

IN MEMORY OF KAMAL JUMBLATT

Assassins killed Kamal Jumblatt during the middle of the month of March on his way to the village of *Al-Muktar*. He met this tragedy while worried about the future of Lebanon, at the same time being aware of the inevitable victory of the democratic nation of Lebanon. This death has left deep sorrow and anger among forces of progress. On the other hand, leaving joy and happiness among the forces against independence, democracy and peace.

The absence of Kamal Jumblatt from this bitter class struggle does not only affect Lebanon and the Arab World but all national liberation movements. He has a clean and noble history which is part and parcel of the struggle of the Lebanese masses. For not less than forty years, he was involved in a struggle to ensure the expectations and hopes of the Lebanese people who were divided according to colonialist interests utilizing religion, tribal and ethnic issues etc. Kamal played a big role in the unity of the progressive parties of the Arab people, especially of the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

That is why he was against the ethnic and religious groupings in Lebanon, against the extermination of Palestinians and against puppets of international imperialism.

The bitter struggle he waged against the forces of reaction, the confidence he had in the ability of the working masses and the strong tie he had with the progressive world made it imperative for him to become the leading figure in the vanguard movements of the Lebanese struggle.

If we look back at the life of Kamal Jumblatt, we find that he belonged to an aristocratic family. But he transcended his class background and fought for the interests of the working people. This clearly shows how committed and objective he was in his ideas and struggle. He founded his own party, Lebanon's *Progressive Socialist Party*, which cooperated and worked with other revolutionary parties.

It is without a doubt that the death of Jumblatt is the work of reactionary forces, Zionists and international imperialists. All aimed at stifling the liberation movements of the Arab people, especially of Palestine, the progressive regimes, and the peace negotiations going on in Lebanon and Geneva to stop the war in Lebanon, a phenomenon which serves the interests of Israel and international imperialism. There are various methods imperialists use to pursue their intentions, the assassination of national and progressive leaders is among

such methods.

Jumblatt was killed at a time when he was indispensable. Let us ask ourselves, will the death of Jumblatt stop the revolutionary movements of the Lebanese masses?

It is true that Jumblatt has been shot when he was indispensable, at a time when his absence will be felt, but this does not mean the end of the Lebanese people's struggle. Experience has proved that in a real struggle the existing subjective condition does not end with the leader who helped to build it; in this case the esteemed Kamal Jumblatt of Lebanon. The same condition can produce more brave and capable leadership. The emphasis on the basic role of the masses does not mean denying the important role of the leader in a struggle. A leader like Jumblatt enhances the movement of history and it is for sure that the aims and ideas he was fighting for will triumph. Kamal Jumblatt will live forever, his ideas are immortal.

* This is a reprint from *Halgan* (The Struggle): Organ of the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party, Year 1, No.6, April 1977.

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On March 27, 1978, MERIP interviewed "Jihad," a Palestinian who was in Beirut during the Israeli invasion:

Question: *The different groups of the Lebanese National Movement worked in a united way?*

Answer: *Oh yes. As for the leadership, ofcourse Kamal Jumblatt is missed, but in another way he was so dominant that it left a vacuum or a paralysis on the second level. Now that he is gone, there is a collective leadership which is perhaps even better.*

This is an excerpt from a larger interview which appeared in *Middle East Research & Information Project (MERIP)*, "SOUTH LEBANON: Israel Invades," p.1-9.