

FOR A CLASS ANALYSIS OF PALESTINE-ISRAEL

by the Mideast Committee of Correspondence

We believe that a Marxist-Leninist historical and class analysis of Palestine-Israel can reveal the essential historical trends taking place there, thus pointing the way for a revolutionary communist program. In this article, we will not attempt to make a full historical and class analysis, but rather to illustrate some of the conceptual and programmatic gains that can be made by an historical materialist approach.

Towards the end of the last century, horrible waves of anti-semitic persecution befell the Jews in Europe, particularly in the East. Previously, when such attacks had broken out, the Jewish community had resiliently sprung to life again because Jews had a vital role to play in the feudal economy (as petty traders and craftsmen). At the turn of the century, however, that role was being eroded; Russia was in a period of transition from a feudal to a bourgeois economy. Zionism was a response to these phenomenon by the East European petty bourgeois Jews. By the early 1900's, large scale immigration to Palestine was already taking place.

There were two fundamental components to this immigration. First, large numbers of Jews (most of whom were of petty bourgeois origin) immigrated to Palestine and were proletarianized. This was accompanied by a variety of "proletarian" Zionist ideologies², which partly reflected the objective aspects of the immigration (proletarianization) and partly the subjective outlook of the intellectuals and oppressed workers in the old country (anarchism, social-democracy, tolstoyism, etc.). Secondly, each wave of immigration

was accompanied by an inflow of Jewish capital into the region.³ Not surprisingly, this immigration had a profound effect on the prevailing social system in Palestine-Israel. At the commencement of the Jewish immigration, Palestine-Israel had a feudal, agrarian economy.⁴ But Jewish capital, buying land from the effendi ruling class (whose right to alienate the land was not recognized under the feudal social structure), disrupted the existing property relations. The peasants did not perceive the class nature of their oppression during this process of primitive accumulation; they blamed their suffering on Zionism alone, not recognizing that the Arab ruling class would have been glad to proletarianize the peasants if it had been able to. Another factor blurring the class nature of primitive accumulation in Palestine was the sharp exclusivist nature of the Zionist movement. The "left" Zionists insisted on creating a Jewish economy, totally separate from the Arab economy.⁵ Thus Arab peasants were totally displaced from lands purchased by Zionist organizations.

There were other ways in which the feudal set-up was smashed as a result of the Zionist immigration -- increased trade, population growth, growth of industry, inflow of technical knowledge all played their role in changing the region from a feudal, Arab Palestine to a bourgeois, Jewish-Arab Palestine-Israel. The exclusivist character of Zionism resulted in the artificial preservation of the two modes of production, feudalism and capitalism, for quite some time. Thus, the effendi landowning class (though constantly liquidating itself as a class by selling land

to Zionists) continued to exercise much control over the Arab population as late as 1948. This domination of the effendis, often aided by British and Zionist interests, was not unchallenged. The Palestinian Arab peasants repeatedly rose in armed opposition to the effendis; at other times, the peasants allied with the effendis in opposition to the British and the Zionists. Both these tendencies were particularly clear in the 1936-1939 civil war.⁶ These struggles also reflected the fact that the Palestinian Arab people were undergoing a different historical evolution than the Arabs in the surrounding regions; in effect, the Palestinians were becoming a nation. Thus the struggles of 1936-1939 had both a class and a national character.

Partly because the internal social structure of Palestinian Arab society remained basically feudal, the Palestinian struggle suffered from poor leadership, poor organization, and little of the outside help that the Jews received. Thus, by 1949, the Zionist movement, having founded the State of Israel, was well on the road to political hegemony in Palestine-Israel.

ISRAELI ECONOMY: CAPITALIST AND IMPERIALIST

In the period from 1949 to 1967 the Israeli economy continued in the direction of capitalist and imperialist control. The two major developments in this period in Israel were: the sudden massive inflow of Jews from Arab countries and the strife that took place (and continues to take place) within the Zionist ruling class.

The Jews from Arab countries (called Sephardim or Oriental Jews) were of petty bourgeois background, but they were much poorer than the European Jews (or Ashkenazim) who ruled Israel. More than half of Israel's Jews are Sephardim. As a result of the large immigration of the early fifties, a large industrial reserve army was built up in Israel (with Arabs in Israel being even

more oppressed by racism than the Sephardims). This led to serious divisions within the working class in Palestine-Israel -- divisions which to this day hamper the further development of class consciousness. Different segments of the working class, forced to compete with each other, tended to see things in ethnic-national terms, giving rise to bitter ethnic national hatred and chauvinism; e.g., Iraqi and Moroccan Jews don't get along (and of course both try to outbid each other in their racism towards the Arabs to prove that they are really Israelis even if they come from the Middle East).⁷ What a delightful situation for the ruling class!

The Zionist ruling class by this time had assumed full control. The effendis position had been seriously eroded by 1948. In achieving near total political dominance, the Zionist ruling class at last had the desire and the capacity to smash the effendis, which they did most effectively.

The Zionist ruling class itself underwent some changes in the period from 1949 to 1967. The Zionist movement had initially started out under the domination of Western bourgeois "general Zionists", but by the 1930's the small but steadily growing labor bureaucracy had achieved primacy within the Zionist movement. This labor bureaucracy is based in the Histadrut, the "union" to which 60% of the adult population belongs. 15% of industrial workers work in Histadrut-owned factories.⁸ The Histadrut provides all medical care to its members.⁹ From the election of the first Keneset (parliament) which resulted in total disaster for both the Zionist "left" and right, the labor bureaucracy ruled Israel.

By 1960, however, struggle was growing within and without the bureaucracy: the growing industrial bourgeoisie and its "technocratic" friends within the labor bureaucracy resented the domination of the "old line" bureaucrats who wanted to maintain the power of the state capitalist sector. Very soon, things blew sky-high with the outbreak of the

Lavon Affair (Israel's Watergate).¹⁰ Ultimately, a series of compromises reverses, and counter-reverses led to the conservative bourgeois elements in the labor bureaucracy more or less coming out ahead--though certainly not achieving anything close to hegemony.

With the Six Day War in 1967, there is a fundamental change in the policy of the Zionist ruling class towards Palestinian Arabs: instead of ignoring the Palestinians, the Israeli ruling class now moves to absorb them. An important element of a class analysis of Palestine - Israel must be a recognition that the economy of the occupied territories is in the process of dissolution into a wider Israeli economy. Talk of an independent Palestinian national existence under capitalism is illusory: Israeli capitalism would dominate any such state.

The Israeli economy has grown very rapidly: real GNP has increased six-fold since 1950 and the growth rate has been over 7.5% since the Six Day War.¹² One of the major factors fueling this growth has been the massive capital inflow. In the sixties, more than \$2 billion came from German reparations (paid to the Israeli government), U. S. government grants, and gifts from Jews abroad (Note: German restitution -- paid to individuals -- was \$1.3 billion in the sixties).¹³ Recently the capital inflow had been more and more in the form of investments and loans instead of gifts: in 1972, it is estimated that there were \$760 million in gifts, \$915 million in loans, and \$120 million in investment.¹⁴

This massive inflow of capital has been matched by a growth in the labor force, mostly from the 700,000 Sephardic immigrants.¹⁵ The Arabs living in Israel have formed another major source of wage-laborers: nearly one half of Israeli Arabs work in industry or in construction.¹⁶ In contrast to the readily available sources of unskilled labor, Israeli capitalism has had a great deal of difficulty finding technicians and professionals: it is

estimated that there will be a deficit of 50,000 technicians by 1976 (unless Russian or American immigration fills the gap).¹⁷

This substantial growth of the Israeli economy is likely to continue. Investment by foreign capitalists is increasing: gifts and loans from American Jews and the American government are likely to be stepped up as a result of the recent war. While it is true that the market for traditional Israeli exports (citrus and diamonds) is saturated, there is a booming market for armaments, whose production already employs 10% of the Israeli workforce.¹⁸ Given the expansive forces in the Israeli economy, it seems likely that the RAND study which estimates that Israel will employ 75,000 workers from the occupied territories in 1978¹⁹ is conservative in its estimates.

PALESTINIAN WORKERS ARE SPECIALLY EXPLOITED

The Palestinians in the occupied territories are certainly a convenient source of wage-laborers. Not only is it politically easy to oppress Palestinian workers, but there are broad elements of the population that are subject to proletarianization. Of the 300,000 males over 14 in the West Bank in March 1970, only 133,000 were in the wage labor force.²⁰ Many of the rest were impoverished peasants, petty bourgeois, and refugees--lumpens. Of those 133,000, 18,000 were working in Israel -- as were 6,000 of the 67,000 wage laborers in the Gaza Strip. Last April, there were 52 to 57 thousand workers from the occupied territories in Israel²¹ (not including more than 2,000 from East Jerusalem).²² 25% of the income of West Bank wage-laborers came from employment in Israel.²³ Nearly half of the workers from the occupied territories are in the construction industry: they form 25% of the construction workers in Israel.²⁴ They are also 40% of the sanitation workers.

These workers are of course subject to special exploitation by Israeli capitalists. The

average daily wage for a worker from the occupied territories in the construction industry in 1970 was 13IL; for an Israeli worker, the average monthly wage was 649IL (over 26IL for a 25 workday month).²⁵ Higher production norms for Arabs were introduced in several plants.²⁶ For several years, Arab workers had to pay into the Israeli equivalent of Social Security without being able to draw benefits.²⁷ Workers from the occupied territories are not eligible to join the Histadrut.²⁸ Government and industry spokesmen have clearly stated that in case of a recession, the workers from the occupied territories would be the first to be fired.²⁹

The workers from the occupied territories, like the Arabs in pre-1967 Israel, have remained in their traditional villages (or refugees camps) -- partly because housing is not available elsewhere. This means that workers from Gaza, for example, may have to commute a full one and a half hours each way to work. More importantly, it means that the traditional village leadership structure has been able to maintain much of its power. This thoroughly reactionary leadership has been helped by the Zionist ruling class.³⁰ In pre-1967 Israel, these feudal leaders deliver about 60% of the Arab vote to Arabs allied with the Meir government.³¹

In addition to employing much of the West Bank and Gaza labor force, Israeli capitalists have been able to dominate much of the local production and exchange of commodities. Exports from the West Bank to Israel exceed those to Jordan (the latter are largely agricultural, the former industrial); imports from Israel are close to 90% of total imports.³² Israeli firms have begun to subcontract (particularly in textile manufacture) to small West Bank firms.³³ Investment in the occupied territories (especially by foreigners) is actively encouraged by the Israeli government.³⁴ Subsidies (loans at low interest, tax remission etc.) are available.

The policy of economic (as distinct from

political) integration of the occupied territories is widely agreed upon among the Israeli ruling class. At a discussion of the subject in the Central Committee of the ruling Labor Party, the Minister of Labor, Almogi, stated that he would be willing to return the territories if necessary but that the flow of workers must be maintained.³⁵ The position of Dayan has been summarized as "worker, yes; citizen, no."³⁶ The Israeli government has taken many steps to tie the West Bank and Gaza to Israel; e.g., much of the occupied territories is now linked to the Israeli electrical system.³⁷ Israeli officials look to the West Bank as a "gate" to the Arab world: they are particularly encouraged by the tourists from the Arab countries who come to Israel through the West Bank (150,000 in 1971).³⁸ We can expect to see an expansion of Israeli economic influence in the area: there have been cases recently of workers from Amman coming to Jerusalem to work for the week.³⁹

A "peace" settlement would not slow the process of integration. A treaty would surely allow Hussein to gain political control over the area the Israelis evacuate. Hussein, the puppet of imperialism and repressor of the Palestinian revolution, would smash any workers' movement (or even any democratic movement) -- especially since the Israeli army would be ready to move if Hussein hesitated. Since the Israelis are sure to insist that a treaty open Jordan to "normal economic relations" with Israel, a settlement would have the effect of opening Jordan to the penetration of Israeli capitalism.

Agitation for a "peace" settlement is therefore a dead end strategy for the left. Only a united struggle of Palestinian and Israeli workers will be able to end the national oppression of the Palestinians. Only a united working class will be able to resist the increasing attempts by the bosses to drive down wages (in Israel, the workers share of national income has fallen substantially since 1967). Any attempt to overthrow Israeli capitalism without the support of a united Palestinian and Israeli



About 100 Tel Aviv slum residents demonstrated in front of Tel Aviv City Hall. They are demanding a solution to rotten housing conditions. They are living in wooden transport lifts outside Tel Aviv. About four or five persons live in boxes six feet by nine feet.

working class is utopian and therefore reactionary in character.

LEFT FALLS INTO NATIONALIST TRAP

The overriding factor in the Left's inability to arrive at a consistently revolutionary line on the problems in the Middle East is the tendency to see the problem only in national terms, failing to emphasize the class struggle. Groups like Fatach and P. F. L. P. (Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine) see their struggle exclusively as a national one and see almost no role for the working class as such in the smashing of Zionism. Siach⁴⁰ (the Israeli New Left) ignores class in both its analysis and strategy.* For them, this

leads to acceptance, de facto, of Zionism: they call for withdrawal and the establishment of an "independent" Palestinian State-- but of course that only leaves us where we were before 1967 -- stuck with a capitalist and racist state. Thus, the cry of the Jewish left in Palestine-Israel for withdrawal amounts to little more than a demand for apartheid -- the creation of a Palestinian "Bantustan."

Some groups like PDFLP and Matzpen (the Israeli Socialist Organization) do make brave and often successful class analyses at times, and do relate their aims to their analysis, but generally they have not been able to achieve a unification of theory with strategy and practice. We feel that our analysis of

the basic historical trends since the Six Day War can point the way for the necessary unification.

Though the revisionist C. P. too has fallen into the nationalist pitfall (in its case supporting every reactionary Arab nationalist movement that Soviet social-imperialism is playing footsies with), in practice within Israel, until recently, it has consistently agitated on lines of class struggle. Never falling into the trap of wild-eyed anti-Zionism, it has consistently propogandized, along class lines, for changes that would, de facto, smash the racist Zionist character of the State; repatriation of the refugees, indemnities; end of the emergency laws and all housing, job and educational discrimination against Palestinian-Arabs. As early as 1961, however, their line (like those of most revisionist CPs) has become watered down from the 1951 slogan "overthrow of the capitalist slave system" to the slogan "social reforms for the benefit of the toilers... reducing taxes, etc."⁴¹ Clearly it too has no present understanding of the need for a working class socialist revolution for smashing Zionism and liberating the Palestinian and Israeli working people.

What we have tried to do is make historical and class analysis upon which to base a revolutionary analysis, free of the traps of nationalism and reformism. In particular, we have shown that the revolutionary class is the united working class consisting of Israeli and Palestinian workers. While the historical process which is creating that unity is not yet completed, it will not be too long before the united Israeli-Palestinian working class in both the occupied territories and within pre-1967 Israel is an objective reality. We must base our strategy and tactics on that objective reality.

Since the integration of the Palestinians into the Israeli economy is an irreversible trend, to call for the creation of an "independent Palestine" in the occupied territories and Jordan is to call for the creation of a

Bantustan. An "independent Palestine" would not end the racist treatment of Palestinians in Israel; the puppet state would only make apartheid more pervasive in Israel-Palestine. Rather than following the dead end strategy of nationalism, communists in Palestine-Israel should build a broad-based organization to fight racism.

Such an organization could fight racist education policies -- for instance, Israeli high school students (including Arabs) spend more class time learning the history of foreign Zionism than the history of Palestine from AD 130 to AD 1880.⁴² Anti-racists could also fight segregated housing practices that bar Arabs from Jewish neighborhoods.⁴³ A mass-based anti-racist organization could fight against the Israeli government's policy of expropriating land from Arab peasants so as to create Jewish settlements.⁴⁴ Anti-racists could attack the infamous Emergency Regulations which allow the military to hold people in jail as long as they want (without court hearings).⁴⁵ The Regulations allow the military to declare any area a "closed" area from which specific individuals can be banned (this is used to keep progressive Israelis and Palestinians from meeting).

A communist strategy for Palestine-Israel would call for the creation of a workers' organization for a united struggle against the Israeli bosses, especially the Histadrut misleaders and the government clique. Israeli workers have no illusions about the Histadrut: they know it is an effective tool for crushing workers' struggles. Histadrut factories are every bit as bad places to work as factories owned by other elements of the ruling class. Israeli workers know that the government has made them pay the price of the war (Palestinians have to pay to support the Israeli Army too). The workers know that rich immigrants get government loans for their \$100,000 houses, while young working couples have to wait years for an apartment (and Arabs get no government help if they want a home near their job). So long as the government and the

Histradrut can divide the Israeli workers from the Palestinian workers with hysterical propaganda about the "need to support the Army", the workers won't be able to stand up to the bosses. The only way to stop the galloping inflation that is eating into the wages of the workers (especially the unskilled workers) is to fight together as one working class.

FOOTNOTES

Footnotes:

1. A term which we use to describe the area of the Palestine mandate in 1919: i. e., the current state of Jordan and the area under Israeli rule except for Sinai and the Golan height
2. Ranging from neo-Bolshevism (Borochovism, Left Poalei Zion) to Second Internationalism (Mapai's forerunners). All were intense national chauvinists of course.
3. Rothschild was the main source: he invested 1.6 million British pounds in Palestine between 1884 and 1900 (A. Elon, The Israelis: Founders and Sons, p. 129).
4. Richard Antoun, Arab Village, pp. 16-25 has a good summary of relations of production in agriculture in Palestine circa 1900. Also, see N. Weinstock, "The Impact of Zionist Colonization on Palestinian Arab Society Before 1948", Journal of Palestinian Studies II:2, Winter 1973.
5. Thus "socialist" Zionists helped to smash the General strike of 1936 by calling on Jews to replace Arab workers; e. g., in the ports (El Kodszy & Lobel, The Arab World and Israel p. 71, quoting Y. Bauer, 15 April, 1966 Haaretz).
6. See El Kodszy and Lobel, op. cit., pp. 66-75 or Ibrahim Abu-Lughad (ed.) The Transformation of Palestine, pp. 203-305 for descriptions of this period.
7. For those interested in more information on the background of the Sephardim, see Weingrod, Israel: Group Relations in a New Society pp. 49-58.
8. Facts About Israel, 1970, p. 121.
9. Rubner, The Economy of Israel says what all Israeli workers know: the reason workers join Histradrut is because only Histradrut members can get decent medical care without paying a fortune to private doctors. See Rubinstein, "Slowdown at Haifa Port" Midstream vol. 12, '7 for an account of how the Histradrut smashes strikes.
10. Abramov, "The Lavon Affair", Commentary, February, 1961, written before the final outcome but still useful.
11. The most prominent individuals being David Ben-Gurion and Moshe Dayan.
12. Encyclopedia Judaica, vol. 9, p. 732
13. ibid, p. 734.
14. L. Lockwood, "Israel's Expanding Arms Industry", Journal of Palestinian Studies, vol. 1, no 4 (summer 1972) p. 77.
15. Encyclopedia Judaica, vol. 9, p. 541
16. Sabri Jiryis, Arabs in Israel, p. 169.
17. The Israeli Economist, February 1973
18. Lockwood, op. cit.
19. Quoted in Sheila Ryan, "Constructing a New Imperialism: Israel and the West Bank", MERIP Reports, #9 (May-June 1972)
20. Monthly Statistics for the Administered Territories, vol. 1, #1; also in Statistical Abstract of Israel 1971 -- for next three sentences.

On the Black Panthers, see Nissim Rejwan, "The Myth of the Black Panthers", New Middle East, October, 1970. The Israeli government had no problem buying off many of the opportunist misleaders of the Black Panthers; the Panthers are now concentrating on electoral politics.

21. Maariv, April 13, 1973.
22. Encyclopedia Judaica, vol. 9, p. 869.
23. Based on calculations from Rouleau, Le Monde, 9 January 1973, and Statistical Abstract of Israel 1971.
24. Maariv, 13 April 1973
25. Statistical Abstract of Israel 1971, p. 640
In 1971 3.5IL was equivalent to \$1 U.S.
26. Statistical Abstract of Israel 1971
27. Statistical Abstract of Israel 1971
28. M. Bruno (Chairman of Economics Department at Hebrew University), Accid, April 1973, p. 54.
29. Maariv, 13 April 1973
30. Abner Cohen, Arab Border Villages in Israel describes the social structure of Israeli Arabs well, especially in the chapter, "From Class to Hamula." He describes Class to Hamula." He provides details of how the Israeli ruling class reinforces the power of the reactionary Arabs.
31. Encyclopedia Judaica, vol. 9, p. 1031
32. Monthly Statistics for the Administered Territories, vol. 1, #1
33. O. Remba, "Israel and the Occupied Territories: A New Common Market in the Making?" New Middle East, November 1970.
34. E.g., see Haartez, 11 August 1968.
35. Maariv, 13 April 1973.
36. Maariv, 1 June 1973.
37. B. Shaicovitch, Accid, April 1973, p. 54
The Israelis refused to provide loans to Hebron to install new electrical generating equipment, so the city council was forced to ask for the connection of Hebron to the Israeli grid.
38. Accid, April 1973, p. 27
39. Maariv, 9 December 1973
40. The largest student based "left" group in Israel.
41. Czudnowski and Landau, The Israeli C. P. p. 31. The CP program for the recent elections mentions workers twice in its 39 pages.
43. Most low cost housing is financed by the Jewish Agency (which is funded by contributions from Jews outside of Israel); the Jewish Agency will not rent to non-Jews. Similarly, the Jewish Agency pays for the electrification themselves. (See B. T. Ross, "Notes from Inside Israel", MERIP Reports, #17, May 1973, p. 14 for a description of the problems this causes in Arab villages).
42. Sabri Jiryis, op. cit. p. 154
44. Davar, 20 March 1973 reports that one third of the Gaza Strip is to be expropriated.
45. A good example is documented in "Kafr Bir'im and Iqrit", Journal of Palestinian Studies, summer 1973.

Mid-East workers will smash Zionism and Arab nationalism

The Worker/Ouvrier

Origins of the Mid-East war

The origins of the most recent installment of the Mideast war arise neither in the striving of Jews for a homeland in Palestine nor in the aspirations of displaced Palestinians to take it back. These are actually only secondary issues. The real cause of this war is inter-imperialist rivalry. Jewish and Arab workers, are the cannon fodder.

The Mideast is crucial to the various imperialists for two reasons. First, forty per cent of the world's known reserves of oil are there. And Mideast oil was (and, despite the price rises, probably still is) the most cheaply mined oil in the world. Secondly, the area is strategic: a land bridge between Europe, Asia, and Africa containing the Suez Canal, one of the world's major trade routes.

British and French imperialists divided up the Mideast as the spoils of the old Ottoman Empire after WWI. They created a number of small nation states in order to thwart the development of pan-Arabic nationalism, i.e. divide and rule. The British gave the Zionists a charter to colonize (the Balfour Declaration 1917) for two further reasons; first, to have a secure base of white European settlement they could count on as in Canada, Kenya, or South Africa, and secondly, to have the Jewish settlement act as a lightning rod for the Arab hatred of British imperialism.

The situation worked fine for the imperialists. Arab workers and peasants rose repeatedly in armed revolts before WWII in Palestine. Each time, Jewish settlers either remained neutral or (more often) sided with the British. The only other problem the British bosses faced was maintaining the friendship of the Arab rulers in the new states the British had themselves created.

Zionism

Within Palestine, the Zionist movement was carefully and thoroughly organizing the military, social, and legal basis for a new Jewish state. Zionism, as political movement for the creation of such a state, developed as a nationalist reaction to the anti-semitic wave of attacks in Eastern Europe after 1880. Political Zionists held that the solution to anti-semitism and safety for Jews meant a Jewish homeland. Revolutionary Jews in Eastern Europe, on the other hand, correctly maintained that the solution to anti-semitism was the destruction of capitalist society that created it. Large numbers of Jews joined the Bolshevik Party in Russia. Conditions for Jews improved immeasurably in the Soviet Union after the Revolution. And it was only when Russia slid back to becoming an imperialist power, as it is today, that all forms of racism including anti-semitism have reappeared.

Within Palestine, the Zionist world organization provided the funds to buy tracts of land, set up hospitals and schools, found new cities like Tel Aviv, etc. The agricultural settlement developed was the kibbutz, a communal arrangement that farmed the land, indoctrinated settlers in Zionism, taught Hebrew and military skills. Only Jews were allowed. In short, these were fortified racist, imperialist institutions (still used today for the same purpose in the territories occupied since 1967) to prepare for the seizure of Palestine in 1948.

A further device used to weaken the status of Palestinian Arabs was the Zionist boycott of Arab labour and Arab products. This drive was initiated as were the kibbutzim by the Labour Zionists, the supposed left-wing nationalists, whose movement today includes Meir and Dayan. Quite clearly, these "left-wing" Zionists understood that a Jewish state meant a Jewish working class. The added cost of this boycott was borne by world Zionist organizations.

Second World War

Despite the stated aims of political Zionism of fighting anti-semitism and protecting Jews, the Israeli ruling class (including most of the bunch running Israel today) actively collaborated with the Nazi death machine. (Considerable literature is available: Ben Hecht, *Perfidy*; Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*; Hillberg, *Destruction of European Jews*) Lacking the manpower to actually round up Jews, put on yellow stars, and organize into ghettos for shipment to the ovens, Eichmann and his cronies offered deals to the leaders of the Jewish communities to do the dirty work for them. These leaders were almost invariably Zionists. The first act of the heroic Warsaw Ghetto fighters was to assassinate the Judenrat (Jewish Council). Quite often, the Judenrat ended up in the ovens with the Jews they led there. But not always. Kastner, who sold out 800,000 Hungarian Jews for some 1600 lives of his own choosing, testified on behalf of Eichmann's colleague at the Nuremberg Trials then went back to Israel where he was a minister in the Cabinet! The head of the Israeli Opera, as another example, was the former Jewish Chief of Police in a Polish town.

The Zionist leaders in Israel, also collaborated with the British in frustrating the deal Eichmann offered in 1943 to trade the Hungarian Jews for trucks, sugar, and coffee. They also quite often turned in Irgun (a terrorist sect) members who were trying to smuggle Jews into Palestine. The Zionist leaders at that time had an unwritten agreement with the British to abide by the White Paper limiting immigration in return for control of the new state after the war.

Clearly, the Zionist leaders did not care in the least

about saving Jews, only about creating a state for themselves to rule. There was only one country in the world that took large numbers of working class Jews fleeing Nazism: the Soviet Union.

Post 1948

UN statistics show nearly a million refugees from the war to create Israel. The Palestinians fled partly because the Arab rulers offered temporary sanctuary until their expected victory and partly because of the Zionists' terrorist attacks such as Deir Yassin, where a whole village was massacred.

The new Israeli state, was still tied to imperialism. The second world war had changed the balance of power, however. The US replaced Britain as the great power. The Soviet Union (rapidly returning to Capitalism), which had supported Israeli independence as an anti-imperialist struggle against the British, now wound up supporting the capitalist Arab regimes. The second installment of the Mideast war in 1956 entrenched Egypt in the Soviet camp. The third installment in 1967 firmly put Syria and Iraq there as well.

The Palestinian Movement

The Palestinian movement became a force in Mideast politics after the ridiculous showing by the Arab regimes in 1967. While the Palestinian workers and peasants have a just cause, the Palestinian movement has not and cannot solve their problems.

The basic weakness of the movement is nationalism, an ideology that results in a form of organization and policies that lead nowhere. The movement, as a whole, does not stand for socialism, rather for national liberation — "a democratic, non-sectarian state in Palestine". The strategy means alliance with the Arab bourgeoisie who fund the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the umbrella organization of the movement. Needless to say, the Arab bourgeoisie gives the money only to look militant and because the movement does not stand for socialism. On the other hand, these same Arab bosses have not hesitated to massacre thousands of Palestinian militants in Jordan in 1967 and Lebanon in 1973.

The Palestinian movement also finds itself allying with the Soviet Union and China. This imperialist power and would-be imperialist power did not hesitate to wine and dine Nixon while his planes bombed Vietnam. They will not hesitate to sell out Arab workers as well.

Finally, and most important, the lack of a socialist program means that unity between Israeli and Arab workers is prevented. The call for a "democratic, non-sectarian state" does not solve the question of land nor does it show to Israeli workers why they must overthrow the Israeli ruling class.

The Palestinian fighters haven't much scope for action other than terrorist attacks on Israel or Zionist institutions (though not all Palestinian groups engage in terrorism). While, undoubtedly, Nixon, Brezhnev, Hussein and Meir are the real terrorists, what is really needed is a revolutionary communist party in the

Arab countries to fight for immediate improvements in living conditions for Palestinian and Arab workers and for socialist revolution along with Israeli workers.

1973

The latest installment of the Mideast war finds the imperialists balance of power changed once again. US imperialism on a world scale on the downswing. European (the EEC) imperialism has just grabbed the Libyan oil. Soviet imperialism now controls Iraqi oil. The oil sheikdoms, reading the situation correctly, have upped their prices. Their so-called "blackmail" of oil as a weapon against countries supporting Israel is so much baloney. But it makes them appear militant to Arab workers whom they fear. These bosses haven't taken any significant action against Zionism in fifty years. Their goals are purely economic. They are in no hurry to deplete their finite resource at low prices. They figure to cut back the exploitation of oil, and hence raise prices.

Summary

There can never be peace in the Mideast as long as there are rival imperialists and rival national ruling classes in competition.

As the balance of power changes through economic strength and local wars like that in the Mideast, the global real balance of power will no longer correspond to the settlement reached by the imperialists at the end of WWII. Then there will be another world war. And, just as the Balkans were the powderkeg of pre WWI imperialist rivalry, so the Mideast may be for WWII.

Either we have working class internationalism or we have bosses' wars. There is no such thing as a "democratic, non-sectarian state". There is either bourgeois "democracy" where workers are cannon-fodder or there is socialism, where the working class rules.

ORDER NOW—

THE NEW PLP PAMPHLET ON ISRAEL'S
FRAME UP OF ARAB-JEWISH COMMUNISTS

Reprint of speeches before court
Editorial comments on Mid-East
war and Israeli society
25¢ a copy

PLP
P.O. Box 808
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201



Support unity of Arab and Jewish workers

In light of the current bosses' war in the Mideast, it is clear why the Israeli ruling class engineered the famous "spy trials" of last year which saw the imprisonment of 37 people including revolutionary communists like Dan Vered who fight for the international unity of workers and against nationalism that allows the rulers to use workers of different nationalities as cannon-fodder against each other, are dangerous to the successful execution of such wars.

The revolutionaries continued the struggle right inside Ramle Prison where most of the (Arab) political prisoners are kept. On the anniversary of Israel's 25th year of "independence", our jailed comrades took a leading role in organizing a hunger strike. Dan Vered and Ehud Adiv, two Jewish members of the group, were transferred to other jails.

Dan Vered was transferred to Shatta Prison where recently there was a "riot". Here is a letter from Shula Vered, Dan's wife, describing the event:

Concerning the "riot" in Shata — it was not like that. There were some prisoners (Jews, by the way) who wanted to be bosses of all the others. They were 'brave' enough against the Arab prisoners, of whom most are political prisoners. Dan described it as a real "pogrom" in which innocent people were hurt. He succeeded to save himself although there were some who were looking especially for him. Dan asked to be moved back to Ramle where he is now. So please write to him.

Another recent visitor to Dan Vered has written to CPL that, due to lousy nutrition in jail as well as confinement, Dan, who is of an athletic build, has lost over 20 lbs.

Write to Dan about the struggles you're involved in.
DAN VERED, RAMLE PRISON, POB 16, RAMLE, ISRAEL.