

make this intervention? It should be generally well known that (PLO Chairman) Arafat does not have the international reputation he had before. A political intervention to establish peace in the Mideast would have been more suitable than this military action which may only lead to higher levels of confrontation. It is up to Israel to make positive steps now."

The March 16 *Ruhr Nachrichten* in Dortmund wrote: "What Israel is doing in Lebanon can only lead to further escalations and may have consequences like what we

know from Mideast confrontations in the past."

The *Südwestpresse*, in the Stuttgart region, published the strongest condemnation of Israel to come from West Germany in many years: "By its invasion of Lebanon, Israel went far beyond what otherwise could be justified as a mere retaliation for the terrorism. By this invasion, Israel is fueling tensions which may lead to general war in the region, as soon as the Arabs are driven into a hard line position by the invasion."

## Israel Massacres Palestinians In Lebanon

Reports from Lebanon are fast confirming Egyptian Foreign Minister Mohammed Ibrahim Kamel's charge that the Israeli military incursion into the country is nothing less than "organized genocide".

The Israeli invasion—the largest military action since the 1973 war—began as a three pronged attack, with Israeli forces moving toward Naqura on the Mediterranean coast, Rmeiche on the south central border, and the eastern Arkub region near Mount Hermon. After seizing a strip four to six miles wide along the 60-mile border, Israeli troops concentrated their attacks on the key port city of Tyre and into the Arkub, to further extend their positions to the south. Heavy shelling of Nabatiye, situated several miles north of the Litani River, was also reported as another sign of Israel's intentions to continue the offensive.

In launching the operation into Lebanon, Israel announced that "special Palestinian operations centers" as well as refugee camps would be targeted, giving the invading Israeli forces license to massacre the population at will.

The Israeli attack was hardly limited to the south. Israeli jets bombed and strafed population centers as far north as Beirut, leaving hundreds dead or wounded. A particularly vicious assault was carried out on Damur, a town located 10 miles south of Beirut on the Tyre-Saida-Beirut coastal highway. Badly destroyed during the 1975-76 Lebanese civil war, Damur nevertheless was home to thousands of the survivors of the Christian siege of the Tel Zaatar refugee camp in the summer of 1976.

At noon on March 15, a flight of two F-15 fighter bombers and three Mirage jets made three bombing runs completely destroying the city in 40 minutes. Thousands of refugees fleeing on the coastal road were also bombed and strafed. According to an eye witness report from Agence France-Presse reporter Ignace Dalle, the road was littered with bodies. "It is impossible to know how many victims there are," he reported. Automobiles packed with refugees were transformed into "mountains of charred metal." Dalle continued: "The inhabitants are fleeing without knowing where they are going... The anguish that a new raid may follow is fanning the panic...

Women, covered with tears and dragging terrorized children, are hurling themselves to the highway trying to hitch a ride."

The Israeli jets then dropped heavy bombs on Uzai, a residential area outside Beirut, adjacent to the Beirut Airport, flattening 300 to 400 yards of one and two-story houses. Of the 40 killed in the raid, none were reported to be Palestinians. Many people were buried alive.

In both the Damur and Uzai bombing raids, several civilian centers were hit, including a hospital. In an interview with Associated Press correspondents, Dr. Fathi Arafat, brother of PLO leader Yasser Arafat and a physician at a Beirut hospital, pointed to a wounded woman and two white sacks containing the bodies of children and stated: "Do these look like military targets to you? They rocketed the camps indiscriminately."

In the south, Tyre remains a prime target of the Israeli forces. Blockaded from the sea by Israeli gunboats, Tyre is being bombed from the air, shelled from the sea, and attacked from the south. March 15, panic-stricken inhabitants fled to the north along the coast road, only to find Israeli fighter bombers striking at the northern urban centers that Israeli leaders had pledged to spare. Several Palestinian refugee camps near Tyre were also attacked. A doctor at an hospital in Tyre criticized the Israelis for deliberately obstructing access to the Rash-diye refugee camp for more than one hour.

In the towns and villages strung along the border region, heavy house-to-house fighting took place, with strong resistance put up by Palestinians at Bint Jbeil. "We are not going to let ourselves be annihilated," said one Palestinian soldier, as the Israeli troops moved into isolate and wipe out "pockets of resistance", later defining these "pockets" as "anything to do with the Palestinians — bridges, houses, vehicles, as well as military installations." Before moving into the region, the Israeli Air Force conducted heavy air strikes, followed by artillery barrages lasting in some instances for as long as eight hours without pause, clearing the way for tank-led assaults.

—Nancy Parsons