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## Plunder and Dignity

Steffan Beckman

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Palestine, situated in the Middle East at the extreme eastern end of the Mediterranean, has been inhabited since the beginnings of our era by the Palestine Arabs, who over the last centuries have shared it with the Palestinian Jews.

After the Second World War, under pressure from the United States in the United Nations, the territory of Palestine was divided into two states, Arab and Jewish.

The result was that the Palestine Arabs were displaced from their lands in successive campaigns of conquest and rape. More than 1 300 000 Palestinians live in desert encampments confronted with the worst possible living conditions, but this does not prevent them from fighting for the reconquest of what belongs to them.

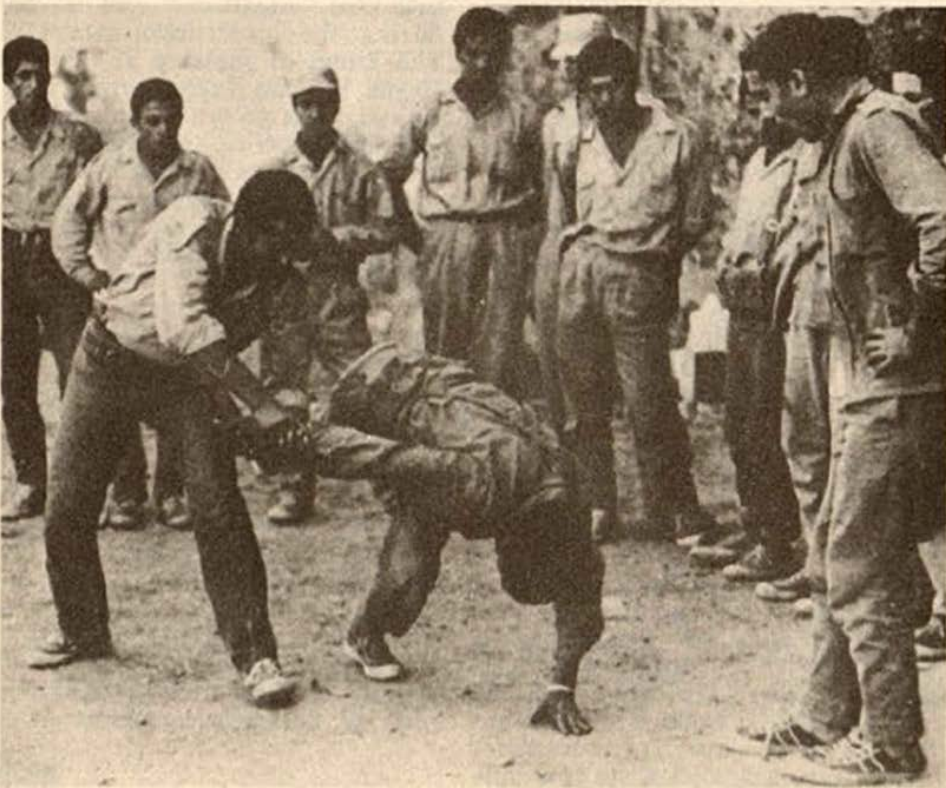
The Swedish journalist and novelist Steffan Beckman shows in this polemic article the origins and ambitions of Zionism and the interests and strategy of its North American imperialist protector in this zone. The author, who at a very young age collaborated on the Bulletin of the Palestine Front and in 1969 published the books Palestine and Israel and Palestine and US Imperialism, also shows the transformation of the political struggle into anti-imperialist armed struggle, and the characteristics of the organizations and parties that are guiding it.

ZIONISM is a movement of European colonialism that has established a "western" outpost in the Middle East after having displaced the native population little by little from the occupied zone. Zionism is, of course, a product of European anti-Semitism and naturally, like any other racism, a product of the conditions of economic competition in a class society. But Zionism, like any other ideology, is linked to a certain class, it is the response of the Jewish petite bourgeoisie to anti-Semitism, and is for this reason something completely different, for example, from the socialist ideology of the Jewish proletariat in the Warsaw ghetto during the first decades of the 20th century. Zionism therefore represents the class interests of a certain class of Jews and not of all Jews. Since its beginnings, Zionist ideology has had as its aim the establishment of a Jewish state where this class could defend its interests which were subordinated in many parts of Europe during the growth of the Zionist movement. A Jewish state would not mean a state where there were Jews but rather a state in which they were the majority. From this one can see clearly that what they wanted to introduce in Palestine was a class society, a society in which one had to be on top to get along well. The population that was already there would remain in subjugation and poor conditions. Actually, the Zionists wanted to introduce in Palestine the European society of their time. There were a few idealists or utopi-

ans among the Zionists who were anxious to put into practice certain socialist ideas, but outside a socialist ideology and not applied to the Arabs but only to the colonizers themselves. The kibbutz, which were the results of this idealism, in only one case have accepted an Arab; and anyhow these small "islands" of idealism very quickly gave in to the capitalist and corporate society that surrounds them. Actually the kibbutz have salaried workers and industrial activities. Idealism worked only during the construction stage. In The Times of January 31, 1968, the Israeli Shimon Tzabar wrote that a girl who has grown up in a kibbutz and then marries an Arab loses the right to be member of the kibbutz.

As a colonial movement without a "metropolis" in the usual sense of the word — that is to say, without a colonial power that extended its military and political support to the immigrants — the Zionists were obliged to make contact with some large interested power that could extract benefits and appear as an artificial metropolis. The reason the Zionists needed a metropolis was that Palestine was already inhabited and the land was occupied. To establish their state, the colonizers necessarily had to enter into conflict with the prevailing situation. For that reason they needed the support of a big power. The Zionist leaders did not hesitate to take advantage successively of the





Turkish empire, of the English, and then of North American imperialism. The three great powers had and the United States today has the same interests that Zionism has: to repress Arab nationalism, obstruct the progressive development of the Arab people by maintaining control over their respective economic and strategic interests in Western Asia.

Moreover it is hardly by chance that Israel and the Zionist machine are today included in the imperialist power structure. It is a consequence of the fundamental contradiction in the Middle East, the contradiction that exists between the Palestine people and the European colonial movement.

In his book *At the Crossroads*, the Zionist Aha Ha'am wrote in 1891 of Palestine that "it is difficult to find any uncultivated land in the country." The major part of these lands were the property of small farmers who refused to sell them to the colonizers; thus the Zionist state had to establish itself by violence, throwing the small farmers off their land. As a result, this state remained in total conflict with its surroundings, obliged to collaborate with imperialism and a policy that seeks to impede progressive development in the entire area. Moreover, this conflict cannot be resolved until the colonial state disappears.

The present phase of North American imperialism began with the increasing concentration of capital in the United States during the decades of the 20s and 30s. The growing interest of this capital in acquiring new markets was one of the principal causes of the intervention of the United States in the Second World War. Even after the Second World War, England was the dominant power in the Middle East,

the British oil companies then produced two thirds of the oil extracted from this zone. In the period between the two world wars, the United States acquired participation in the exploitation of oil in the Middle East and toward the end of the 40s was the net exporter of oil — that is, it exported more oil than it imported from other places.

The big North American oil companies induced President Roosevelt to make close connections with Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia, while the growing rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union after World War II heightened US interest in the Middle East from the strategic point of view. Between 1945 and 1947 an air base was built in Saudi Arabia; President Truman declared that Turkey was within the sphere of North American interests, a US military delegation visited Iran to enter into collaboration with the Shah, and the United States Government — Truman himself to begin with — declared itself for the creation of the State of Israel.

By giving their support to Zionism in Palestine, the North Americans could push the English out of their Middle Eastern bulwarks. The strong support for Zionism among the Jewish minority in the United States evidenced, among other things, by the large amount of money raised during the years immediately following the world war, also made it possible for President Truman to envision that a Jewish state in Palestine would be under strong US influence. In his diary, Truman writes that he imagined a great industrial project under Jewish direction in the Middle East, which coincided very nicely with the fact



that, while many different pressures caused the partition of Palestine by the UN, he was vigorously supporting the establishment of an oil base in Saudi Arabia and the construction of an enormous pipeline from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean. The first deliveries through this oil duct reached the zone at the same time that the UN voted for Palestine's partition. It was this pipeline, it can be said in passing, that the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) blew up in May of 1969 in the occupied zone of the Golan mountains.

At the beginning of the 50s US oil production in the Middle East had expanded until it was now larger than Britain's. North American industries had also won concessions by which they monopolized two thirds of the oil reserves of the Middle East. Estimates made in 1967 judged the oil reserves of the Middle East to be more than 60% of the total oil reserves of the world, and the US companies held the major part of these reserves. Even if the deposits recently discovered under the ice in Alaska prove to be very large, the reserves of the Middle East will have an important economic and strategic role in the next 50 or 100 years.

According to a report from the American Enterprise Institute in October 1968, North American oil production in the Middle East gave the United States a net profit of \$1 300 000 in 1966. A picture of what this figure represents can be drawn from *Survey of Current Business*, which in October 1968 reported that oil from the Middle East provides the United States with more than 22% of the income that the North

American industry receives from abroad.

Oil is the principal interest of US imperialism in the Middle East, partly because of its large economic profit, and partly because of the great strategic importance oil has for civilian and military industry, for waging war.

But in addition to oil there are also other North American interests, strategic ones.

a) The interest of "protecting" the natural resources of the Middle East.

b) The interest of utilizing the Middle East from a strategic-military point of view, to protect other regions and interests and in case of the eventuality of an attack on the Soviet Union, which is presently the principal economic, strategic and political obstruction to North American imperialism. The Middle East borders on the Soviet Union; moreover in the North it touches the Caucasus, where the Soviet Union has some of its largest oil deposits. The path of communications which includes the Suez Canal, the Red Sea and the straits of Bab el Mandeb, is naturally also important for the Soviet Union. Moreover, Turkey controls both banks of the Bosphorus, the important straits between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

c) The interest of "protecting" military and commercial communications with, from, and across Western Asia. Because of its geographic location between Asia and Europe and between Africa and Asia, as well as between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean, the region is important for communications. In mid-July of 1969, a land station

for satellite telecommunication was inaugurated in Bahrein, in the Persian Gulf. The great pipeline from Saudi Arabia to the Mediterranean and the Iraqi oil lines to the Mediterranean through Syria, are vital strategic interests for United States imperialism and its European allies.

Because of these interests, all of them tied to North American imperialism's aspiration to world domination and its monopolistic economic predominance, the United States employs a military and political strategy that involves:

a) Support for Israel and the reactionary Arab regimes;

b) efforts to block the evolution of the Arab people toward the formation of an anti-imperialist class;

c) opposition to all people's political movements or progressive regimes. By "progressive" is meant a regime which, without being socialist, takes an anti-imperialist line and adopts measures to better the conditions of the people's lives;

d) creating division among people's movements and progressive regimes;

e) supporting collaboration between reactionary regimes to fortify its position.

And this also points to the winning of absolute US control over the Middle East. The basic elements of imperialist strategy are:

1) The 6th Fleet with its two huge aircraft carriers and 50 or 60 ships surrounding them. It has been used among other things to protect the regimes of Jordan in 1957 and of Lebanon in 1958 and to guarantee the security of Israel in June 1967.

2) Military bases. Libya is the only Arab country in which the

United States has had any significant number of troops. The coup d'etat of September 1, 1969, will naturally cause changes. But they have stationed troops in countries that surround the Arab world: Ethiopia, Iran and Turkey. The base of Dhahran in Saudi Arabia functions, above all, as an intermediate landing base, among other things for the transports going to Viet Nam. England, allied with the United States, has bases in Cyprus, in Dhofar on the southern part of the Arab peninsula, and in Bahrein and Sharjah in the Persian Gulf. In the summer of 1969 the British Minister of Defense declared that the bases in the Persian Gulf and Dhofar would not be affected by events in the East of Suez.

3) Maintaining Israeli military superiority over neighboring countries and, with it, its ability to intervene in situations in which North American and Israeli interests are threatened. (I will return further along to a discussion of arms supplied to Israel by the North Americans.)

4) Arms supplied to reactionary regimes so they can protect themselves against their own people. It is typical that countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrein, Jordan, Lebanon and Iran should be provided with arms for fighting in the rural areas but a very small number of fighter and bomber planes. While Israel, in January of 1969, had close to 350 fighter and attack planes, Jordan, for example, had only 25 and Lebanon some 20 (see *Newsweek*, February 13, 1969).

5) Military pacts. Iran and Turkey have been members of "defense pacts" dominated by the



United States, since the beginning of the 50s. For a time, Iraq was linked to these two states by the so-called Baghdad Pact, which was broken after the coup d'état in Iraq in 1958. During the 50s there were repeated attempts to include Egypt in an alliance but these attempts failed despite the fact that Israeli attacks against Egypt were used to try to make President Nasser seek North American support. On various occasions, Israel offered the United States the establishment of bases in its territory and sought admission into NATO, but the United States judged this to be a tactical risk to its interests in the Arab world.

6) Political manipulations are another basic element in the strategy. The CIA contributed to the overthrow of the nationalist Mosaddegh in Iran in 1953 and of President Kassem in Iraq in 1963.

7) The displacement of rival imperialist powers was another of the important points of strategy during the 50s and was basically directed against England. After having eliminated the British from Palestine, the United States then supported all the nationalists who fought against the English — in Egypt and Iran, for example — as long as they did not threaten North American interests.

8) The political-ideological element of this strategy, which in the Middle East is expressed in United States stimulation of collaboration based on Islamism, by which reactionary Arab groups can be united with nonreactionary Arab groups of the same religion. By comparison, it must be remembered that the North American alliance with the regimes of Turkey and Iran has the ideologi-

cal pretext, first of all, of a struggle against the communist Soviet Union, while the alliance with Israel has as its principal ideological motivation the struggle against communist or progressive movements within the Arab world.

One of the contributions of the oil companies to imperialist strategy is their economic policy in the oil-producing Arab countries. For relatively low sums, they have taken control through monopolistic concessions and contracts that exempt them from payment of taxes and give them customs rights and full liberty in processing. The only function that the majority of the regimes have, as far as their natural resources are concerned is to receive a part of the profit. Only in cases of extreme necessity do the industries show any interest in coordinating their plans with those of the producing countries, and thus a great part of the economic planning for these countries is directed from the United States. Refining and all the other processes for oil derivatives take place outside the Middle East. As an example, one can cite the fact that North American industries, in 1964, made investments worth \$1 300 000 000 in Western Europe, while in the Middle East they made only \$20 000 000. A mere 40 000 to 50 000 Arabs today work in the oil industry which presently returns to the companies and the Arab regimes in question some \$6 000 000 000 annually in liquid profits. The reactionary Arab regimes of course collaborate, since they thus receive the full political and military support of imperialism. It is very convenient to them that the workers of the North American oil companies have absolutely no political liberty. The collaboration

between North American imperialism and Zionism is based on common interests. The ruling classes in Israeli society are the same as those who rule in the United States. The Zionist Saul Friedländer writes:

In Israel true power is a privilege of very limited groups, whose "ethnic" composition is easily identifiable. The political elite and the economic elite are still made up, to a great extent, of Jews of Russian or Polish origin; the military elite is dominated by the Sabras (Israelis born in Israel or Palestine). Only the scientific elite includes both Sabras and Jews from all the European countries and the United States. As far as the Jews of Africa or Asia are concerned, they are practically unrepresented in any of these groups.

Thus writes Friedländer in *Réflexions sur l'avenir d'Israël (Reflections on the Future of Israel)*, published in Paris in 1969. As one can see, he doesn't even mention the social status of the Arab population.

An idea of the nature of Israeli society and its close similarity to United States imperialism is given in the measures that the ruling class took in 1967 to resolve the difficult economic crisis into which the state had fallen. Among other consequences, the crisis of the Spring of 1967 had raised the unemployment figure to 12%. The first measure was to conquer new territories, by which a new area of investment would be won and the work force could be increased. The second measure was to invite foreign investment capital; since the war of 1967, three so-called "conferences of millionaires" have taken place in Israel with the result that trade be-

tween Israel and South Africa went up 47% in the two years following the war. The *Jerusalem Post Weekly* on June 30, 1969, wrote the following concerning the last millionaires' conference:

...72 new projects have been prepared by North American investors since the announcement that the conference had been held... They signified an investment of \$66 000 000, and 35 of the projects have been begun. Of the 500 major enterprises listed by *Fortune* magazine, 31 are operating in Israel and there are relations with another ten...

With respect to the territories occupied, it is interesting to note the Israeli State has given tax exemptions and other economic incentives to those Israelis and foreigners who want to invest there, but the advantage does not include Arabs who live in the territories. And the Arab laborer employed by Israeli industry has a work permit which establishes the fact that he has a right to work only as long as there is no risk of unemployment for Israeli workers. That is to say, as soon as new emigrants arrive who want work, the Arabs are fired.

But despite the new work forces available, the new investments from abroad, the possibility of exporting to the occupied zones, the major control over the minerals of the Dead Sea, the oil seized from Sinai, the control now over practically the entire water system of the Jordan, having taken over all the tourist sites and thus having been able to increase tourism, despite all this, Israel had in 1969 its greatest deficit in balance of trade since the establishment of the state.



The Israeli Minister of Finance, Sharef, said in June 1969 that it was expected that the deficit would be about \$850 000 000.

This is the United States' colleague in the Middle East, in a society which moreover runs the risk of becoming a new South Africa. And now the Arabs of Israeli citizenship are denied the right to form their own parties, publish any newspaper without censorship, or to form their own football teams. It has been this way since the founding of the State of Israel.

According to information from the Israeli ex-Minister of Finance, Sapir, in the *Israel Economist* of September 1967, between 1949 and 1966, Israel had received \$7 000 000 000 in economic aid from abroad. This sum represents more than half what all the European countries devastated by the war received in total from the United States under the so-called Marshall Plan.

When one examines this aid a little closer, one sees that the major part comes from the United States. The North American State permitted the Zionist organizations to collect \$1 200 000 000 in donations and exempted those who contributed from paying taxes on the amount donated. There have been private North American investments worth \$840 000 000. Israel is the only foreign country that has the right to sell state bonds in the United States, which up until 1967 had brought in the sum of \$840 000 000. The total sum sent from the United States reaches \$4 800 000 000.

The United States has obliged and pressed the Government of the German Federal Republic to pay

\$775 000 000 under the concept of so-called damage to the State of Israel (this does not refer to the payment of damages to individual Israelis), and to authorize in 1960 a loan of \$500 000 000.

With all this the United States has seen that Israel received more than \$6 000 000 000 of the \$7 000 000 000 that Minister of Finance Sapir mentioned. It can be said that the United States has at least fulfilled fully its task of acting as the metropolis.

As far as military aid from the United States is concerned, the North Americans have succeeded in extracting the maximum advantage from their aid. The United States closed its eyes when the so-called flying fortresses were contrabanded to Israel in 1948. In 1952, on July 23, the same day that the officers seized power in Egypt, the United States decided to send Israel military equipment "that could not be purchased any place else." It was at this time that military instruction was being given to Burmese in Israel. According to *The New York Times* of September 4, 1958, the United States had sold arms to Israel "recently," which must be related to the landing of North American troops in Lebanon and the entrance into Jordania through Israel of the British, who quickly withdrew so that Israel could function as protector of the gentlemen of Beirut and Amman.

But up until 1962 the North American Government used, above all, the fraud of providing arms aid to Israel through its allies. In April of 1956, John Foster Dulles declared that the United States, for the moment, was not considering arms sales to Israel but that "it did not oppose other states providing them,"

according to *The New York Times* of April 3, 1956, which was interpreted by all as an exhortation to England and France to do so. Three days earlier the same newspaper had revealed that "France had begun delivery to Israel of 12 Mystère planes with the tacit consent of the United States." This supplying of Mystère planes, which in reality had been ordered through NATO, marked the beginning of the large arms sales by France to Israel, interrupted for a period after the 1967 war in deference to General de Gaulle's great anti-North American policy — determined by economic factors.

In 1950, the German Federal Republic, stimulated by the United States, began supplying North American arms to Israel and on February 20, 1965, *The New York Times* reported that "a top North American official last summer sent a direct request to chancellor Ludwig Erhard to supply arms to Israel." During the same period, *Der Spiegel* had revealed on February 14, 1965, that West Germany had, up to that time, sent Israel 60 planes, 60 tanks, antitank artillery and antitank rockets, a thousand parachutes, etcetera, and the plan for successive supplies would include, among other things, two submarines. Israeli officers were trained in West Germany.

At the beginning of the 60s the United States abandoned its plans for military pacts with the Arab states, since it no longer considered it necessary to continue with this double game. This also was a consequence of the military superiority that Israel had shown during the attack against Egypt in 1956. At the time the escalation of the attack against Viet Nam began, the open

supplying of arms to Israel was also started. On June 28, 1963, an agreement was signed for the sale of supersonic Hawk rockets (*The New York Times*, June 29, 1963). On February 6, 1966, *The New York Times* revealed that for some time the United States had been selling M-48 Patton tanks to Israel. On May 19, it was announced that the United States had decided to sell "tactical planes" to Israel. *The New York Times* commented that this was the first time that the United States had sent Israel a direct attack weapon. The following day it was revealed that it was the Skyhawk A-4, "a small reaction bomber, designed especially as an attack bomber with an aircraft carrier as its base." According to Maxime Rodinson<sup>1</sup> the price of these planes was "very advantageous"; as pointed out earlier, the question is whether, in reality, they should be considered gifts or sales in view of the capital that flows to Israel from the United States.

After the war of 1967, the United States made a pretense of halting US arms shipments to the Middle East, but already on October 27, *The New York Times* reported that 48 Skyhawks would be handed over to Israel. The delivery of the 50 controversial Phantoms was begun, a group of Israeli pilots was trained at George Air Force Base in California, according to the *Jerusalem Post Weekly* of August 4, 1969, and Israel has stated that it wants more Phantom planes after the 50 have been delivered.

It was not without meaning that Levi Eshkol said, as reported in

<sup>1</sup> Maxime Rodinson, *Israel and the Arabs*, p. 180.



Newsweek of February 17, 1969, that "Israel's value to the West in this part of the world is out of all proportion to its size."

Not without meaning is Israeli aid to organize the population of the Northeast and South of Thailand, nor is it by chance that Israel trains the Ethiopian army for antiguerrilla warfare against Eritrea, where the United States has a large air base. Nor is it by chance that Israel and the Shah of Iran deliver arms to the Kurds in Iraq, nor that the US trade union organization AFL-CIO, managed by the CIA, provides a flow of funds through the channel of the Afro-Asia Institute of Israel, nor was it by chance that the State Department in Washington announced its support of an Israeli attack against Syria in April 1937, as was revealed in the book published in Paris in 1968, *Histoire secrète de la guerre d'Israël (Secret History of the Israeli War)* by Michael Bar-Zohar, ghost-writer for the Israeli Government.

North American imperialism and Zionism united to try to keep the Arab people in submission. And North American imperialism and Zionism together exploit the Jews of the world who, because of the interests of a particular class, are dragged into the defense of a colonial and racist state. No less serious is the situation within the United States, where the large Jewish minority is indoctrinated in such a manner that it winds up opposing other groups of North American people and may well become the victim of a new wave of anti-Semitism. The grotesque aspect of the situation is that this is something desirable for Zionism which can then expect great

er emigration to Israel. In the recently cited *Réflexions sur l'avenir d'Israël*, the Zionist Saul Friedländer is hopeful about growing anti-Semitism in the United States.

Not only because of the Arabs, but also because of the Jews Zionism must be fought.

The Palestine Arab people have recently begun their organized liberation struggle. Over 70 years they have struggled against the usurpers by means of uprisings, strikes and fedayeen attacks, but the Palestine aristocracy and the regimes of the neighboring states have always succeeded eventually in obstructing the development of the people's struggle, because this aristocracy and these regimes have wished at the same time to protect their own positions. The betrayal of the aristocracy appears in all its clarity during the 30s when, at the same time that it presented itself as guiding the people's struggle for independence, it was collaborating with the government of the British protectorate and permitting the colonizers to buy land, which led to the displacement of the Palestine farmers and tenants.

After the Palestine people were thrown into political exile in large numbers, in 1948-49, the Arab regimes pretended to represent the struggle for freedom, against Zionism and imperialism.

The growing comprehension of the character of the Arab regimes resulted, at the beginning of the 60s, in an increasing number of Palestinians who began to plan a people's struggle with a base among the Palestinian people and led by them. Al Assifa, the military branch of the National Liberation Movement Al Fatah, carried out its first action inside Israeli territory in January

1955.

By June of 1967, Al Fatah had grown and many fedayeen groups that had formerly acted independently, joined the organization. Naturally, the growth and the growing activity of Al Fatah was one of the causes for the Israeli attack, just as the formation and growth of the NLF was one of the causes of US escalation in Viet Nam.

For the Palestine people, Israel's success against the Arab states was the decisive proof that only with their own forces would they be able to liberate Palestine. During the year following the war, Al Fatah grew very rapidly and at the end of 1967 the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine was formed and some guerrilla groups began to work with the Palestine branch of Kawmeen el Arab (Arab Nationalist Movement). Al Fatah and PFLP together engaged in combat near the Transjordanian city of Kerameh on March 21, 1968, in the first military triumph of the Palestinians against the colonizers. This battle in turn led to a very great increase in enrollment in the guerrilla organizations.

By the fall of 1969 the Palestine liberation movement had been affirmed in Israel and in the occupied territories. The Israeli publication *New Outlook*, number 3, 1969, declared editorially that increasing groups of "Israeli Arabs" have been involved in what it called "disturbances." According to the *Jerusalem Post Weekly* of July 28, 1969, Minister of Defense Dayan had declared that, in addition to the growing terrorism in the territories, in particular in the Gaza strip, there had been a considerable increase in actions in areas populated by Jews. Some of the major actions during a

summer week can serve as an example: on July 30 the paper factory of Lydda was set on fire; on August 5, a pipeline in the South of Gaza was blown up; on August 7 an Israeli military bus was blown up and went over a ravine; on August 8, three commandos eliminated an Israeli post in the Jordan Valley. Twice during the summer the Haifa oil refinery installations were set on fire, and a North American-Saudi Arabian oil pipeline in the Golan zone was blown up, which caused the petroleum to flow into Lake Genesaret, a reservoir for drinking water in Israel.

Al Fatah, like other organizations, considers the present period a stage of construction. The leadership of Al Fatah has drawn from this the conclusion that, for the moment, it is a question of organizing all the people, all classes, for the struggle, and that as far as possible conflicts with the Arab regimes must be avoided. This position might be compared to that of the Communist Party of China during the liberation struggle in China, when it was agreed that, first, the entire Chinese people would be mobilized in a coordinated struggle. At the same time, Al Fatah does not accept any type of intervention on the part of the Arab states, an attitude that the organization has demonstrated in the struggle for its independence and freedom of movement in Lebanon.

The struggle of Al Fatah is clearly anti-imperialist and its strategy is based on the development of the strength and consciousness of the Palestine people. Parallel to the struggle itself there is a social program of support for the people in



the refugee camps and for the Palestinian and Jordanian farmers. It has developed a system of "political officers" who operate within the fedayeen groups in political education at the same time that they function as social aids.

At its Congress of August 1968, PFLP adopted the Marxist-Leninist line growing out of the evolution of the Kawmeen el Arab party. In February 1969 the Front split when the progressive forces within the movement took two opposing positions in relation to the bourgeois elements that continue to exist in the organization. One of the progressive groups formed its own organization, the Democratic People's Front (DPF), to concentrate first of all on the construction of a Marxist-Leninist party, while the progressive members who remained in the People's Front and who were sufficiently strong to be able to maintain the Marxist-Leninist line, considered that it was more useful to maintain the contact with the groups that struggle and to develop them politically at the same time the struggle is developing.

Al Saika, which is also called Vanguard of the People's War of Liberation, is the military branch of the Palestine Party. The Palestine Baas Party has long been closely linked to the Syrian Baas Party and, like the Syrian party, includes workers, peasants and petit-bourgeois elements. The Palestinian Baas Party, which has grown increasingly over recent years, has placed its accent on Marxist studies.

The Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) is formed under the direction of the Arab states as a military organization annexed to the Pales-

tine Liberation Organization (PLO) established in 1964 by the Arab League in an attempt on the part of the Arab regimes to control the growing Palestinian activity. The PLA, like the PLO, has freed itself of the influence of the Arab states with the membership of Al Fatah and Al Saika, in February of 1969, on the executive committee of PLO. PLA, along with its guerrilla section People's Liberation Forces (PLF), established in 1967, works in intimate collaboration with Al Fatah although the organizations are still not integrated. Within the PLA-PLF there is a Marxist group that has firm connections with the Democratic Front.

The present multiplicity of groups must be seen first of all as an expression of different ideologies as a result of different classes among the Palestinian people. But also as a consequence of the fact the Palestinians have been scattered to all parts, and also as a reflection of the political currents within the different Arab states. Apart from this, one can trace factors of division created by the attempts of the different Arab regimes — especially before 1967 — to influence Palestine groups or individuals and take advantage of them. Religion also plays a role, and the forces that still hold a great part of the population. To the degree that the struggle grows in its dimensions, and consciousness deepens, the effects of a long oppression will disappear and the movement will become more united and homogeneous. At a later stage of struggle it will also be natural to establish collaboration with the Israeli Socialist Organization, Matzpen, an anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist organization that has arisen in Israel in recent years.