionary organization, because the defeat of the revolution means returning to thugs and barbarism and its success is what enables it to continue to achieve all demands and to prevent any forces loyal to the regime and its poles from circumventing them and revive the old regime and new faces.

In Tunisia, the so-called Front of January 14, which was formed of the leaders of the revolutionary left in the country, was established. In Egypt, work began to form a left-wing revolutionary party outside the framework of the Tagammu party. In the two countries, the revolutionary left believes that there is no way to preserve and keep the gains of the revolution without a revolutionary organization that seeks to push the revolutionary movement forward. Once it exists, this organization can form a core nucleus to produce revolutionary hegemony against the regime's attempts to overthrow the revolution. It proves that the only legitimacy today is revolutionary legitimacy and defends it against the regime's attempts to attack it in an alliance with the opportunistic forces that are trying to ride the wave of revolution only in order to gain power without harming the structure of the regime.

Here, another stage of the revolution begins, and perhaps the biggest battle will be. The events that have taken place so far are to bring down the political face of the ruling bourgeois class, which paves the way for the crystallization of the class struggle in its most direct forms. After the overthrow of Mubarak and Ben Ali, Ruling in its entirety.

The network of regional relations and American imperialism

This battle is not confined to the local arena, but extends beyond it to become part of a battle within a network of regional and global relations and interests. Tunisia and Egypt were the basic systems in support of imperialist policies and the protection of the Zionist authority. Both revolutions were a severe blow to US imperialist interests in the region. They also caused a political crisis. The Mubarak regime was one of the "moderate" regimes that the United States and other Arab countries called for. The Mubarak regime was the second largest recipient of US financial support after Israel, with financial grants exceeding $ 1.5 billion annually. Both the Tunisian and Egyptian regimes were the main allies of the neoliberal economic system. An international trade organization with enthusiasm over the past decades.

Thus, the American administration hesitated a lot before taking a stand on the Egyptian revolution and limited its statements to regret and warning and caressing while in the days of the Cedar Revolution, the American and Western media as a whole was a mobilizer to support that revolution. Remember, the United States did nothing when Egyptian security forces and thugs attacked and killed demonstrators only when an American journalist was hurt. We see the hypocrisy when Hillary Clinton says: "There is a clear responsibility for the Egyptian government, and the Egyptian army must protect those who are threatened and hold those responsible accountable. The Egyptian government must demonstrate its readiness to ensure journalists' ability to cover events" (http: //www.america.gov/st/texttrans-english/2011/ February/20110203174000 ...). That statement came when it became clear to

everyone that the person responsible for these attacks was the authority itself.

The Syrian and Iranian regimes considered the revolution in Egypt a victory over the occupation and American policies, exploiting the revolution to record the points of the bourgeois rivalry in maintaining their regime and in establishing greater dominance in the Middle East, so that neither Of the Syrian and Iranian regimes were close to the Egyptian and Tunisian revolutions because it was only an uprising against the United States of America. This revolution would only spring in the allied countries of the American regime, and even the Iranian regime began brazenly to say that the Egyptian revolution was an extension of the revolution of Islam In Iran, forgetting that the Islamic Revolution was actually a coup against the Iranian revolution led by the students and workers against the Shah. The regime does not end here. Ahmadinejad says: "The last step has begun ... We are in the midst of a global revolution Dear Imam Mahdi. A major awakening is emerging .http: //www. allvoices.com/contributed-news/8180966-ahmadinejad-egypt-revo ...).

But what both the United States and its allies, on the one hand, and the Syrian and Iranian regimes know on the other, that these revolutions are not partial revolutions demanding a change of some policies and a broader "space" of democracy and freedom — and that these two revolutions want to overthrow the regime, They reject and fight against dictatorship and demand democracy. They also demand social justice and the right to work, and to the same extent they demand human and national dignity.

The opposite of the regional equation of "moderate" and "oppressive" countries are repressive dictatorships suffering from severe economic crises and concentration of most of the wealth in the hands of a small handful of capitalists and royal families. Hence, the illusions of the regimes of resistance are being revealed day after day as the demands and popular uprisings spread to the cities and capitals of these countries. We see how the Syrian regime began to allocate aid to poor families and began a series of arrests of political activists and repeatedly prevented movements supporting the Egyptian revolution. The rise of the protest movements in Iran in 2009 and today we see them growing again after the momentum given to them by Tunisia and Egypt, and also in the Iranian arena changes in the situation and transformations that occur on the ground. For example, Facebook pages calling for moves in Iran, which we see today as more open to the Arab street, demand its support compared to the closure on the Arab street in 2009.

In an interview with the student activist Ali at Amir Kabir University in Tehran, Ali answers his expectations from the groups in Tunisia and Egypt: "We want them to publish statements supporting our movement. Imagine the impact that might be issued if the Muslim Brotherhood issued a statement supporting our movement or if the Egyptian youth issued a supportive statement to us. This would be a great moral support. "People do not consider themselves supporters of Mousavi or Karroubi. They say they are part of a movement, The green movement is not owned by Mousavi but belongs to the people. "Here we see a shift in awareness and a sense of the people's ability to change without being committed to the political leadership of the movement.

This transformation, even if it is still in its infancy, is accompanied by a shift in

the class nature of the political movement in Iran. In 2009, the Green Movement lost the political battle when it could not attract the poor and the workers. The level of democratic demands today shows a shift in the structure of the movement. "We've seen NASA from all walks of life," Ali says. Many students are but a lot older. We have seen NASA with an Islamic dress and a beard in our ranks. There were people who appeared poor. We did not expect them to come. But I think they came because of the economic pressures. Things have gotten worse because of recent economic reforms. "

The revolution in Egypt and Tunisia gave a new dimension to the protest movements - the tide and the revolutionary horizon - and we saw how the cheers in Iran called for the fall of Khamenei, not just the dictator Ahmadinejad.

Towards building a revolutionary left in Lebanon

The revolutionary issue is no longer a matter of intellectual and theoretical future, but it is a word echoed by everyone every day. Hence, the victory of the revolution in Egypt, Tunisia, Iran, Syria, Bahrain, Algeria and others depends on building a popular solidarity movement that is not limited to the Arab street. The whole region, the reality of Iran and Pakistan and others is not different from the reality of the Arab countries, for example, «the current popular among Pakistani university students is« coup (revolution) of Egypt »(Riaz Ahmad, Pakistan).

The attempts of both the eighth and the 14th of March to say that the revolution in Egypt is an extension of the cedar revolution or a victory for the forces of resistance, this is nothing but a heretical political heresy that is intended only to employ the revolutions of the Egyptian and Tunisian people in narrow sectarian interests and in their regional and international relations. March will stand for example with the revolution in Saudi Arabia (except on the basis of opportunistic) and the March 8 team will stand by the revolution in Iran or Syria - because both teams end up in the borders of the system and regional bourgeois balances. These revolutions were not funded by foreign embassies and were not a review of sectarianism and sectarianism. They were at the core of the ruling class, against the official opposition, and it was a revolution of a people whose people made speeches and came from the throats of fighters and fighters, not from the expensive sound systems, Hotels and palaces, they even came from the streets, came from the people.

Support for the revolution in Egypt, Tunisia, Iran, Syria, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere coincides with the issue of revolutionary building in Lebanon. Today, the equation becomes clearer. There are people who seek freedom, social justice, freedom from the regimes of oppression and occupation. There are regimes of greedy capitalist dictatorship, which move between a microscopic ally and a timid ally of American imperialism. These revolutions will push these regimes to the bloc to confront the revolutionary wave that is sweeping its streets to unite and solidarity in order to confront and overthrow these regimes.

The success of the revolution in Egypt, Tunisia, Iran, Syria and others paves the way for the development of a revolution in Lebanon that will rise up against the existing bourgeois class sectarian system. So, as we are keen on change in Lebanon, we are keen to rally support for revolutions that are expanding day by day and moving from country to country.

On the left as a whole, join today and not tomorrow to the revolutionary path of

the people and cut with the logic of Esperance and ask for mercy from the rulers, the language of the masses and the street, which the traditional left always wanted to isolate from the political language and his speech returned today to the forefront of the political arena. So, he has to choose: either with the street and the people or with the regime and the ruling gangs! No place anymore for frequency and moderation.

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As Gaddafi's brutal regime collapses ... don't let West hijack the Arab Spring

August 2011[28]The intervention of the Western powers is a real threat to the Arab revolutions. It allows the dictators to pose as defenders of national independence. In fact it is the dictators, who have relied on the West's support for decades, who ensure the grip of imperialism.

There will be some who argue we need Western support to win. But the West is not interested in winning revolutions. It is pursuing specific economic and strategic interests. Neither Nato nor its planes can bring liberation. The only way to win real freedom and democracy is by our own hand – solidarity within the Arab revolutions.

Anti-imperialism is in the fabric of the Arab political movements. We cannot separate the fight for democratic freedoms from the struggle to defeat imperialism. What the imperialists want, and there are forces among the Libyan rebels who agree, is to sustain the system with a different face. But it's important to see that the fall of Gaddafi might also radicalise other revolutionary struggles. It will have an impact in the Gulf states.

In Libya it's too early to judge if all the people will welcome NATO with open arms. At the start of revolutions people unite in wide coalitions, but once the dictators fall contradictions will come to the surface. But the decisive factor is the process in Egypt. It is the most powerful movement in the region and what happens there shapes all the struggles across the region. We are still just at the beginning of the revolutionary process, and these are just the first small steps.

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The Egyptian revolution, its continuity and its effects on the Arab street

28 January 2012[29]A year before the start of the Arab revolutions, a year ago and this intifada has not subsided yet, rising and falling, expanding and receding, but it continues. This continuity confirms to us the fundamental thing that the revolution is not a point in time that begins and ends after the fall of a dictator or the fulfilment of some demands, but it is a process, a revolutionary process that leads to contradictions to the surface of political, social and economic reality, and this process sparks different kinds of conflicts. There is also a process of social transformations at the level of awareness, political fabric and the level of balance of power.

It is on this basis that we must understand this revolutionary transformation and its different paths, and the question of its spread and its impact on the Arab region and the world as well. When the Egyptian masses began their struggle with the regime, these masses not only changed their local reality, but also launched a transformation valve at the Arab, regional and even global level.

For at least a year, the stereotype of the Arab world has been that these Arab peoples hate democracy, are backward, populated by reaction and terrorism, and need to be saved because they do not want to save themselves. This is the basic argument by which they justified. This is the argument used by the Zionist authority in order to convince the world public opinion of its crimes, murder and destruction against the Palestinian people in particular and the Arab peoples in general. In this sense, Zionism adopts itself as the only arena for democracy and freedom in the Middle East.

But as the Arab masses went out into the vast arena of political and social conflict, all these arguments seemed to be falling. It was clear that world public opinion was beginning to look beyond what its rulers were saying about the Arab peoples, so we heard from Wisconsin the demonstrators chanting slogans launched by the Arab revolution, and in Britain from the slums we heard how young people say: "They did it in Syria and in Egypt, why do not we do it."

Hence, our view of the issue of Arab revolutions can not be limited to some of the political equations imposed by the existing dictatorships such as between March 14 and March 8 in Lebanon or between the regimes of "resistance" and moderate at the level of the region, the fundamental issue posed by these revolutions that the equation changed, today It is not a matter of choosing which repressive regime we want; it is a choice between the alignment of the masses or regimes and nowhere between them.

This is the most visible effect on the Arab arena, of course there are opportunists, and there are forces that want to undermine this revolutionary process and course, and this is normal in any revolutionary reality, but we are revolutionary Kisaris. We have to ask ourselves the question: Who put our trust in the momentum of the masses? Or some reactionary forces that want to ride the train of revolution? Or the regimes and their lies and hypocrisy?

Therefore, the victory of an Arab people for its regime and its completion in its march for the success of the revolution is actually an act that ensures the continuation and development of the revolutionary movement in other parts of the Arab region, and the solidarity of these peoples among them is what saves them from attacks from existing regimes.

Foreign intervention, and constitute the basis on which to base it to counter the counter-revolutions that build itself today through the legitimacy of money and international relations, and organizational capacity, and here also raises another question, what is the legitimacy? Is it the legitimacy of the mass movement and its revolutionary efforts, or is it the legitimacy of the ability of some parties, organizationally, financially and systematically, to control the election results?

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Analysis: Syria's rebels organise despite brutal repression

August 2012

Recent defections from Bashar al-Assad's government show that it is crumbling. It can only hang on by brutally crushing the popular uprising. Sections of the mass movement have been forced to take up arms in response to the regime's relentless attacks. The real issue is the survival of the movement itself. The revolution is very open — it does not have a centralised leadership. In many ways this is a strength as it makes it harder for the regime to target.[30]Those opposing Assad on the ground in Syria are not acting under the mandate of outside forces. International powers have been trying to intervene but the revolution has not been hijacked. We have to stand with the revolution against the regime and at same time stand against international intervention.

The revolt is developing from below. Local Coordinating Committees continue to organise despite facing shelling and the threat of regime spies. Mass demonstrations still happen. Often they are symbolic, keeping political activity going in neighbourhoods won to revolution. Here there is a level of self-organisation of daily life creating a sense of an alternative. Leadership is emerging organically out of struggle. In some villages women have been organising solidarity sit-ins for those who have been detained by the regime. People make neighbourhoods secure, doctors organise in hospitals, committees develop to look after food, to care for refugees and so on.

It looks different to the revolution in Egypt, where some important political breakthroughs took place before the revolution started. The working class had already gained some experience and the roots of organisation. But in Syria there has been an absence of politics for 40 years in reality. Now many workers are part of this uprising, but not on the demonstrations in organised blocks.

The fight is not easy but new political forces are coming through. There is a strong sense of solidarity across borders, people feel connected by these historic struggles against their rulers.

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The West's war will weaken Syria's revolution

September 2013

Since news broke of a possible US strike on Syria the overwhelming mood in the region has been an escalation of fear. Thousands of Syrians fled towards the Lebanese border, while in Lebanon people were preparing for the worst. [31] The vision of a US strike on Syria as a liberators breath probably only occurred to a tiny minority of people. It could only appeal to people who can easily escape the repercussions or who are so desperate that they welcome any change.

First an attack will be disastrous for the people of Syria. It undermines the

development of the revolution that offers real hope. There is no such thing as a "surgical strike". The US administration's claim that it will punish the regime without also hurting millions of people in Syria and across the region is a fiction. In reality a US strike is most likely to strengthen Assad. Alternatively, if the West is determined to bring him down, it will have to destroy most of Syria.

In the first scenario, Assad would be able to continue his murderous actions against the Syrian population while posing as an anti-imperialist hero. This would further isolate the Syrian Revolution. Already some people who supported the revolution are turning back to the regime under the pretext that it must be defended from the US.

We have seen what it means when the US decides to "depose a dictator" in Iraq, in Afghanistan and in Libya. Even if the Americans succeed, they will also have destroyed all the structures and the networks built by the Syrian revolutionaries during their struggle against the regime. All the experience of self-organisation, all the democratic processes put in place by the active masses, all the political developments within them — all of these will be destroyed.

That will leave an empty space for opportunist forces, the proxies of al-Qaeda and the regressive regimes such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar, to take on the leading role. In both scenarios, the US attack will first and foremost damage the Syrian Revolution. Moreover it will be a pretext for the regime's allies in the region to rescue it by widening the circle of war.

Lebanon's leaders could submerge it in yet another war to escape the rising popular resentment against Hezbollah sending fighters to bolster Assad in Syria. It would silence local support for the Syrian Revolution under the slogan of "national discipline" against imperialism. Already the violence is spreading. Just last week Lebanon witnessed car bombs in densely populated neighbourhoods of both Beirut and Tripoli. The idea that revolutions are won by some swift action that disposes of a regime and builds another is a fiction.

Regimes are not simply structures balanced somewhere in some capital, that can be simply got rid of or taken over: they are a complex web of relations of interests among those on the top of society. They continuously adapt their roles and the agencies of economy and thought and politics to benefit changing situations. And they have the money and the knowledge to do so.

That is why revolutions are not about simply deposing a dictator or a military council or a corrupt president, however integral and necessary those actions may be. They are also about sparking a process of mass transformation and of self-education and confidence within the masses. This develops through their continuous movement and struggle for change. It emerges from the factory of ideas set up by the revolutionary process, as alternative structures and agencies of resistance and of self-organisation are erected.

In time this process forms the dual power[32] that can truly defy the existing order. That is when the system can be brought down to open the space for a true mass transformation of society towards a better future. These processes must take place, even with dangerous setbacks. As has happened in Egypt such setbacks can be an important space to polarise people to a revolutionary position. They can filter

out those elements who are willing to compromise with the ruling order at the first opportunity.

Moreover, observers often exaggerate the depth of these setbacks. The roots of the revolutions we are seeing are not simply a result of political conflict. At their base are contradictions between the immense socio-economic developments happening at the base of Arab society and the existing superstructure and the political order.

These contradictions are far from disappearing. In Egypt, Syria, Bahrain or wherever, revolutionaries remind people of these contradictions and the necessity to push the revolutionary process forward. They argue for the importance of giving time for these agencies and structures of resistance to develop and to support them. They can never, never fall to despair and call for foreign intervention or to side with one side of the ruling class against the other.

The first and foremost task is to support the masses as they develop their own potential to achieve change through their own collective action. This can never be achieved by substituting for their movement with some surgical actions, whether a coup or a swift strike.

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The Mechanistic Left and Revolution

July 2014

There is a huge difference between movement from the area of "mass action" and their actual movement in demonstrations, strikes and sit-ins — as happened in Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Bahrain and elsewhere — which by their very nature are a political space for political action. If not a highly organized, armed, move in a purely military and repressive path, and push its daily movement of mass action to the margin, but shrink it and constrain its ability to organize and political action.[33]This is what the mechanistic[34] left does not understand. Even if both movements exist in one revolutionary historical process, as we do today, this does not mean that they both express the same "revolution"; they may even be the opposite of those existing in the area of the historical conflict. "Revolution" and "counterrevolution"!

Class and class contradictions are objective, not "political" in the historical course, ie, these conditions exist materially and effectively, while the political movement is a "subjective expression" of a class position of existing contradictions, namely the movement of groups, individuals, parties and masses trying to "express "About the same reality. The fact that material reality is the same, does not mean that every political movement in society is expressed by the revolution, or even express it directly or correctly!

Therefore, the revolution is not the physical reality in which the revolution and the counter revolution take place; rather, the social and class contradictions are the material reality. The revolution is one of the movements that exist in that reality, but it is not the only one. There are also anti-revolutionary movements, in addition to the regime and the ruling bourgeoisie. Therefore, not every movement of the counterrevolution implies a broader movement of revolutionary movement. Sometimes, the counterrevolution is unique in expression and the revolution retreats

for a variety of reasons.

Is it a hallucination of any act hostile to the regime, regardless of the policy of this act? Or the distribution of revolutionary legitimacy to every movement against the regime regardless of its class, intellectual and ideological position? Of course not, in this sense, both Nazism and the German revolutionary knows movement in the early part of the last century become two parts of a single revolution! Or that Sisi is from the same revolutionary fabric of the revolutionary mass movement in Egypt! Or as the mechanic left today tries to promote it, that a preacher has benefited from the contradictions and anger that exist in the path of authoritarian, extremist and sectarian, and this implies that there is a revolution to bear!

This is the current trend of the Shabawi, which historically contributed to the destruction of the revolutionary movement, such as turning the eyes of the German left on the rise of Nazism, which led to Hitler's rule, and the eye and the humiliation of the Stalinist left of the Sisi in Egypt led to his rise to power and the beginning of his fascist struggle against the forces of the actual revolution , Or what the Lebanese Stalinist left in the civil war and handing over the leadership of the movement to the "national" sectarian bourgeoisie, Coled Jumblatt, Nabih Berri and others, which undermined the labor and leftist movement and the wider consolidation of bourgeois ideology and order.

The most important task today is to move away from populist chatter and to work on building the revolutionary organization and equip it politically, intellectually and practically to confront the reality we are living and prepare for the existing confrontations, not to transform the working class into masses of reactionaries and the petty bourgeoisie,

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The Arab revolutions mix despair and hope

Jun 2014

Only in the most mechanical understanding of history do relations of oppression and exploitation automatically translate into revolution. Having said that, it is important for socialists to look objectively at the current twists and turns of the revolutionary process. This is not just to feed intellectual curiosity, but more importantly to understand how revolutionary politics can adapt and push forward in such difficult times.[35]So it is important to understand recent events in the Middle East — especially Iraq — in a wider context. In Tunisia, where the Arab revolutions began, we have seen the introduction of a new constitution. This guarantees important democratic rights, but it hasn't radically changed the nature of the state. In Egypt, president Mohamed Mursi was deposed following mass protests, but this movement was hijacked with a coup d'état by the military council. The shift was confirmed in the recent election of military leader Abdel Fatah el-Sisi as president. In Syria, Bashar al-Assad's regime has built on support from Iran and Russia, and the heavy deployment of Hezbollah fighters from Lebanon. This has stabilised it enough to solidify its power in the recent rigged elections.

Iraq witnessed mass protests in 2012 and 2013 in several Sunni-dominated regions. They were supported by various Shia figures including Moqtada al-Sadr[36] — against the sectarian politics of Nouri al-Maliki. They faced heavy repression, which halted the popular movement. Heavy repression that was directed against protesters in Bahrain has considerably limited the movement's momentum. These events signal a rise in the counter-revolutionary wave sweeping across the region. Admitting such facts does not negate the revolutionary process. Quite the contrary, it takes it away from the realm of fantasy towards the domain of reality.

Deviation

In this light, the recent events in Iraq are not, as many wish them to be, an upsurge in revolutionary politics. They sadly mark a deviation towards more regressive and sectarian politics. And it is important to state that overwhelming dissatisfaction does not by its mere existence translate into a revolution, or an uprising. It can also become a breeding ground for sectarian and counter-revolutionary politics. This is most true in the absence of a unified popular movement, and more importantly, of an organised revolutionary party.

That is why the most important task right now for socialists and revolutionaries across the Arab region is to get organised. We have to work tirelessly in winning sections of the working class away from defeatist, opportunist and sectarian ideas. If these are left uncontested, they could lead to the disillusionment of workers into regressive and sectarian politics.

The revolutionary conditions and contradictions within Arab societies that led to the first waves of revolutionary upsurges from 2011 are far from being resolved. But history does not progress in a straight line. Admitting the existence of the current downturn will allow us to be prepared and organised for coming struggles in the future.

And that is why it is crucial to avoid two traps. We must not negate the revolutionary processes, as many on the Stalinist and nationalist left have done by surrendering their souls to the ruling classes. On the other hand, we cannot afford to be taken up by a euphoric fantasy of wishful thinking and dreadful populism. Either fault will foster the political conditions that favour counter-revolutionary despair.

We have a long and difficult task ahead. It is not enough to only produce the correct politics. We need to be able to build a true revolutionary party that can transmit hope among the working masses. We need the capacity and ability to fight the ruling order, and at the same time to fend off the regressive currents within society. We need a revolutionary party that can win the confidence of the people, and be ready to conduct the struggle to the end.

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Chapter Seven
National Liberation, Islamism & Palestine

\intro text here

How did the sectarian nightmare come true in Syria and Iraq?
[37]
Aug 2014

What led to the emergence of the Islamic State group?
People in the Middle East have suffered enormously from poverty, oppression and Western imperialism. With the retreat of the left in recent decades many looked at political Islam as an alternative. But this is a broad and varied category — and both the US war on Iraq and the revolutions across the Arab world have changed the political agenda.

On the one hand there are mass organisations such as the Muslim Brotherhood, Hezbollah and Hamas. These recruit and organise ordinary people on a political agenda, even if they organise militarily as well. In contrast, a group such as Al-Qaeda builds on political ideas, but without building a popular movement among ordinary people.

Like the Narodniks in 19th century Russia, it is a terrorist organisation in a traditional sense with the aim of destabilising the enemy. Particularly since the occupation of Iraq, groups that merge these two traditions are growing. They adopt terrorist tactics at the same time as recruiting people politically. Isis — the group that later became the Islamic State — and others such as Jabhat al-Nusra are examples of this.

How did groups such as Isis overtake other forms of political Islam?
The revolutions were full of contradictions. In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood experienced a terrible defeat after going into government and working with the regime. In Tunisia, An-Nahda had to retreat into opposition. Many of those looking to Sunni political Islam started to turn away from these established groups, as they weren't able to deliver.

This allowed factional groups to emerge as a hard-line alternative. Very organised, with funding and a clear programme, they were more attractive especially to the most radicalised militants. Meanwhile Shia political Islam was on the offensive, with support from Iran. Lebanon's Hezbollah has intervened from a very sectarian perspective to defend the dictatorship in Syria against the revolution. In Iraq, Nouri al-Maliki's government has led a wide offensive on Sunni areas.

Such factors combined with a continuing destruction of the social fabric in Iraq and Syria. This is down to both regimes' heavy repressive and sectarian policies, and a bloody history of imperialism and regional interferences. This provided groups like Isis both a political momentum and a sectarian purpose. They also fed on the heavy destabilisation of al-Qaeda's bureaucratic structure.

Where did all their money come from?
Many forces are involved, from Saudi Arabia and Qatar to local and regional businessmen and possibly the US itself. Funding for Islamist groups is always a very twisted affair. One group can get backing from somewhere, only to merge or get taken over by another — along with its money and arms. Their funding structures change and transform in relation to political or strategic shifts. The CIA is involved in every country in the region. And the story of the West backing Osama bin Laden only for him to become their worst enemy has many echoes.

It's not unusual for people who have passed through contact with the CIA later to pop up and become Islamist leaders. The Islamic State also gains arms and money with territorial possession. And now of course it also gets revenue from selling oil it controls. Particularly in Syria, Isis was a product of local militias and groups consolidating into one powerful organisation. This is very attractive to warlords and much of the petty bourgeoisie thrown up by the war, who need to control the streets where they operate.

How did the Syrian revolution come to this?
The influence of Isis reflects the militarisation of the revolt from very early on. Bashar al-Assad's regime unleashed horrible repression, and created the conditions for a civil war. That regime is now emptied of any political substance. It has completely lost credibility on the ground, and is ruling purely by scaring people into obedience and helplessness. Many of the Syrian activists and civilians who were part of early political protests are either in regime prisons or outside Syria as refugees.

Others are in liberated areas, drained of resources from having to fend off both Isis and regime forces. Syria has been emptied to polarise the fight between one threat and another, pushing back and fragmenting much of the mass movement — and that helped Isis.

Was there an alternative to this degeneration?
There was, but you need to consider the broader context to see it. When the revolution in Egypt started, there were protests in support of it all over the Arab World. But the small mobilisations we helped organise in Beirut were the only ones in support of the Syrian revolution.

At the same time, there is a history of deep segregation between the Syrian working class and the Lebanese working class, and there have been no political parties in Syria for the last 40 years. Much of the wider left opposed the Syrian revolution.

Hezbollah and others argued that the revolutions were only happening against regimes which collaborate with imperialism — and that the Syrian regime wasn't like

that. As if the revolutions weren't also connected to economic crisis, repression and so on. They closed down breathing space for the Syrian revolutionaries to propagate their politics or to build solidarity. So the Syrian revolution was besieged and isolated. Without that isolation, its degeneration into an armed conflict was never a given.

Lebanon and Syria are interconnected. You cannot see a sustained movement in one without the other. You also need unity and solidarity between movements in the countries of the region. They cannot be limited only within national boundaries.

Can anything be done to stop the Islamic State?
The only way you defend yourself against forces like this is to organise people in a way that fends off sectarianism. Sectarianism is a tactic used by the ruling class to attack the revolution. It has the potential to become a very organic culture, which just fuels itself into more and more killings. In 1990 Beirut was completely segregated between Christians and Muslims. But over ten years there was more intermixing.

By the 2000s, the potential to create a general aggressive culture of sectarianism was more limited because of common living and common experiences. Social movements developed and created links, and a space to organise against sectarianism. In 2011, we marched into working class areas where sectarian militias occupied the streets. Families came from their homes and joined the demonstrations, because we used anti-sectarian slogans that spoke about their real worries and demands.

You're fending off the sectarian militias from controlling the area they are in geographically or psychologically. In Iraq it is harder because the social and political decay left by the occupation led to fiercer segregation in mixed areas. But the left needs to intervene to create a real alternative and shift new generations from getting recruited by sectarian parties.

What effect does US intervention have?
The US is on the defensive and trying to protect its own interests in Iraq. An intervention will inflame the situation and prolong the conflict. The Islamic State exists because of a lack of revolutionary politics. A movement from below which fends off the regime and fills the vacuum the Islamic State is currently filling could win people away from it. You can point to Isis as being part of the counter-revolutionary forces that criminalise revolution. The line of struggle against both the regime and against these reactionaries becomes clearer. But when imperialists intervene it gives structures like Isis more favourable conditions.

It galvanises regional rivalries which allows the further spreading of factional conflicts. This fragments the masses and besieges the working class in a war-driven economy. and it limits the possibility of building political movements and mass mobilisations that offer the only real alternative against these sectarian forces.

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The Historical and Class Dimensions for the Rise of Islamist Movements in Lebanon

2015

The political and security developments that have occurred in Lebanon over the past few weeks, in the Capital and the North,[38][1] are signs that cannot be ignored, inasmuch as they signify the extent to which the current political reality is in crisis, as well as what they reveal about the contradictions that govern the balance of power in this political reality, especially in the shadow of the process of the Arab revolutions, the Syrian revolution, and the problem the latter poses for the Arab ruling class in general and the Lebanese in particular. Some may attempt to explain these events as if they occurred according to some preconceived plan, say, from the Syrian Intelligence on one hand, or from Saudi Intelligence on the other, as an attempt from both to marginalize their political, social and economic significations.

Both sides of the March 14 and March 8 divide have clearly adopted and supported the security solution, even if each offered different reasons and guises for this adoption. For example, the March 14 forces called on the current government to resign after the fighting in Tripoli, considering that "the goal of the resignation is not to retaliate against the [Najib] Mikati government, but rather to instal a rescue government that can offer a radical treatment for the susceptibility of the politics and security of the country."[39] [Then Electricity Minister] Gebran Bassil's reply was the most representative of March 8's general position regarding this issue. "Why do they want to topple the government?" he asked. "So that it is replaced by the government of the takfiris; the sights of chaos and lawlessness; a government that wants to demolish the army; the government of the Free Syrian Army?" [40]

The logic adopted by both sides of the ruling powers, which reduces most of the issues in the country to conspiratorial schemes, is based on a political vision that considers the reasons for these regular explosions within the Lebanese political reality as the results of the irrational actions of the people. It is, as they describe it, "the anger of the people." Or as the minister of the interior, Marwan Charbel, described it, "letting off steam."

Of course, the people are by their very nature "irrational", and according to this view, are dragged by the directives and plots of the influential regional states, e.g. the Syrian and Saudi regimes. While the ruling power is always clad with reason and civility and armed with the power of the state, jurisdiction, and the military and civil institutions (which they use to quell [fiery] situations and punish those irrational people!). Thus, as both March 8 and March 14 demand to protect the country from a susceptible political and security situation; it is this demeaning logic that motivates their position.

There is no denial here of the interference of regional and global states in the political events of Lebanon, and especially by the Saudi and Syrian regimes. This interference, however, does not arise without first being provided a fertile environment that serves as its outlet. In any case, this interference is the result of the politics of the current ruling class, and not the result of the supposed "irrationality of the people" or "the triumph of tradition and customs over the state". This is especially so since after each round of violent events (ahdath), whether in the southern suburb of Beirut (Dahiyeh), the Bekaa Valley, the North, or other areas, the pseudo-intellectuals begin repeating the expressions, "mutiny against the prestige of the state" and "attack on its institutions" etc.

This discourse is the most prominent weapon for eclipsing the class background and the social, economic, and political depth of these events. This discourse also ignores the contradictions inside the Lebanese political scene revealed by the confrontation, as well as the current class contradictions of our Lebanese reality in particular and the Arab reality in general. On one hand, this discourse is an attempt to punish whoever tries to "spoil" the state of discipline within the ranks of the "sects", whereby these battles decrease the hegemony of the sectarian parties over the street and lessen their ability to control it. On the other hand, this discourse imparts an ignorant "nature" on the class expression that utilizes, in this case, the stage of sectarianism and religion to express itself. Hence, the state intends to hide or marginalize the class and socio-political dimensions of these events, in an attempt to restore discipline in the class-sectarian order.

This logic is not very far off from the approach taken by a significant portion of leftist activists, the Stalinist left, and especially the nationalist left. It conjectures a tribal approach that does not differ from the sectarian tribalism promoted by the dominant ruling class. For in the face of every riot, or similar security hazard, these "leftists" trumpet slogans such as "the Army is a red line", a mantra adopted by the Lebanese Communist Party as a response to the Hay el-Sellom riots in 2004 (in retaliation against living conditions) and during the war of Nahr al-Bared refugee camp in 2007 (a war that led to the destruction of homes for more than thirty thousand Palestinian refugees.) Today, this slogan is used to justify the direct invitation to kill "the Islamic groups in the North". In response to the latest events in Tripoli, one of the supposedly "leftist" activists stated on their Facebook page, "A good Salafist is a dead Salafist."

Here it is necessary for us, as revolutionary Marxists, not to be dragged in this sectarian discourse and to look instead at the socio-historical and class dimensions that produce such political movements. We need to face this reality from a revolutionary point of view, thereby serving the interest of society as a whole, and not from the logic of factional and tribal alignments, a logic that reproduces the current sectarian and racist regime, which contributes to strengthening the attempts of the ruling power to adopt purely security approaches, as mentioned before (to efface what these battles point towards in relation to the level of existing class tensions and its contradictions that have resulted in the growth of these Islamic political movements). This is with the knowledge that the security solution has always been the choice of the sectarian bourgeois authority for the sake of reproducing the conditions of its political existence and its sectarian and classist discourse.

On the historical conditions of political and sectarian expression

Religious (and sectarian) movements around the world have risen in a reality whose social and economic basis was fractured as a result of capitalist transformation — first, as a product of its imposition by the imperial hegemony, then by the blunt transformation of internal social relations, leading in time to the rise of a local bourgeois class and the emergence of the capitalist bourgeois state. [41]

New classes replaced the old ones. However, this capitalist transformation was never distinct; rather, it was simultaneously uneven and compounded, or a combined

development. Leon Trotsky has explained this process, saying: "Although compelled to follow after the advanced countries, a backward country does not take things in the same order. The privilege of historic backwardness — and such a privilege exists — permits, or rather compels, the adoption of whatever is ready in advance of any specified date, skipping a whole series of intermediate stages." [42]

As such, the peasants throw away their farming tools and move to work in factories and small workshops, or in stores and commercial institutions, or they take it as a profession to drive taxi cabs. All this without having to travel the long road that led to the transformation and development of these tools of production. For example, the shock of such acute capitalist transformation was the main motive behind the emigration of the people of Mount Lebanon between 1860 and 1910. Akram Fouad Khater explains how the economic crisis that hit Mount Lebanon presented the peasants with a dilemma: "[…]how to make enough money quickly to guarantee their status as landowners and not slip into the ranks of the landless labourers. About the only option that appeared on the economic horizon was emigration." [43][6]

However, if the law of combined development explains in basic form the socio-historical process in backward countries, it does not follow that this law can only be applied to capitalist development in the Third World ony; rather it can be applied to aspects of the development of what is called the Global North. For example, it is through such a law of combined development that we can understand the capitalist advancement of Germany and the United States over Britain at the beginning of the previous century.

When major capitalist countries reach an advanced stage of growth, whereby their need for raw materials, cheap labour and open markets increases, they seek to exploit the religious and sectarian pluralism in the colonized land to their advantage. This pluralism is categorized as a sectarian and religious "division" and followed by enforced colonial policies that lead to disparities in wealth and economic growth between these religions and sects. These "divisions", and the internal struggles arising out of them, have become the easy alibi for intervention in colonized lands, nay, for invasion under the banner of "humanitarian intervention" and the "progress of civilization, urbanization and modernity."

Ussama Makdisi explains this phenomenon in his book The Culture of Sectarianism, saying: "Religion … became the site of the colonial encounter in the Ottoman Empire in that European officials defined the parameters of reform through a modernization discourse couched in terms of a clash of religious civilizations. Both the problem (Islam) and the solution (European Christian rationality) were defined in monolithic religious terms. Furthermore, diplomats such as Canning imagined the Empire not so much as a multi-ethnic and multi-religious territory, but as a Muslim state with large "minorities" of Christians scattered in various provinces. This understanding of the Empire as a "mosaic" where ethnic and religious groups existed as separate and autonomous cultural and physical units was embedded in Canning's description of the local Christians as the "subjugated classes" [44][7]

This does not mean that European policies were the sole reason for the emergence of sectarianism; the Ottoman Empire and its local dependent bourgeoisie made their own contribution. Perhaps the biggest proof of the continuation of this political

approach is what we hear today from Lebanese politicians when they use terms such as "injustice against Christians", "Sunni People's dignity" and "Shia deprivation" and so forth. For the identity of political discourse concerning political, cultural and economic changes is presented religiously. However, these changes are not religious, but the expression of very real socio-economic and political circumstances emerging from uneven development.

"Injustice", "deprivation", and "dignity" are class expressions; they are universal expressions when taken abstractly. However, when associated with sectarian expressions, their universal nature is reduced and changed to a sectarian particularism. Moreover, these expressions are the translation of the fusion between objective class expression and the hegemonic ideological discourse of the ruling sectarian-bourgeoisie. The 1990 Taif Accords [which put an end to the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990)] prove as much, as the following phrases were added to the preamble Lebanese constitution: "The even development among regions on the educational, social, and economic levels shall be a basic pillar of the unity of the state and the stability of the system." This religious and sectarian expression is present within a capitalist infrastructure, as evidenced further in the preamble, The economic system is free and ensures private initiative and the right of private property."

Staging the political and class conflict through religious-sectarian expression

Sectarian-religious movements, especially the ones existing today, are an expression of the contradictions that have ruled the aforementioned changes in Lebanese society. With the onset of the Lebanese Civil War and the proceeding decline of unions and the Left, sectarian parties were on the rise, in comparison to the 1960s and 1970s; they emerged as a sharper expression of capitalist transformation. Thus, we saw the decline of cross-sectarian parties, and the rise of parties boasting sectarian purity and donning the masque of religious creed.

Urban migration and the demise of the rural community

Capitalist transformations in Lebanon have led to the development of some modern industry, albeit in a limited capacity, coexisting side by side with large sectors of small and traditional workshops and manufacturing units, these constitute 90 percent of workplaces and do not exceed a five-person workforce.[8] In addition, successive wars, the shift taken by the economy towards the services sectors, and the lifting of agricultural subsidies led a large number of Lebanese lands to be restricted to big landowners, Islamic religious endowment (awqaf), or the Church.

Furthermore, a large number of middle-sized farmers became small-sized farmers[a]. This situation also led to the migration of a large number of farmers to the cities and their suburbs, especially those whose livelihood depends on day-to-day or weekly labour in workshops or commercial stores. While the expansion of the education sector has led to the graduation of many high school and college students, they seldom find job opportunities that provide upward social mobility or even bare subsistence wage. Consequently, some work as taxi or minivan drivers, or work in the informal market.

This reality translates directly to the population density of cities in comparison

with rural areas, and the discrepancy is disastrous. In 1950, the estimate of the urban population of Lebanon was 22.7 percent, while in 1970, this estimate increased to between 50 percent and 59 percent. In the year 2000 the urban population was estimated to be in between 87 percent and 92 percent.[9]

This rise in the urban population is concentrated in the suburbs of the cities. For example, "Between 1925 and 1969, Chiyyah [south of Beirut] grew from a village of about 575 households into two suburbs composed of 4,587 households, 5,054 nuclear families, and a population of more than 28,568. About 75 percent of the population are newcomers (migrants); the rest are old settlers."[10]

Inflation of classes in transformation and capitalist hybridity

The exacerbation of economic crises on the global level led to the exacerbation of their contradictions [on the local level]. The new industries found the national economy too small to operate efficiently in the midst of a severely competitive global economy; they could not continue without government support (such as flour subsidies). Small industries and workshops, moreover, could not grow without similar support and were also incapable of compensating for the failure of the new industries to provide jobs for the urban and suburban population.

These contradictions had two effects. On one hand, they led to increasing the size of the petty bourgeoisie (small-shop owners and the self-employed) and the expansion of the informal market, leading, naturally, to the increase in precarious work (daily and weekly workers). Accordingly, the size of the petit bourgeoisie in Lebanon is estimated at around 23.3 percent from the overall economic workforce, whereas the percentage of the precarious workforce is estimated at around 10.3 percent from the overall workforce.[11]

On the other hand, other sectors such as the banking sector, the real estate sector, and the services sector were able to forge strong relations with regional and global capital and find political allies who would provide for them suitable conditions for wealth accumulation. At the same time we witness a large concentration of wealth, glaringly visible in the souks, the downtown area, and especially apparent in skyscrapers and the manifestations of great wealth in Beirut. This asymmetric affluence leads to a growing tension between, the rich on one hand, and precarious workers on the other (daily or weekly workers, or the unemployed), not to mention the regular labour segments. Another tension, although less severe, is between the petit bourgeoisie and the hegemonic bourgeoisie.

However, there is a very important question that must be asked: despite this reality and what it might create of feelings of class antagonism, what is it that makes these lower classes, in particular, more susceptible to religious and sectarian discourse, and thus resorting to it on many occasions?

With the absence of social welfare and security, the lack of national health insurance, the dearth of job opportunities and investment in productive sectors, and the absence of economic and social security, over and above the decline of the labour movements and unions that formed the focal point for overall street mobilization and political expression of workers and the disadvantaged classes — a decline arising from the vicious attack deployed by the local bourgeoisie during and especially after

the civil war, with the help of collaborators and allies such as with the Syrian regime and its intelligence agencies — all these factors left the lower classes without a representative voice in the midst of a wretched socio-political reality.

Whereupon the religious institutions, such as mosques, Husayniyas, and churches, began, and still provide a social focal point for newcomers to the city. Moreover, sectarian institutions provide social welfare by offering various services such as orphanages, social welfare organisations, hospitals, clinics and schools. Thus sectarian institutions play the role of the absent state, consequently establishing a relationship of dependency between them and their clientele, with whatever thought and ideology gets pumped into the beneficiaries of those services.

Money is given to these institutions by those whose interest conflicts with the interest of the majority of the people, such as the leaders of the sectarian bourgeoisie, who control the positions of local power and an important part of the state's money. Under their control, this money is used to present illegal social services to associates and people dependent on them. This is not to mention the role of regional powers, be it from countries of the Arab Gulf, such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, or Iran, who seek popular loyalties within Lebanese society as an outlet. In other words, the provision of financial and sectarian haven for the poor is reciprocated with political loyalty. We all know the magnitude of high funding that the local bourgeoisie, and their regional supporters, pay to build sectarian and religious welfare institutions, or mosques and places of worship, etc.

This is the crux of the relationship of dependency and reliability that is produced between the popular classes on one hand (the petit bourgeoisie, the precarious workers, the unemployed, and others poor populations), and the sectarian leaders and parties on the other hand. Thus, Hezbollah's (material) ability to contain the streets is actually its ability to provide a relationship of dependence through its social, economic and political guarantees. These guarantees are evident in Hezbollah's focus on building husayniyyat, mosques, and social welfare institutions, all of which provide it with an extensive crowd. The creation of a relation of dependency was also undertaken by Rafic Hariri and continued by his son, Saad Hariri, through the Hariri Foundation, scholarships, and various social services projects, as well as employment placements. According to this, class tensions are refracted and staged by the intellectual and psychological background of sectarian and religious discourse and by the destitute popular classes and their mobility.

Probing the areas in which religious and sectarian discourse is used to mobilize crowds provides further proof of the manifestation of this phenomenon within these social classes. For example, the protests that happen in areas such as Beirut's southern Suburb, Dahiyeh, Tariq al-Jadida, Barbour, Ras el-Nabeh, Burj Abi Haidar, Bab al-Tabbaneh, Jabal Mohsen, Ain el-Remmaneh, and other areas are the clearest urban expression of the mobilization of these social classes and what they are exposed to from emotional, intellectual exploitation and blackmail within the prevailing sectarian structure.

The geographical grounds are the clearest signs for the validity of this analysis. This is clearer still if we look at the direct and current reasons for the rise of Islamic movements, especially in the north and the Bekaa Valley, investigating the

susceptibility of such areas to the rise of fundamentalist and Salafi Islamic currents.

On the direct and current reasons for the emergence of islamic movements

in the north and the Bekaa

Islamic movements in the north and the Bekaa are not new. On the contrary, they have taken a large part in the political life of these areas since the 1980s, and especially in light of Syria's hegemony over Lebanon.

The syrian regime's iron fist over the area

The North and the Bekaa both suffered extensively from the Syrian regime's hegemony over Lebanon. The regime resorted to stricter surveillance and oppression in those regions given the fact that they both provide a crossing to the inlands of Syria.

Syrian policy in the north of Lebanon has had "local and special interests for inland Syria. The control over the city [Tripoli] gave Assad economic and political gains in Syria. And Syria's control over the informal market in the north was of vital importance since there was not a lot of red line in the north, and given the special policies that the regime followed in the north given its major Sunni demographic. Therefore, the city was kept under the direct grip of the Syrian regime".[12][b]

The security policies of the Lebanese authorities are not different from those of the Syrian regime regarding the North and the Bekaa, Even after the exit of the Syrian forces in 2005, Lebanese authorities adopted the slogan of the War on Terror with open arms, whereby they resorted to oppress the Islamic movements since the 1990s, with all the arbitrary arrests that followed, and without any trial. Each of March 14 and March 8 have participated in these policies, especially in the arrests that followed the battles of Nahr al-Bared in 2007 and 2008.

Deterioration of the people's living conditions

After the exit of the Syrian Army from Lebanon in 2005, the North was greatly affected by the closing of the Syrian border because of the tense relationship between the Syrian and Lebanese authorities. This was followed by the war with Israel in July of 2006 and the war of Nahr al-Bared in 2007. All this contributed to the deterioration of the living conditions for most families in the North.

In an attempt to indemnify the losses suffered in the July 2006 war, some farmers took out loans in order to increase their produce; however, with the outbreak of the war of Nahr al-Bared, another harvest season was destroyed, whereas "64 percent of the families involved in agrarian work suffered from a decline in productivity because of these two wars."[13]

The north is one of the most deprived areas in Lebanon

"According to the Central Administration of Statistics, the number of [commercial] institutions in the North is 17 thousand institutions, whereas Mount Lebanon has 73 thousand institutions, and Beirut has 72 thousand institutions. Moreover, Tripoli's share of bank loans to the private sector does not exceed 2 percent, whereas in Beirut and its suburbs it stands at 83 percent. Thus the mantra of reducing the role of the

state for the benefit of the private sector has no echo here, and the "market" does not provide jobs for the youth, making them hostages to "need". This is further proven by the high unemployment rates in Tripoli in contrast to other areas, as well as high percentages of school dropout, illiteracy among women, child mortality and the weakness of the social protection systems (especially health insurance)… leading a large number of this city's children to be subject to the social charities of the current political leaders."[14]

Since the beginning of the Syrian Revolution, the northern and eastern borders of Lebanon have witnessed a constant state of tension, as well as security prosecution against Syrian Opposition members on both sides of the border, which made the conditions of living in the North and the Bekaa more complicated.

The Arab Revolutions and the Syrian Revolution in particular

With the expansion of the Arab revolutions, the success of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Egyptian and Tunisian elections, and the persistence of the Syrian Revolution, the Islamic Movements in the North have seen a new political depth. This is especially so in light of opposition to the Syrian revolution by a large part of the Lebanese and Syrian Left, due to their adherence to the ruling regimes and betrayal of the interests of the Lebanese and Syrians. Accordingly, the chance has opened for the Islamist movements to take the lead on the political level.

As a result of the brutality of the regime and its attacks on non-sectarian voices and the leftist forces in Syria, as well as the regime's injection of sectarianism and its attempts to terrorize racial and religious minorities, some oppositional Syrian forces have leaned to a sectarian and religious discourse.

However, this does not mean that the Syrian revolution itself has leaned towards a religious and sectarian discourse. On the contrary, the actions of the Syrian masses demonstrate their insistence on their unity and their remaining outside the sectarian and racial logic. Nevertheless, the unification of all the ranks of the opposition, in the shadow of a dictatorial rule, is difficult and takes time. Based on these political changes, Islamist forces in Tripoli were motivated to expand by anchoring a political Islamist kernel in the Syrian revolution, one that did not exist before. Thus, they exploited the window opened by the Syrian Revolution for the sake of political efficacy. For example, the Salafist protest in support of the Syrian Revolution in Martyr's Square in Beirut on March 4, 2012, led by Sheikh [Ahmad] al-Assir, is one of the major signs to the widening political grasps of these movements.

The forced displacement of the Syrian population to the north of Lebanon and the Bekaa, as a result of regime brutality, increased the momentum of these Islamist currents. The solidarity shown by imams and sheikhs of mosques and local municipal leaders towards refugees led to increased resentment against the Lebanese state's absent role regarding the refugees as well as its neutral position regarding the events in Syria.

The decline of the Future Movement's role as a Sunni leadership

On the other hand, the power of the Future Movement, led by Saad Hariri, in absorbing these [Islamist] movements under its banner is clearly waning. This came especially

after the financial setback suffered by the Hariri family, Saad Hariri's political failure in keeping his Prime Minister position, as well as his loss during the events of May 7, 2008.

Some of the groups [previously allied with the Future Movement] have moved towards Islamist leadership as an alternative to the Future Movement. Even though the Future Movement still retains a wide allegiance in these places, the [rising] voices of the Islamic movements form a fundamental threat to the Future Movement's hegemony over the Sunni political choice. This threat appears clearly in the open criticism that the Future Movement receives from both these Islamist Movements and its own popular base. On the other hand, Hezbollah's siding with the Assad regime, as well as the introduction of their weapon's arsenal as a sectarian-political factor in Lebanese politics during the events of May 7, 2008, coupled with the impossibility of providing any serious reforms within the standing system — all this has led the Islamic Movements in the north to take up arms in order to secure their ability in forcing their own political reality and thus ensuring their continuity.

A disclaimer is in order here. These Islamist movements are not one political body; rather, they differ in politics and modes of operation. Moreover, not all of them are necessarily armed; in a similar fashion to other political forces in Lebanon, some rely on peaceful populist work, others depend on armed security work, or both at the same time. The conflation of both of these modes of operation is not surprising within the Lebanese scene, as the history of the emergence of Hezbollah in Dahiyeh and the South attests. The latter depended in the beginning on armed operations inside of Lebanon, then it confined its work to resistance in South Lebanon, until it returned again to in-land operations in 2008.

The intersection of those reasons led to the thriving of fundamentalist and Salafi Islamist movements in Lebanon, especially in the North and the Bekaa. In turn, their prosperity affects the current political power balance, adding a new factor to existing political alliances, in both the opposition and the loyalists' ranks, and especially in the midst of the waning of the Future Movement's unilateral representation of the Sunni population.

Conclusion

Herein lies the fundamental issue that the left in general and the revolutionary left in particular has to address: how can we attract the masses — who either favour the fundamentalist movements on one hand, or the existing sectarian movements on the other — to a non-sectarian and class position. Obviously, the issue cannot be confronted as if the fundamentalist are coming from a distant past, or are strange to society, or that they are non-modern expressions, or other such excuses that others utilize to call for the perishing of or the elimination of Salafism and fundamentalism.

From such a position, these same people condone any security response to this issue, which in turn motivates sectarian fighting and contributes to the creation of the political conditions that the regime can use to renew itself. In other words, the security response in actuality justifies the war on the poor, while the one truly responsible is acquitted from the circumstances of economic, social, and political deterioration; the circumstances fertile for the emergence of such [Islamist] movements.

Hence, it is upon the Left in general and the Revolutionary Left in particular to consider tackling this issue by creating the political, revolutionary, and proletarian alternative that can win over the masses from these groups, not to a sectarian discourse, but toward secular one. This alternative neither incriminates these segments of society, nor does it brand them as "sectarian" or "idiotic", since the prime reason that these segments favour the sectarian and religious discourse is the absence of the working class from the political and economic struggle. The working class is the only class that can form a focal point or fulcrum to the present class tensions, and the one best suited to create a non-sectarian, secular confrontation against the dominant class (avoiding entering into sectarian clashes that lead to the destruction of the whole of society). The local bourgeoisie and its regional allies, especially the Syrian regime, have sought to weaken the working class by devastating union movements and voiding them of content.

In an article published in Assafir newspaper, Adnan al-Haj, the editor of the economics section, writes on the occasion of May 1st in 2011, commenting upon the current distribution of unions: "We said that there are around 580 workers' unions who have an approximate membership of 50 thousand workers. Some see that this number is too large and retort that union membership in Lebanon does not exceed 2 percent or 3 percent, which is a number closer to reality considering the phantom union whose officials do not even know their names. There are 51 unions that are divided over the political forces in the following manner: 15 unions to the Amal Movement, 8 for the Lebanese Forces, 7 for Hezbollah, 6 for the Communist Party (and these are unions that have differing views and relationships with the General Workers' Union), two for the Syrian Socialist Nationalist Party (SSNP), 3 for the Ba'ath party, one for each of the Progressive Socialist Party and the Phalanges, two independent unions, and one union shared between the Future Movement and the Amal Movement, the South Union. In addition to this, there are other camouflaged unions that refer back to political sources, even if they were under independent or shared names; and these independent unions are the minority after they were the active force in the days of the united unions' movement."

The working class today is subjected to continual attempts at silencing by the powers of the current regime, either through political favouritism, as a process of hiring in state institutions and some private companies, or through the tight grip they have on the workers' voices through subduing the general workers' union under the current bourgeoisie's decisions. This subjection appears clear especially in the past few years, when each of March 8 and March 14 demonstrated that they will never support the workers and their demands. Herein lies the necessity of rebuilding union work and building an independent, non-sectarian and secular workers' movement, for indeed it is the main pillar to rectify the struggle and avert the danger of sectarian and religious fighting in Lebanon.

Another important point is to stand in opposition to the security solutions advocated for by the state and its hegemonic sectarian parties against Islamist movements; the demand has to be made upon the Lebanese state to enter all of the Lebanese land with services such as social welfare, employment opportunities, justice, and development, first and foremost, and not bearing weapons.

Today, it is the Lebanese army as well as the Lebanese people who are paying the price, day after day, for the games that the hegemonic bourgeoisie and security forces play and for their sectarian and oppressive economic policies. These policies have made the whole country live in a dormant state of perpetual war and growing social violence. We have no exit from this cycle except the building a revolutionary workers movement, it being the only element capable of re-polarizing the Lebanese population towards their true class interest; this population that, day after day, retreats to sectarian and religious positions to express class tensions, especially in the absence of any other alternative. The equation today, more than ever, is: "Either a social revolution or barbarism."[15]

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[7] Makdisi, Ussama Samir. The Culture of Sectarianism Community, History, and Violence in Nineteenth-century Ottoman Lebanon. Berkeley, California.: U of California, 2000. Pages 9-10.

[8] Living Conditions of Households 2007, Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs, 2008.

[9] Based on 2002 UN statistics in Brauch, Hans Günter, 2003: "Urbanization and Natural Disasters in the Mediterranean – Po¬pu¬lation Growth and Climate Change in the 21st Century", in: Kreimer. Alcira; Arnold, Margaret; Carlin, Anne (Eds.): The Future of Disaster Risk: Building Safer Cities. December 2002. Conference Papers (Washington, D.C.: World Bank): 149-164.

[10] Fuad I. Khuri, From Village to Suburb: Order and Change in Greater Beirut, University of Chicago Press, 1975. Page 21.

[11] Living Conditions of Households, op. cit.

[12] مركز الدراسات السوسيوية، جامعة سانت انورز، اسكتلندا.

[13] Mada Association, "عكار المنسية,[Akkar al-Mansiyah]" (Forgotten Akkar), Beirut, 2008, p. 21.

[14] رشا ابو زكي، حلقة المئة عام بحثاً عن الطعام، جريدة الاخبار، ١٥ ايار ٢٠١٢.

[15] Translator's Note: Friedrich Engels: "Bourgeois society stands at the crossroads, either a transition to socialism or regression into barbarism". In the Junius Pamphlet, Rosa Luxemburg explains this statement, saying: "Until now, we have all probably read and repeated these words thoughtlessly, without suspecting their fearsome seriousness. A look around us at this moment shows what the regression of bourgeois society into barbarism means. This world war is a regression into barbarism. The triumph of imperialism leads to the annihilation of civilization."

< https://www.marxists.org/archive/luxemburg/1915/junius/ch01.htm>

[a]Need to find reference.

[b]Reference needs checking. Could not find English source.

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Nationalism, resistance and revolution

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Identity and entity

The reduction of current struggles in Lebanon and Syria in particular, and across the Middle East in general, to purely abstract nationalistic, sectarian and "identitarian" dimensions is one of the dominating features of the analytical and methodical logic of the Arab nationalist and Stalinist left.1 Their analysis fails to consider the social structures involved and their contradictions, the ideological engines powering such national or sectarian identities. Nor does it take into account the crises that they experience, in particular those imposed by the revolutionary process; a process that is on-going despite its fluctuations and fractures.

The methodology of the Arab nationalist and Stalinist left sees the situation in the Middle East and in the Lebanese and Syrian region in particular, through the lens of antagonistic binaries and approaches society and its contradictions through a set of predetermined cultural and national/religious identities. Therefore we hear of "Sunni-Shia strife", the Oriental culture, Arabs, the West, Orientalism, identity crisis, sectarian rule, Christians, Muslims, etc. According to such characterisations, these identities are treated as independent structures and established entities that interact among themselves in a relationship of convergence, divergence and struggle on the local, regional and international theatres of the shifting balance of power.

The movements of the masses are therefore evaluated according to their closeness to a particular regional or international alliance and their distance from another. The "resistance" axis is said to include Iran and Syria, and is supported by Russia. An opposing "American-Zionist-Takfiri"2 axis is viewed as being backed by the US and includes regimes like Saudi Arabia and Qatar. A mass movement is subsequently legitimised or de-legitimised according to where it stands in the struggle between these axes. The on-going struggle is pictured as a struggle between identities that are legitimised by the political language used to describe them, regardless of how genuine these entities themselves are, particularly in the face of the revolutionary transformations that govern the situation today.

The Stalinist and Arab nationalist left have never seen beyond the milestone of national struggle and national liberation to which, in spite of their importance and necessity, the revolution cannot be restricted. This perspective on the revolution is invoked by the language used to describe it. Herein lies the essential problem: are we seeing the revolutionary process, on the one hand, through its actual reality, in other words through the context that gave birth to it and the contradictions characterising that context; or, on the other hand, evaluating it based on a theoretical assumption that has never been able to concede that the Arab or non-Arab individual in this region cannot be exclusively reduced to his or her national identity?

"National entity" and national identity remain the main pillars of Stalinist and Arab nationalist leftist thought and language, through which some are classified as "patriots" and others as "traitors" or "clients". Systematically accusing others of

treason is not only a moral failing on the part of some individuals, but is a natural consequence of nationalist thought, whenever compelled to defend its position in the dominant ideological structure. Of course, this does not imply that there are no traitors or political forces that are clients of imperialism; however, it means that the systematic accusation of treason often becomes the dominant language of the nationalist rhetoric, whenever nationalism is in crisis or in a position of having to defend its hegemony over the dominant political language in society.

We can observe this nowadays because of the revolutionary process that is sweeping the region. The first assumption put forward by many in the Stalinist and Arab nationalist currents, in their approach to the events of early 2011, was that the uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia were caused by the relations between the regimes there and US imperialism. However, this assumption was quickly rebuffed by the rise of the mass movement in Syria, whose regime is considered by the Stalinists and Arab nationalists to be a "resistance" regime — a "citadel of resistance" to Zionism and imperialism.

Since the beginning of the Syrian Revolution the advocates of Arab nationalism and Stalinism have been trying to rethink the hierarchy of the struggle in such a way as to distinguish between two struggles, the national liberation struggle and the social liberation struggle. The second is subordinated to the first, by virtue of the commitment to the fundamental national entity. While the national liberation struggle becomes an existential battle, the social struggle is treated as a mere case of reformist struggle within the boundaries of "keeping one's house in order". That is what Samah Idriss3 insinuated on 4 December 2013:

Our issue with the Arab regimes is an issue with oppression, criminality, corruption and clientelism. Our problem with Israel is a problem with the entity itself, its regime, its state, its army, its institutions, its economy, its culture, its tourism, its industry, its agriculture, its right, its left and its centre.4

Idriss is right to state that the issue with Israel is one with the entity itself; however, he does not address the following problematic: Can the struggle against the Zionist entity be resolved and won within the context of the current entities of the Arab regimes? Or even through the very notion of national entities? Or is it actually only solvable through a drastic reconfiguration of these entities?

That is what history has shown before, with the path of the Palestinian Revolution that has imposed transformations and contradictions on the reality of the established Arab entities, from Syria to Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and others. In its rise, the Palestinian Revolution clashed objectively, not only with the Zionist entity, but also with the national structure of the whole of the Arab regimes. Perhaps one of the major examples of that clash with, for instance, the "Syrian national interest" — ie the interests of a "final" Syrian entity — is the events of "Black September" in 1970, when then Syrian defence minister Hafez al-Assad:

Opposed Syrian military support for the Palestinians, for fear that Syria would be drawn into an all-out war with Israel. He refused to provide air cover to the Syrian tanks when they came under Jordanian attack, forcing the brigade to withdraw. This left the Palestinians isolated, and thousands were massacred by Hussein's forces in pogroms that became known as "Black September".5

This clash (between the Palestinian Revolution and the Arab entities) was not restricted to Syria and Jordan; it also naturally led to a clash with the structure of the Lebanese entity, as could be seen during the Lebanese Civil War and the resulting ideological struggles over the identity and "finality" of the entity. This was proven by the Taif agreement6 where the "patriotic" bourgeoisie re-emphasised the finality of the Lebanese entity, with an Arab face, and Syrian-Saudi sponsorship.

This pattern of the finality or inevitability of entities can be applied to all Arab regimes, be they "resistant" or not. In Egypt, for instance, "the Camp David agreement was the political indicator of the changes in Egyptian reality, and watchwords like 'disengagement' and 'Arab isolation' contained the implicit and explicit announcement of the shift of the Egyptian regime towards a market economy".7 Arab isolation, disengagement and other expressions, like "Egypt first", "Jordan first" or "Lebanon first", are nothing but the implicit and explicit expression of the politics of the finality of Arab national entities, meaning, in effect, a commitment to the divisions brought about by European colonial powers at the beginning of the 20th century.

There can be no formal distinction between the nationalist rhetoric of the Arab regimes and their politics, on one side, and the nationalist rhetoric that is dominant today among the traditional left on the other, even if they differ in their details. Both categorically insist on the centrality of national entities and identities as the bases for political and social mobilisation, even if this struggle cannot possibly be undertaken without the alignment of these entities with one or another of the dominant axes on the regional and international theatres. In truth, these policies and their underlying logic are nothing but the repetition of Cold War rhetoric, from which the Arab nationalist and Stalinist left have assumed the necessity of alignment to one side against another. It represents the complete abandonment of any attempt to exit the duality of that imperialist antagonism and head towards a genuinely revolutionary mass movement that would not base its strategy on advocating one imperialism against another. Naturally these policies are always presented under the cover of national identity or national liberation.

That is what As'ad AbuKhalil8 says in an article for the Al–Akhbar journal on 16 October 2013 under the title "A Call for the Return to the Lebanese Civil War" where AbuKhalil summarises the underlying latent conflict in Lebanon — which is yet to be resolved — in the following problematics: "1. The identity of Lebanon. 2. The Lebanese foreign policy and the government's position on the regional conflict. 3. The position on the Palestinian cause. 4. The disagreement on social justice. 5. The issue of sectarian injustice. 6. The type of ruling regime." He then goes on to describe the different Lebanese religious sects:

No single sect has had a fixed political position in Lebanon — in spite of those who promote the theory of a moral superiority of one sect against another — because the sects, by virtue of the sectarian system, are akin to the tribes of Afghanistan and Iraq: up for grabs, moving from one position to another, by virtue of the prevailing conditions. That makes Walid Jumblatt9 the true representative of narrow sectarianism.10

In this view, AbuKhalil emphasises two points: the first is that the problematic of the Lebanese question is concerned with resolving the "Lebanese identity" issue.

The second is that resolving said issue is the task of Lebanon's established sectarian entities — that are, according to AbuKhalil, like "the tribes of Afghanistan and Iraq". The rhetoric, adopted by Idriss and AbuKhalil, is not far from that of the allies of the Syrian regime in Lebanon, from Hezbollah to the Free Patriotic Movement to the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and others, even if Idriss and AbuKhalil distinguish themselves from those parties by criticising, from time to time, the "resistance" regimes. However, they remain part of these cleavages, within the general rhetoric of the politics of conflicting axes, without tackling the ideological and intellectual fabric of those politics or making any attempt to fracture that rhetoric.

The secretary general of Hezbollah, Hassan Nasrallah, made the following declaration in a televised speech on 30 April 2013: "Syria has, in the region and the world, genuine friends who will not allow it to fall into the hands of the United States or Israel or the Takfiri groups";11 and in June 2013: "the issue is not one of [Hezbollah's] intervention in Syria…the Syrian Arab Army is fighting on various parts of Syrian territory, and we are assuming part of the responsibilities in facing this worldwide project that wants to precipitate the downfall of the region, not only Syria, that is the American-Israeli-Takfiri project".12

From this speech, it is clear that Nasrallah is genuinely convinced of the veracity of the conflict of axes thesis, in which Hezbollah has sided with the Syrian regime and its regional and international allies against the "American-Israeli-Takfiri project". The correlation between Hezbollah's position and that of the Arab nationalists and the traditional left is no coincidence. Their argument is an application, perhaps even a literal one, of the stageist Stalinist vision, which calls for a historical and strategic alliance with the national bourgeoisie to attain democratic national rule as a first stage, before proceeding to the building of a strong regime and state apparatus that would contribute to developing the means of production and allow, at a further stage, for a revolution that would pave the way for socialism.

We have seen not so long ago where this recipe has taken us. The alliance of the "National Movement"13 with the "nationalist/Muslim" bourgeoisie in opposition to the "isolationist/reactionary/Christian" bourgeoisie, on the eve of and during the Lebanese Civil War ended in the confirmation of sectarian rule in Lebanon and the punishment of the Palestinians for their "spoiling of Lebanon". We can also extend this vision to the outcome of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). The PLO's commitment to the project of the "state", in other words the commitment to the finality of the Palestinian national entity, which restricted the Palestinian cause, from an Arab and worldwide popular movement unbound with identities, to the bourgeois, bureaucratic and "nationalist" template, whose "achievement" will include the emergence of Abu Mazen (Mahmoud Abbas) and his entourage.14

This very strategy is still upheld by the Stalinist left in general, as the Egyptian Communist Party declares in its political programme:

"The party believes that the 25 January [2011] Revolution is the most important episode in the national democratic revolution, and that it is in essence a popular and democratic revolution with national and social prospects, and has risen to eradicate tyranny and corruption, achieve political and economical independence, put an end to clientelism, achieve self-sustained independent development, rebuild the state

apparatus on popular democratic bases, put an end to monopolies, build the national industry, conduct profound changes in the agricultural sector, achieve political and social democracy, and respect the rights and dignity of the Egyptian individual as well as public liberties.15

From this stance, the Egyptian traditional left justifies voting in favour of the military's constitution and considering the Muslim Brotherhood to be the greatest danger to the revolution — with no mention of the military — as well as its alignment with the "Syrian regime and the Syrian Arab Army" in opposition to the imperialist plan against the Arab region and particularly against Syria.

Using the same approach, albeit with a different twist, Nahed Hattar16 and his lackeys adopt their own take on nationalism that can euphemistically be described as a reincarnation of neo-fascist Syrian nationalist thought but, with a "new" cover making it easier to digest for the old left.

On the Syrian question, Hattar says:

We have stood, clearly, with the regime of President Bashar Al-Assad against Gulf and Wahhabi barbarism, Qatari and Saudi, as well as against neo-Ottomanism. We are not merely "sympathetic" to the Syrian regime, as [Hazem] Saghieh puts it, but we are, in the nationalist war, fighting in the same trench. And we believe that we have chosen the right trench. We have, of course, our own methodical and critical analysis of that regime, and we have our own declared programme of struggle inside Syria to build a nationalist, resistance and developmentalist state. However that is a Syrian, Levantine, internal political struggle that does not affect the unity of the forces that are repulsing the external aggression, the Western, Zionist, Wahhabi and Ottoman aggression.17

At the end of the day, the vision that all of these people share is that national liberation, or the building of the national state, in any form, requires at first the nation's liberation. National liberation determines what is external and what is internal to the state, and through which the issues of that interior — issues around Arab, Levantine, Syrian, Lebanese or other identitarian formations — can be debated. This is confirmed by Khalid Hadadi18 in his latest article in Nida'a19 where he argues that, as the sectarian nature of the Lebanese regime makes the regional contradictions a part of internal Lebanese politics, that reality can only be changed through "building the civil, secular, democratic resistance state".20 He says that: conditions for a deeper solution related to the refoundation of the Lebanese state must be met, in a way that surpasses its war-provoking, division and clientelism-encouraging nature, towards a salvation conference that would lay the foundations to build that civil, secular, democratic and resistant state.

This proposition does not, of course, address the class nature of that state. From here we can see how this ideological current, from its far-right to its far-left, in its ultranationalist or its national-popular incarnation, has never gone beyond the central issue of the dominance of the bourgeois national state, ie a state with the capacity to form a class alliance that would provide a bourgeois-proletarian conciliation while at the same time ensuring national unity, through which the external dangers can be confronted, or the relations of competition and convergence with that exterior can be set.

Imperialism, capitalism and the national state

The national bourgeois state is one of the essential structures established by Western colonialism as a condition of capitalist expansion in the colonies, in its economic, social and political aspects. The bourgeois state constituted a rupture or fracture with the prevailing semi-feudal system. It would be illusory to consider nationalist thought as being in contradiction with capitalism; the emergence of the state is conditional to the development of capitalist economic and social structures, and the divergence from and ultimate destruction of pre-capitalist structures. From thereon in, the notions of "entity" and "national identity", the finality of a certain entity and its relation to other entities are concepts that cannot come into being without the centralised establishment of a bourgeois state apparatus that governs society under the cover of a "national identity", be it Arab, Levantine, Lebanese, Syrian, Islamic, Christian or other. All constitute an ideological cover for the dominating bourgeois regime itself.

And it is not peculiar that those sections of the left that identify with one national ideology or another put the issue of the national cover for that bourgeois domination at the top of their political agenda. Their policies are not so much in contradiction with the established bourgeois regime as in accordance with it, since their starting point is the ideological structure of the very same bourgeois regime.

As Mahdi Amel puts it in his book Theoretical Introductions to the Study of the Effect of Socialist Thought on National Liberation Movements: "And by this thought structure we mean the ideological field in which the individual's ideology is determined, built and developed, ie this one soil from which multiple ideas can sprout, the differences between which can reach the point of contradiction; however, their roots are set in the same soil that determines the nature of their emergence and their field of development. The existence of contradictions between these ideas does not negate, but affirms the fact that they are situated in one ideological soil."21

Therefore, the ideological premises from which nationalist thought stems to confront the dependency on imperialism are in no fundamental contradiction with imperialism. They share the same thought structure, that is, the bourgeois governance system, with which they identify. For this reason, we see that the Arab nationalist regimes that emerged in the last decades of the 20th century, and that were considered back then — and still today — as progressive regimes by large chunks of the traditional and national left, have proven over time that they were no different from the bourgeois "client" regimes, as they are called. Indeed, the Arab nationalist regimes have renewed their relation to and identification with the interests of imperialism, even if the degree to which they identify with those interests might differ. That differentiation, like the one between Saudi Arabia and Syria for instance, is a proof of the continuation of this pattern of relations, and a negation of the independence of these regimes or their liberation from imperialist domination.

We go back to Mahdi Amel, and his analysis of "progressive regimes" that transform the dominant petty bourgeoisie into a renewed colonial bourgeoisie:

We notice, for instance, that the change in dominant class in the so-called "progressive regimes", like those of Egypt and Syria, has always taken place in the context of an ectopic form of class struggle. This helps us to understand the special

nature of the political practice of the petty bourgeoisie… The petty bourgeoisie is necessarily urged to renew these relations of production, to permanently reproduce those relations in the political practice of its class struggle against the colonial bourgeoisie itself, because the renewal of the relations of production is a necessary and absolute condition for its continuation as a dominant class. However, the necessity to become the dominant class in the context of the existing relations of production will push the petty bourgeoisie to assimilate into the dominant class that it has replaced and against which it is engaged in a class struggle, and therefore to identify with it and not diverge from it… The existence of a state sector does not change the class nature of the relations of production.22

For this reason, the national task cannot be effectively accomplished, and this reality is presented as the expression of a crisis of identity or a crisis of nationalism, taking us back to the issue of entity and identity without getting to grips with the capitalist class structure and its uneven development which result in the creation of relations of dependency on imperialism. That is the essential problem with the strategic perspectives of the traditional left and the nationalist currents in general. It is clear that the best that can be achieved with the stance they have adopted is an improvement in the conditions of capitalist and nationalist competition between the established entities, without defying the structure that not only allows that competition to exist, but opens the door to foreign and regional interference, or regional or international dominance over a given country.

This is why national liberation is not a stage that precedes social liberation and class struggle, but it is in reality part and parcel of the one and only social class struggle. National liberation doesn't precede social revolution, but it is produced by it, as one of its processes, because it is impossible to achieve independence within the system of capitalist dependence, dominance and competition that rules the world. True independence or national liberation cannot be achieved in the current conditions without being included in the process of socialist revolution itself.

Therefore national liberation movements, by fighting the national liberation struggle from outside the class struggle, are heading towards assimilation with the dominant bourgeoisie and becoming players in the convergence and competition within the dominant bourgeois capitalist axes. This phenomenon can be observed in the PLO, Hamas and Hezbollah with the latter's recent and ongoing shifts in its socio-economic and organisational structure as well as its local and regional positioning, a point I will return to later.

It is not the sectarian regime per se that establishes dependency, and the connection between the inside and the outside; rather it is merely an ideological cover for capitalist dependency. That dependency cannot be broken from within the capitalist structure itself because the bourgeois state is not only an internal system of class domination, but is also at the same time an apparatus for national, regional and international capitalist competition. What follows is that the national cover for the bourgeois state is nothing but a fitting and refitting of the axes of that capitalist competition, its terrain of dominance, and its capacity to contain the struggles that arise within its societies from the structural contradictions of the capitalist system.

The structural crisis of nationalist thought, from its left to its right, lies in the fact

that it lives on those contradictions that characterise the capitalist system, and cannot part with them. It is itself an articulation of the attempt by that bourgeois ideological structure to conceive new identities in order to maintain its ideological dominance in renewed ideological clothing. This point is confirmed by the emergence of a crisis of identity every time the bourgeois ruling class itself is in crisis, or sees cracks in the ideological domination through which it justifies its class rule.

The crisis of bourgeois rule and the new crisis of capitalism

We cannot understand those shifts, and the identitarian struggle and the concurrent re-emergence of historic identities — be they religious, national, regional or sectarian — outside the context of capitalist structure, its shifts and contradictions; the struggles over identity are an expression of the crisis of capitalism itself. Frederick Engels said: According to the materialist conception of history, the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. Other than this neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure — political forms of the class struggle and its results, to wit: constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc, juridical forms, and even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the participants, political, juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogmas — also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form.23

There is a clear correlation between the dominant ideology, the dominant class structure, and the absence of the issue of class relations in the rhetorical identitarian and geostrategic debate dominant in the nationalist current and its left; it is nothing but an attempt to escape a confrontation with the exploding class contradictions in their current, international, regional and local realities. This attempt to revamp those contradictions or postpone their explosion aims to preserve the existing class hegemony, in any possible way, be it sectarian or national or other.

The shifts and transformations happening throughout the world, and taking a thoroughly confrontational form in the Arab world, are in contradiction, not only with the liberal thought structure, but also with the worldview of the Arab nationalist and traditional left. For what is characteristic of both liberal thought and nationalist thought is that they compete with each other, rather than contradict one another, within the dominant structure of bourgeois thought. They form, at least in the Arab world, the most obvious incarnation of that theatre of competitive interactions between two poles, whether one attempts to assert domination over another or they form an alliance to confront mutual threats. These threats are in truth the contradictions, fractures and struggles that are happening within the established system of capitalist hegemony, ie that very same national bourgeois state, whichever cover it happens to adopt — liberal, nationalist or other.

These relations are confirmed daily through, for instance, the US-Syrian agreement on the Syrian regime's chemical weapons. The US-Iranian agreement on

the Iranian nuclear programme, which was followed by an Iranian-Saudi convergence, materialised with, among other things, apologies to the Bahraini regime by the Manar TV and Noor radio channels, both of which belong to Hezbollah, for their coverage of the events in Bahrain — that is, the Bahraini Revolution that began in 2011.

Such agreements are not only indicators of decreasing US hegemony over the region due to shifts in internal US affairs. They are also aimed at giving the dominant Arab and regional regimes greater leeway to put their own imploding houses in order. These agreements are building up to an attempt by those regimes to contain and tackle the Arab and non-Arab mass movements in the region, from Egypt to Syria and Bahrain, Iran and others while simultaneously isolating the Palestinian people, and the Palestinian cause altogether, from the revolutionary masses that surround them.

Going back to Idriss's depiction of the struggle against Israel as an existential one, in contrast to the struggles with the Arab regimes, with the latter reduced to a mere struggle against tyranny, and other internal affairs, we ask, how can Palestine be liberated? How can a project of resistance be sustained through the existing structures of the Arab regimes? Or through the national bourgeois apparatus, in the context of the shifts and alliances that are sprouting on the regional and international political theatres? The answer to this question can, in reality, only come from a process that neither the nationalist nor the Stalinist left will recognise, that is, the revolution: not as an entity's revolution, or a national revolution, but a permanent revolution that arises from the structural contradictions in Arab societies.

By its class nature, this revolution cannot but be in fundamental contradiction with the established system of class dominance, and with the systems of regional and international dependency. The social, economic and political problems that arise on the political level cannot be solved by any bourgeois refurbishment of the established regimes in their own national space. They can only be solved by the overthrow of the system of bourgeois rule and by defying the system of class dominance in general. The watchword that no one on the revolutionary left must shy away from proclaiming today is socialism! It is not as a historical leap by the masses towards another regime, but as the process through which the dominant ideology can be destroyed, through which the class contradictions that support the bourgeois regimes can be exposed, in order to overcome this apparatus towards its antithesis: revolutionary workers' power, through which it is really possible to overcome religious sectarianism, persecution, exploitation, injustice and oppression, and what is more, to fracture the cycle of capitalist and imperialist dependence.

I will not address the evidence for the class nature of the Arab revolutions, for many have written on the subject in the Permanent Revolution journal and elsewhere. The question we must address is that of the interconnectivity of the revolutionary struggle, the fact that it is spreading from one country to another, and its capacity to defy the established balance of forces at the local and regional scales. The revolutionary struggle is defying the finality of the national entities that were imposed on the peoples of the region by colonial divisions and later by the dominant bourgeoisie and bureaucracy, in agreement and in convergence with imperialism.

The revolutions rocking our region are not the expressions of a crisis of identity, as pictured by some, but they are, first and foremost, the expressions of the crisis

of the bourgeois national state and the dominant capitalist system. It is therefore impossible to address the issues of resistance and liberation from imperialism from outside that context. On the contrary, resistance and liberation must identify with the perspectives of the ongoing revolutions, not be imposed on them from above in a pre-packaged nationalist ideology, which is itself going through crisis as an expression of the same bourgeois regime.

Hezbollah, resistance and revolution

It is from this vantage point that we must approach the issue of Hezbollah and those of resistance and national liberation. Can Hezbollah, with its established structure and its sectarian and bourgeois nature, put an end to occupation or achieve national liberation?

The nationalist and Stalinist left entertain many illusions when it comes to Hezbollah. In addition to the sacred character that Hezbollah ascribes to itself, that left also considers it sacred, describing it as a resistance movement which is not governed by reality or by the class structure in which we live. Naturally, because of the centrality of national identity and the national question which overpowers any other consideration, Hezbollah's role as an apparatus of resistance is granted, by the traditional left, with an existence in abstraction from its class position in society or even given a proletarian gloss, regardless of reality. Therefore, the traditional left supports Hezbollah blindly, not only from the viewpoint of national liberation, but also from the viewpoint of social struggle. The oppression of South Beirut and South Lebanon,24 which many leftist activists harp on about, becomes in these circumstances, another attempt to excuse sectarian bias using the language of class. Sectarian parties in Lebanon use class language (Shia deprivation, Christian injustice, etc) to legitimise their sectarian rhetoric.

The nationalist and Stalinist left, who are wholly allied to Hezbollah and to the Syrian regime's allies in Lebanon, utilise the same sectarian rhetoric and give it a class dimension, transforming, for instance, Ashoura'25 into a symbol of confronting oppression, or the Dahiyeh area of South Beirut26 into a symbol of resistance and dynamism.

These expressions do not differ from sectarian rhetoric, but legitimise it and reinforce feelings of sectarian pride, which was always a defining element of the dominant sectarian discourse. Just as the Phalangists promoted, in their period of dominance,27 a discourse of Christian sectarian pride under the cover of Lebanese nationalism, Hezbollah nowadays promotes "Shia" sectarian culture and identifies it with Lebanese national culture. Therefore, patriotism is put in a distinctively sectarian mould. This logic can easily reach extremes among people, making a client or a traitor of every Sunni, while making every Shia a resister of imperialism or a patriot.

Lately a rampage of racism towards Syrian refugees has been seen among proponents of the idea that Syria is a resistant regime. The refugees are described as traitors. Some say: "Wouldn't it be better to give money to the resistance fighters in Qalamoun?"28 or "How can we sympathise with a child or a woman who was left here in a tent by her husband or brother, so he can go murder women and children in his own country?" This discourse aids the propaganda and denigration

campaigns the national current and its left have adopted since the beginning of the Syrian Revolution. While, when it comes to the Egyptian Revolution, they are capable of distinguishing between the Salafists, the Muslim Brotherhood, the nationalists, the liberals, the leftists, the military and the revolutionaries, they are absolutely incapable of applying a similar demarcation in the case of Syria. Thus anyone who supported the Syrian Revolution becomes a "Daeshi",29 and the revolution becomes a mere "upheaval", until the conflict is painted as one between the regime and the Takfiris.

Our goal here is not to deny the existence of the Takfiris or their relationship with Gulf regimes, but to expose the similarities between the respective discourses of the Stalinist and nationalist left on one side and the Takfiris on the other. In the Takfiri discourse there are believers and infidels; in the nationalist left's discourse there are patriots and traitors. This stems from the fact that this "left" does not share the ideology of the revolutionary left, but that of nationalism itself, in leftist cloth. In other words it has become part of the dominant bourgeois discourse itself, and not its antithesis; that left does not see in itself an antithesis to the bourgeoisie; rather it identifies with the bourgeoisie, and becomes its apologist by directly distorting the reality. This is what people like As'ad AbuKhalil do. In another of his articles in the Al–Akhbar newspaper, on "The Theory of Dialectics and the Renewal of the Arab Left", he says: "There are plenty of advocates of capitalism in our region, and they themselves are the enemies of the resistance in Lebanon." The first thing AbuKhalil does is clear "the resistance" (understand, Hezbollah) from the "charge" of being capitalists, before adding later in his article:

But the capacity to do that stems from the categorical rejection of the principles of capitalism (Abdel Karim Mrouwwe now believes that the capitalist state can protect us from capitalism), and its whole superstructure which, supported by the oil and gas Gulf states, determines our taste in poetry, art, culture, journalism, dance and aesthetics.

AbuKhalil sees only one of the competing axes on the regional theatre — the Gulf axis — as capitalist, but does not mention the capitalist structure of, say, the Iranian regime or their allies in Lebanon and Syria. Through this blatant distortion of reality, he reduces the anti-capitalist struggle to a struggle against the Gulf regimes and their helpers, as if the resistance, Hezbollah and Iran, were part of an international proletarian alliance!

There is no need to prove the bourgeois nature of Hezbollah or the Syrian regime, as many have written on this subject before; their bourgeois nature is irrefutably proven by their economic role, and in the case of Hezbollah, by the social and economic policies that they have adopted in the past few years. Hassan Nasrallah's famous "We will not stand behind bread",30 or Hezbollah's support for privatisation, its opposition to the demands of the trade union Coordinating Committee31 and the agreement it made with the Amal Movement and the Free Patriotic Movement to stop the state electricity company workers winning their demands, are all proof of Hezbollah's bourgeois nature. Other indicators are the extensive sums Hezbollah invests in the real estate sector, which made the Southern suburbs of Beirut (a pro-Hezbollah stronghold) one of the most expensive neighbourhoods in greater Beirut.

There is no need to mention the tuition fees of Hezbollah-run schools, which have become schools for the Shia middle classes rather than the poor, or the substantial amounts of money Hezbollah amasses through its healthcare institutions such as the Great Prophet Hospital in South Beirut. All of this proves that Hezbollah is the party of the Shia middle classes and bourgeoisie, the hegemony over whom it shares with the Amal Movement, and not, as many on the nationalist and Stalinist left picture it, the party of the poor and deprived.

Owing to its capitalist nature, Hezbollah has clearly entered a phase of bureaucratic bourgeois growth, particularly since the Israeli war on Lebanon in July 2006. This is evidenced by the way its cadre and members display their wealth and the privileges they enjoy such as social, economic, educational and health services. This will naturally cause a split between this arriviste bureaucracy and the large masses that Hezbollah relies on to assert its political legitimacy during elections or popular rallies. This is sometimes shown by the latent complaints of common Hezbollah supporters, who have expressed their resentment over that flaunting of wealth, and the bullying influence that members of this bureaucratic clique often exert on other people in the neighbourhoods where they operate.32

This divergence between the class nature of Hezbollah's supporters — and part of its membership — and its cadre, particularly at mid and senior level, is the main contradiction that Hezbollah will face in the current and future periods. This is indicated by the fact that Hezbollah is increasingly providing a Jihadi religious cover for their policies, by building mosques, depicting their intervention in Syria as a religious duty, or through the provocative sectarian slogan "Zeynab shall not be captured twice".33 Hezbollah's increased use of religious messages compared to previous years indicates the necessity for them to contain their base, through an ideological and religious discipline that is bound to become more and more necessary in a context of class crisis, on a local and regional scale. Perhaps — although we cannot be certain in this case — the latest Al-Manar affair (the Hezbollah TV station had apologised to the Bahraini government for its coverage of the revolution there, after which Hezbollah sacked the TV station's director) can be seen as an indicator of the influence of that class crisis on the party's bureaucratic discipline; it has shown a contradiction between the party's political and media apparatus.

The nationalist and Stalinist left do not grasp the fact that the conditions that gave birth to revolutions in the region are the same conditions that govern the resistance to occupation and imperialism. The continuation and success of that resistance are not only dependent on the degree of enthusiasm about arms; it is also necessary to see if the arms-bearing side can escape the balance of interests that controls those arms and makes them available, and if it will escape, with its bourgeois alignment, from the ongoing implosions in the class structures of regional and Arab societies.

The issue of the revolution gives the resistance another dimension, and poses an essential problematic on the current "resistance cases", like Hezbollah and Hamas: Can the Zionist entity collapse? Can US, EU or Russian interference be stopped without a radical break with the bourgeois structure that legitimises foreign interference and dominance? Will the "Arab" bourgeoisie relinquish their common interests with the American or Israeli bourgeoisie in order to liberate Palestine? Will the Iranian

regime, for instance, give up the necessity to integrate into the world oil market? Will the Syrian regime give up its economic relations with Western regimes? Or will the Syrian moguls give up their relations with other tycoons from the West, China or Russia in the name of Arab higher interests? Naturally the answer is no, because we live in a highly interlaced world economy, the myth of self-sufficiency is nothing but a myth. All the attempts at self-sufficiency have shown that its proponents will align themselves, sooner or later, with one of the great capitalist poles. This is not caused by a degeneration of values among the bourgeoisie; it is a natural consequence of the interlacement of interests between the regional and foreign bourgeoisies, particularly when the former is placed in the position of defending its hegemony against the rise of class struggle. That interlacement is part of the global capitalist fabric in which we live and which is still in a position of dominance, even if it is clearly faltering.

Therefore we cannot but see liberation from imperialism and occupation as part of the process of social liberation. It enters the process of class struggle, not only from the realm of economics, but also from its social, ideological and cultural perspective. Liberation and emancipation are not two distinct phases in a successive programme, but two sides of the same struggle, the struggle for the organisation of the working class in the region on an independent, revolutionary basis. This is not only needed to develop the purely economic and trade unionist struggle, but also as a step towards the achievement of real liberation, and the fracture of the system on which imperialism subsists and through which it controls the region, that is, the capitalist system that governs all of our lives.

Mass resistance is no longer the hypothetical issue it used to be, one that was rebuffed by many for its irrelevance; it has become a historical necessity for the emancipation of the people of the Middle East, not only from occupation and imperialism, but also from dictatorship, oppression, tyranny and exploitation. Without mass resistance, human salvation will remain a mere dream, not an actual serious project waiting for the conditions of its fulfilment.

Being realist today does not mean depending on a structure that emerged not so long ago out of the destruction of existing resistance organisations,34 but it is by building structures of a radically different class nature from the ones that were built for past defeats. Hezbollah has ended the Israeli occupation of south Lebanon, but will not, because of its very bourgeois nature, be capable of putting an end to the "Israeli threat" or "imperialist hegemony". Therefore, all those who consider themselves revolutionaries must answer this essential question: How do we really emancipate ourselves from imperialism? And how can Palestine really be free, not only through delusional hopes resting on regimes that will abandon any project that clashes with their bourgeois hegemonic interests, as they have done in the past?

For all these reasons, the support for revolutions in our region and the whole world is not only an ethical issue, but an essentially realist position. For it is only through revolution that it is possible to break dependency, clientelism, occupation, oppression, tyranny and exploitation, and their resulting culture. It cannot be done through delusions based on the hope that some bourgeois apparatus (Arab or otherwise) might carry us to a better tomorrow. We know in advance that this will never happen, as any improved social situation will clash with bourgeois dominance

and bourgeois interests. Change will only be made by the revolutionary masses, for it is in their core interest.

Notes

1: Translated by Haytham Cero. Thanks to Wassim Wagdy, Anne Alexander and Camilla Royle for comments on the draft.

2: Translator's note: Takfiri refers to Islamist movements, such as ISIS, who declare that their Muslim opponents are apostates, rather than simply misguided.

3: Translator's note: Samah Idriss is editor-in-chief of the Al-Adab, politics/arts/culture magazine in Beirut. He often writes for Al-Akhbar and is an organiser in the boycott and anti-normalisation (of Israel) movement in Lebanon.

4: On his Facebook page, 4 December 2013.

5: Shaoul and Marsden, 2000.

6: Translator's note: The Taif Agreement was signed in 1989 to put an end to the Lebanese civil war.

7: Noor, 2013.

8: Translator's note: As'ad AbuKhalil is Professor of Political Science at California State University, Stanislaus and blogs at the Angry Arab News Service, go to http://angryarab.blogspot.co.uk/

9: Translator's note: Walid Jumblatt is the leader of the Progressive Socialist Party, which draws most of its membership from the Druze community in Lebanon.

10: AbuKhalil, 2013.

11: Nasrallah, 2013a.

12: Nasrallah, 2013b.

13: Translator's note: The Lebanese National Movement in Lebanon was led by Kamal Jumblatt of the Progressive Socialist Party (Walid Jumblatt's father) and brought together the nationalist and Stalinist left in an alliance against the Lebanese government in the early stages of the Lebanese civil war in the 1970s.

14: See Philip Marfleet's article in this issue.

15: Website of the Egyptian Communist Party, cp-egypt.com

16: Translator's note: Jordanian writer and journalist who writes regularly for Lebanese newspaper Al-Akhbar.

17: Hattar, 2013.

18: Translator's note: Secretary General of the Lebanese Communist Party.

19: Translator's note: the LCP journal.

20: Hadadi, 2013.

21: Amel, 1980. Translator's note: Mahdi Amel was a Lebanese Marxist theoretician and academic. Member of the Central Committee of the Lebanese Communist Party, he formulated a Marxist critique of Arab nationalist thought and Arab bourgeois culture in general. He was assassinated by gunmen, widely believed to be connected with Hezbollah, in Beirut on 18 May 1987.

22: Amel, 1980.

23: Engels, 1890b. See also Engels, 1890a and c and Engels, 1893.

24: Translator's note: The South of Lebanon and the southern suburbs of Beirut have a largely Shia population and were historically relatively impoverished and politically

marginalised compared to other areas of the country.
25: Translator's note: The Shia festival of Ashoura' commemorates the martyrdom of Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, in battle near Karbala' in 680 CE.
26: Translator's note: The Dahiyeh area is where Hezbollah is headquartered.
27: Translator's note: The Phalangist movement was a sectarian militia inspired by European fascist movements and founded by Pierre Gemayel in 1936, which played a key role in the Lebanese Civil War and carried out the massacre of Palestinians in Sabra and Chatilla refugee camps in 1982.
28: Translator's note: Mountains in Syria where Hezbollah is fighting, close to the border with Lebanon.
29: Translator's note: A denigrating term for supporters of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) known also by its Arabic acronym Da'ash.
30: Translator's note: ie Hezbollah will not subsidise basic food needs.
31: Translator's note: The Coordinating Committee has played a key role in organising recent public sector strikes in Lebanon.
32: For more details on Hezbollah's dive into sectarianism, see Assaf, 2013.
33: Translator's note: a reference to the Sayyidah Zeynab mosque in Damascus, the supposed burial place of the prophet Muhammad's granddaughter Zeynab, and considered a holy shrine in Shia tradition. It has been guarded by Hezbollah fighters as well as various Iraqi Shia militias since the beginning of the war in Syria.
34: Translator's note: The Lebanese National Resistance Front was composed mainly of LCP and Palestinian militants and emerged in 1982 after Israeli invasion. It carried out guerrilla attacks against Israel and the SLA (the South Lebanon Army which was allied to Israel), but was hit by assassinations of leftist activists in the mid to late 1980s, which were attributed to Hezbollah and other Islamist movements. Hezbollah emerged as the dominant resistance faction after LNRF's decay in the late 1980s.

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Chapter Eight
Racism, Liberation & Equality

\intro text here

Understanding racism against Syrian refugees in Lebanon
Bassem Chit & Muhammad Ali Nayel, 28 October 2013[45]

A Syrian refugee, when asked how Lebanon was treating him, lamented and said: "How is it treating me? It isn't treating me, it treats my money. Because of the nature of my job (veterinarian) I'm dealing with middle upper class Lebanese who only make their judgments based on money. They see that I'm here spending, and they see that I too come from the middle classes so they don't show as much bigotry as it is normally the sentiment against us (Syrians) in Lebanon."

The end of Lebanon's civil war was marked by a more direct hegemonic role of the Syrian regime over the country's political and economic spheres, with a high level of complicity from the Lebanese rulers with the Syrian regime. This status quo allowed the Syrian regime, on one hand, to escape the economic stagnation the country faced [46], through the open borders policy, allowing scores of Syrian workers to come to Lebanon in search of jobs. On the other hand, it gave the Lebanese ruling class and its contractors access to cheap labour, without providing them with any rights, in the large reconstruction projects that were initiated by the government in the early 1990's, after 15 years of civil war.

The multi-class composition of Syrian refugees in Lebanon has challenged pre-existing xenophobic sentiments and stigmas, as the starting quote mentions: "They see that I'm here spending, and they see that I too come from the middle classes so they don't show as much bigotry as it is normally the sentiment against us (Syrians) in Lebanon".

However, it only does so on a class basis. The Syrian middle classes are able, in effect, albeit to a small extent, to escape the stigmatization, which is becoming more and more focused and concentrated on poor and working class Syrian refugees in Lebanon. The on-going popular uprising that started in Syria in early 2011 especially after the oppressive response by the regime, has now turned into an all-out war across the country. As a result, a high number of Syrian citizens fled their country into Lebanon. Yet, and in contrast to the previous composition of the Syrian community that was present in Lebanon before 2011, this new influx introduced new and different segments of the Syrian population into Lebanon, such as the Syrian upper and lower middle classes.

These newcomers found striking similarities with the Lebanese middle classes. However, the majority of refugees is still composed of Syrian workers and the urban and rural poor. Resentment against the Syrian regime's control over Lebanon grew

in the post-civil war years, yet this discontent was easily channelled through the dominant discourses into an unchallenged (neither by the Syrian or Lebanese State, nor by the majority of civil society organisations and political parties in Lebanon) xenophobic and racist sentiments against Syrian workers. They became stereotyped and stigmatized as "ignorant" and "menial" workers. Although it was exactly this Syrian labour force that rebuilt Lebanon in the post-war era.

At the same time, the influx of Syrian refugees is also shaping contradictory sentiments among the wider populace in Lebanon. On one side there is an element of basic sympathy, which can be identified through a diverse scope of activities such as Lebanese families hosting refugees in their homes or property, as well as basic support like clothing and food in different regions and locations in cities and villages. As a 50-year-old woman comments, contemplating that issue of basic sympathy: "It is unethical to blame the refugees for the problems we are facing, they had no choice in coming here, they are running from war, like we ran before them from the [Lebanese] civil war."

On the other side, there are the dominant discourses propagated by leading political forces and elites, along with their affiliated media stations. They have been actively scapegoating Syrian refugees and blaming them for economic, social and security failures in the country. These discourses are then replicated through the daily politics of individuals and groups, forging a xenophobic and racist popular culture against Syrian refugees.

MP Michel Aoun recently stated that the "Syrian refugees are a serious danger", while Samir Geagea, the main figure in Lebanon's Lebanese Forces, stressed on 30th August 2013, about "Lebanon's inability to handle [The Syrian refugee crisis] more, and that a viable solution needs to be put in place, and the only solution is to establish safe zones within Syria's borders under international protection." Moreover, Marwan Charbel, Lebanon's internal security minister declared on 28 February 2013 that the "Syrian refugees are threatening the security situation in Lebanon".

Other major political forces in Lebanon, like Hezbollah, Amal, Jumblatt's PSP (Progressive Socialist Party), and Hariri's Future Current mostly stressed the Humanitarian aspect of the "Syrian refugees Crisis" in Lebanon, but have refrained from countering any of the racist and xenophobic discourses, in the political and media spheres and even among their base of supporters and cadres.

The scapegoating discourse does not spur out of a natural inclination towards racism. Rather, it signals a deep crisis that the Lebanese state and its ruling elite have been facing since 2005. [2] More recently, it became galvanized by the crisis faced by the Syrian regime and the consequent influx of refugees, which has uncovered Lebanon's ruling elite's inability to manage the rising needs within society and the calls for reform.

Social dismay in Lebanon also started to accumulate around 2011, exacerbated by a history of corruption and conflicts, in the absence of any real and concrete plans of economic and social development and reform. The past two years witnessed a short-lived social mobilization against sectarianism and a prolonged mobilization and strike movement by the Trade Union Coordination Committee, in addition to localized protests, such as the electricity workers' open strike. Added to that was

the rising pressure from civil society forces for equal rights for women and other social issues. This led the Lebanese State and major political forces in the country to actively try to escape that pressure by attempting to channel existing popular resentment against the State towards a xenophobic and racist victimization of poor Syrian refugees.

To simply say that the Lebanese are naturally racist is short-sighted. This over-simplification tends to overlook factors that concentrate and divert people's frustration against their own regime, towards scapegoating and discrimination against Syrian refugees. In order to discern this process of diversion or deflection, the role of Lebanon's media institutions needs to be interpreted and the manner in which they shape people's general understanding and consciousness of the world around them and its contradictions.

On August 6th, 2013, a news article published by An-Nahar newspaper, a Arabic Lebanese political daily, mentions that: "The worker and craftsman from Akkar already suffers from a tough economic hardship and shrinking job opportunities. They are being forced between the hammer of a human feeling, sympathy with the displaced Syrians, and the anvil of the reality of living difficulties. The Syrian seasonal workers have become today's workers and permanent residents working in various business available in Akkar"

The author in this paragraph summarizes the problematic of this article. First, he manages to establish an unquestionable status quo in Akkar by saying it "already suffers from a tough economic hardship and shrinking job opportunities." He then suggests that what is galvanizing these hardships is also another unquestionable fact, which is the taking over of jobs by the Syrian refugees, who are "already registered as refugees and are benefiting from international, Arab and local aid".

The author fails to mention the reasons of economic stagnation in Akkar, North of Lebanon, which has been witnessing a serious lack of attention from the Lebanese State especially in terms of socio-economic development. A study conducted by Mada Association in 2008 notices the following about the area: "In 1998, Akkar accounted for 12.5 percent of the total number of deprived individuals in Lebanon, with 63.3 percent of the families in the region living in poverty and 23.3 percent of them in extreme poverty. Preliminary results of the 2004 mapping using the same living conditions index show that Akkar continues to have the highest share of poor households in Lebanon." From another side, the author also fails to mention the reasons why Syrian refugees, who are "receiving aid," as he states, are in dire need of finding jobs. He also fails to ask whether the provided aid is actually enough to sustain the Syrian refugees, who did not flee to Lebanon by choice, but were rather forced to do so due to the ongoing violence in Syria.

Oxfam, an international humanitarian organisation, carried out a Fair Share Analysis of Donations to the UN Syria Crisis Appeal, September 2013, and deduced the following: "Research carried out by international aid agency Oxfam reveals that many donor countries are failing to provide their share of the urgently-needed funding for the humanitarian response to the Syria crisis. While the need for a political solution to the crisis is as urgent as ever, Oxfam says donors including France, Qatar and Russia, must also prioritise funding the UN's $5 billion appeals." By omitting these facts, the

author, on one hand, leaves the reader with the conclusion that people in Akkar are communities who, in order to make a living, need to fend for themselves, without showing the shortcomings and responsibilities of the State or the region's elected MPs. On the other hand, he suggests that Akkar's residents, although living a tough reality, they were generally doing ok, until the Syrian refugees arrived to the region.

This method of diversion is prevalent in Lebanese media reporting. In an article published by Assafir newspaper on September 4th, 2013, which could be read as a feel-good story about the refugees. However, the story's conclusion focuses on the negative sentiments that sum up refugees as a nuisance and alien to the "Lebanese way of life." "The large number of motorcycles, though making life easier for Syrian refugees, has become an ample curse for the local population in the villages. The movements of dozens of motorbikes in villages have annoyed their residents, who in turn complained about the annoying sounds in narrow streets and alleys, in addition to the smoke that is emitted from each motorbike. This urged local authorities and security forces to control their movement, by setting specific limited hours for their movement."

Although the author mentions the reasons why Syrian refugees use motorbikes, as it has a low cost compared to the high costs of local transportation systems in Lebanon, he misses the fact that the use of motorbikes is also a prevalent means of transportation, for the same reasons mentioned above, for many Lebanese from working class or poor backgrounds. Instead of tackling the question of transportation, facing both poor Lebanese and poor Syrian refugees alike, which is by all means the responsibility of the Lebanese State and ruling elites, the issue is thus diverted into an unresolvable dilemma presented in the concluding comparison, portraying quaint Lebanese villages versus the noise and nuisance that is caused by Syrian refugees on motorbikes.

Another example of this method of reporting can be found in an article published on April 19th, 2013 by Al-Akhbar newspaper, another Arabic, Lebanese political daily. The author seems to have just discovered or is re-discovering Souk al-Ahad (The Sunday Market). The author observes, based on the present businesses and the crowds in the Sunday Market, that the Syrian refugees are now: "changing landmarks in Beirut and its daily routine and Sunday market has had the lion's share from this change".

Yet this market has been historically one of the most visited places by poor working class Lebanese and Syrian and other migrant workers alike. But the author neglects that fact by saying that, before the Syrians came, it was a "quiet" shopping area. When one of the stall owners mentions the real problem of the continuous rising of stalls' rent prices by the market's Lebanese management: "Muhammad denies the increasing number of stalls in the market is a result of the influx of Syrian refugees into Lebanon, and explains it on the basis that the price of a stall in Souk al-Ahad is US$175 per week, with raising prices permanently put up by the market management."

The author fails to pursue this issue, but continues to generally describe the Lebanese stall owners' reaction to Syrian customers and vice versa. The article overlooks the effects of rising rent prices and the reasons behind the hike in product

prices, which many of the author's interviewees mentioned in the article. One woman is reportedly saying: "Are Lebanese used to pay such prices or where they hiked just to welcome the Syrian visitor?"

The author simply focuses on the antagonism that exists between Lebanese and Syrians, inadvertently contributing to the portrayal of an embedded racism, without showing who are the ones responsible or pulling the strings and fuelling such racism. The use of the word "Lebanese prestige" at the beginning of the article, to describe an assumed slow or quiet movement in the market before the influx of Syrian refugees, hints at a certain assumed bourgeois character of Lebanese citizens. It is then re-established by describing the "Lebanese corner" of the market, as being similar in shape to the bourgeois streets of downtown Beirut, compared to the popular character of the other stalls (where the author does not really say whether they are Lebanese or Syrian).

The missing facts and questions for understanding the antagonism rising within the politics of this market are many. Who is the Lebanese management? Why did it hike the rent prices? What were the reasons behind the rent hike? How did that impact the prices of goods sold in the market? Who was affected? How did that play in fuelling or driving antagonistic sentiments between Syrian and Lebanese shoppers and stall operators?

Falling into the same problematic of media reporting in Lebanon when dealing with the question of racism against Syrian refugees is the continued focus on reporting "racist behavior," whether in support or in condemnation. Either way, it is being enforced as the media fails to look into what drives it, what encourages it, and what are the conditions that are nourishing its propagation within society.

All in all, those responsible for economic policies in Lebanon, the establishment of working and accessible transportation systems, the management of markets, such as Souk Al-Ahad, are all outside the picture the media reports when tackling questions related to Syrian refugees in Lebanon. The reader is left with two conclusions; either the Lebanese are inherently racist, as an unchanging fact, or Syrian refugees are greedy workers who steal jobs from poor Lebanese citizens.

The examples of media reporting on Syrian refugees in Lebanon are many and most follow these two stereotypes in one way or another. On rare occasions, articles point to the structural causes and the political environment that effortlessly manage to divert existing genuine resentment against the harsh conditions people face in Lebanon, through scapegoating "foreign elements."

This culture of diversion, if it may be called as such, is not new. It has been a longstanding accompanying discourse of Lebanon's ruling elite, in building their own political hegemony and preserving their rule. The ills of Lebanon are always relegated to being the result of interference of "stranger" and/or "foreign" elements. This is exceptionally true in the dominant discourses interpreting the causes of the long civil war that destroyed the country between 1975 and 1989, following which the ruling elite declared a general amnesty and resorted to explain the civil war as a result of the interference of "Palestinians" or "Syrians" in local Lebanese affairs. It was enough to divert attention from the real causes of the war, the State's sectarianism being one of the major causes.

Yet this scapegoating is never done on the level of interfering governments or rich Arab and foreign interventionists. Quite the contrary, it has always been directed against migrant workers, refugees, workers, and the poor. It is exactly this economic or class element of this culture that is worrying. The opening quote of this article mentions that "it [Lebanon] treats my money", making Lebanon a safe haven for the rich and, at the same time, a punitive establishment for the poor. The punishments is incited through sectarianism and racist and xenophobic strife and conflict.

In an environment of economic scarcity, hardship, and poverty, questions about who is more poor and more needy, among the poor, is directly and indirectly attempting to hide a more important and more crucial question, which is why do Syrian and Lebanese, whether in Lebanon or in Syria, have to live in poverty and hardship? In the meantime, projects for constructing billion-dollar shopping malls and sky-high expensive resorts and buildings are on-going in different places around the country. It is that culture of not questioning poverty and scarcity that allows and drives the development of racism, sectarianism, and xenophobia.

As a result, it is the poor and the refugees who pay the price and they learn to replicate the same discourse within their own interpretations of reality: "We have covered larger sections of Lebanon and we have become too many to the extent that the Lebanese cannot tolerate us any longer. They have also increased their authority and control over us at work. Even some of them have stopped paying us our salaries. The hard living conditions are not the only reasons that make Syrian refugees line up at the doors of UNHCR, but also because in Lebanon they don't feel that they are outside the Syrian crisis. Everyone in Lebanon wants to know where we are from, who we belong to, or who we support. This way, the Lebanese choose to deal with us based on our backgrounds".

Nasser fled with two generations from his family, all wanting to reach the West. It doesn't matter which country they go to, what only matters is to get out of here, Nasser tells al-Akhbar newspaper on October 16th, 2012. Stories and news reports about Syrian refugees in Lebanon are abundant in Lebanese media. Stories covering the refugees seem to cover almost all aspects of being a Syrian refugee in Lebanon. However, they are always portrayed in majority as having a "turbulent" effect on Lebanese society, without actually looking to the already existing turbulent conditions in the country. The fact that Syrian refugees are being coerced towards a refugee status is similar to that which many Lebanese faced during the 2006 Israeli war on Lebanon or the Civil War.

But it is mostly neglected or only used to justify support for the regime or segments of the opposition in Syria. It does not purport to show the striking similarities in hardships, oppression, and exploitation that both Syrian and Lebanese face, while living under the existing ruling orders; the continuous state of stagnation of reforms that both the Syrian and Lebanese regimes are facing; or the effects this stagnation has in terms of exacerbating social and civil injustices.

The media commands how people understand and interpret reality to a large extent. Thus, if the space is left for a shortsighted or deflected explanation of reality, this contributes, in one way or the other, to diverting people's focus away from the real problems. Thus, it creates a culture of misinformation, which contradicts the

democratic culture that the media presumably contributes to developing.

In conclusion, civil society organisations in Lebanon cannot continue treating Syrian refugees in Lebanon through a strictly humanitarian lens. They must be mindful of the prevailing discourses that shape people's opinions about refugees. They should also systematically counter that discourse by putting pressure on media institutions, in addition to the State, and by developing alternative discourses. This could win people outside the racist and sectarian discourses and lead to a focus on real issues that people face and the shared experience both Lebanese and Syrians are facing and have faced in the past, in their struggle against exploitation and survival under oppression, exploitation, wars, and social injustices.

Notes

1. "Syria's economic stagnation is rooted in official as well as informal economic and fiscal policies and decisions that have undergirded incentives for liberalizing the national market since the early 1990s", Bassam Haddad, Change and Statis in Syria, Merip, 2013.

2. The Lebanese ruling class crisis has presented itself in several forms during the past few years, either by their inability to resolve the political conflict that has been reaping through the country since 2005, and in their inability to respond to the rising economic hardships that most Lebanese are facing, as well as the massively accumulated national debt which accounts to more than 40 billion US dollars (which is a result of the pandemic state of corruption that characterizes the Lebanese ruling order).

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Marxism and the emancipation of women in Lebanon

June 2013

Today we read many articles that speak about the issue of the emancipation of Arab women, and there is a different view between writers and others in looking at this issue. Arab revolutions as soon as they occurred, added to the space of the Arab street movement, new political spaces, which were not actually available in the previous period, and within these political areas, we all saw, or actually redefined the leading role played by Arab women, not only in the course of the Revolution, which is sweeping the Arab cities, but we have also discovered within this process, the leading role played by Arab women in our Arab society as a whole.

The role of women is not new to our Arab societies. It is actually absent from us, or hidden from the public space, as a result of a dominant culture and a class system that derives its power and control over societies by imposing hierarchies and power relations, during which privileges are given to members of the society according to gender, ethnic, racial, sectarian and other criteria of discrimination.

Some think that the issue of gender and sexual discrimination is actually a cultural characteristic. Through this approach, masculinity is defined only in its behavioural realm. Through this definition, the fight against male culture becomes a discipline for both males and females to overcome these behavioural patterns.

Of course, I do not deny here the importance of this space, and its necessity in the day-to-day struggle. But the problem with this approach is that it summarizes the issue as a cultural issue, and we overcome it when we can overcome these

customs and traditions. As an extension of this approach, we see that most of the initiatives that exist today, despite their importance and necessity, limit the issue of emancipation only in its own space, that is, within the home or in the shroud of the marital institution. The demands of the feminist and women's movement today, which take the widest part of the demands, are the adoption of the law protecting women from domestic violence and the law of the right of women to give citizenship to their husband and children.

I am not trying to minimize the need to address these issues or to ensure that the daily cycle of violence and discrimination against women in Lebanon is stopped. But what I am trying to do is to think aloud and ask two questions: Are these issues actually enough to build women's and women's struggle in Lebanon? Or, if the current approaches to these two issues are, in particular, linked to the other forms of violence and discrimination experienced by women in Lebanon?

The two issues deal only with women as an individual in their relationship with men, while neglecting their relationship as an individual independent of men and directly related to society. Thus, the identity of women is reproduced only in the private sphere, which is the accepted space within the existing class, social and political system.

Two approaches can be observed to address the issue of domestic violence, which are tactically different but at the same time have a common methodology: - The campaign of the Association of the dimensions of the example, built the weight of propaganda to give space to the clergy, who are themselves the most opposed to the adoption of the law to protect women from domestic violence, to convince men from the religious point of no offense to women. The same religious logic that says "man is the head of woman" and "men are women" is no longer a matter of a step on the path to full rights or full equality. Rather, the goal of this methodology is to "protect women" independent of society, but within its status as "under the authority of men", and this is the seriousness of the matter, because this approach preserves the system of discriminatory relations and relations of domination already existing within society, and defines women only as victims of "lack of religion" or "lack of logic" A victim of "the inadequacy of some men" or "the failure of some men to obey Jesus' words," and this is exactly what the " N. "

- Campaign Enough violence and exploitation, which called on several occasions parliamentary blocs to demonstrate in order to demand the House of Representatives to approve the draft law referred to the same Council. It may be considered by many that the call of these parties is not the big problem, and it is necessary to pressure Speaker Nabih Berri. But the problem here is that the rhetoric against violence against women is being undermined by its ability to address the issue of violence in all its aspects. It should not be forgotten, for example, that these parties, for example, had participated in civil war, for example, that many women were tormented by their fighters, or by mass rape, which occurred periodically, if not on a daily basis at different periods of war National.

- Also, let us not forget the partnership of these parties in blocking the human, economic and social rights of women in Lebanon from the laws of equality in social compensation, equal pay, political participation, inheritance, nationality, marriage

and other matters. What is really taking place in this approach is to address the issue of violence only, in its physical space, despite its importance, but it conceals the various forms of violence mentioned above, which women are systematically exposed to in Lebanon. Thus, through the participation of the parties of power, the issue of domestic violence is viewed as an anomaly, or a mere behavioural issue, and not as a single complex of an integrated system that encourages, and even legitimizes, violence, oppression and discrimination against women. What is really taking place in this approach is to address the issue of violence only, in its physical space, despite its importance, but it conceals the various forms of violence mentioned above, which women are systematically exposed to in Lebanon.

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Consciously or unconsciously, to divide the feminist and women's struggle for full rights, instead of calling for protection as an inherent right, as a human right first and foremost, and as an organically related right to other rights of women in Lebanon, which is no less important than protection from We seek to recognize the legitimacy of this right, not by attracting the masses of women who suffer from this discrimination and oppression. On the contrary, we see these initiatives as seeking legitimacy from the political and religious authority, which is within its work and judgment.

Here is the fundamental question to be asked. Is not it time for the women and feminism movement in Lebanon to be a discourse independent of the existing authority in its religious, political and economic space? Should the legitimacy of the movement not be legitimized by the advocacy of the masses of women in Lebanon, rather than seeking to obtain such legitimacy from the existing authorities? In addition, is not the issue of violence more complex than merely a behavioural issue? Is not the "legitimacy" of this violence and oppression actually derived from the existing system of government, and regimes of ideological, racial, sectarian, masculine and religious domination?

Male children are not created by genes that make them masculine; they learn masculinity, at home, in the neighbourhood, in the school, in the university, in the leaders 'permits, in the clerics' permits, and through Traditional party work, daily commercials, the national anthem, television series, Arab and Hollywood films, etc., all create the male culture that belongs to a large part of the male population.

For the mainstream media, the image of the ideal male is the image of that man with the twisted muscles, the man around him, the man who owns the apartment

and the car, the man with the high intake, who wears the high-priced suit; in contrast, the ideal woman is that graceful woman , The chic, who loves to go to the market, the good mother, the wimpy wife, are those women who are tormented, and sacrifice in the way of men and family.

If we look at most of the popular television series today, we see the repetition of this image hysterically, we always see women through Western, Arab, Turkish and Mexican series, as a relationship with a man, or waiting for a relationship with a man, Happy ending, Or marriage, and of course the encounter or relationship that results from it, or marriage, requires the style of "championship" and "roughness" of men in exchange for "paper" or "weakness" of women, the man in this case becomes the Savior, is the woman feels safe , In contrast, give the woman herself, most often especially at the height of the story, give Filled a gesture of "thanks" or as an input to accept it Krgelha and "protector".

But is the actual reality we live in daily in our direct human relations identical with these images, or that it has a contradiction with it, although it often seeks to comply with it, but fails because this image, that of "ideal" women and men, And content, are actually closer to the imagination than the actual reality?

Women and men, who are / are weak, large, long, short-bodied, fat or agile, all have different physical forms and characteristics, but by approaching our daily selves with these two images we create an identity that contradicts our actual nature. Through this stereotypical pressure, we learn to see the extent of our "reality" by how close we are to these stereotypes. We see our bodies as incomplete or imperfect, and we learn to attract features are not necessarily reflective of the attraction we feel, but reflect what we must be drawn to by the visual pressures which sweeps our minds daily.

In women, but who said that all men should be strong, and that all women should be weak? In fact, from the countless human experiences in our society, there are many women who reflect more power and safety than men, and there are many men who reflect more tenderness and weakness than women, but the more important question is, is it logical to reduce people, whether was he male or female only in these characteristics? Is it really man, in his identities / gender and nationality, and his / her intellectual and practical identities, is the expression of these conflicting identities, between roughness and tenderness, and between weakness and strength? Do we really have to adhere to the logic of the supposed gender conflict, which is based on the ideas that govern our societies? As men and women, we have to fight this conflict on a daily basis, and to achieve it through a victory over the opposite sex.

Our struggle against discrimination and persecution is at the same time a conflict against the logic of social violence, the logic of gender and sexual separation, and the prevailing logic of discrimination, which attempts to dress women as men with identities that are objectively opposed to their different and truly complex nature. The issue is not what we should be, but the issue is that there should not be a template that determines what we are. The masculine rejection must begin as an endeavour not only for the freedom and emancipation of women, but also as equally important as a path to free men from the masculine stereotypes that "must" or "imposed" to comply with.

Hence, the issue of emancipation of women is inextricably linked to the issue of emancipation of society, but its link does not make it a matter of emancipation of women as a result of the emancipation of society. On the contrary, the emancipation of women is a precondition for the emancipation of society as a whole. Therefore, today's emancipation of women, especially in light of the ongoing Arab revolutions, is equally important with other fundamental and central issues such as social justice, democracy, freedom, anti-sectarianism and secularism.

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[2]
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[5] – Hegel ref here
[6] – pp. 177-178 of the 6th German edition. http://lenin.public-archive.net/en/L2605ar.html

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[9] – First Published 15 May 2008

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[15] – First Published 1 October (?) https://www.al-manshour.org/node/13
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[19] – First Published 20 Jul 2012, Socialist Worker (GB) Issue No. 2312

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[28] – From Socialist Worker, 23 August 2011. Transcribed by Christian Høgsbjerg. Marked up by Einde O'Callaghan for the Encyclopaedia of Trotskyism On-Line (ETOL).
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[30] – Socialist Worker 14 Aug 2012, Issue No. 2316
[31] – "Western intervention will either strengthen Assad's grip or destroy the gains of the Syrian revolt, says Lebanese socialist Bassem Chit". Socialist Review, 3 Sep 2013,

[32] – Explain Dual Power
[33] – 7 July 2014
[34] – Mechanical Marxism explanation here
[35] – Socialist Worker, 24 Jun 2014. Issue No. 2409
[36]
[37] – Interview with Socialist Worker (UK) 9 Aug 2014
[38] – In the last two weeks of March 2012, Lebanon experienced dangerous security developments that ensued after the arrest of one of the leaders of the Salafi movements in the North, Shadi al-Mawlawi. Al-Mawlawi was arrested for suspicions of belonging to al-Qaida (without hitherto knowing whether these suspicions are corroborated or unfounded). After the arrest, protests and the burning of tires ensued, along with the closing of roads in Tripoli, which lasted several day. This situation led to confrontations between various Islamic groups, on one hand, and the Lebanese army, on the other, as well as confrontations between the area of Bab al-Tabbaneh (of Sunni majority) and Jabal Mohsen (of Alawite majority). These skirmishes were followed by the killing of two sheikhs, Sheikh Ahmad Abdel Wahed

and Sheikh Mohammed Mir'ib, at a Lebanese Army checkpoint, with circumstances remaining blurry until now. The killing was met with wide condemnation and popular civil unrest. The sparks of these events reached Tariq al-Jadida in Beirut, where young men from the Future Movement protested the killing of the two sheikhs, only to escalate to armed presence and the ousting of Shaker al-Barjawi, president of the Arab Movement (Al-Tayyar al-'Arabi) and a March 8 ally. Shadi al-Mawlawi was subsequently released under bail, stating that his release was "a [source of] pride for Tripoli and fundamentalists".
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[40] – Al-Akhbar Newspaper, Friday May 25, 2012.
[41] – Harman, Chris, "The Prophet and the Proletariat," International Socialism Journal, 2.64 (1994), Marxist Internet Archive, https://www.marxists.org/archive/harman/1994/xx/islam.htm.
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[45] – From Civil Society Knowledge Center, Lebanon Support (28 October 2013). Republished with kind permission of Lebanon Support from cskc.daleel-madani.org. Transcribed by Christian Høgsbjerg.
[46] – "Syria's economic stagnation is rooted in official as well as informal economic and fiscal policies and decisions that have undergirded incentives for liberalizing the national market since the early 1990s", Bassam Haddad, Change and Statis in Syria, Merip, 2013.

War on Syrian Refugees: Continuation of Class War

Sunday 30 November 2014

Every time you remember phrases such as "prestige of the state" and "army red line", "the maintenance of the military establishment", and other resonant sentences echoed by politicians of sectarian hubs from within the barricades of the Lebanese authority or from outside, then knew that the Lebanese state, and During the military lead a new class war against refugees, refugees, the poor, workers and workers.

It is necessary to point out that the military establishment of the Lebanese state and its ruling regime is not limited to the police and the army, but extends to the militias and the local zealots, who constitute the local military apparatus of the Lebanese authority, who are tasked with controlling the "people" within sectarian expectations. "It spreads its authority over the living.

But this military establishment, with all its official and non-official branches, has another more ruthless role: the oppression and abuse of refugees and foreign workers. At a time when its iron grip, which is holding, killing and destroying refugee

camps, is growing stronger, To Beirut, Tripoli, Bekaa and the south. This military establishment played only the role of the political-sectarian security officer. And did not stand in defense of the people and people in the face of sectarian massacres, but adapted to them and turned itself into militias supporting sectarian leaders against others, as happened during the civil war. With the return of the era of "peace", after the Taif agreement, the warring militias themselves merged into the "national" military establishment, and became another apparatus of class and sectarian containment, under the so-called sectarian quota in appointments, promotions and others. Lebanon, where he holds his faith with distinction and pride.

This military establishment has always been the right wing of the Lebanese regime's wars against the refugees, under the guise of a "national battle" or a "battle against terrorism." In both cases, these apparatuses do not attack the Israeli occupation, for example, The displacement and detention of refugees, the poor and what we saw at Nahr al-Bared in 2007, and what we are witnessing today in Arsal is a new version of one war, the regime's war against refugees. In the same year, the Palestinian factions offered the military leadership their support to get rid of Fatah al-Islam in Nahr al-Bared camp, without resorting to the destruction of the camp, but that military institution was supported by the one who knows the camp as a stone stone. Of Palestinian civilians and soldiers during the battle.

In 2008, the Lebanese army, in cooperation with the March 8 militias in Beirut and the regions, restored the internal "military-sectarian" balance in all Lebanese regions, particularly in Beirut, and "calming" the situation between the rival forces. Of course, Of the ruling parties. We can not forget the year 2004, when this same national institution went on strike and killed five workers in the neighborhood of Al-Salam, the same that beat the moves demanding electricity and the killing of several citizens for years while suppressing these movements.

Contemporary Lebanese history has witnessed several examples of what the Palestinians in Lebanon, for example, or the Lebanese themselves, had experienced before, during and after the civil war at the hands of the Lebanese military and security establishment. To those who forget, we recall the strike of the Ghandour factory, the demonstration in which Marouf Saad was assassinated in Sidon, and the war of cancellation between Aoun and Dja'ja, when he split, the rest of the army between the two sides.

This institution is in its ideology, known as the national sectarian containment, that is, its role remains in the orbit of the balance of military and political sectarian, wearing "national", and it is not surprising that the only institution that is considered "national" in Lebanon is a military and security institution, Is organized violence.

According to the logic of the Lebanese sectarian system, national rule is the antithesis of sectarianism. In fact, it is not only a security provision, and it is often a declaration of a classical and continuous war against workers and social movements, by threatening civil peace or sometimes against refugees and refugees on the pretext of building an identity "Lebanese" saves them from the crisis of the social, economic and political system, and the best way for the bourgeoisie, wherever it exists, to

escape its crisis is racism and fascist regimes.

This is precisely what is happening today; because of the unwillingness of the parties to political power to resolve the issue of the hostages, politically or even militarily, as they have done repeatedly with the Zionist enemy or with the Lebanese militias, we see the political authority and the military establishment turn their battle against the Syrian refugees . Although the families of the abducted soldiers themselves have repeatedly said that the Syrian refugees have nothing to do with the abduction. And how that relationship is based and they are the aggressors first of the call and acts of terrorism.

In discussing this racism, we see many values that try to justify this racism because of the existence of some kind of objective reasons for it, from the presentation of the issue of living and overcrowding to jobs and others, or the legacy of the Lebanese-Syrian relationship under the tutelage.

However, during the period of Baath rule for Lebanon, the military leadership was always the right arm to implement all the requirements of the Assad regime in Lebanon. And the Baathist regime.

In the current Arsal battles, following the abduction of the Lebanese soldiers by da'ash and victory, the Lebanese military organization is burning the refugee camps and detaining and arresting the Syrian refugees throughout Lebanon, under the umbrella of a racist speech.

The invention of that relationship between Damascus and Syrian refugees is nothing more than a direct and obvious racism aimed at hiding behind a "strenuous fight" to fight Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

Today, as in the past, the Lebanese authority deliberately classifies itself under the guise of fighting terrorism, ignoring and ignoring it. In fact, both advocates and supporters are not Syrian organizations. Fatah al-Islam is not a Palestinian organization; it is a sectarian and trans-national organization sponsored by regional and local forces. , From the Lebanese ruling class, the Syrian and the kingdoms and emirates of the Gulf.

Instead, the demands of "Lebanese patriotism" - that is, the prestige that is based on the tone of "assertiveness" - are the requirements of the continuation of this regime, under the feet of the military establishment.

In the years after 1948, during the period of the first resort of the Palestinians to Lebanon, as a result of the expansion of the Zionist occupation in Palestine, the Lebanese authority transferred the refugee camps from the south to the center, Bekaa and Aleppo (Aleppo convoy stopped in the north and settled in Nahr al-Bared) Directly manage the camps through the police and the army. With the creation of the second office under President-General Fuad Shehab, the security and intelligence grip on the Palestinians increased. One of the most important achievements of the second office at the time was the martyrdom of the fighter Jalal Kawash under torture in his basement.

There has never been a need to speak about the "importance" of maintaining the prestige of the state if the army is engaged in a confrontation against the Israeli occupation, for example, in the few times it did, but was praised at the time heroism, but attend the prestige and the need to preserve, Military forces lead a vicious class

war against refugees, the poor and workers.

The recent events of Arsal that led to the abduction of Lebanese soldiers by Dahesh and al-Ansar were the new "pretext" used by most Lebanese political forces to re-establish their already existing racism and try to expand it and bring the entire society into a new war against refugees.

Most of the constituent parties of the existing authority have built their "new" legitimacy on the rubble of massacres and endless social wars against the Palestinian refugees. Their racism was embodied in the Taef Accord, which extended and established arbitrary measures, collective punishment policies Against the Palestinians in Lebanon.

Today, the Lebanese regime begins another war against the Syrian refugees in Lebanon, which extends from deportation policies, the abolition of refugee status, the burning of camps and arbitrary arrests, humiliations in searches, beatings, torture and other violent and arbitrary methods.

In addition, economic war is waged against them by raising rents, as well as hysterically stating that "the Syrians are stealing the livelihood of the Lebanese" and forcing the refugees to pay for their house arrest in the tents of landowners, brokers or asylum brokers who spend their money and Then expel them from their places of refuge, and other crooked methods that, in many cases, make refugee status more difficult than the war itself.

Some might be surprised to see the use of the word "racist" here, because the Syrians and the Lebanese are not different elements, and some may accuse the use of a racist word, or try to justify it as a "natural reaction" in a situation like the one we live in. Racism and sectarianism are not new to the ruling class and the entire Lebanese state. The First Republic, which grew up in the bosom of the French Mandate, was built on the legacy of the sectarian massacres waged by Lebanese feudalism in the 1860 war against the peasantry, encouraged by the Ottoman Empire, In building a sectarian and geopolitical balance in Syria and Lebanon, both have secured competitive control within the Lebanese-Syrian territory. The great state of Lebanon was the actual embodiment of the sectarianism created by the Lebanese feudalism in that war.

While most Lebanese political leaders, differing from their positions in the Lebanese political divide, are calling for the deportation of large numbers of Syrian refugees, a number of municipalities have begun to direct the expulsion of Syrian refugees outside their towns.

At the same time, the Lebanese militias and their neighborhoods are launching threats, attacking, beating and kidnapping Syrian refugees and workers in the areas where they are located, thereby effectively implementing the hopes of their leaders to get rid of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

In addition, under the umbrella and cover of the "national" the Lebanese military institution in all its branches to tighten, abuse, displacement and hit thousands of Syrian refugees through raids on refugee camps, and burning, and destruction, all to "fight terrorism." Militarization is the first and last resort to the "national" cover of the Lebanese sectarian system.

With the military establishment, the sectarian, racial and class violence practiced

by the regime is transformed into “secular” violence that is adorned in the past and adorned daily with slogans such as “100% Lebanese”, “army, people and resistance”, “ransom of your youth” and other expressions of mania And the “national” chauvinism, and the total bending of the scenes of defamation practiced by the “national” army forces on the Syrian refugees, as it had done with the Palestinians and with the Lebanese during the civil war. These scenes of defamation are no different from the scenes of defamation practiced and practiced by the Syrian regime against the Lebanese, Syrians and Palestinians alike. It has one nationality, the identity of “defamation”, the body through which this violence is imposed and applied Class, sectarian and racial.

From Egypt, which is one of the most important centers of the counterrevolution, and to the Gulf eastward to the Atlantic Ocean to the west, through to Syria and Lebanon, racism was a weapon in the hands of regimes. What foreign workers suffer in the oil kingdoms is no different from the suffering of African workers in Tunisia or Libya. The exposure of the Amazigh in North Africa is no different from the situation of the Kurds under the rule of the Baath, the Iraqi and the Syrian, and at this time of our age, at a time when the revolution recedes or subsides with the swordsmanship and the missiles of the international coalition and the military boots, Arab dictatorships and sponsors of global imperialism Or regional, from a revolutionary alliance facing these systems among peoples Almentvdh surpassing the illusion of national separation and the border and Alhoiati, about the movement Taatcafl and solidarity among themselves facing oppression and persecution based systems.