

Plan). What stung the Zionist leaders was to see the whole of the Negev included in the Arab zone.

After all the exhortations made by these leaders at the recent annual conference of the British Zionist Federation to keep faith with Britain, not to expect too much from America, etc.; after Nahum Goldman's vicious attack on the UN which lined him up with the most pro-fascist anti-democratic elements, Britain once again meted out its "reward" for services rendered, the Bevin Plan.

If however, these so-called "moderate" Zionists did not swallow Bevin's bait, there are other poor fish in the Jewish community here who have. Both the Agudah and the Anglo-Jewish Association received from the government copies of the Bevin scheme and were invited to send delegates to the Colonial Office to discuss it. The former, an anti-Zionist clerical organization, and the latter, representing the upper class *Yahudim* who oppose the official Jewish state policy of the Zionist movement, had previously favored participation in the St. James Palace talks.

Now that the Zionists had participated—through the back door—it was to be expected that these bodies also wanted to have their say. So, in order to show some kind of "united front," a meeting was

called of the Jewish Agency, the Zionist dominated Board of Deputies, the Agudah and the Anglo-Jewish Association. Nothing, however, came of this meeting.

But the Agudah, after its delegates had consulted with Mr. Bevin, came out in favor of the Bevin Plan. Mr. H. Goodman, on behalf of the Agudah, declared, "that the Bevin Plan should not be rejected outright and that an effort should be made to reach agreement." He stressed that "the promise of a monthly quota of 4,000 immigrants over two years was of the utmost importance . . . nothing should be done to lose it."

The attitude of the Anglo-Jewish Association, which also sent a delegation, is not yet known. This body in the past always supported the government and was the first to go on record for participation in the London talks, and elected two delegates to "stand by" in case the Jewish Agency would officially participate.

Democratic opinion here has not shown any surprise at the most recent "solution" put forward by Bevin and has condemned it outrightly, exposing it as another imperialist maneuver which will not bring the long desired settlement of this burning problem any nearer.

London

I. RENNAP

Far from serving the peace of Palestine, military and police forces have inaugurated a regime of terror in the country (*vide*: Memorandum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Palestine on "Outrages Committed by the British Army and Police Against the Population of Palestine," submitted to the United Nations Organization on Nov. 26, 1946).

The Budget of the government of Palestine for the financial year 1946-47 provides for an expenditure of £6.4 million, i.e., over 30 per cent of the total budget on Police and Prisons. According to official government figures, expenditure on the "maintenance of law and order" for the period 1920 to 1945 amounted to £43,352,000, while expenditure on all other services totalled £96,268,000, including £22,252,000 expenditure on special measures arising out of the war.

The police and military rule in Palestine is expressed not only by the magnitude of police and prison establishments, but also by the orders and regulations giving every policeman and soldier nearly unlimited power over every citizen. The Defense (Emergency) Regulations, 1945, published in the Supplement to the Official Gazette of Sept. 27, 1945, have abolished the last remnants of personal freedom, freedom of conscience, speech, press and assembly.

Any person may be placed under police supervision, banished to a certain residence, detained or deported from the country. Youths may be whipped, in addition to or without imposing any other punishment.

Requests for Habeas Corpus have been rejected by the Palestine judiciary stating "that the District Commissioner's powers under the Regulations are absolute and that he is not obliged to give any reasons when he acts under the Regulations."

In order to facilitate its rule of oppression, the British Government has applied its well-known policy of "divide and rule" producing antagonism between Arabs and Jews by encouraging and assisting reactionary elements among Arabs on the one hand, and reactionary Jewish elements on the other. In order to divert the attention of the Arab and Jewish masses from their common national and social struggle, the British government places the most chauvinistic demands of Arab and Jewish reactionaries into the center of agitation and discussion.

Government reaps its political fruits from the policy of divide and rule and its support of the reactionary forces among both Arabs and Jews in that it has not to face a united struggle of the Arabs and Jews in Palestine for the abolition of colonial rule, independence and democratization of the country; instead, government has succeeded in fomenting hostilities on national lines around such problems as immigration, fear

DOCUMENTS

MEMO TO UN ON PALESTINE

ACCORDING to the Charter of the United Nations Organization the former Mandated Territories of the League of Nations have to be placed under the trusteeship of the United Nations and to be administered by the Trusteeship Council to be set up by UNO.

The principles governing these territories should, therefore, be applied also to Palestine, "to encourage respect for human rights and for fundamental freedom for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion. . ."; and to promote the progressive development of the inhabitants of Palestine "towards self-government or independence, as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances . . . and the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned."

The British government as Mandatory Power has failed to submit a trusteeship agreement in regard to Palestine.

This default is not only a violation of the UNO Charter. The continuation of British rule in Palestine endangers peace and is contrary to the interests of the inhabitants of Palestine.

A. DANGER TO PEACE

1. *Danger to Peace in Palestine*

The situation in Palestine, resulting from the colonial regime and policy of the British government, is characterized by successive phases of bloodshed and disturbances of the peace. According to the Survey of Palestine, submitted by government to the Anglo-American Commission of Enquiry, "since the British occupation there have been but few intervals when the problem of internal security has not been a major preoccupation of the administration."

British police and military rule in Palestine has not been instrumental in preserving peace, but on the contrary has produced a state of tension between Arabs and Jews and the constant danger of bloody disturbances.

Military and police forces in Palestine have been increased to such an extent that there is now one soldier or policeman to every 18 civilians; yet with the increase of "security measures" insecurity has increased.

of national domination, purchase of land, employment in government service and public works, import policy, industrial and agricultural development, taxation, education and health services. Government has succeeded in making the reciprocal boycott propaganda of the Jewish and Arab reactionary leadership a characteristic feature of the political and economic life in Palestine, thereby furthering not only its own political ends but also the sale of British products to the detriment of local production.

Every national, economic and social problem is exploited by government to stir up one community against the other. For instance, in the municipality of Jerusalem government worked up antagonistic demands until it could finally dismiss the Municipal Council and set up municipal rule by British officials.

The present situation in Palestine created by British policy is fraught with grave danger. The Arab and Jewish masses have gained considerable political maturity from the bitter experience of the past. They have so far resisted all attempts at provoking communal disturbances. But British policy in Palestine is continuing its provocations to break down restraint and foment communal riots as in other colonial countries under British rule.

2. Danger to Peace in the Middle East

Though Palestine is but a small country in the geographic sense, it is of sufficient strategic and economic importance for British imperialism to have made it into a formidable military base. This base is directed not only against the inhabitants of Palestine, but against all the colonial and semi-colonial countries of the Middle East. Egypt or Syria cannot be fully independent while a large imperialist army is stationed at their frontiers.

In addition to using Palestine as a military base against the countries of the Middle East, British policy exploits the Arab-Jewish antagonism of its own making in Palestine for imperialist purposes in all Arab countries. This antagonism is built up into a major problem in Egypt, Arabia, Syria, the Lebanon and Iraq, distorting the peoples' struggle for independence and side-tracking it, as for instance in the promotion of economic boycott, thereby facilitating imperialist domination and exploitation.

3. Danger to World Peace

The huge military base which the British government has been building up in Palestine greatly surpasses any needs even of a colonial army of oppression directed against the people of Palestine and the

colonial and semi-colonial countries of the Middle East.

The British maneuvers recently held in the desert adjoining Palestine, where troops were made to fight an imaginary Red Army that had invaded the Middle East, give a clear indication against whom British reactionary circles intend to direct these military preparations in Palestine.

B. OPPRESSION AND EXPLOITATION OF THE PEOPLE OF PALESTINE

The Covenant of the former League of Nations stipulates the well-being and development of the colonial peoples as a sacred task of civilization. Accordingly, the Mandate for Palestine and Transjordan charges the administration of Palestine to take all necessary measures to safeguard the interests of the community in connection with the development of the country. It is submitted that the British government has grossly violated the interests of the population of Palestine.

1. The Political Bondage of Palestine

Palestine is ruled by Great Britain on the lines of a crown colony. The political life of Palestine, after 29 years of British rule, is characterized by the absence of all democratic legislative or executive institutions. British rule has prevented the democratization of the country, sabotaging even the most elementary initial measures.

Even the Advisory Council established in 1936 is comprised exclusively of British officials. All power is vested in the High Commissioner. The system introduced by the British military administration after the conquest of Palestine is still in force today. The executive is composed entirely of colonial officials. Likewise, all higher government posts in the central as well as the district administrations are filled by officers of the Colonial Administrative Service. Palestinians are excluded from all higher administrative posts.

Nor are the municipal and local council areas governed democratically. The franchise is subject to various qualifications, including rate-paying requirements, in the majority of municipal and local council areas, the right to vote in the election of councillors is vested solely in the propertied classes (at the last Jerusalem elections held in 1935 only approximately 7,000 out of 70,000 adults had the right to vote). In Jerusalem, Haifa, Jaffa and in almost all smaller towns and villages, women are disfranchised.

The High Commissioner may appoint mayors and deputy mayors from among

the councillors against the majority vote of the Municipal Council—as has been done in Tel-Aviv. The High Commissioner is free to dismiss a mayor, a deputy mayor or a whole elected municipal council—as has been done in the case of Jerusalem and nine other municipalities.

Existing municipal, local and village councils have very limited powers. They are not allowed to expend even the smallest item without the written consent of the British District Commissioner.

Elections to municipal councils are postponed by government time and again, in order to keep reactionary majorities in power; in most municipalities, no elections have taken place for the last twelve years.

Only recently, a further retrogressive measure in the administration of Arab rural communities was introduced by the Village Administration Ordinance of 1944, abolishing council elections.

2. The Economic Bondage of Palestine

By means of the political bondage, the economic bondage of Palestine is enforced. As in any colonial country within the Empire, the British government uses the people and resources of Palestine as objects of the grossest exploitation.

MONOPOLY CAPITAL

The principal economic positions of the country are in British hands, such as the Dead Sea and electricity concessions, oil refineries and pipe lines, insurance companies, large banks.

The mineral wealth of the Dead Sea—the most important raw material of Palestine—instead of being used to finance the improvement of the conditions of the people of Palestine, their health, education and standard of living, is extracted solely for the benefit of the British shareholders of the Palestine Potash Company. No tax is levied on the company, nor has the company to pay custom duties on imports.

The oil refinery at Haifa (The Consolidated Refineries Limited) is a foreign concern exempted from all payment of custom duties.

Monopoly concessions have been granted to the Iraq Petroleum Company and to the Trans-Arabian Oil Company. These concessions include the right—free of royalties, taxes, import duties or other payments, charges or compensations—to lay pipelines through any part of the country, to expropriate land, to seize any wood, stone, water and other local materials required, to import cheap labor regardless of existing immigration laws, to pass freely the border of Palestine, to build and use their own harbors, railroads, aerodromes and wireless stations, to exact port taxes

for harboring and loading, and to keep their own police force. The population of Palestine does not derive even cheaper oil and petrol from these concessions, granted by government without any consultation of the people.

Monopolistic concessions have been granted to two foreign concerns for the supply of electricity in Palestine. The concessionaires have the right—without payment of any royalties and taxes—to exploit the water power of Palestine and to fix exorbitant rates. They have to pay no import duties on machinery, nor any other import duties, until a taxfree dividend of eight per cent is secured to their shareholders. No steps are taken by government against them when failing in their obligations to supply the public with electricity (Jerusalem).

The power of foreign monopoly capital can be gauged from the fact that in 1943 two companies, the Palestine Electric Corporation and the Palestine Potash Company, owned over 40 per cent of the total industrial capital investments in Palestine.

By agency of the Palestine government, British monopoly capital has succeeded in securing majority holdings and cartel rights with regard to purchase areas and prices for raw materials and sales areas and prices for manufactured goods in numerous secondary industries which have been made subservient to British monopoly interests.

The British government has exploited the war against fascism in order to extend the hold of British monopoly capital over additional fields of the economy of Palestine. The British monopoly concern, Steel Brothers, deprived in the course of the war of their dividends from Burma, were made sole government agents, with a transport monopoly as well as a trade monopoly in all important foodstuffs consumed by the people of Palestine, resulting in an enormous increase in the cost of living and exorbitant profits to the monopoly concern.

LOCAL INDUSTRY

The British government uses Palestine as a market for British goods and, in the interest of British trade, hinders the development of competitive local industries.

War conditions compelled government to permit an expansion of certain local industries within the limits of war requirements. But since the end of the war, government does everything in its power to strangle industrial development through an import and control policy maintaining inflationary conditions in this country which heavily burden the masses of the consumers and render local industries non-competitive with British industry.

The means employed towards this end

are: 1) restrictions on the import of modern machinery; 2) restrictions on the import of raw materials, combined with a licensing policy directing the purchase of raw materials for Palestinian industries towards the most expensive sources; 3) maintenance of a high cost of living by a policy restricting imports of cheap foodstuffs from so-called hard currency areas, closing of cheap empire sources of foodstuffs to Palestine consumers, maintaining a purchase monopoly for certain foodstuffs from countries with inflationary price levels; restricting the import of cheap building materials with the purpose of creating a high level of rents for workers' flats and industrial premises; and enforcing a large number of unsocial measures burdening the masses of the population.

LOCAL AGRICULTURE

The importance of the agrarian problem in Palestine is indicated by the fact that the majority of its inhabitants, live on and from the land.

As in other colonial and semi-colonial countries under British rule, the British government in Palestine does not support the development of a well-balanced agricultural economy, supplying the requirements of the local market, but directs its policy towards an excessive expansion of a monocultural product—citrus—which renders the country dependent on the metropolitan market, and the large planters subservient to British interest. The complete neglect of general agriculture is illustrated by the allocation for agriculture of a mere three per cent of the total budgetary expenditure.

Government has done hardly anything to provide farmers and tenants with cheap credit for the purchase of seeds, fertilizers, livestock, machinery, or for land melioration. The large banks—Barclays', Anglo-Palestine and other institutes representing foreign banking interests—heavily burden local agriculture with exorbitant interest rates. Through this policy, government has strengthened the position of usurers in their dealings with tenants and small farmers, and has forced tenants to abandon their land, and small peasants to sell their land to large owners and large land purchasing companies.

Government does not support any irrigation schemes. The import of modern agriculture machinery is restricted by an unsympathetic import policy. During the war, the import of fodder was handed over to a private monopolist (Cegla) who drew huge profits from poultry and dairy farmers. There are no government laboratories for undertaking research in agriculture problems. After more than a quarter of a century of British occupation, the land survey is still far from complete.

THE GOVERNMENT BUDGET

The budget, dictated by government without consultation of the population, is characteristic of the colonial policy of exploitation and oppression—as regards both revenue and expenditure.

Revenue

More than 50 per cent of the revenue is obtained by indirect taxation, such as customs duties for imported articles and excise duties on local products. From year to year, indirect taxes are growing relatively and absolutely, burdening the masses of the population. Only a quarter of the total revenue is derived from direct taxation.

(Continued on page 30)

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(Continued from page 28)

Capital taxation or death duties to be borne by the propertied classes do not exist, while on the other hand such archaic taxes as tides and animal tax are still in force.

Income tax—only recently introduced—burdens particularly the small taxpayer,

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since inflation of prices has drawn a large number of workers and employes into the orbit of income tax payment, while the large incomes are relatively little affected. The huge incomes of the foreign concessionaires, extracted from the resources of the country, are not subject to income or other taxes and duties. Local companies pay a flat rate of 25 per cent on declared profits.

From the much advertised British Colonial Development Fund, Palestine has received in 11 financial years (1933-34 to 1944-45) the meager pittance of £P. 133,094.

Expenditure

Of the huge sums extorted from the masses of the people of Palestine, hardly anything is spent towards their economic, social, educational, or hygienic improvement. Over £P. 6 million per annum, i.e. over 30 per cent of the total expenditure, is used to finance the oppression of the people—police and prisons.

In 1945-46, nearly £P. 8 million were expended by the Control Departments, not in the interests of the masses, but for the benefit of a small section of milling interests, cattle dealers, butchers, government agents and blackmarketeers, as well as on political bribes paid to large exporting interests in neighboring countries in the form of grain export monopoly to Palestine.

On education, health, and other social services, the government spends about eight per cent of the total budget. The disgraceful state of education in Palestine illustrates this side of colonial policy.

Among the Arab population in towns, 60 per cent of boys and 45 per cent of girls of school-going age attend school; in villages 40 per cent and 5 per cent, respectively. 23,000 Bedouin children do not receive any schooling at all. After 29 years of British rule in Palestine, 70 per cent of the Arab population are completely illiterate.

Even among the Jewish community which contributes towards its own educational system, about 10,000 children do not receive any school education. 30 per cent of children at the age of 10 years, 40 per cent at the age of 11 years, 55 per cent at the age of 12 years and 65 per cent at the age of 13 years do not attend school.

The small number of professional schools and agricultural institutions existing in Palestine have been established by private means without Government assistance.

**THE QUESTION OF
DISPLACED JEWS**

The linking, in promotion of the various imperialist as well as Zionist politi-

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cal aspirations in Palestine, of two entirely different problems, i.e. the Palestine problem and the problem of displaced Jews in certain parts of Europe and of the Jewish masses in countries where they are sub-

ject to persecution or discrimination, adds to the difficulties in Palestine, without striking at the roots of anti-Semitism.

The eradication of anti-Semitism and racial and religious persecution can be achieved only by the complete destruction of the political, economic and social roots of fascism and reaction, the implementation of the principles, laid down in the charter of the United Nations Organization, and by the victory of genuine democracy.

The rehabilitation of displaced Jews is one of the most urgent post-war problems. Palestine cannot solve the problem of the large number of Jews displaced by fascism and war. The resettlement of homeless Jews in their countries of origin should be facilitated. For this purpose, the governments and Jewish communities of the new Eastern and Central European democracies should be assisted in establishing close contacts with displaced Jews in the camps of Germany, Austria and Italy.

Displaced Jews unwilling to return to their countries of origin should be given immediate opportunities to emigrate and settle in democratic countries overseas or in Europe, whereby individual requests should be given the fullest possible consideration.

The question of immigration of displaced Jews into Palestine must be solved by Arab-Jewish agreement within the framework of a general democratic agreement on the Palestine problem and within the framework of the international agreement on the future of displaced Jews.

SUMMARY

Since the basic problem of Palestine is the consequence of British colonial rule, which endangers peace and violates the political, social and economic interests of the inhabitants of our country, the Communist Party of Palestine herewith appeals to the United Nations Organization to apply the terms of its Charter to Palestine, and declare Palestine free and independent and to order the evacuation of the British army of occupation. Any other plan forced on the peoples of Palestine by an imperialist power can only aggravate the problem. We appeal to the United Nations Organization to assist the peoples of Palestine in setting up a democratic Arab-Jewish state, based on an internationally guaranteed democratic constitution which provides complete equality of national rights for both Arabs and Jews, and secures full civic rights to all inhabitants of Palestine, irrespective of race, sex, creed or nationality.

Tel-Aviv, February 7, 1947.

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