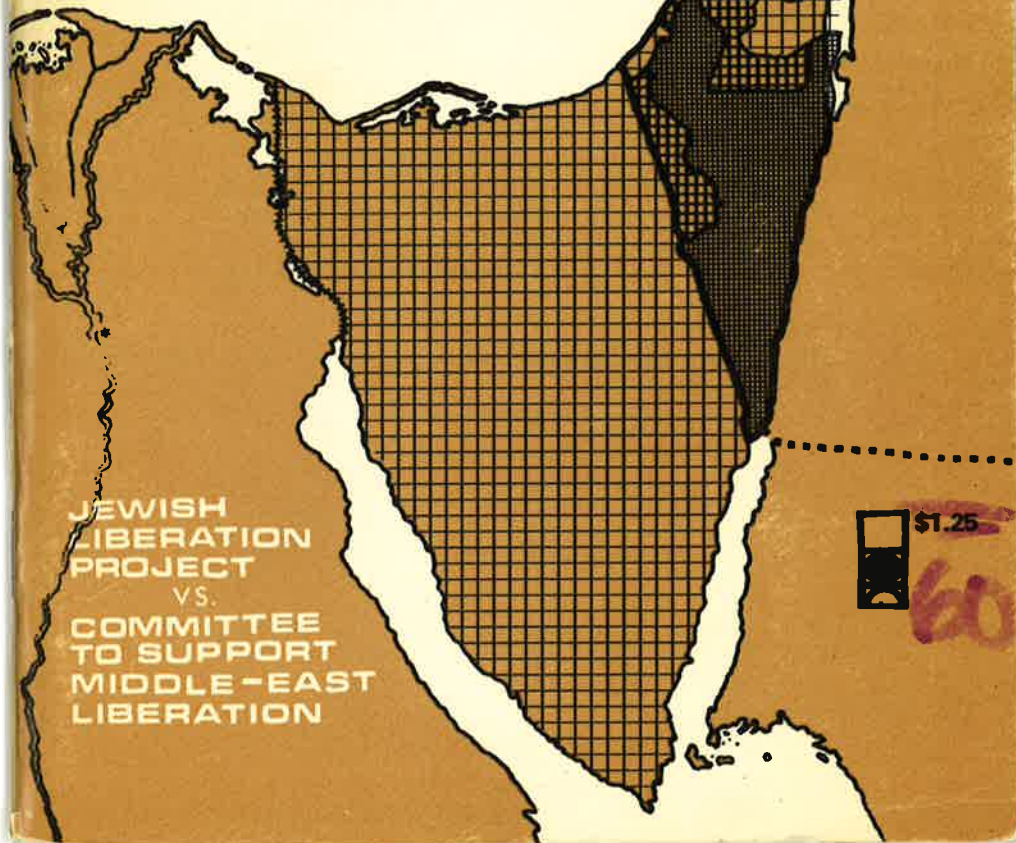


ARAB-ISRAELI DEBATE

TOWARD A
SOCIALIST
SOLUTION



JEWISH
LIBERATION
PROJECT
VS.
COMMITTEE
TO SUPPORT
MIDDLE-EAST
LIBERATION



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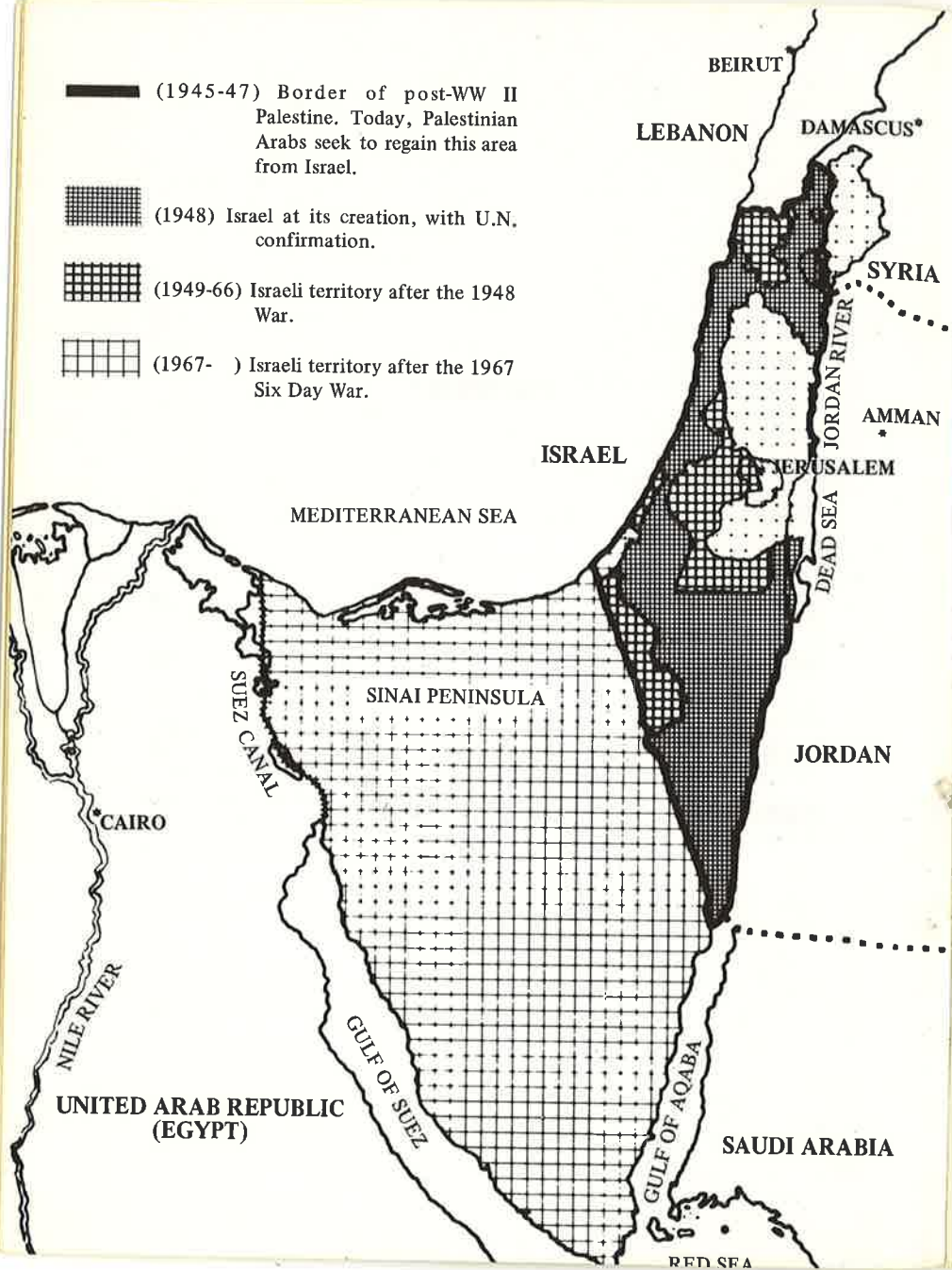
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THIS ARAB-ISRAELI DEBATE presupposes a solution based on and to be developed by *Israeli* and *Palestinian Arab* interests, and not on the outside power interests of U.S. imperialism, the Soviet Union, or even Egypt, Syria and the other Arab governments. Outside interference, competition, exploitation and nationalist rivalries derive from the capitalism and state capitalism predominant in this area. The only solution capable of bringing equitable and lasting peace in a united, prosperous and progressive Middle East would be a socialist solution.

Both groups in this debate are Marxist oriented and American in composition.

THE JEWISH LIBERATION PROJECT (JLP) was formed by a group of radical Jews in 1968. The JLP is confronting the institutions of the American Jewish community with their failure to serve the needs of the Jewish people and is working to develop a Jewish world community with a strong sense of Jewish history and identity. JLP feels closest to groups like SIAH (Israeli New Left) which are critical of certain Israeli government policies but are not anti-Zionist. The JLP address is: JLP, 150 Fifth Ave., N.Y., N.Y.

THE COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT MIDDLE EAST LIBERATION (CSMEL) was formed at the time of the June 1967 Mideast war with the aim of building understanding in the progressive movement and the American public in general of U.S. imperialism's role in using Israel to combat the Arab liberation movement. To this end it has conducted many demonstrations and has published several pamphlets and a periodical newsletter on the Mideast. The committee's address is: CSMEL, Box 948, N.Y., N.Y. 10027





JLP STATEMENT

The State of Israel was created by a national struggle waged by Jews. This process included the development of a national consciousness in Jews as well as the development of a society which would reflect this consciousness.

As in all struggles of national liberation, many political elements joined a united struggle for self-determination. Zionism—the national liberation movement of the Jewish people—included bourgeois as well as revolutionary elements. The tasks facing Zionist liberation fighters were different from other nationalists only because of the unique situation of Jews before the creation of the State of Israel.

The major struggle within Zionism was over what ideological focus within the national movement would lead to the creation of a society which most served the needs of the Jewish people.

The institutions and social structures of the present state and their precursors in the Zionist movement reflect the unresolved nature of that struggle.

National self-awareness among Jews throughout the centuries of dispersion in generally hostile societies took different forms in different periods. Clearly the political vision of a nation-state was not always foremost (fighting for national or peoples liberation by means of the nation-state is a relatively recent phenomena). As Cleaver has pointed out it was political, national Zionism—amongst all classes—which galvanized European Jews during their period of sharpest persecution, roughly 1848-1946. Jews began to understand that there were only two ways to achieve national

liberation and insure national survival: communism or the establishment of a normal national existence. The Russian Revolution, unfortunately, especially after Lenin's death, could only accommodate Jews who were willing to stop identifying with other Jews as brethren.

Zionism, though still far from achieving its goals, understood the need for an autonomous national existence in which class development and inevitable conflict could proceed normally. Just as Mao in the Chinese national movement found it necessary to incorporate classes he was fighting and would later struggle against even more strenuously, and just as the Palestinian national movement now incorporates reactionary classes that one assumes will later be dealt with, so Zionism has to date incorporated many classes including reactionaries.

A clear recognition by all elements within the Zionist movement was of a return by the Jewish people with their hands and sweat to the soil and labor. Liberation for Jews included the shedding of their character as an overwhelmingly urban and petit bourgeois people (a condition which was true for both European and Asian Jews).

The process of self-liberation begins with the creation of a new view of oneself. Land, labor, and self-defense were the means necessary for the Jews to develop a new identity as free people. Turning away from bourgeois self-alienation, the individual works to create a people of Jewish workers and farmers who can begin to act in their own self-interest as the Jewish masses. It was this type of personal-political understanding which led to the establishment of such institutions as the kibbutz, moshav, and assorted urban collectives.

The kibbutz is an important economic factor in the Jewish liberation movement; even more important is the role of the kibbutz in the ideological framework of the Zionist movement. Sisters and brothers of Eastern European Communists, the early

settlers understood that only a revolutionary way of life could correspond to the attempt to reorder the Jewish peoples' existence in a revolutionary direction. The success of this movement after sharp struggle within the Zionist movement as a whole, was a victory for collectivity and people's power which is indelible.

The development of the concept of each person relating to production and labor and being a member of the collective in his or her own right, collective child-rearing, with children seen as members of their own Kvutzah (group) has achieved at least material liberation for women and children through the dismantling of the family unit as it is known in Capitalism.

As the kibbutz was the Zionist solution to agriculture, so the Histadrut (far from the most revolutionary of labor groups), was the instrument for the building of a class-conscious Jewish working class. Whereas the Bund could not escape the anomaly of Jewish existence in Eastern Europe, and American labor organizers who on account of assimilationist tendencies were more prone to false consciousness than non-Jews, the Histadrut was able to build a Jewish working class acting in their own interest as workers. In this vigorously class framework Jewish workers were able to be in the vanguard of the struggle against English imperialism. The workers in the Zionist movement developed the Chupat Cholim, people's medicine, as one way of serving the people. Demythologized medicine was taken off a class basis and made a social possession. Seeing the advances not taking place in Cuba underscores the breakthrough chupat cholim was at its inception.

So far we have been speaking of Zionism primarily as a movement. The institutions of the Zionist movement changed as they became the institutions of a state. The Histadrut became involved in industrial activity as an employee union and employer (the Histadrut owns 50% of all Israeli industry by law). A worker could thus find himself in the position of employee, part owner, and if he works in a military supply factory for example he might

use the products he makes as a soldier (in Israel every person enters the Army at age 18 and males serve in the reserve on active duty for at least one month every year until they are fifty). War in this framework beclouds the worker's interest as worker: peace accentuates his class consciousness.

The goal of the kibbutz has been, in a sense, achieved. The kibbutznik is no longer an urban intellectual seeking rootedness. This transformation retains its significance for Jews coming to Israel with political-personal mentalities arising from petit-bourgeois urban backgrounds. The important psychological role of the kibbutzim does not minimize their important economic role. Eighty percent of Israeli agriculture is kibbutz agriculture and 15% of Israeli industry is kibbutz-based.

In brief, a Jewish working class—industrial and agricultural—has been created. The “minimal” goal of Zionism; a normal class distribution of Jews in a nation state has come about. Infusions of foreign capital (eg. German reparations) have served to create an Israeli Bourgeoisie.

The entire discussion so far, both of the Zionist movement and the Israeli state, is predicated on the proposition the Jews were and are in need of a state both as a base for normal class differentiation and development and as a secure physical asylum for a people. As we now understand the need for the Palestinians, a nation living as refugees, to have a state, so one must view the situation of the Jews before the creation of Israel. Just as Palestinian Arabs have had their national consciousness developed largely during their time as refugees through the vanguard of the guerilla organizations, so the Jews living as a dispersed nation had their national consciousness raised during their period of sharpest persecution, by the Zionist vanguard.

Blacks will determine whether or not a separate state is a solution to their situation; Jews decided on the basis of their life experience that only national self-determination could offer a

solution to the oppression they have suffered. Constant expulsions, murders, confiscations; genocide have been the central facts of Jewish life for centuries. Jewish marginality and persecution are not limited to any time, place or circumstance. Jews are always marginal to the national, cultural and economic life of the host societies. Oppression of Jews takes place everywhere, but the focal point of Jewish existence, though expressed differently in different times is always Israel. In terms of genocide of a people—all Jews can identify with Zionist hopes for Jewish survival. Further, however, a revolution amongst Jews can take place only in a situation where they are not *as a people* marginal.

The collective, communal and national dignity and health of the Jewish people was restored—partially—through the effort to build Israel. An effort in which we as Jews are involved. It is especially as Jews having gone through this process that we can recognize parallel developments among Palestinians. The development of a Jewish state is clearly not the end of Zionism nor the fruition of Jewish Liberation. As Jews we want to help create a movement which can relate to a similar movement among Palestinians. However as Jews we will work among Jews, and we will not sacrifice what has been secured up to now—imperfect, incomplete, and corrupted as that may be.

The movement we want to build is one where big power antagonisms do not determine the relationships among the peoples of the Middle East. The movement we want sees that both the Israeli and Palestinian nations should and must exist. For Israelis to believe that their national existence is possible only at the expense of the Palestinians or for the Palestinians to see their national existence as possible only at the expense of the Israelis, is “the worm at the end of the Imperialists’ fishhook.” It cannot foster national liberation; it can only foster chauvinism. Clearly workers and farmers shelled at their work and in their homes have the right to defend themselves. Clearly an occupied people have the right to

fight a military occupation. But an analysis which stops at this point leaves us with nothing but the prospect of eternal warfare. This eternal warfare cannot benefit either people. Their relationship to each other does not fit the oppressor-oppressed model.

As revolutionaries we view armed struggle as the highest level of political activity. In the Middle-East however, both sides see themselves as the VietCong; both sides see themselves as fighting a foreign financed enemy superior either in arms or number. American bombs were dropped on an Egyptian factory; it was also an American shell which killed 12 children in a schoolbus in Israel. Self-determination does not consist of eliminating other peoples; destruction of Israel would not mean Palestinian self-determination. The continuation of armed struggle of the present non-revolutionary sort will lead only to the decimation of two peoples. Continuation of the present armed struggle strengthens chauvinists and reactionaries on both sides. Much needed revolution in Israel and various Arab countries are less likely in the current situation. Contradictions are being submerged, not sharpened. Internationalist Socialism is more distant not nearer. To us Israel is one of the nations presently seeking self-determination. The real conflict is between Palestinians and Jews seeking control over their own collective lives.

The bulk of the fighting, however, is between Israel and the surrounding Arab states, primarily Egypt. The continuation of this conflict only facilitates big power penetration of both nations and encourages big power Imperialist domination of the entire region. Despite avowed anti-Americanism, Egypt has signed new gas and oil contracts with the USA, and Communists have been put back in jail. Algeria has just signed special trade agreements with the Common Market. Libya is suppressing an uprising in neo-colonialist Chad in return for French jets and Greek trained pilots. Sudan continues to murder blacks fighting for self-determination in the

South. Iraq hangs non-Zionist Jews for political convenience, thereby demonstrating how freely Jews can live in a secular Arab state. Syria persists in seeing Palestinians as "South Syrians." Continued war between Israel and these states will not lead to revolutionary or even progressive change in either these or avowedly feudal Arab States.

Just how interested are the Arab states in their Palestinian brothers and sisters? In the 22 years since the establishment of Israel, the Palestinian Arabs have gotten only one thing from the Arab governments and leaders who had promised them all of Palestine in 1948, and that is, more empty promises of revenge and reconquest. Egypt kept the refugees in Gaza in what was in effect a concentration camp and forbade their settling in Egypt proper. Jordan unilaterally annexed the West bank and proceeded to treat it like a step-child, of use only for the foreign currency it provided the Jordanian government through the tourist trade. Only 3 factories were built on the West bank between 1948 and 1967; all the economic and industrial development was lavished on the East bank. In sum, the Arab governments sold out the Palestinians, exploited their misery for propaganda purposes and every now and then threw them several crumbs of inflated rhetoric to keep their hopes of reconquering Palestine alive.

In fact the original PLO was fronted by the Egyptian government. It was recognition of this which led to the dissolution of that structure; at this time only some of the guerrilla groups are fronts for other governments. If the guerrilla groups are really interested in building a new Palestine society they must recognize that the Palestine in which they can achieve their national consciousness is not solely that area that was June 1967 Israel but much more including parts of Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and even Arabia. If on the other hand, Israel is the sole intruder in what would otherwise be a unified Arab region, then there is no national identity as Palestinian and no such entity as Palestine;

Nasser was then right in his original pan-Arab UAR formulation.

Admittedly, Israel also has not done all that it could have for those Arabs who rightly or wrongly, necessarily or unnecessarily left in '48. It has been much argued as to why they left; by words and acts both Israel and the surrounding Arab states are to blame. One of the proposed solutions to the "refugee problem" is the compensation and/or repatriation of the '48 refugees. Those who support an Israeli state must oppose forced repatriation of those who would like to destroy it. Compensation, so long as it went directly to Palestinians, might or might not be helpful. But this liberal perspective and liberal solution really do not speak to the question of Palestinian self-determination; this perspective only co-opts Palestinian rights. There needs to be a national, political entity, a state of Palestine. The state of Palestine which we support is one which would not destroy what are the legitimate rights of self-determination of the Jewish people, of Israel. Such a state would, more or less include the area occupied by Israel in '67 and the bulk of already Palestinian Jordan (Trans Jordan), the Gaza region, and parts of Syria. Such a state would for the first time, give Palestinians control over their own destiny. Palestine and Israel could thus have a relationship not predicated by oppression or repression of one by the other. Such a situation, though it would involve some dislocation, would remove the real cause of antagonisms between Jewish self-determination and Palestinian self-determination.

The real cause of the antagonism does not lie in the Zionist ideal. The Zionist idea does not inherently call for or necessitate expansionism. Even bourgeois Zionists like Ben-Gurion have renounced expansion; the pre-war borders of Israel can easily contain several million more people, an addition unlikely-short of another Hitler. All nations have a majority character, but this does not automatically make others "out of place". Non-Jews do have institutional expressions of their culture and community in Israel.

In a Socialist Middle-East there would still be an Arab Iraq and a Jewish Israel, for example, but Arab Israelis and Jewish Iraqis would not be jeopardized by minority status.

The myth of Jews as a "chosen people" is prevalent among those who want Jews to continue living dispersed among the nations. Some see this as a kind of moral mission; others see it as Jews being involved in all *other* peoples' struggles. It is exactly those Jews who choose national self-determination and normalization who reject this elitist image. The "law of return" is a law of asylum. But it must be more as well. Israel cannot be a refuge like New Zealand or just a place where there are Jews. The question of peoplehood, a Jewish place, a need for "turf" is involved. There is a need for a place where any Jew can come; for centuries Jews were murdered simply on the basis of being Jews—it is on this basis that we must therefore find safety. That this safety be in the context of a Jewish culture which has transformed the Passover seder, for example, from an expression of exile—"Next year in Jerusalem" to its original meaning—a celebration of the arrival of spring.

It is the lack of similar fulfillment for Palestinians which causes the antagonism between Palestinian rights and Jewish rights.

It is clear from what we have written that we view the war in the Mid-East as Jewish. Despite the fact we are not Israelis, we see Israel as central to Jewish life. We feel this way largely because we have experienced oppression as Jews. We have recognized that it is only those Jews who are willing to "act white"; give up special clothing, diet, meeting places, songs which are too obviously "Jewish", too different, who can make it in this racist, sexist, imperialist country. We have absorbed the stories of our parents' experiences—some of whom spent World War II in concentration camps, others who had the right class background and connections to obtain visas to America. And significantly we absorbed the stories about their friends who didn't have the right criteria to obtain visas to safety and who either perished in the Nazi genocide against the Jews, or

survived with the aid of the only group who took them in wholeheartedly—the Jewish community in Palestine.

We also view the Middle-east as revolutionaries. We know that neither Israelis nor Palestinians can live a life of human liberation until “big power” Imperialism is crushed. It can only be crushed by the determination of the people. Israel was created by the Jewish people—not by a “deal” made by Herzl with British Imperialists.

The ruling class in this country maintains power by dividing the people against each other. The Imperial powers function the same way with the nations of people seeking self-determination. Our task as revolutionaries is to bring people together, not aid Imperialists in dividing them. Our task is to bring together Israeli and Palestinian. ●

Ruth Grunzweig and
David Abraham for JLP





CSMEL STATEMENT

The oppressed are in revolt throughout the world. From the internal Black colony of the United States to the shiekhdoms of the Arabian Gulf, from Puerto Rico to Southeast Asia, the people are rising up against the racist, exploitative, imperialist system. The Black and Vietnamese struggles have been largely responsible for the growth in America of the anti-war and progressive movement, one section of which, chiefly among the youth, has gone beyond opposition to war and racism as such, to an understanding of the monopoly system which underlies these phenomena.

They have learned, in the course of the confrontation between U.S. rulers and the liberation forces, that there can be no "single issue," as the large peace groups used to insist, but that there is only one struggle. That is the global contest of the colonized and neo-colonized, fighting to exercise self-determination over their human and natural resources, against the monopolists fighting to hold and expand their robbers' profits.

But there is one area where this concept is ignored by all too many anti-imperialists, as well as by the anti-war movement in general. That question, the question of Arab liberation, figures however not only integrally but centrally in the world perspective of the enemy!

There is almost no aspect of American imperialism's rule which can remain unaffected by events in the Middle East. The oil industry of the capitalist world is dominated by seven companies, five of which are American: Standard of New Jersey, Gulf, Texaco, Socony (Standard of New York)-Mobil, and Standard of California.

These monopolies have, since the end of WWII, controlled a major part of the oil produced in the Middle East, oil on which Japan and Western Europe depend for 85 percent and 76 percent of their fuel supply, respectively.

The superprofits taken by these five giants from the Arab people are estimated to have reached \$3 billion in 1967 alone. Their exploitation of Arab workers is so intense, compared with that of Latin or U.S. operations, that it only takes one year to recover an oil investment in the Middle East, whereas it takes 2 years in Latin America and 3 years in the U.S.

Control of Arab oil and markets means that one-fourth of the total \$4 billion U.S. trade surplus in 1967 came from the Arab world; five-eighths of that sum was from Libya. In 1966 petroleum accounted for 45 per cent of total U.S. income, against 30 percent of investments. Finally, it is Middle East oil that fuels the war in Vietnam.

Any Arab moves against American hegemony over this vital source of profits must have shattering effects on the whole system, endangering Washington's ability not only to wage war abroad, and to maintain its dominance over the other imperialist nations, but even to hold back the domestic class struggle.

When Libya nationalizes some of the concessions held by American companies, therefore, or when Syria closes down the Aramco pipeline; when Algeria nationalizes oil holdings and Sudan and Somalia take over American and other Western businesses, and when U.S. oil analysts lament "these are terrible, dangerous times"—all progressives ought to applaud these acts as blows struck for the world oppressed.

As the Administration prepares an offensive against the Arabs, openly acknowledging that the Middle East situation is "more dangerous" for their interests than is Southeast Asia, the necessity of supporting the Arab struggle will inevitably become clearer to many sincere progressives. To the anti-imperialists, the role of the

"doves" in lining up with their pro-Vietnam war colleagues to call for jets to Israel (meaning war against the Arabs) should also clarify things. It has long been obvious to revolutionaries that the doves are not against imperialist war; they are just against unwinnable wars which in addition provoke domestic revolution.

These doves are confident, as are Nixon and *his* flock, that a major attack against the Arabs will raise no sizable protest in America, since it would be carried out, as was the last one, in the name of "Israel's survival."

Arab nationalism threatens U.S. economic and strategic interests; Israel carries out the attack, in the name of survival; and, despite all the newspaper articles about Wall Street's fears and counter-revolutionary intentions, despite all the headlines boasting of the proxy "victory", most Americans will remain ignorant of Washington's real role in the aggression. That is the formula that worked in 1967, and they are shining it up again for the next round.

Of course it can't work forever, anymore than the "Communist menace" ploy succeeded in the Southeast Asia adventure. The growing breadth of the Arab anti-imperialist challenge, moreover, will eventually make it impossible for Israel to do the job alone, and the U.S. will have to play a more and more overt role in the Mideast.

But in the meantime, Nixon and his dovish collaborators are relying on a propaganda arsenal of twenty-odd years' accumulated myths, to keep the public in general and progressives in particular confused about Israel and the Arab liberation struggle.

Chief among these myths, promulgated by both those who support Israel's tie with Western imperialism and even by some who decry this relationship, is the contention that the Zionist movement was a legitimate and progressive self-determination movement implementing the will of the Jewish people. Israel was created, the Zionists claim, as a result of an independence struggle

by the Jewish refugees from European oppression, and represents the only solution to Jewish persecution. These allegations are simply not supported by the facts.

The Zionist movement was organized at the end of the 19th century under the leadership of the Viennese journalist Theodore Herzl, Leo Pinsker, Max Nordau and others. It was a product of middle-class despair at finding a solution to Jewish persecution either through assimilation or revolution, and of the age of imperialism.

In his efforts to find a sponsor for the projected Jewish National Home in Palestine, Herzl, a confessed monarchist, offered the services of the Zionist movement to the very forces that were oppressing the Jews. In 1903 he approached the Czarist Interior Minister, Von Plehve, chief instigator of anti-Jewish pogroms, proposing to use Zionism to combat the revolutionary movement among Jewish youth in Russia. Similarly, Herzl approached the German Kaiser and the Ottoman rulers of Palestine with the idea of the loyal Jewish protectorate.

None of the Zionist leaders would dream of approaching the Palestinians themselves. Their plans called for ignoring the native inhabitants ("A land without people for a people without land"), or using them first to exterminate undesirable wild animals before expelling them altogether ("spirit the penniless population across the frontier" by "denying it any employment in our country"—Herzl).

The Zionist plan of an imperialist outpost finally won favor with Britain, which sought to ensure its route to India, and to protect against both French ambitions for expansion in the area, as well as against the rising Arab nationalist movement. A British-sponsored Zionist garrison would be a "Power in opposition to Islam, a Power that would be a protection to the Suez Canal, a people under eternal obligation to the British."

And so the British Empire gave its blessing to the Zionist

National Home, in the 1917 Balfour Declaration. Palestine was not Britain's to give away, of course. The Palestine Mandate was later awarded to Britain after WWI, when the imperialist powers in the League of Nations parcelled out the colonial booty of the war. But what sort of progressive is it who can point to this thieves' legality as a valid deed of ownership to Palestine? Only one for whom, Zionism comes first, and justice later.

President Wilson supported the Balfour Declaration, and the U.S. Congress passed a resolution seconding it. A Standard Oil employee named William Yale, then the only American agent in the Middle East (it was he who had analyzed the Zionist home as a "protection to the Suez Canal"), explained U.S. intentions as follows: "... a Jewish state will inevitably fall under control of American Jews, who will work out along Jewish lines, American ideals and American civilization. A Jewish commonwealth in Palestine will develop into an outpost in the Orient."

As one Congressman shrewdly wrote to Allen Dulles, American support of the Declaration committed the U.S. to "protecting the National Home itself, if a turn of the whirligig should throw the British out."

At that time, American strategists already had good grounds for thinking that the U.S. could eventually replace Britain in Palestine. The U.S. by the '20's had become the center for Jewish immigration and Jewish capital. In 1936 American investment in Palestine, furnished by non-Zionist capitalists (who had been taken into the Jewish Agency for Palestine in 1929) as well as Zionist investors, represented more than one-third of the total.

While Zionist settlement proceeded under the British Mandate, increasing numbers of Palestinians were dispossessed from the lands they had tilled for generations. The Zionist land-buying fund, dealing generally with absentee owners, used both British Mandatory police and Zionist forces to evict the fellahin, peasant sharecroppers. Whole villages disappeared in this way. Palestinian

protest grew, and there were uprisings in which Arab and Jew perished.

Principally, the Palestinian rebellions were directed against the British. The Zionist leadership, on the other hand, remained loyal to their imperialist protector. Because the British did not want the Jewish colony to become too well armed or too independent, the Zionists would remind the Mandatory authorities, whenever conflicts arose, that "England needs the Jews in order to prevent the Arabs from becoming too strong," and that "You, who come from England, will surely appreciate the difficulties... no colonizatory undertakings have taken place without being met with the hatred of the natives."

In 1936, a historic six-month general strike, which succeeded in the other Arab countries under Mandate rule, was put down by the British with the help of the Zionists, who acted as strikebreakers. Regardless of the subjective intentions of individual Jewish settlers, the Zionist leadership clung to its aim of displacing the Palestinians and strengthening British imperialism.

In 1939, however, the British issued the White Paper limiting Jewish immigration to Palestine. They did so not in the interests of the Palestinians, but out of concern lest the growing conflict, aggravated by the wave of Jewish immigrants fleeing Hitler, would endanger their strategic position in the Mideast theatre during the War.

For American policymakers, those refugees were to be the most valuable pawn in the struggle to take over Palestine and the Mideast. With the emergence of the U.S. as the dominant imperialist power by the end of WWII, control of the area had become an all-consuming passion for Washington.

James Landes, head of the Civil Aeronautical Authority wrote, in *Fortune*, Sept. 1945: "To reach around the world, or to reach eastward to China and the Pacific... we require free and untrammled access to the Mediterranean and the Red Sea."

And Walter Lippman gave a clear warning of the U.S. intention to replace Britain in his Nov. 15, 1945 *Herald Tribune* article: "We must be present in the Middle East—present somewhere, for example at the port of Haifa—exercising not only influence from the distance of Washington, but influence radiating from some local point of actual American power."

The American "presence" would be established by refusing entry in the U.S. to the helpless refugees, so that they would be forced to go to Palestine. This policy, which owed much to racism of White House and State Department officials, but even more to their strategic intentions, has been documented in the book "While Six Million Died." Also documented there, as in books such as Ben Hecht's "Perfidy," Lilienthal's "What Price Israel" and other works, is the collaboration of Zionist officials in refusing to do rescue and relocation work (except to Israel), which would "put the Zionist activities in a secondary line." For Washington and for Zionism alike, the establishment of the Zionist state had nothing to do with saving Jewish lives. Had the refugees been given a real haven in the U.S., where, a 1948 *N.Y. Times* poll of DP's revealed, 80 percent of them wished to go rather than Palestine, there could have been no American outpost in the Middle East.

Those who get their political ideas from Hollywood—their numbers are legion—have long been victims of the Exodus myth, according to which Israel was created by a noble struggle against British imperialism.

The truth is that the British decision to give up the Mandate by May 14, 1948, was forced upon them chiefly by their post-war weakened condition, by the realization that the best they could do was give way to the U.S. claim on Palestine, attempt to gain what advantage they could by bartering, and to await a future comeback. The main target of Zionist military activities was not the British, but the Palestinians.

In November, 1947, the UN voted to partition Palestine into a

Jewish and an Arab state, and a Jerusalem international Zone. Almost all the Afro-Asian nations represented in the UN refused to back this colonialist act, but the U.S. extorted the necessary votes from Haiti, Liberia, Ethiopia and the Philippines by threats of economic reprisal. The Soviet Union and socialist bloc also supported partition, hoping for an Israeli socialist ally—an opportunistic betrayal of the Arabs which has caused great confusion in the progressive movement and does immeasurable harm to the socialist cause in the Middle East, to this day.

The Palestinians rejected partition of their homeland, while the Zionists accepted it as a starting point from which to expand, to make Israel, as the State's first President, Weizmann, once put it, "as Jewish as England is English." The Jewish settlers comprised one-third the total population, and Zionist land funds had still only acquired 6 percent of the land through their "legal" transactions with the absentee landowners. But Partition allotted 56 percent of the land to the Jewish State. When the Zionist District Commissioner in Jerusalem was asked by his British counterpart—there was no Palestinian Commissioner, of course—how the Zionists would resolve the problem of a Jewish state with 45 percent Arab population, he replied: "A few calculated massacres will soon get rid of them."

Zionist attacks on Arab villages both in the "Arab state" and the "Jewish state" commenced one week after Partition, six months before any Arab army entered Palestine. Deir Yassin, a village in the "Jerusalem International Zone," was the scene of an infamous massacre, with 250 killed. Zionist columns drove through other Arab areas such as Lydda and Jerusalem, warning the people to flee, or "the fate of Deir Yassin will be your fate."

The leader of the "unofficial" Irgun and Stern groupings which carried out the massacre, was made a Cabinet Minister on the eve of the June war. Moshe Dayan and other official Zionist army leaders played an important role in the terror campaigns at Lydda

and elsewhere; and Ben-Gurion openly boasted about the fact that the Zionists struck first during these months, so that the Haganah could operate freely on the "day of destiny."

Thus, 600,000 Palestinians were terrorized into fleeing. Their numbers were swelled by subsequent attacks, and by the 1956 and 1967 fighting. Today there are over a million and a half Palestinians living in bitter exile from a land they lived and worked on, not in some far-off ancient times, but 22, 14 and three years ago.

Israeli apologists will say they fled, therefore they have no right to return. Would these hypocrites feel the same way if *they* were forced by fire, invasion, or some other holocaust to flee *their* homes? Of course not. On the contrary, they claim the only right to a land from which the Hebrews were driven by Rome 2000 years ago. (Although there were more Hebrews throughout the world than in Palestine, long before the Roman conquest.)

Israel was founded on the denial of self-determination to an oppressed, colonial people, the Palestinians. This alone would negate the Zionist claim that Israel represents self-determination for the Jewish settlers in Palestine. But even further, this claim is rebutted by Israel's total dependence, since its establishment, on Western, primarily U.S. economic aid.

In 1948 Washington granted Israel a \$100 million loan through the Export-Import Bank. Since then, the Zionist state has been the recipient of more per capita direct U.S. governmental aid than any other country, totalling some \$2 billion. The so-called "private" Zionist contributions also constitute a form of governmental aid, since they are tax-free, costing American taxpayers \$650,000 on each \$1 million. UJA and other fund-raising agencies have sent an average \$60 million yearly to Israel, and another \$2 billion has been collected through the sale of Israel Bonds, which are floated through the Chase Manhattan Bank. Israel is the only country to which Washington grants this privilege.

West German reparations, restitutions, and military and industrial aid add up to another \$4 billion. It was the U.S. which forced its conquered rival to make these payments, channelling funds to their client Israel through the Nazi-riddled West German state which was rebuilt with American aid.

Israeli policy is dictated by Washington through these financial leading-strings. Even when Zionist aims run counter to U.S. requirements, Tel-Aviv must heed its master's voice. Ben Gurion admitted this when the U.S. forced Israel to withdraw from the Sinai in the 1956 British-French-Israeli attack on Egypt.

While Eisenhower and Dulles didn't want to see Arab nationalism triumph through the Suez nationalization, they wanted even less to let Paris and London make a Mideast comeback.

The U.S. attitude toward the rising tide of Arab anti-imperialism in the 50's took shape in the Eisenhower Doctrine, under which the U.S. could intervene to prevent "Communist subversion", i.e., to protect U.S. markets and investments. Under this Doctrine, the Sixth Fleet moved to "protect" Hussein's rule in Jordan when civil war threatened in 1957; in 1958 the Iraqi Revolution broke out, nationalizing the oil resources and threatening to spread to Lebanon and Jordan. Egypt and Syria had formed an alliance and were getting Soviet aid.

The old feudal patterns of land and education were being challenged and everywhere Washington looked, the status quo so necessary to the monopolists' profits was tottering.

The American Marines landed in Beirut, while the British sent paratroops to save Hussein. But the Eisenhower intervention could not postpone the inevitable: by 1962, civil war had erupted in Yemen. As it continued through the '60's, with the UAR aiding the nationalists and Saudi Arabia backing the royalists, the oil companies became increasingly fearful for their holdings in Saudi Arabia and the Arabian Gulf. The left wing of the Baathist Party came to power in Syria in early 1966, and gave voice to a militant

anti-imperialist line, which they implemented by nationalizing various foreign and domestic businesses, setting up a workers' militia and using it to enforce the shutdown of the Iraq Petroleum Co. pipeline, demanding a 50 percent increase in transit fees.

Since its establishment, Israel had faithfully opposed the efforts of the colonial world to free itself, backing the U.S. in Korea, opposing North African independence, aiding Mobutu in the Congo, supporting the U.S. in Vietnam. Now it would take the field in its sponsor's behalf.

The N.Y. Times had reported on June 11, 1966: "The United States has come to the conclusion that it can no longer respond to every incident around the world, that it must rely on a local power, the deterrent of a friendly power—as a first line to stave off America's direct involvement . . . Israel feels that she fits this definition . . . Foreign Minister Abba Eban and Mr. McNamara conferred over Skyhawk details in the context of this concept . . . in Washington last February."

Tel Aviv spokesmen began to threaten Syria, which they called the "next Cuba," with overthrow, echoing Congressional warnings that the UAR and Syria were "adversely affecting U.S. and British interests." As for Jordan, where Hussein was proving unable to stop the growth of the Palestinian guerrilla movement, Israel had already indicated in November, 1966, that she would "feel compelled to take some action" against revolutionary developments in that country.

All in the name of self-defense and survival, of course!

It makes no difference that Israeli soldiers *thought* they were fighting in their own interest, no more than when American GIs in Vietnam think they are fighting for Mom and Country. Objectively, they were carrying out Washington's counterrevolutionary mission: the overthrow of the Baathists, and of Nasser, whose Vice Premier, Mohieddine, was considered a promising successor, friendly to foreign oil interests; and

protection of the status quo in Jordan.

When Israeli bombers attacked the suburbs of Damascus on April 7, 1967, the U.S.-Israeli plans were already a year old. And when, on June 5, Israel blasted the Egyptian airfield, Tel Aviv knew that the Pentagon was right behind them. "We are here, the Sixth Fleet is here," Eban had been told on his Washington visit. And the U.S. was prepared to "Intervene Alone if Arabs Get Upper Hand," which Israeli military superiority guaranteed against, according to CIA estimates. The 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions were alerted and given "missions and targets in the Arab world which included protection for American oil installations . . . it was planned as an invasion of conquest which would leave the Arab nations without bargaining powers . . . Israeli military leaders were encouraged to strike the first blow in all directions against the Arabs."

American no less than Israeli spokesmen gloated over the joint victory. Gerald Ford said Israel had "bailed out U.S. interests" while Eban called it a "vindication and assertion of Western democracy."

The victory, however, was only temporary. The imperialist system's aggression, like its driving need to exploit and expand, carries the seeds of its own defeat. Today, three years after the war, the oil monopolies are reeling under blows struck by the very revolutionary forces they had hoped to suppress.

In September, 1969, the Libyan monarchy was overthrown by a group of young nationalist army men who had been imprisoned by King Idris during the June war for attempting to join in the fight against Israel. By May of this year the Revolutionary Council had achieved the evacuation of the British and the Americans from the airbases at Tobruk and Wheelus, from which tanks had been airlifted to Israel in 1967. They then proceeded to take on the U.S. oil companies which control 90 percent of the \$3 million-a-day industry. Recently they have nationalized holdings of four

American companies.

Throughout North Africa, the anti-imperialist drive is retaking control of the natural wealth from foreign exploiters. In Algeria, Somalia, and Sudan a pattern of nationalization is emerging to threaten Wall Street's hegemony.

Under the militant pressure of the Arab people, the circle of Arab allies on which the U.S. can depend to safeguard their interests is shrinking inexorably. Washington is preparing therefore, to once again use the bludgeon of Israeli military force.

Some so-called revolutionaries refuse to support the Arab countries faced with this threat on the grounds that these regimes are insufficiently proletarian in character. They forget that no progressive dared withhold support from the feudalist Ethiopian regime when it was the object of attack by Italian fascist imperialism, a power no more vicious or fearful to the oppressed and colonial peoples than U.S. imperialism, with its Sixth Fleet, its Skyhawks, Phantoms and napalm.

They also forget Lenin's observation that a prince who fights imperialism is more to be supported than a social democrat who conciliates with it.

But this is a revolutionary and internationalist concept, and the truth is that Zionists, no matter how they label themselves, cannot be revolutionaries nor internationalists. And so the "radical" Zionists reserve their most furious condemnation for the Palestinian liberation movement, a movement which is truly revolutionizing the whole Arab world.

That is because the guerrillas offer the Jewish people in Palestine a choice whose logic dooms Zionism: either remain as alien white-settlers, as the garrison of imperialism, target of an unceasing struggle by the Palestinian people for their stolen homeland, or become part of the Palestinian people.

In its January statement on the Democratic Palestine, Fateh, the main guerrilla group calls for full rights of citizenship for the Jews

in Palestine—even to teaching Hebrew in governmental schools to all Palestinians, Jew or non-Jew. The aim of a democratic, secular, non-discriminating state is supported by all the guerrilla groups.

But this approach is rejected by the Zionists, and with it the only hope for the Jews of Palestine to break out of their imperialist-allied deathtrap.

Thus, the would-be saviors of the Jewish people stand opposed to the interests of the very people they profess to care about most.

They also stand opposed to the interests of the world oppressed. They may talk about overthrowing the imperialist system, but their Zionist logic places them in opposition to the Black struggle, the socialist camp, the Arab people, and, by an extension of their “anti-semitism” logic, to Cuba, Korea, China, Vietnam, etc., etc., For true anti-imperialists, and even simply progressives in general, however, the latter are our allies in the world struggle to overthrow the racist, bloody, profiteering system of monopoly capital. As Washington prepares to unleash a new aggression in the Middle East, all progressive activists must be very clear about it, and especially must put the question to “radical” supporters of Israel: Which side are you *really* on? ●

Rita Freed for CSMEL

JLP REBUTTAL

The most pervasive and pernicious fabrication extant today is that Zionism is inherently an ideology of imperialism and colonialism and that Israel is its historical embodiment. This view has been nurtured, reinforced and widely disseminated by a broad but unstable anti-Zionist front which includes the Old and New Left; progressive, bourgeois and feudal Arab government leaders; the Black Panthers; the various fedayeen (guerrilla) movements; the sectarian self-proclaimed “Marxist” Israeli Socialist Organization (Matzpen); and the Committee to Support Middle-East Liberation. This contention is rendered spurious when Zionism is attacked as if it was a monolithic entity devoid of internal conflicts, tendencies and oppositions. Ironically, this front implicitly accepts the official Zionist view that there is indeed only one Zionism and that Israel as it is today is in fact the exemplification of genuine Zionism. This is as false as the contention that the Soviet Union is the realization of Marxism.

If the essence of Zionism were to be limited just to the problem of establishing a Jewish homeland there would, indeed, be just one Zionism. But the essential nature of Zionism was—and remains—precisely in determining the *kind* of homeland the Jewish people were to establish; an analysis of the condition of the Jews in the diaspora (dispersal); deciding the relationship between the Jewish homeland and neighboring nations and the relationship between the Jews, Arabs and Christians within the Jewish homeland; and developing the forms of struggle necessary to advance the Jewish economy, political structure and cultural

institutions from one stage to the next. There were and are bourgeois Zionists for whom the establishment of a Jewish nation was nothing more than the re-creation of the class divisions and oppression of capitalism into a Jewish context. There were and are religious Zionists for whom a Jewish nation was the realization of a religious ideal. There were and are militarist Zionists for whom "defense" and "secure boundaries" has become a rationalization for the establishment and perpetuation of a Jewish garrison state. But there were and are also Socialist-Zionists for whom—according to Ber Borochov, who developed the views of Socialist-Zionism on the basis of the Marxist concept of dialectical and historical materialism—"Zionism is the minimum program, the maximum program is socialism."

Until the nature of Zionism, as the liberation movement of the Jewish people which is part of the liberation movement of all oppressed peoples, is understood, nothing else really matters. For whichever way and on whatever level the Palestinian problem, the rights of self-determination of the Jews and Arabs and peace and socialism in the Middle East are discussed, the ideology of Zionism must be clarified. Two questions must be answered: what is the evidence for the assertion that Zionism is inherently imperialist and at what point did Zionism manifest this element; and what is the nature of Israel's "imperialism?"

EVOLUTION OF ZIONISM

Zionism began as a profoundly revolutionary and liberating movement of the Jewish people against oppression, pogroms and exploitation. Leon Trotsky, in his monumental "History of the Russian Revolution" defined revolution as the direct interference of the masses into historic events. This is an apt description of Zionism as well. Zionism removed the destiny of the Jews from the realm of blind economic forces, from the stranglehold of the rabbis and the Jewish bourgeoisie, from apathy and helplessness, and

placed the Jew in the center of history where he could determine his own destiny. The future of the Jewish people, it explained, was the task of the Jewish people themselves in concert with other oppressed and exploited peoples. The greatest thrust of Zionism was that of Socialist-Zionism which based itself on the class struggle and opted for a socialist society.

The theoreticians of the early Socialist-Zionist movement like Nachman Syrkin, Ber Borochov, and later, ideologists like Berl Katzenelson, the leaders of the Brith Shalom movement and the Hashomer Hatzair in Palestine and the United States, taught the Jewish people that their anomalous position in society, which made them "outsiders" in the process of production and relegated them primarily to the sphere of distribution, could only be resolved through the class struggle.

The main enemy, they taught, was capitalism which squeezed the Jews out of the basic process of production and made them superfluous and therefore the victims and objects of scorn, ridicule, oppression and pogroms (and under Nazism, the "objects" consigned to gas chambers). The Socialist-Zionists also fought against the assimilated Jews, those Jews who had made it within the system—the court Jews, the house Jews, the stock exchange Jews—and who were the exploiters of Jewish labor within the Jewish community. Syrkin, in 1901, in his essay "Call To Jewish Youth," wrote that Socialist-Zionism "aligns itself with the liberating impulse of international socialism on whose red flag is inscribed the call for national emancipation and the cultural renaissance of all oppressed peoples." The Socialist-Zionists taught the developing Jewish proletariat that its historic class interests were inextricably interwoven with those of the working class in general and that their struggle for national liberation—their liberation as a people, as a class, as an international minority—was as justified and as historically imperative as the national liberation movements of other peoples like the Polish, Moldavian, Slovak,

Italian, and German peoples.

The establishment of the nation, at least in western Europe, had taken shape with the advent of the bourgeois-democratic struggles in England and France. The national problem in those countries, at least, had been solved so far as a "home" was concerned, *so far as a territory in which a system of social production could be carried on*. But for the Jews, this kind of "home" as a basis for developing a normal, economic and social and political structure was still lacking. As long as the Jews had no "home" they would have a perverted societal structure whereby the base of the Jewish people in each country would be predominately comprised of "brain" workers instead of proletarians, as was the normal structure of other peoples. The solution to this anomaly was what divided the Socialist-proletarian-internationalist Zionists such as Syrkin and Borochoy, from bourgeois Zionists such as Theodor Herzl. Baron Rothschild saw in the development of a new territory in Palestine the possibility of establishing an absentee plantation system in which private capital would buy land and Jewish labor would be exploited to work that land. The Socialist-Zionists opposed this and, instead, succeeded in establishing in Palestine communes—kibbutzim—which precluded private investment, land speculation and the exploitation of Jewish and Arab labor.

The differences between the bourgeois Zionists and Socialist-Zionists were not only limited to the type of social structure the Jews were to establish, but also dealt with the relationship between the Jews and the indigenous population in the area where the Jews were to establish their homeland. Space does not permit a thorough investigation into why Palestine was designated as the Jewish homeland. But the Jews, no matter where they would have elected to settle, would have been considered as strangers and intruders. Mansur Al Tunsi, a leading Fatah spokesman, writing in the March 1969 issue of *Free Palestine* declared: "We would have opposed a Jewish state *anywhere in the*

world since it would have been the embodiment of a reactionary concept."

JEWS AND ARABS

Herzl, a formerly assimilated and bourgeoisified Jew (whose relationship to the Zionist movement is often given a weight by equally bourgeois Zionists, non-Zionists and anti-Zionists which it does not deserve) out of ignorance of the situation in Palestine formulated the idea that Palestine was "a land without people for a people without land." This view was scathingly denounced by Borochoy, Syrkin and Achad Ha'am (Asher Ginzberg), the leader of the cultural Zionist movement. Achad Ha'am, in 1891, six years before the first Zionist Congress in Basle, Switzerland, wrote in his article "The Truth From Palestine" that "we abroad have a way of thinking that Palestine today is almost a desert, uncultivated wilderness and that anyone who wishes to buy land can do so to his heart's content. But this is in fact not the case . . . We abroad have a way of thinking that the Arabs are all savages, on the level with animals, and blind to what goes on around them. But that is quite mistaken. The Arabs, especially the townsmen, see through our activities in their country, and our aims, but they keep silence and make no sign because for the present they anticipate no danger to their own future from what we are about. But if the time should ever come when our people have so far developed their life in Palestine that the indigenous population should feel more or less cramped, then they will not readily make way for us." He warned that the Jewish settlers must meet the Arabs in the spirit of respect. "Yet what do our brethren do in Palestine?" he asked. "They treat the Arabs with hostility and cruelty, deprive them of their rights . . . and nobody among us opposes this despicable and dangerous inclination."

In 1920, Achad Ha'am excoriated the facile rebuttal to the Arabs, who were suspicious of the newcomers, that the newcomers

were really not strange but descendents of the old "masters" of the country. He wrote: "But this historic right does not override the right of the other inhabitants (the Arabs), which is a tangible right based on generation after generation of life and work in this country. The country is at present their national home too, and they too have the right to develop their national potentialities so far as they are able." Continuing, he declared: "This position then makes Palestine common ground for different people, each of which tries to establish its national home there; and in this position it is impossible for the national home of either of them to be complete and to embrace all that is involved in the conception of a 'national home'. If you build your house not on untenanted ground, you are sole master only as far as your front gate."

Syrkin, the "father" of Socialist-Zionism, wrote: "No, gentlemen of the reactionary, bourgeois camp, it is *you* who have made Zionism unrealizable; it is you who have transformed it into a 'utopia' of slavery, of national debasement. The reactionary bourgeois Zionists seek colonization on a capitalist basis. In doing so they doom Zionism to death." Outlining his proposal for purchasing land in Palestine, Syrkin stated that "the best and most honorable way . . . is to secure the land in alliance with other oppressed nationalities in the Turkish empire through a common stand against the Turks . . . The Jews should form an alliance with the oppressed people under Turkish rule and seek a just distribution of the liberated territories. They should support revolutionary elements (the 'Insurgents') . . . and should enlist in the war against Turkey." At the 1920 Pittsburgh convention of the Posle Zion (literally: proletarian Zionists), Syrkin advocated joining the Third International, despite his losing battles with those internationalist socialists who dismissed Zionism as bourgeois. His motion lost by a narrow margin. David Ben Gurion, in a letter to Syrkin dated December 2, 1920, agreed with his unremitting efforts to join the International because "in my view there is no

International save the Third International and the place of every socialist is in it."

Borochof, the most consistent Socialist-Zionist, who applied the Marxist method to the Jewish question, wrote in 1905 in his famous "Our Platform" that "our ultimate aim, our maximum program is socialism—the socialization of the means of production. The only way to achieve socialism is through the class struggle of the Jews within the ranks of the world-wide Social-Democracy . . . Our immediate aim, our minimum program, is Zionism. The necessity for a territory in the case of the Jews results from the unsatisfactory economic strategic base of the Jewish proletariat."

Territorial autonomy in Palestine, he wrote in "Our Platform", was the "ultimate aim of Zionism. For the proletarian Zionists, this is also a step toward Socialism." How? Because the establishment of a Jewish homeland with its developing proletarian base and the ensuing class struggle against bourgeois elements would constitute a permanent revolution against the existing feudal relations that then prevailed in Palestine. In practice, this is precisely what occurred. The Arab peasants in Palestine and those from surrounding countries found the newly evolving economic relations and conditions of production a basis for their own development. It was precisely in those areas where Jewish settlers introduced new economic modes that Arab peasants and artisans settled in as well. "National territorial autonomy," in Borochof's words, or national independence, was seen as a *preliminary, preparatory stage* of the social revolution of the Jewish people. Zionism was the initial form of the Jewish nation; socialism its content.

ZIONISM AS "IMPERIALISM"

The question that arises, in view of the current anti-Zionist campaign, is: when did Zionism become an ideology of imperialism? Moreover, which form of Zionism became the expression of imperialism? Was it an ideology of imperialism when

England's Arab Higher Commission wrote in 1923: "It was thus shown that the prevalent conditions of the Jewish immigrants are being a very fertile medium for the *propagation of communistic principles*, not only among the Jews, but also amongst the Arabs, as the bolshevik demonstrations of Haifa last spring (when certain Arabs, under the guidance of Jews, openly flew the red flag) has revealed. It is now quite relevant that the government should make a very thorough investigation about the social conditions of the Jewish colonies that have been established after the war . . . Our personal experiences assure us that the *majority of these colonies are typical examples of communistic villages in Red Russia*. Had these conditions been restricted to Jewish colonies, this would have been quite a Jewish affair, but we find that the infectious bolshevik disease is penetrating day by day into the Arab peasantry particularly amongst those whose life is rendered so bitter by the government's unprotective and oppressive land policy . . ."

Was Zionism imperialistic when Matiel Mogannan, Secretary of the Arab Executive and Secretary of the National Defense Party, writing about Zionists in the late 1920's, declared: "The new arrivals usually bring with them some advanced European habits and ways of thought which are not borne out by local traditions . . . It is natural that the Arab should have been irritated by the self-assertion and aggressiveness of the new arrivals and be influenced by the social and bolshevik principles which they bring with them. A strong bolshevik element has already established itself in the country and has produced an effect on the population, not only by the success of its propaganda, but by the genuine uneasiness which it inspired among the Arabs, especially the poorer classes."

Was Zionism an imperialist ideology when Jamal Hussaini, Secretary of the Arab Higher Committee, in testimony before the Royal Commission in 1937, declared: "As to the *communistic principles and ideas of Jewish immigrants*, most repugnant to the

religion, customs and ethical principles of this country, which are imported and disseminated, I need not dwell upon them as these ideas are well known to have been imported by the Jewish community."

Was it perhaps considered an imperialist ideology when, 10 months after the Six-Day war of June 1967, Eldridge Cleaver wrote in his essay, "The Land Question and the Black Liberation Movement": "The parallel between the situation of the Jews at the time of the coming of Theodor Herzl and the present situation of the black people in America is fascinating. For Jews had no homeland and were dispersed around the world, cooped up in the ghettos of Europe . . . Psychologically, the black people in America have precisely the same outlook as the Jews had then . . . the facts of history show that the Jews were able to do precisely the same thing that Afro-Americans must now do. When Theodor Herzl founded the National Jewish Congress (World Zionist Congress—M.Z.), he virtually founded a government in exile for a people in exile. They built their own organization, and later on they got some land and set the government and the people down on the land, like placing one's hat on top of one's head. The Jews did it. It worked. So now Afro-Americans must do the same thing."

However it makes little difference, the anti-Zionists say, what Zionism said theoretically or that it was assailed for being "communist" and "Bolshevik." Look at its practice: Very well, let's look.

"IMPERIALISM" IN PRACTICE

A feature of imperialism was the export of capital and the super-exploitation of the indigenous population in the countries it colonized for the sake of the capitalists in the "mother country." In its quest for super-profits it left the basic social relations in the colonies intact and reinforced these basic relations, developing only

a pliant compradore (local business agent) incipient "new" ruling class and proletariat, and introducing only enough roads, scientific techniques, education and social services as was essential to develop its capital. To maintain its foreign domination and oppression of the colonized peoples, it introduced a standing army comprised of imported personnel and local mercenaries. This was especially so with the British. The Zionists did not export capital and had no "mother country" for whom to super-exploit. Zionism, instead, exported workers, students, intellectuals, and developed a people's militia for self-defense (the shomrim) where conditions warranted this. They revolutionized the prevailing social and economic conditions; broke up the feudal land relations and, along with this, the material and historical basis for the ruling class; mechanized agriculture and socialized the land (kibbutzim); and fought against the private investment and plantation systems of those like Baron Rothschild. They did not come in as the advance guard of any imperialist nation.

The Zionists organized Jews and Arabs into trade unions and helped forge a class consciousness among Arab fellahin (peasants). The view that Zionism aided imperialism does not explain why other Arab countries under the rule of imperialism did not advance technologically or socially at the same time and to the same extent as did Palestine in the past 70 years. Why did the British and Arab effendis (rulers) harass and persecute Jewish labor organizers who helped organize Arab workers as "communists?" Why did the British refuse to recognize and negotiate with Arab workers organized into and represented by the unions they forged together with Jewish workers? Why did the British only recognize and establish Arab separatist unions, company unions, and work feverishly to split Arab and Jewish workers and turn them against each other?

At the time Histadrut was formed in 1920 and Socialist-Zionists sought to achieve Arab-Jewish solidarity, Istiklal, the extremist

pan-Arab nationalist movement, campaigned to break up this unity. As early as 1922, the pan-Arab Congress met in Cairo with the prominent Syrian leader Abd Arrahman Shabender and other participants to discuss, among other matters, a proposal for Jewish-Arab agreement on political and economic collaboration. Negotiations were begun between the Arab representatives and Jewish representatives of the Zionist Executive, but Britain intervened and put a stop to it. The following year, the Arab Higher Committee voted to institute a boycott of Jewish businesses and to oppose further Jewish immigration. In 1930 a Jewish-Arab workers club was organized in Jerusalem under the name of "Achvat Poalim" (Brotherhood of Workers) but official recognition was withheld from it by the district commissioner. During the 1933 strike at the Nesher cement factory the government arbitrator ruled that the employers were under no obligation to recognize the Brit Poale Eretz Israel (Palestine Workers Brotherhood), the Arab-Jewish fraternal labor organization connected with Histadrut, despite the fact that the Brit was the authorized representative of the Arab workers in this enterprise. Between 1934 and 1936 the Brit was engaged in fighting for improved working conditions of the 500 Arabs employed in the port of Jaffa. The British refused to deal with any Arab workers association identified with Histadrut but declared that it would, instead, support a "pure" Arab union.

EFFORTS AT JEWISH-ARAB RECONCILIATION

There were many efforts at reconciliation between Jews and Arabs before 1948, especially around the issue of a bi-national state. There were many Zionists who sought, as early as 1920, to establish a bi-national state, including Achad Ha'am. There were individuals like Judah Magnes, Hayim Kalvarisky, Martin Buber and Henrietta Szold, and organizations like the Socialist-Zionist Hashomer Hatzair which throughout the 1920's and 1930's

campaigns vigorously for a bi-national state and were under heavy fire from the bourgeois Zionists and reactionaries like Vladimir Jabotinsky.

Although few Arabs came forward publicly many agreed with this approach and with the efforts of Jewish-Arab unity, recognizing the historical legitimacy of both the Jewish and Arab peoples to self-determination. The British, however, from 1917 on, together with the Arab rulers and el-Husseini, the Grand Mufti, did all they could to frustrate cooperation or where cooperation was occurring, to sabotage it. In 1927, Zionists under the leadership of Hugo Bergmann organized Brith Shalom (Peace Alliance) whose purpose was to further the Arab-Jewish relations. Its guiding principle was that "Palestine should be neither a Jewish State nor an Arab State, but a bi-national State in which Jews and Arabs should enjoy equal civil, political and social rights, without distinction between majority and minority. The two peoples should each be free in the administration of their respective domestic affairs, but united in their common interests." The abhorrence of Socialist-Zionists for the idea of "ruling" can be seen in a statement by Berl Katzenelson: "Zionists, particularly those who look for great things, seek neither government nor privilege at another's expense."

This theme of common interests did not end when the Jewish State was proclaimed in 1948. Today there are numerous individuals and groups in Israel and out that continue to seek unity and cooperation between the Jews and Arabs—the heirs of the early Socialist-Zionists. These include the Jewish Liberation Project, Hashomer Hatzair, and the Americans for Progressive Israel in the United States; the Critical Zionists in Holland; the Comité des Jeunes Juifs Revolutionnaires in France; Young Mapam in England; and the Committee for Social Justice in the Middle East at McGill University in Montreal. Within Israel there are such outstanding individuals as Shlomo Avineri, Jacob Talmon, Simcha

Flapan, Chaika Grossman, Mordechai Cafri and Amos Kenan, and such groups and parties as the Israeli New Left (SIAH), Mapam, Givat Haviva and the Israeli Communist Party (Maki). These groups and individuals are opposed to Israel's fait accompli annexationist policies, the continuing war with its deep penetration raids into Egypt, the refusal on the part of the Israeli establishment to recognize the legitimate demands of the Palestinian Arabs, the subordination of the collective sector (kibbutzim) to the private sector, the administrative detentions, the attacks against dissent, and witchhunts against the critics of the Israeli government. But, what the anti-Zionist front refuses to recognize and the Israeli establishment seeks to obscure or deny is that all of these groups and individuals *speak from a viewpoint and within the framework of Zionism and support Israel despite, not because of, its deformation of Zionism.*

ARAB LIBERATION MOVEMENT

What are the elements within the Arab liberation movement? Is there any group or individual within these movements that recognizes the legitimacy of the Jewish nation and Jewish liberation?

True, there are proclaimed "differences" between the major liberation groups, but all of them agree that Israel and Zionism must go. In its place they propose a "Democratic secular Palestinian state." What, however, do they actually mean when they call for such a state?

Several months ago, representatives from various Arab guerrilla groups met in the office of the Beirut weekly *El Anwar* to discuss this question. The symposium was published in the March 8 and 15, 1970 issues of the newspaper. The discussion was extremely revealing in that it was aimed not at the Western news media but toward internal clarification. Ahafiq Alhout, representing the Palestine Liberation Organization headed by Yasser Arafat,

contended: "If the slogan of a democratic state is intended only as an answer to the charge that we aim at throwing the Jews into the sea, then it is a successful slogan and an effective political and propagandistic act. But if we regard it as a matter of ultimate strategy of the national Palestinian and Arab liberation movement, then I think it calls for a thorough examination . . ." The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) representative asserted: "From the beginning we have clarified and emphasized that the slogan of a democratic Palestinian state cannot be realized and cannot be thought of except within the framework of Eastern Arab unity—at least in the form of a federal republic." But, he emphasized, such a state "can only be carried out after the elimination of the entity presently existing on Palestinian soil." The Arab Liberation Front spokesman commented that his group "negates this democratic Palestinian state idea as a tactical step because, if we assume that Israel agrees to it, the proposers of the idea will be forced to accept it. The slogan also expresses the division which is opposed to the strivings for unity of the Arab people . . ."

In an interview published in the June 15 issue of *Look* magazine Abu Lotuf, a leading Fatah ideologist, told the Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci: "I see that what you want to know is whether we are or are not really Communists. No, we are not. We have no gripe against oil wells, only against Zionism. We are not trying to destroy capitalism, we are trying to destroy Zionism. In all of its social, military, economic, cultural and ideological forms." Dr. George Habash, leader of the PFLP, told Miss Fallaci during an interview which appeared in the June 7 issue of *Life* magazine that: "China wants Israel erased from the map because as long as Israel exists there will remain an aggressive imperialistic outpost on Arab soil . . . We (PFLP) don't want peace, we will never agree to any peaceful compromise. And China sees eye to eye with us on this issue."

Dr. Habash brings the circle to a close. Israel is an imperialist outpost—others claim Israel is a lackey, a running-dog, an ally—because, among other reasons, she accepts and depends on military hardware from the U.S. Even if it were true that Israel is a lackey of imperialism it is wrong to confuse a lackey with its master.

It is not Israel but the Arab's fear and hatred of Israel that serves imperialism by keeping the Jewish and Arab workers divided. There is certainly no evidence that Israel is a mirror image of or acts in reflex response to the U.S. as does, say, South Korea, South Vietnam or the Latin American dictators. In addition, how much does the U.S. aid Israel compared to its aid to South Korea, Latin American dictators, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Egypt? What was Israel when it was supported by the Soviet Union in the early days and when Czechoslovakia supplied Israel with arms? Did this make Israel socialist? Along a similar line, what makes Libya—whose current regime is passionately anti-Israeli but which buys planes from France and trains its pilots in France and Greece to help France crush the revolution in Chad—a "third world" country? And what makes Sudan, which is destroying its black citizens, or Egypt, which persecutes its Copt citizens, or Iraq, which persecutes the Kurds, "third world" nations? Are they to be supported by the left in spite of those policies?

MYTH OF FORCIBLE EXPULSION

The myth of Zionism as an imperialist ideology and of Israel as its material expression requires one more myth to give "concreteness" to the foregoing imaginary postulates: the myth of forcible expulsion of Palestinian Arabs in 1948-49. The facts, however are quite different. An article in the *Bulletin of the Research Group For European Migration Problems* dated January-March 1957 stated: "As early as the first months of 1948 the Arab League issued orders exhorting the people to seek

temporary refuge in neighboring countries, later to return to their abodes in the wake of the victorious Arab armies and obtain their share of abandoned Jewish property . . .”

An article in the Jordanian daily *Al-Urdun* dated April 19, 1953 stated: “For the flight and fall of the other villages, it is our leaders who are responsible because of their dissemination of rumors exaggerating Jewish crime and describing them as atrocities in order to inflame the Arabs . . . By spreading rumors of Jewish atrocities, killings of women and children, etc. they instilled fear and terror in the hearts of the Arabs of Palestine until they fled, leaving their homes and property to the enemy.”

Kenneth W. Bilby, in his book *New Star In The Middle East* (published in 1950) wrote: “The Arab exodus, initially at least, was encouraged by many Arab leaders such as Haj Amin el-Husseini, the exiled pro-Nazi Mufti of Jerusalem, and by the Arab Higher Committee of Palestine.” The London *Economist* of October 2, 1948, noted that the Jews asked and pleaded with the Arabs of Haifa to remain, guaranteeing them protection and security. “Various factors influenced their (the Arabs) decision to seek safety in flight,” the *Economist* observed. “There is little doubt that the most potent of these factors were the announcements made over the air by the Arab Higher Executive, urging all Arabs in Haifa to quit . . . It was clearly intimated that those Arabs who remained in Haifa and accepted Jewish protection would be regarded as traitors.”

Nimr al-Hawari, a lawyer and former commander of a paramilitary Arab youth organization in Palestine who became a refugee in 1948 and the author, several years later of *Secret Behind The Disaster*, conceded in 1956 that the Jews tried to dissuade Arabs from leaving Palestine in 1948. Some Arabs did not leave because of threats of reprisals against those who remained. Some left of their own accord as was in the case of many historic upheavals in the past like the flight of certain sections of the Cuban

population after the overthrow of the hated Batista regime by Fidel Castro and his revolutionary army.

Added to this is Deir Yassin (the massacred Arab village), which has been a spectre haunting Israel since its infamous occurrence. But what the anti-Zionist front overlooks is that Deir Yassin is an infamous example because it was the exception and not the rule. The Irgun, which organized and carried out this bloodbath, was denounced by every section of Palestine Jewry. Of course, the anti-Zionist front conveniently drags out Deir Yassin but equally conveniently ignores the massacre in 1929 by the Arabs of the Jews in Hebron.

TASKS AHEAD

The chief struggle in the Middle East is between two basic rights—the Jewish and Palestinian Arab rights to self-determination and to nationhood. The basic task for the Israelis is to recognize the rights of the Palestinians and for the Palestinians to recognize the legitimacy of the Jewish people to a homeland. The refusal of both, at this time, to recognize the existence of each other is ludicrous and tragic in view of the daily battles the Israelis and Palestinians carry on against each other. The present Israeli government does not represent the long range historical interests of the Jewish workers any more than do the Arab guerrilla leaders and the Arab governments represent the rights and needs of the Arab masses.

The task within Israel is to restructure the economic and political institutions into a collective economy operated democratically by the workers and kibbutz members. The task in the Arab countries is eliminating existing regimes and class oppression. The general task in the Middle East is to form a Socialist federation within which both a Jewish and a Palestinian state can live and thrive together, to develop their cultures, politics and economies on a free basis and with open borders. Israelis and

Arabs must unite to expel all foreign troops and expropriate the holdings of the imperialists. But the struggle for socialism remains remote as long as the war and threat of war remains.

To accomplish these tasks, the left outside of Israel must recognize its obligation to help and support the left and Socialist-Zionist forces in Israel and to aid in establishing a dialogue between these forces and their counterparts among the Palestinian Arabs. The task of the left outside of Israel should be to help the Palestinian Arabs rid themselves of their blinding hatred of Zionism and Israel and to help them separate the views of the Socialist-Zionists from the chauvinistic, annexationist and militaristic "Zionists." Until now, the left forces outside of Israel have played a divisive role and conducted a campaign against their sisters and brothers in Israel which has, in effect, betrayed the Israeli socialist forces, deprived them of an international base and isolated them from the international socialist movement. What is desperately needed, however, is solidarity among all socialist forces. The left can play the role of a catalyst in this stride toward peace and socialism in the Middle East. ●

Ruth Grunzweig and
Moshe Zadek for JLP

CSMEL REBUTTAL

We earlier put the question, "Which side are you on?" to those who claim membership in both the progressive movement and the Zionist camp. We asked it as internationalists, as partisans in the world struggle to end all exploitation and oppression. Our opponents are concerned *first* with Jewish oppression. They view the Middle East conflict within this framework: as Jews who are "also" revolutionaries.

Well, they have given us their answer, and by it confirmed that they stand neither for Jewish salvation nor world revolution.

Take, for example, their approach to the question of physical survival. They say that it was the "Zionist vanguard" which raised Jewish national consciousness during the period of sharpest persecution; that all Jews can identify with Zionist hopes for Jewish survival.

But it was precisely in that period of sharpest persecution—the Hitler period—that the Zionists showed Jewish survival was not their aim at all.

The collaboration of the Zionist leadership in opposing rescue work has already been pointed out here. In its pamphlet, *The Other Israel*, the Israeli Socialist Organization notes: "Typically, the initiative in the Jewish struggle against Nazism during the 1930's never came from the Zionist organization. It was the non-Zionist Jewish individuals and organizations which took the initiative and burden of that struggle on themselves. The fiercer that struggle became, the further apart did the Zionist organizations stand from the rest of Jewry. The underlying

considerations are spelled out in a letter written by Ben-Gurion to the Zionist Executive on December 17th, 1938.

“ . . . If Jews will have to choose between the refugees, saving Jews from concentration camps, and assisting a national museum in Palestine, mercy will have the upper hand and the whole energy of the people will be channeled into saving Jews from various countries. Zionism will be struck off the agenda If we allow a separation between the refugee problem and the Palestine problem, we are risking the existence of Zionism.’

“ . . . When Zionism had to choose between the Jewish people and the Jewish state it unhesitatingly preferred the latter.’ ”

This is the cynical reasoning which underlies our opponents’ contention that “a refuge like New Zealand” (or the U.S.) is insufficient; “a need for ‘turf’ is involved.”

What about the class struggle of Jewish workers? Only on Israeli “turf”, bought with millions of European Jewish lives, can that struggle be carried out, say the Zionist radicals. They thus shamefully discard the truly vanguard role played by Jewish workers in guiding the labor and progressive movement in the U.S.

Similarly, they forget the leading role of Jewish revolutionaries—way out of proportion to their numbers in the total population—in the Russian Revolution. The Zionists, we may recall, won bloody-handed Von Plehve’s sympathy with their proposal to counter this trend, and the Balfour Declaration was in part aimed at winning revolutionary Jewish youth over to the Kerensky war party.

That there is discrimination in the Soviet Union and some socialist states cannot be denied. But the way for genuine revolutionaries to fight it is to struggle against the retreat from socialism manifested in the privileges of the bureaucratic caste, which are the basis for bigotry—not to ally with those reactionary forces in the West and in Israel who oppose the socialist camp. We cannot demand of Jewish communists a higher political level than

that which has prevailed in the socialist world in general, since the Bolshevik period. Still, we can recall that when Lenin spoke of the world progressive role of Jewish workers, he meant not their rejection of their Jewish brothers, but rather their historic solidarity with all the oppressed. That appeal can never be obsolete.

In regard to the class struggle in Israel itself, the defense of Zionism leads these would-be revolutionaries to a defense of the racist and capitalist structure of the Israeli state, under the heading of their discussion of the kibbutz and the Histadruth. Tel Aviv has long used these institutions as a figleaf to hide the true nature of the state, relying on precisely this type of domesticated “radical” to hold it up.

What do they tell us about the kibbutz? That it was a solution to agriculture, with an important role not only in transforming the psyche of the Zionist settler but in the general economy. They do not mention that the kibbutzim, comprising only five percent of the population, are totally dependent on subsidies from their sponsoring parties, and in debt to the capitalist firms and their government.

In their attempt to keep afloat, the kibbutzim turned to industry, running into a manpower problem which they solve by hiring Arab laborers. Often the Palestinian farmer ends up as a hired worker on his own former land, which was expropriated by the Israeli State, with the kibbutznik as his foreman.

When there is a strike by workers on a kibbutz, the “owners” or members—and this can not include Arabs, even one whose spouse is a kibbutznik—do not hesitate to call the police.

Politically, the kibbutzim belong to the parties which finance them; and a non-complying vote may bring on a witch-hunt, with expulsion for the wayward voter. Why are they silent about these facts?

When they speak about the “vigorously class framework” of the

Histadruth, why don't they admit its rather more vigorous *racism*, revealed in its Hebrew name. (The General Organization of Jewish Workers in Palestine.) Why don't they say how this organization helped British imperialism by scabbing on the 1936 Palestinian general strike, under the battle cry of "Jewish Labor only" and "Buy Jewish Only"?

And look how they characterize the union's role of largest national employer: "A worker could thus find himself in the position of **employee**, part owner, and if he works in a military supply factory, for example, he might use the products he makes as a soldier War . . . beclouds the workers' interest as workers . . ."

Part owner? About as much as we are "part owners" of the U.S. government because we pay taxes! Ninety percent of Israeli workers are in unions run by Histadrut. If you do not pay membership you lose your health insurance; the fees are collected centrally, so that when the workers go on strikes which are deemed against the Zionist State's interests, they are without strike funds and at the mercy of "their" company union.

No, the contradiction is not so much between class interest and war, as it is between class interest and Zionism. And while economic necessity sometimes forces the Israeli *workers* to choose class solidarity over Zionist solidarity with their exploiters, such is not the case with "revolutionaries" who must justify Zionism first, last, always.

In the name of defending "what has been secured up to now—imperfect, incomplete, and corrupted as that may be," they refrain from even *examining* the extent of the imperfection, incompleteness, and corruption. In truth, they turn their backs on those who are struggling to change Israeli society.

This is their inevitable answer to the dilemma: revolutionary change versus Zionism—although to be sure, for them it is merely an embarrassment, rather than a real choice. And so they illustrate

the impossibility of creating, through Zionism, a movement to act on the real needs of the Jewish people."

As long as the Jewish people in Palestine are bound to Zionist ideology they cannot free themselves from their own exploiters.

Suppose for a moment that the Israeli workers overthrew the Tel Aviv government. To reach the political consciousness necessary for this act without having been affected by—and allied with—the Palestine revolution is of course impossible. Still, let us suppose it: an Israeli revolution based on Zionism. If the new state "will not sacrifice what has been secured up till now"—i.e. Jewish exclusive control of Palestine, it will thereby have to continue refusing to repatriate the Palestinians, treating the "Israeli Arabs" as dangerous security threats and curtailing their economic and political rights, and opposing not only the Palestinian self-determination struggle, but also revolutionary developments in the Arab world generally, which inevitably strengthen that struggle.

The hypothetical state of Zionist-revolutionary Israel, in its continued political alienation from the Arab world, would be economically alienated as well. We know that the Israeli state, in its present character, survives only due to massive transfusions of economic aid from the U.S., directly and through those conduits which the U.S. controls such as West Germany and the Zionist agencies. We know also that Washington exacts heavy economic penalties from countries which truly break with it. The boycott imposed on Cuba is an outstanding example, as is the denial of vital assistance to build the Aswan Dam, in reprisal for Nasser's refusal to enroll Egypt in the imperialist alliance known as the Baghdad Pact.

It is possible that Washington would wish to continue sustaining the so-called revolutionary Israel for its undiminished value in fighting Palestinian and Arab liberation. In that case it would be up to Israel, under the leadership of the Israeli working class, to say to the U.S., as "mere" bourgeois nationalists such as Sukarno and

Nasser have done, "to hell with your aid." But that is exactly what is impossible for Tel Aviv to do, since that aid is the Zionist State's only guarantee of financial survival.

True, the JLP writers say they "recognize" the Palestinian national struggle, and even assert that "both the Israeli and Palestinian nations should and must exist." But how? By their own admission, "Those who support an Israeli state must oppose forced (!) repatriation of those who would like to destroy it." This "liberal solution," they claim, "only co-opts Palestinian rights." And so *they* decide what constitutes legitimate Palestinian self-determination. The essence of self-determination is, of course, that the oppressed *alone* have the right to define their destiny. But these self-styled revolutionaries, forgetting that basic axiom, and insisting in any case that the relationship of Israel to Palestine "does not fit the oppressor-oppressed model" (Why? Because they, the Zionists, say so), map out the Palestine state as follows: "... more or less . . . the area occupied by Israel in '67 and the bulk of already Palestinian Jordan (Transjordan), the Gaza region, and parts of Syria."

Do they dream that the Palestinians would be placated with a Zionist-allotted Bantustan? Let the Palestinians speak for themselves:

"The liberated Palestine will be part of the Arab homeland and will not be another alien state within it. The eventual unity of Palestine with other Arab states will make boundary problems less relevant and will end the artificiality of the present status of Israel, and possibly that of Jordan as well. The new country will be anti-imperialist and will join the ranks of progressive revolutionary countries. Therefore, it will have to cut the present life line links with, and total dependence on, the United States. Therefore, integration within the area will be a foremost prerequisite.

"It should be quite obvious at this stage that the New Palestine discussed here is not the occupied West Bank or the Gaza Strip or

both. These are areas occupied by the Israelis since June 1967. The homeland of the Palestinians usurped and colonized in 1948 is no less dear or important than the part occupied in 1967. Besides, the very existence of the racist oppressor state of Israel based on the vacation and forced exile of part of its citizens is unacceptable by the revolution even on one tiny Palestinian village. Any arrangement accommodating the aggressor settler-state is unacceptable and temporary. Only the people of Palestine: its Jews, Christians and Moslems in a country that combines them all is permanent."

Our opponents seem to make a habit of pretending to "agree" with selected concepts which they then so thoroughly distort as to become the reverse. Clearly, the Palestinians have taken up armed struggle not as the be-all and end-all of political activity, an end in itself, but so as to build the New Palestine which will join, on a revolutionary basis, in a united Middle East.

The future irrelevance of boundaries is obviously tied to a socialist solution, and has nothing to do with the land-grab falsely claimed for the guerrillas by Abraham and Grunzweig. Plainly, these two are not talking about the socialist vision, for why then speak of "*parts of Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and even Arabia?*"

It is all right, apparently, for Zionists to assert *their* kind of imperialist-backed nation-building as a steppingstone to socialist unity—a sequence that never can be. But they deny the Palestinians' right to have a perspective of Arab unity, and try to slander their approach as expansionist.

The authors tell us that for the Palestinians to see their national existence as possible only at the expense of the Israelis is 'the worm at the end of the Imperialists' fishhook.' " First of all, the Palestinians seek to establish the New Palestine at the expense of Israel, but not of the *Israelis*. Rather it would be to their advantage to be full citizens of Palestine, instead of Spartans in the racist

Zionist death trap.

Do the writers perhaps mean by this phrase that the Palestinian national struggle is financed by Washington, as is the Zionist occupation? The ridiculous assertion is intended to counterbalance their admission that the Israelis, having swallowed the worm of Zionist supremacy, are indeed in the imperialist creel.

This balancing act leads them up some rather peculiar alleys—peculiar, that is, if they were really revolutionaries. “Big power antagonisms,” they say, should not determine Mideast relationships. Do they mean that the Soviet Union is the power behind the Palestinian revolution? That would be absurd, in light of the Soviet leadership’s continued insistence on the sovereignty of Israel.

But then they take another tack, and turn to the conflict between Israel and the surrounding Arab states, which “only facilitates . . . and encourages big power Imperialist domination of the entire region.” Now obviously it takes two to make a power conflict. U.S. spokesmen have been complaining since 1955, when the nationalist regimes began to trade and get aid from the socialist bloc, about the loss of their hegemony. How often since 1967 have they lamented that the Mediterranean was no longer exclusively an American lake—a fact that should make any progressive rejoice?

And now, as they again prepare to attack these regimes for daring to reclaim the resources that belong to the Arab people, to deal with the socialists and thereby undercut Western monopoly’s stranglehold, what are they all shouting, “hawks” and “doves” alike, but—“Soviet takeover!” “Eroding balance of power!” and so on. Our opponents, however, don’t want to sound like Nixon et al. So they simply ignore what they just said about “big power antagonisms,” and proceed to imply that the nationalist regimes are tools of—U.S. imperialism!!

They forget all the worried U.S. press articles about Egyptian-Soviet oil prospecting teams, and SAM missiles, and about

the daily Phantomjet and Skyhawk bombings. They would rather notice U.S. gas and oil contracts. (They do *not* notice U.S.-Israeli contracts.)

They comment on Algerian-Common Market relations, but not Algerian nationalization of Western oil companies (nor *Israeli-Common Market* relations). As for Libya, they mention only an allegedly suppressed rebellion in Chad—but not the ousting of the U.S. and Britain from the Libyan airbases, nor the nationalizations of U.S. oil companies there.

They don’t speak of the nationalizations carried out by the Sudanese government, but only of the Black rebellion in southern Sudan (against the *equally* Black government of the North, and with Israeli machine guns).

They invent Syrian claims to Palestine, but forget about Syria’s recent closing of the American pipeline, and about the U.S.-Israeli military attempt to overthrow the dangerous Baathists, the last time that happened.

In their condemnation of Iraq’s supposed persecution of Jews, they sound just like the “Establishment” Zionists and the bourgeois press—neglecting to even mention that non-Jews were also executed. The only difference is that the “revolutionaries” are silent about Iraq’s refusal to let the U.S. monopolies plunder the rich Rumaila oilfields, while the overt imperialists complain loudly.

That these Arab nationalist states are petit bourgeois, and their break with imperialism not completed, is true enough. But why, if they are such lovers of things progressive, “imperfect” and “incomplete” though they be, do Abraham and Grunzweig take such pains to deny the very existence of the Arab anti-imperialist struggle?

One doesn’t have to be a revolutionary to know that the Arab nationalist challenge is causing the oil companies great anguish, one need only be a U.S. politician, or a reader of the New York Times.

If they were really for Arab revolution, wouldn’t the JLP writers

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Even if it were possible to dismiss the outside power interests of U.S. imperialism, the Soviet Union and the Arab governments, there would remain a formidable conflict in the Middle East.

From the point of view of socialist Zionism, the Jews as a people have been historically oppressed due to their marginal role in "host" societies. During Europe's great era of nationalism the Jews failed to achieve this bourgeois step from feudalism because they had no territory, no land. The Jewish liberation struggle, like all liberation struggles, recognizes national territorial independence as a precondition for self-determination and socialism.

From the point of view of the Palestinian Arabs, for centuries the indigenous population of the Middle East, historically under the yoke of the Ottoman and later the British Empires, the outright seizure of their homeland again denies their heritage and their future. Languishing in refugee camps for 20 years, an entire generation has grown to see the state of Israel, in lightning wars, expand to many times its original size. The Palestinian Arabs are waging a war of self-determination, not unlike that of Vietnam, of a repeatedly colonized people to be free.

The Jewish Liberation Project and the Committee to Support Middle East Liberation, two American Marxist-oriented support groups, participate in an Arab-Israeli debate in an effort to reconcile, *through socialism*, this otherwise insoluble conflict.



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