

and translated into daily political activity, they can go a long way toward enabling the Party to achieve a greater degree of influence.

The writer believes that the following changes and modifications would strengthen the resolution.

1. Section I (on anti-Semitism) and Section II (analysis of the American Jewish community) should be interchanged. Our approach to the Jewish question should be based on a Marxist analysis of that question and on a concrete examination of the U.S.A. Jewish community as it exists. Putting the section on anti-Semitism first feeds the attitude that the struggle against anti-Semitism is the only aspect of the Jewish question.

2. Section II does not come to grips with putting the Jewish question within the Marxist analysis of the national question. The use of the phrase "Jewish community" avoids defining the relationship between the Jews in the U.S.A. and the rest of the world. Marxists do not accept the Zionist definition of the Jews as a "world nation." However, we do recognize the existence of various ties of historical, cultural, religious and psychological nature among Jews of various countries. The strength of these ties varies in different historical periods and

from country to country. The writer believes that the use of the term "peoplehood" as used in Jewish Marxist and secularist circles comes closest to describing the status of the Jews in the world.

3. The paragraphs discussing the interlinking of the struggle against anti-Semitism with the Negro people's freedom struggle should include the need for combatting the growth of anti-Semitism among the Negroes.

4. The writer would like to propose to delete the words "in order to mislead many honest people, even some leading figures in the civil rights and peace movements" from Section IV on Soviet Jews (*Political Affairs*, August 1966, p. 32). The participation of people like Bertrand Russell in protests directed at the Soviet Union is not based on being "misled." It is based on the very real shortcomings and errors still present in the Soviet policy toward Jews, which are recognized and listed in the draft resolution.

5. Referring to Premier Kosygin's speech of August 1965 and the *Pravda* editorial of September 5, 1965 the resolution states: "These are welcome beginnings of a campaign against remnants of anti-Semitism." The writer believes that this should be revised since no campaign has developed to date (14 months later).

## Some Criticisms

I welcome the decisions of the 18th National Convention regarding the holding of a conference on work among the Jewish people and the fight against anti-Semitism, on having a pre-conference discussion, and preparing a draft resolution.

I have read the draft and I am in general agreement with it. I have several criticisms:

1) The liberal American Jewish Congress should be included in the description of important national Jewish organizations.

2) Jews are sensitive to an attack on Zionism because the attack frequently cloaks an anti-Israel or anti-Semitic attitude, or both. Within the Jewish community the most vitriolic attacker of Zionism and Israel is the American Council for Judaism, which is composed of wealthy, assimilationist Jews who are outside the mainstream of Jewish life. Hence a Jew, irrespective of his ideological position on Zionism, is generally unsympathetic to critics of Zionism.

I fear that the resolution's discussions of Communist differences with the Zionist movement on the issue of Zionism will serve only to alienate the majority of Jews—Zionist and non-Zionist alike—who agree with us on the more fundamental issues of peace, civil

rights, and the fight against anti-Semitism.

It is true that on pages 30-31 the resolution describes objectively the trends within Zionism and the possibility of our cooperation with certain Zionist leaders, individuals and groups. But unfortunately the earlier initial approach is the hostile one of linking and opposing Zionists, sections of the upper middle class, the big bourgeoisie, and Right-wing-Social-Democrats.

Must we concern ourselves with combating American Zionism at this time? As the resolution points out, American Jewish concern for Israel should not be equated with acceptance of the Zionist belief in the "ingathering of all Jews in the homeland of Israel." Zionist organizations in the United States have declined drastically in membership and influence since the establishment of the State of Israel. This has occurred because Jews generally regard the Zionist movement here as having made a notable contribution to the creation of the State of Israel, and once having done so, having lost its reason for being. Why then should we continue or resume a debate on Zionism in America that is really irrelevant to the major issues of the day, and will serve only to disunite the Jewish people and reopen old wounds of battle

between the Zionists and the Left? I would urge a more careful and sensitive approach based on these considerations.

3) I do not believe that an attack should be made on Jewish organizations which make a charge of "Soviet anti-Semitism." If anti-Semitism exists in any country, American Jewish organizations (and non-Jewish groups as well) have a right and an obligation to protest. Why must we define "Soviet anti-Semitism" precisely and only as "Soviet governmental anti-Semitism" when it could be and is equally well-defined as "anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union?" Does the resolution adhere to the narrow definition in order to "prove" that governmental anti-Semitism is non-existent in the Soviet Union, and hence that organizations and individuals making this charge are confused, misguided cold-war slanderers of socialism?

There have been numerous instances of anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union which have been cited in the Communist and Left press. There also have been cultural and religious restrictions placed on Jews by the Soviet government. I believe these Soviet restrictions to be based on political considerations, not on anti-Semitic bias. Are Communists and Left-wingers to be the only ones allowed to be critical of these developments, or may Jewish groups also be allowed to express their feelings? In recent months there have been statements by Jewish leaders—including world Zionist officials—which

call on critics of the Soviet Jewish policy to refrain carefully from formulations which would promote the cold war. We, too, must continue to criticize those who use this issue to foment hatred against socialism, at the same time as we criticize policies and programs in the Soviet Union with which we are in disagreement.

4) A major weakness of the resolution is the absence of any clear guide to methods of combating anti-Semitism in the United States. There is by no means an agreed-upon approach to this problem among Jewish groups, with the result that they frequently spend more time and effort in combating each other than in combating the anti-Semites.

A principal problem in this field is the civil libertarian philosophy adopted by virtually all Jewish organizations (the Jewish War Veterans is the major exception). It is the opinion of most Jewish leaders that anti-Semites have a constitutional right to speak, publish, parade, and picket; hence no action can or should be taken by Jewish defense groups which would pressure governmental bodies to infringe on these rights. Because of this approach, Jewish groups are virtually paralyzed when it comes to taking meaningful public action against Nazis and Right-wingers seeking to foment anti-Semitism and anti-Negroism.

In a recent directive issued when George Lincoln Rockwell threatened to lead a march of his followers in a heavily populated

Jewish area, the Chicago rabbi-nate urged only that Jews stay indoor and ignore the demonstration. The American Civil Liberties Union has questioned the constitutionality of a federal judge's subsequent injunction against Nazis in Chicago which prevents their marching on Jewish holy days within a half-mile of a synagogue; hence most Jewish groups have not taken an open public stand in support of the injunction.

I feel that we need a deeper analysis of the U.S. Bill of Rights as it relates to this matter, so that a legal as well as a moral case may be made for restricting anti-Semitic and anti-Negro utterances and publications. International opinion is on the side of restricting the freedom of racists to speak, publish, or even to exist organizationally. This is evident

in the terms of such universally praised and endorsed United Nations Conventions as those on Genocide and on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Both of these Conventions were drafted with United States participation, signed by the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., and officially approved by the U.S. Administration. But neither Convention has been ratified by the U.S. Senate. It should be noted that these Conventions have the wholehearted support of every Jewish organization. Perhaps both the moral and legal keys to a firm position in the United States against racist activities lie in these Conventions—and certainly our resolution should give every encouragement to the development of a strong national campaign for Senate ratification.

It is easy to become complacent about the existence of anti-Semitism. After all there are no pogroms. But complacency about backward ideological currents is always dangerous. If not fought such ideological currents can be like underground fires in peat moss. They smoulder beneath but are capable of setting forest fires. And anti-Semitism is not just beneath the surface.

It is a central part of the ideological stock-in-trade of the fascist, racist ultra-Right . . .

Gus Hall, *For A Radical Change*, p. 57