

workers' liberty

reason in revolt



Trotskyists and the creation of Israel



Most "Trotskyists" today are, everywhere, agitators and propagandists against the Jewish state of Israel. Not agitators for the view that Israel should change its relationship with the Palestinians, or that it should help set up an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel. No. The agitation and propaganda centres on the "demand" that Israel should cease to exist.

In war they have sided with the Arab states — Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Jordan — in the hope and expectation that, victorious, they would put an end to Israel. At the start of the 21st century they back the medieval-minded forces of Arab and Islamic clerical fascism — the Muslim Brotherhood and its off-shoots, and Hezbollah, Hamas and the jihadists in Iraq. Rejecting a two-state solution, these mystics of "anti-Imperialism" back the Muslim mystics who would recreate the Caliphate — the pre-World War I Turkish empire, against Israel. This "left" is mainly, in Britain, centred on the SWP-Respect.

What do they propose to put in place of Israel? It used to be a "secular democratic state" covering all of pre-1948 Palestine. In this, the Jews who survived the necessary conquest by Arab armies would be offered religious, but not national, rights. The now all-determining alliance with Islamic clerical fascists, such as the Muslim Brotherhoods British offshoot, the Muslim Association of Britain, has knocked the "secular" out of that formula. The fact of all-pervasive dictatorship in the Arab states, with the flickering exception of Lebanon, had always begged the question about the "democratic" part of it. What is left now? "Marxist" support for the conquest of Israel by Hamas-Hesbullah-like jihadists!

This political attitude to Israel-Palestine is a long way from the politics of the international Trotskyist movement on this question in the

1920s, '30s and '40s — when Israel was established — as the documents assembled here, mainly from the late 1940s, show. Looking back you can see some of the roots of what exists now, but you also see a great deal more. What changed in the '60s and early '70s, obviously, was Israel's victory over the Arab states in the Six-Day War of 1967, and its occupation of the whole of pre-1948 Palestine.

The UN partition plan of 1947, under which Israel came into existence, had provided for two states in Palestine, one for the Arabs. The territory of that projected Palestinian state was taken by Egypt, Jordan, and, marginally, Israel, in 1948-9. After June 1967 Israel controlled it all, and for forty years now has been the brutal colonial master of the Palestinian people.

The rectification of this terrible situation calls for the realisation, even 60 years too late, of the UN's 1947 resolution — two states for the two peoples. It is the rational response to the oppression of the Palestinians, as well as being the only remotely practicable one, and the only way to do something like justice to both the Palestinian and Jewish peoples. You may think that. Most reasonable people do. Not the kitsch left! While trading, in its agitation and propaganda, on justified humanitarian outrage at the suffering of the Palestinians, it rejects the only policy that could bring relief to the Palestinians! Maximum outrage combines here with maximum indifference to the Palestinian people.

Before and after World War I, revolutionary socialists opposed the Zionist project, but they did not side with the reactionaries, still less with the then equivalent of today's clerical fascists, of the Arab world, against the Zionists. They defended the right of Jews to go to Palestine, as to anywhere else (see the 1929 article by Max Shachtman in this collection).

Then, in 1929-30, the Communist International, which at first had characterised the

Arab pogroms against Jews in Palestine as... pogroms, switched their "line" and decided, that since this was a period, the "Third Period", where everywhere capitalism was giving way to revolution, the pogroms must be part of the world-wide anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist upsurge. They came out unrestrainedly for the "anti-Imperialist" pogromists. It was the start of what is today the "anti-Zionist" "Anti-Imperialism" held to by most "Trotskyists".

It was tragically reminiscent of the response of the heroic Russian terrorists of the Narodnaya Volya, who had just assassinated the Tsar, to the anti-Semitic pogroms of 1881. They had hoped by their spectacular assassination to detonate the people against the aristocracy — and lo, here the people were rising. The pogroms were therefore welcome evidence that "the people" were responding to the Narodniks. They were honest, though very confused, people. The Stalinists were cynical manipulators who, in the 1930s, '40s and '50s — with a short break in the late 1940s, when they backed the formation of Israel, in order to make trouble for the British Empire — would fill the labour movement with their own poisonous brand of anti-Semitic "anti-Zionism. What is now "Trotskyism" on the Israeli-Arab conflict.

The most striking thing about the late 1940s documents of the "Orthodox Trotskyists" collected here is that in the 1948 war — in which Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and others greeted the declaration of Israel by a full scale invasion — they do not support the Arabs. They tell the truth about the political nature of the Arab forces: they consider that a matter of consequence in shaping their attitude towards the war. Political fantasy did not lead them to see in Arab feudalists, still less in clerical fascists such as the Muslim Brotherhood, "objectively" anti-imperialist revolutionaries.

The "Heterodox Trotskyists" — those like Max

Shachtman, Albert Glotzer and Hal Draper, who had fallen out with Trotsky in 1939-40 over Russia's invasion of Finland — denounced Zionism but supported Israel's right to exist and to defend itself. Some other Trotskyists in Europe had supported Irgun's guerrilla war against the British.

Even so, you can see some of the roots of later developments in the Trotskyist attitude of 1948. The Jews supported the partition of Palestine. The Orthodox Trotskyists' refusal to endorse their right to self-determination, was in this situation, though none of them backed the Arab states, a pro-Arab attitude. (Curiously, it parallels the implicitly anti-Palestinian position now of those "anti-Zionists" who reject the two state solution). Why they did this was spelled out in a polemical article of 1946, by Tony Cliff, the late founder of the British SWP. Arguing in an internal bulletin of the US organisation, he wrote: "we are sure that acceptance by the SWP (of anything less than stark hostility to Israel) will do infinite harm to the cause of the Fourth International in all the Arab countries and may even bring about a cleavage between the colonial sections and the SWP".

The "line" was to be determined not by political right and wrong, not by basic working class socialist politics, but by the consideration of how it would "play" in the Arab countries. In effect he says that the Trotskyists dare not recognise national rights for the Jewish Palestinians. That approach then inhibited logical support for Jewish national rights. Today, the same approach has eaten away the political brain and backbone of those "Trotskyists" who, in the name of "anti-Imperialism", ally with some of the most reactionary forces on the planet. We publish these documents to help young people miseducated by the kitsch-Trotskyists get their political bearings.

Sean Matgamna

1. Fourth International statement: Draft Theses on the Jewish Question

THESE Draft Theses were produced by the International Secretariat of the Fourth International in January 1947, and probably written by Ernest Mandel. The first part summarises the historical analyses of Jewry and anti-semitism developed by Abram Leon in his book *The Jewish Question*, and assesses Zionism and anti-semitism in 1946-7.

Forty years of hindsight reveal many flaws in the document. It underestimates capitalism's ability to revive; it overestimates the force of Arab nationalism; it underestimates the strength of the Zionist drive for a Jewish state. But on many questions of basic attitude and approach the document is a valuable check on today's debates on the left.

What is striking is not what it has in common with today's "left", but how radically it differs. The document opposes Zionism. But its arguments are entirely different from those used by typical kitsch-left anti-Zionists today.

The Jewish question in the capitalist world

1 As a trading people, whose survival in the midst of other peoples has been rooted in a particular social function, the Jews have seen their fate determined across the ages by the general evolution of society, an evolution which changed their relations with the different classes.

The bourgeois revolution in Western Europe opened the gates of the ghettos and integrated the Jewish masses into the society around them. The assimilation of the Jews seemed to be decided. But the countries of central and eastern Europe, the greatest reservoirs of Jews who had been pigeon-holed for centuries in the role of economic intermediaries, entered on the path of capitalist development at the same time as world capitalism had already entered its imperialist phase.

While the old relations of exchange and production were rapidly overturned, taking away from the Jews the material basis of their existence, there was no massive industrialisation allowing these millions of intermediaries who had become redundant to become integrated into the proletariat. The social differentiation of the Jewish masses was thus hindered. Only a small part of the Jews became capitalist or proletarian; a bigger part emigrated, thus counteracting the tendency towards complete assimilation which was operating in the western countries. The great majority remained in a miserable condition as small traders, "crushed between feudalism and capitalism, the decay of one augmenting the decay of the other" (A. Leon).

2 The anti-semitic movements of the past always had a direct or indirect social base. They were movements of different social classes whose interests came successively into conflict with the social function of the Jew. It was the same with the revival which anti-semitism experienced around the beginning of the 20th century.

a) In the underdeveloped countries of Eastern Europe, reactionary political forces succeeded in diverting the discontent and despair of the masses towards periodic pogroms because the hatred of the poor towards the Jewish small moneylender, pawnbroker, small trader and inn-keeper was an undeniable social reality.

b) In the countries of central Europe, anti-semitic movements like that of mayor Lüger in Vienna found their social roots in the sharpening of the competition within the commercial and professional middle classes which were submerged by a tide of Jewish immigrants.

c) In France, the anti-semitic movement which was unleashed at the time of the Dreyfus affair found its social origin in the hatred of the aristocracy for the Jewish bankers who bought up their chateaux, and of the aristocrats' sons who saw the careers which until then had been 'reserved' for them occupied by these dangerous competitors.

These social layers succeeded in directing against the Jews, for a certain period, the embittered nationalist feelings of a large part of the petty bourgeoisie.

Having their roots in determinate social conflicts, these different anti-semitic movements appeared with very diverse manifestations, from phenomena of the crudest barbarism (the Russian pogroms) to the formulation of 'refined' nationalist theories characteristic of the imperialist epoch (Charles Maurras).

3 The social possibilities of the assimilation of Jews in Western Europe had created a powerful ideological movement towards total assimilation.

The impossibility of a massive assimilation of Jews in Eastern Europe gave rise to a powerful current in favour of a national renaissance and the conservation of national peculiarities. In the midst of strong concentrations of Jewish people, in Poland, in Lithuania, in western Russia, in Hungary, in Romania, and in Slovakia, there developed a new literature in Yiddish, a new folklore, an intense cultural life and even an autonomous political life (the "Bund" in the workers' movement).

To the extent that the Jewish masses who had emigrated to the United States found themselves socially pigeon-holed in determinate sectors of economic life, and geographically

concentrated, this movement was extended to that country.

Lenin, who alone in the Second International knew how to apply a Marxist strategy to the national question, rejected all pedantry in his assessment of this current. He started from the viewpoint that the task of the revolutionary party was to integrate into the movement of proletarian emancipation all the currents of national and cultural autonomy which corresponded to the genuine aspirations of the working masses. That is why he recognised the legitimacy, from a socialist point of view, of this Jewish movement as much as of the Polish or Czech movement.

The task of the Jewish workers was to fight side by side with the workers of the countries where they lived, for the overthrow of capitalism, after which complete liberty would be granted to them to organise things for their national and cultural autonomy according to their choice.

4 The epoch of decaying capitalism is also the epoch of the aggravated crisis of the Jewish problem. Inflation, increased pressure from banking capital, and then the great economic crisis, ruin millions of small tradespeople and shopkeepers, and raise their hatred against Jewish competitors to extremes. The terrible unemployment among intellectual workers, and the increased poverty of the liberal professions in central and eastern Europe, create a particularly favourable climate for the appearance of huge mass petty bourgeois movements, which make anti-semitism one of their ideological weapons.

In the countries of Eastern Europe, these movements reflect an extremely profound popular current, which expresses itself in numerous bloody explosions.

In Germany the state power, which had fallen into the hands of the Nazi leaders, organised from above the persecution and, later, the extermination of the Jews. In this sense it was decaying capitalism which consciously put power into the hands of a band of bloody criminals, and is fully responsible for the terrible fate of the Jewish masses in Europe during the war.

The extermination of the European Jews by German imperialism is a warning for all the other peoples, showing them the fate which awaits them if present-day society continues to rot.

5 Zionism was born in the Jewish petty bourgeoisie of Central Europe, as a reaction to the rise of anti-semitism at the beginning of the 20th century.

It was a typically petty-bourgeois movement, and for a long time it remained without aid from the Jewish bourgeoisie and isolated from the popular masses. In the course of the First World War, British imperialism, wanting to use Zionism as an instrument to install itself in Palestine, seemed to give it the possibility of becoming a reality, through the Balfour Declaration. After that, a slight inflow of capital and immigration began.

It was not until after Hitler's coming to power, and the rapid descent into the abyss of all European Jewry, that these two flows accelerated, though at the same time they were hindered by Arab nationalist explosions and by the policy of British imperialism, which was erecting more and more barriers to Jewish penetration in Palestine.

For the revolutionary proletariat, Zionism should be considered as both an *utopian* and a *reactionary* movement.

Utopian:

a) Because it considers possible a "harmonious" development of the productive forces in a "closed economy" in Palestine, in the middle of a capitalist world which is subject to greater and greater economic convulsions. The tremendous development of the Palestinian economy which would be necessary to allow the absorption of several million immigrants is unrealisable in the framework of the present-day world capitalist economy.

b) Because it considers possible the creation of a Jewish (or binational) state in the midst of the avowed hostility of 50 million Arabs, although Jewish immigration and the progressive industrialisation of the country develop the Arab population in the same proportion.

c) Because it hopes to obtain this result by relying on manoeuvres between the great powers, which in reality all only want to use the Zionist movement as a pawn in their power politics in the Arab world.

d) Because it thinks it can neutralise anti-semitism in the world just by granting a nationality to the Jews, although this anti-semitism has deep social, historical and ideological roots, which will be all the more difficult to tear up as the agony of capitalism prolongs itself.

Reactionary:

a) Because it serves as a support for British imperialist domination, giving imperialism the pretext of serving as an "arbiter" of the Jewish Arab disputes, itself demanding the maintenance of the British mandate, and developing a miniature "closed" Jewish economy whose working masses have a much higher standard of living than, and different immediate interests from, the Arab working masses.

b) Because it provokes a nationalist reaction on the part of the Arab masses, causes a racial division in the workers' movement, reinforces the "holy alliance" of classes among both Jews and Arabs, and thus allows imperialism to perpetuate this conflict, as a means to perpetuate the presence of troops in Palestine.

c) Because it slows down the movement for agrarian revolution by buying land from the Arab landowners and developing it, thanks to foreign subsidies, as "closed" Jewish agriculture in the midst of Palestinian Arab agriculture. Thus the position of the landowners is somewhat reinforced, land is taken away from the Arab peasants, and, most important, the Jewish masses of Palestine have no interest in fighting for the division of the land of the "effendis" among the Arab peasants, because such division would mean the end of their land purchases.

d) Because it puts a brake on the participation of the Jewish working-class masses in the class struggle in the rest of the world, gives them autonomous aims to achieve, and creates illusions in the possibility of improving their condition in the framework of decaying world capitalism.

For all these reasons, the revolutionary workers' movement has always waged a sharp struggle against Zionist ideology and practice. The arguments that the "socialist" representatives of Zionism advance in favour of their case are either classic reformist arguments ("the possibility of improving the situation of the Jewish masses bit by bit...") or social-patriotic arguments ("the national question for all Jews must first be resolved before undertaking the solution of social problems for the Jewish workers"), or the classic arguments of defenders of imperialism ("the penetration of Jews in Palestine has not only developed industry, but also the workers' movement, the general culture of the masses, their standard of living, etc."), arguments advanced by the defenders of colonialism in every country.

How the Jewish question presents itself in the world today

6 After the Second World War, the particularly tragic situation of the Jews seems to be a symbol for the whole tragedy of humanity sliding towards barbarism.

After the terrible catastrophe of European Jewry, the Jews everywhere face a renewal of popular hostility towards them.

a) In Europe, two years after the "liberation", more than 100,000 Jews continue to suffer the most infamous regime in the camps; the imperialist masters who in the course of their military operations managed to move millions of people in a few days, have not been able to find any refuge for these unfortunate survivors of the Nazi camps after 20 months of searching. In the rest of the continent, there are scarcely a million Jews remaining.

b) In Palestine, 700,000 Jews face an Arab world in ferment. The development of Egyptian and Syrian capitalism adds the factor of economic competition to the multiple causes of militant anti-Zionism. British imperialism and the Arab feudalists and bourgeois, for their part, will do all they can to divert the hatred of the oppressed Arab masses against the Jewish scapegoat. Thus the Palestinian Jews risk being exterminated in the general explosion which is brewing in the Middle East.

c) In the USSR, the bureaucracy used in its struggle against the opposition the anti-semitism which remained latent in the peasant masses and the backward sections of the working class. In western Russia they make up the part of the bureaucracy which is most directly in contact with the oppressed masses, and thus the masses' hatred against the parasites and profiteers of the regime is largely focused on them.

The bloody pogroms unleashed by the indigenous population at the time of the German invasion are very clear indices of the sharpening of this hatred (70,000 Jews killed in Kiev within 24 hours). A sharpening of the social crisis in Russia, and the purging of civil war, will certainly mean the extermination of the Jewish masses if the counter-revolution triumphs.

d) Finally, in the United States, the pigeon-holing of Jews into determinate sectors of the trades, commerce, and liberal professions, will create at the next violent economic crisis the sharpening of competition which will give a powerful material base to anti-semitism, which is already present in latent form.

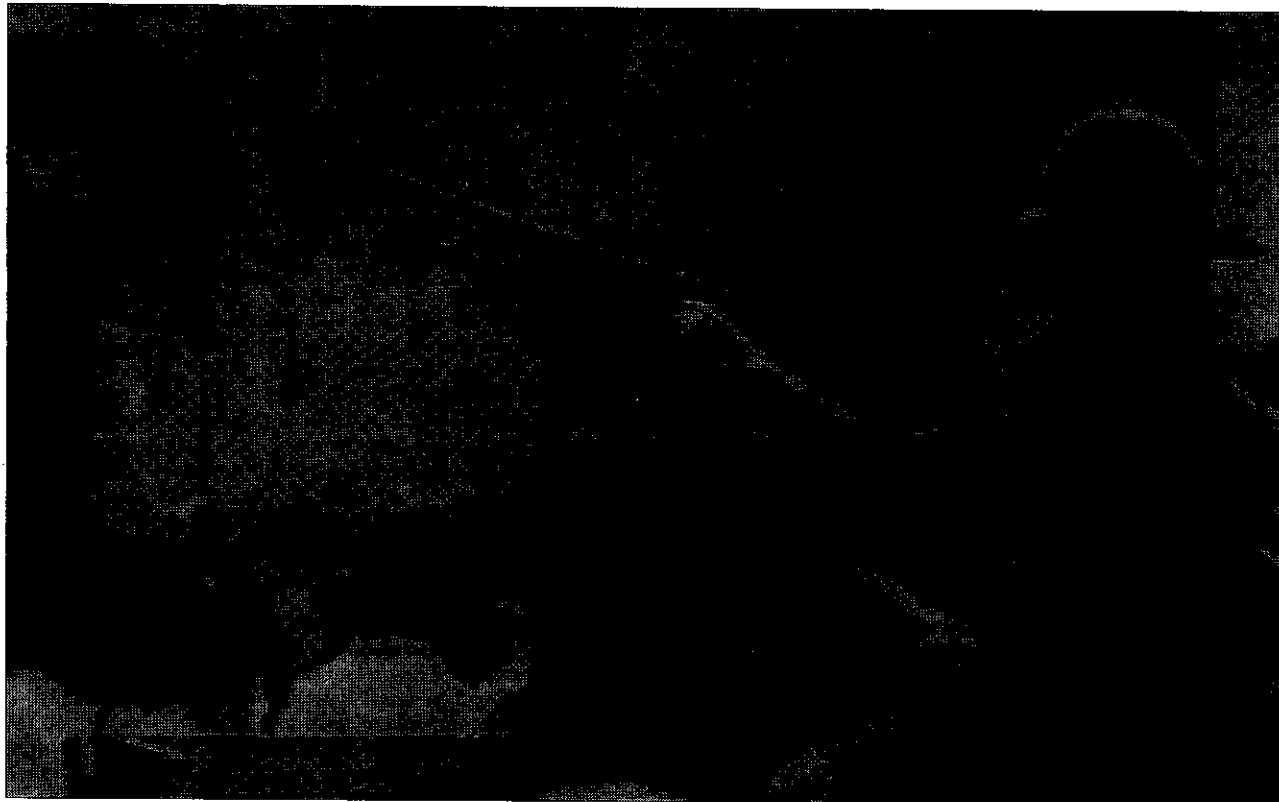
The fate of the Jews in the United States is intimately linked to the outcome of the gigantic struggle of the American working class and the Yankee bourgeoisie. A victory of the latter, through the establishment of a dictatorship, will mean, in the short term, a catastrophe comparable only to the catastrophe which Hitler's coming to power was for the Jews of Europe.

7 The interminable series of sufferings through which the Jewish masses of Europe have passed have without doubt sharpened the development of a national consciousness, both among the survivors and among the Jewish masses of America and Palestine who feel most closely tied to the fate of their brothers in Europe.

This national consciousness expresses itself in the following way:

a) The Jewish masses in general now wish to affirm their own nationality as against other peoples. A violent Jewish nationalism responds to the violence of persecutions and anti-semitism.

b) The Jewish masses in Europe have their eyes turned towards emigration. Given the hermetic closure of all frontiers, following from general world conditions postwar, and in line with the wave of nationalism which carries them away, this wish to leave the continent of Europe, which for them is just a huge cemetery, expresses itself above all in a Zionist drive to



British soldier on patrol in Palestine

go to Palestine.

c) Inside the Zionist movement the struggle for "the Jewish state", formerly waged exclusively by the far right ("the revisionists"), is now taken up by all the parties ("Biltmore Programme") except the centrist party Hashomer Hatzair.

The rebirth of the national consciousness of the masses is a result of the decay of capitalism, which is putting into question once again all the problems solved in its period of upswing. Basing itself firmly on its programme and on a scientific analysis of the situation in Palestine, but considering at the same time the real state of the consciousness of the Jewish masses, the Fourth International should recognise as legitimate their wish to develop their own national existence. It should show concretely that gaining this national existence is unrealisable in decaying capitalist society, and especially unrealisable and reactionary in Palestine. It should show that for the Jews as for all the other peoples of the world, the defence or the definitive conquest of their own nationality cannot be got by means of the construction of "closed" states and economies, but that the planned socialist world economy constitutes the only realistic framework in which a free and undistorted development of peoples is now possible. The Fourth International should make the Jewish masses aware of the terrible catastrophes awaiting them if the decay of capitalism continues. Only the integration of the movement for Jewish emancipation into the world workers' movement will allow a harmonious solution of the Jewish question. Socialist planning "turning the topography of the world upside down" (Trotsky) will guarantee all those who want it a special national existence in the framework of the United States of the World.

8 But the Fourth International will never win a decisive influence among the Jewish masses just by preaching the necessity of the socialist revolution for their emancipation.

Only by taking the lead in a vast world movement of solidarity by the proletariat for the victims of imperialist and fascist persecution; only in showing the Jews in practice that the solutions proposed by the revolutionary movement are more favourable and more realistic than the Zionist "solution", will the Fourth International succeed, at the next turn of events, in bringing the Jewish masses into the world anti-imperialist struggle. To go against the Zionist current now; to counterpose to it another immediate and concrete way out: such are the two indispensable elements to prepare for the next stage: when the Jewish masses have gone through the experience of being deceived by Zionism, when they have understood the pointlessness of their efforts and their sacrifices, they will turn towards us on condition that we are able as from now to offer them our solutions as well as an implacable criticism of Zionism.

a) All sections of the Fourth International should put forward the slogan, "Open the gates of all countries to the Jewish refugees!", "Abolition of all immigration controls". This slogan should be defended most specially by the SWP of the United States on the one hand, and by our British, Canadian, French and all Latin American sections on the other. These latter, as well as our Australian section, and in particular the sections of Argentina and Brazil, should add to these slogans the demand: "Abolition of all racial and religious discrimination in immigration laws".

Every concrete opportunity (complaints about the lack of labour and the decline of the population; partial opening of the country for certain categories of immigrants; acts of commemoration for the victims of fascism...) should be used to arouse the working-class public opinion of the country and to demand the launching of concrete actions with a view to getting immediate results. It is only to the extent that our sections are able to prove to the Jews that they are really and effectively struggling for the opening of their own countries to immigration that they will be able to get them to prefer immigration to those countries to immigration to Palestine, which is harder to achieve and also constitutes an act contrary to the vital interests of the anti-imperialist masses of the Middle East.

b) All the sections of the Fourth International should seriously set about the task of fighting the rot of anti-semitism which remains or is developing in large sections of the popu-

lation in all countries.

At every concrete opportunity, our sections should destroy the fascist lies about "Jewish capitalism" or "Jewish monopolists". They should systematically rouse up the mass proletarian organisations against every attempt to reconstruct the anti-semitic organisations. Using the tragic examples of recent years, they should imbue the consciousness of the masses with this fundamental truth, that their own fate is at stake in the struggle against anti-semitic gangsterism.

It is only to the extent that our sections get this truth absorbed by the masses and translated by them into action that they will convince the Jews that only the integration of their movement of emancipation into the world workers' movement will put them in a position to defend themselves effectively against new waves of anti-semitism.

c) All sections of the Fourth International that confront an organised fascist movement thoroughly using anti-semitic demagoguery and going over to terrorist actions against the Jews, should try to mobilise the working class in armed formations (militias ...) for the defence of the Jews. Where the Jewish population is concentrated in Jewish quarters, they should propose and favour the creation of armed self-defence militias while trying to fuse them with the workers' militias. They should explain to the Jewish masses that only this fusion in armed struggle can guarantee effective defence; but at the same time they should warn the workers that only an armed defence of the Jews will prevent the same fascist armies crushing the whole workers' movement at a later stage.

The Palestine problem today

9 The Palestine problem has gained a new and special importance since the end of the Second World War as a result of a series of "new factors" which are changing its face profoundly.

a) The industrialisation of the Near and Middle East has to a certain extent bolstered up the native Arab bourgeoisies in Egypt, in Palestine itself, in Syria, in Lebanon, and to a lesser extent in other Arab countries. The social differentiation of the old feudal and patriarchal Arab society has accelerated. An Arab proletariat, much more powerful numerically and already conscious politically, has appeared on the political scene in several countries of the Middle East (strikes in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Iran and Iraq).

Arab nationalism is being differentiated in the same way. Alongside feudal and reactionary pan-Islamism, there now appears a progressive pan-Arab current which sees the creation of a Union of the Arab countries of the Middle East as the only real framework for the development of the productive forces and for the constitution of an Arab nation. The bourgeoisie can only defend this idea in a hesitant way on the ideological level, to the extent that it wants an expansion of the market for its industry which, since the end of the war, has been plunged into a profound crisis. The only force capable of realising this programme of the national democratic revolution of the Arab world is the proletariat, which alone is capable of pushing through, by the mechanism of the permanent revolution, the struggle against feudalism for agrarian reform, for the emancipation of the Arab world from imperialist intervention, and for the constitution of the unity of the Arab world.

b) The transformation of Palestine into the cornerstone of the system of imperial defence in the Eastern Mediterranean. After the withdrawal of British troops from Egypt, Palestine will be the main base for the British fleet, airforce, army and secret services in the Eastern Mediterranean, the cornerstone of the defence of the Suez Canal and the imperial route to India. The strong concentrations of British troops in Palestine just use the terrorist troubles as a pretext. In reality, for British imperialism it is a matter of constructing a durable base with a view to future military conflicts and the defence of the Empire.

c) The transformation of the Middle East into one of the main items at stake between the "three big powers". Before the war the Middle East was the sector of the world where the predominant influence of British imperialism was least threatened. Since then, Rommel's advance to El Alamein, the installation of American "observers" in the kingdom of Ibn Saud, the unleashing of the Anglo-American dispute over Iranian oil,

the penetration of the Orthodox Church throughout the Middle East as a major agency of Kremlin diplomacy — all these developments have put exclusive British domination in question in this part of the world and transformed it into an area of constant conflicts between the great powers. Since, besides, the Middle East has the world's most untapped and greatest oil reserves; it is also becoming, in the present period, the main area of dispute in the world struggle for this strategic raw material, of which the US's and the USSR's reserves are severely reduced. The various "tactical" moves of American and Soviet diplomacy in relation to the Zionist movement should be seen essentially as elements of their intrigues aiming to replace British domination in the Arab world.

d) The demand for immigration to Palestine is put forward by the mass of Jewish refugees in Europe, and supported by a powerful protest movement by American Zionism, culminating in the "peaceful" actions undertaken by the Haganah in Palestine, as well as the terrorism of the "Irgun Zvei Leumi" and "Stern" gangs.

10 The starting point of the position of the Fourth International on the Palestine problem must be the understanding of the necessity of the anti-imperialist struggle waged by the Arabs, to which it gives the objective of the constitution of the Union of the Arab countries of the Middle East.

It is the Arab masses, the workers and the poor peasants, who constitute the revolutionary force in the Middle East and also in Palestine, thanks to their numbers, their social conditions, and their material life, which puts them directly in conflict with imperialism. The revolutionary party must base itself in the first place on the dynamics of the class struggle, waged for the defence of their interests. Developing as the Arab proletariat grows and becomes stronger, the Middle East section of the Fourth International constituted on the basis of the existing nuclei in Palestine and Egypt, should lead the actions of the masses for the defence of their daily interests, raise working-class consciousness to an understanding of the necessity of political action, and work to forge an alliance of all the exploited around the revolutionary proletariat through the struggle for the following four basic demands:

a) Immediate withdrawal of British troops. Complete independence for Palestine.

b) Immediate convocation of a single sovereign Constituent Assembly.

c) Expropriation of the land of the effendis and administration of the expropriated land by committees of poor peasants.

d) Expropriation of all enterprises owned by foreign capital, and workers' management of nationalised enterprises.

It is through the struggle for these four main central objectives that the revolutionary party will educate the masses on the necessity of more and more opposition to the Arab bourgeoisie, which is closely tied to the effendis. When the mass struggle reaches its climax, when worker and peasant committees cover the Middle East and the question of the seizure of power by the Arab proletariat is on the agenda, the revolutionary party will have educated the masses sufficiently to lead them also to the expropriation of the "national" bourgeoisie.

11 Can these four objectives be realised at the present stage in a common struggle by the Arab masses and the Jewish working class masses?

To reply to this question, one must start not from abstract schemas, but from the social and ideological reality of Jewish life in Palestine. Apart from a few thousand Jewish workers employed on the railways, in the IPC, at the refinery and in the docks, the whole Jewish industrial and agricultural proletariat is employed in closed Jewish industry, working with constant inflows of foreign capital and guaranteeing the Jewish workers a much higher standard of living than the Arab workers. Besides, the Jewish community in Palestine lives in constant fear of an Arab uprising and in face of this danger puts all its hopes in continual immigration and in the maintenance of the British occupation. We can thus observe more particularly:

a) Far from wanting the immediate withdrawal of the British forces of occupation, the Jewish masses, on the contrary, want them to stay in the country. The only thing that the Zionist leaders, bourgeois and worker alike, do demand is concessions on immigration and the setting-up of a Jewish state. But the overwhelming majority of the Jews of Palestine (in the first place, the "Haganah") are ready to "act" against imperialism only to the extent that such "action" does not endanger the fundamental "security" of the Jewish community in relation to the Arab world. That is why an armed struggle, or even widespread sabotage action, undertaken by the Jewish masses is more or less excluded at the present stage. The aim of the current Zionist action is only to apply pressure on British imperialism to get concessions, and not to push for its expulsion from Palestine.

The terrorist movement and the so-called "Hebrew committee of national liberation" do pose the objective of the expulsion of British imperialism from Palestine. But they can conceive of this expulsion only in the form of a general arming of the Jews of Palestine, who would hold the Arab world in check until such time as massive immigration by Jews would make them militarily capable of opposing the "Arab threat". Quite apart from the utterly utopian character of these views, they are ultra-reactionary and can only further widen the gulf which separates the Jewish and Arab workers in Palestine.

b) All the Jews of Palestine oppose the immediate convocation of a Constituent Assembly which would put power into the hands of the majority of the population, which is Arab.

The terrorists claim to fight for a free, independent and democratic Palestine. But, being the most fervent partisans of a "Jewish state", they too must find a subterfuge to deny sovereignty to the majority of the population of the country.

c) The Jews have no interest in the expropriation of the effendis, since this expropriation would in practice deny them

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any possibility of buying new land and expanding their "closed Jewish economy" in Palestine.

d) They are even more bitterly opposed to the expropriation of the enterprises built with foreign capital and to the closing of the country to the import of capital, because this would be a mortal blow to their Jewish economy. All this leads to the conclusion that at the present stage the Jewish masses of Palestine, as a whole, are not an anti-imperialist force, and that the constitution of a Jewish-Arab anti-imperialist bloc cannot be a slogan for immediate agitation.

12 The question of Jewish immigration in Palestine must be looked at in the light of these considerations. As long as the two economies, Jewish and Arab, are separate economies in Palestine, the Arab working population will consider each new influx of Jewish immigrants as an act of open hostility. When the whole population of Palestine lives with the perspective of the explosion of a bloody conflict in the Middle East, the Arab masses are bound to consider the arrival of new immigrants as the arrival of enemy soldiers, and besides that is confirmed by the way the Jewish masses see this immigration. That is why it is necessary to be aware of the fact that the continuation of Jewish immigration in Palestine widens the gulf between Jewish and Arab workers, strengthens the position and perpetuates the presence of British imperialism, and can only pave the way for the complete extermination of the Jewish minority at the next stage, in the Arab uprising.

If, therefore, the Fourth International should do all it can to warn Jewish refugees against emigration to Palestine; if, in the framework of a world movement of solidarity, it should try to get the doors of other countries opened to them, and warn them that Palestine is a veritable death-trap for them, in its concrete propaganda on the question of Jewish immigration it should start from the question of the sovereignty of the Arab population. Only this Arab population has the right to determine whether or not immigration to Palestine should be open or closed to Jews. The question of immigration should be decided by the Constituent Assembly, elected by all the inhabitants of the country aged 18 and over. Such is the only democratic position on this problem, a position which also fits into the framework of the general strategy of the revolution in the Middle East.

In consequence, the Fourth International should condemn and fight British repression of Jewish immigration, denounce all the police measures, and counterpose concretely on each occasion

the demand for the immediate withdrawal of the British troops. It is not difficult to explain to the Arab masses that this limited imperialist repression against the Jews is only preparation for much more violent repression against future Arab movements.

Likewise the Fourth International should oppose all the "solutions" which imperialism is proposing and may implement with or without the aid of its agents in the Jewish Agency. These solutions, such as the partition of Palestine, limited immigration of 100,000 Jews, or the handing-over of the mandate to the UN, all have the aim of perpetuating the presence of British troops in the country and still deny to the majority of the population its right to decide its own future.

13 At the present stage, general unity between Jews and Arabs in Palestine is unrealisable: only on a very limited scale, and to the extent that a section of the Jewish workers is employed outside the "closed" Jewish economy, have Jewish-Arab strikes like those of the last year been able to happen.

But that does not mean that this unity is ruled out for all time. At present the Jewish population of Palestine has bent all its efforts towards the strengthening of its autonomous economic and political positions.

The current wave of terrorism by the "Irgun Zvei Leumi" and "Stern" gangs constitutes acts of despair by this minority, used and then abandoned by the bourgeois leaders of the Zionist movement, and coming from the impasse into which the whole movement has strayed. Of course, this terrorism of despair does not in itself constitute the path to a solution to the Palestine problem. Quite the contrary. In the face of the terrorism, the Arab feudalists and bourgeois can manage to create an atmosphere of artificial "solidarity" between the masses and imperialism, and sharpen the hostility between Arab and Jewish workers. From the military point of view, these acts can only accelerate the establishment of an alien British police force in Palestine, which is the aim of the whole post-war imperial policy.

Eventual unity between Jews and Arabs should first come through the abolition of all racist ideology and practice on the part of the Jews.

* Down with exclusively Jewish enterprises! For the hiring of Arab workers in all the industry of the country!

* Down with separate Jewish and Arab trade unions! For the setting up of Jewish-Arab trade unions!

* Down with the camouflaged boycott of Arab or Jewish products. Down with the "closed Jewish economy"! For the mutual integration of the Jewish and Arab economies.

* Down with the idea of a "Jewish state" imposed on the majority of the population of the country! For the elimination of Zionist ideas from the workers' movement! For the integration of the Jewish workers into the movement of the national-democratic revolution of the Arab masses.

* For a break by the Jewish trade unions and workers' organisations from the Jewish Agency, and the full publication of all the secret minutes of this organism.

* For a break by the Arab trade unions and workers' organisations from the Arab League and the Arab High Committee for Palestine, and the full publication of all the secret minutes of these organisms.

All these slogans, which can only be defended at present as slogans of general propaganda, necessarily come up against bitter opposition from the Zionists, not only for ideological reasons but also and above all because the privileged material situation of the Jews in relation to the Arabs is thereby put in question. But to the extent that the collapse of Zionism becomes more and more evident in the eyes of the masses, to the extent that immigration slows down and the extreme danger of the Arab explosion comes closer; to the extent that our propaganda helps the masses to realise that it is a question of life and death for them to find a basis of agreement with the Arab masses, even at the cost of a temporary abandonment of certain privileges — our slogans will be able to go from the propagandist level to the level of agitation, and will be able to encourage a split between the workers' movement and Zionism. That is the condition sine qua non for achieving Jewish-Arab unity of action against imperialism, and it is the only way to stop the Arab revolution in the Middle East proceeding over the corpse of Palestinian Jewry. Here, as among the Jewish masses in the rest of the world, a firm position against the current at the present stage is the only way to prepare a reversing of the current at the next stage.

It also implies the need for the sections of the Fourth International to carry on preparatory propaganda work inside the far-left Zionist organisations. By showing that the slogan of a "bi-national state" is a nationalist and anti-democratic slogan, going against both the right of peoples to self-determination and the immediate needs of the anti-imperialist struggle in Palestine, our militants should at the same time put on the agenda, on each occasion, the question of the concrete realisation of the slogan of Jewish-Arab unity. They should put the centrist leaders up against their responsibilities, put on the agenda the adoption of the anti-racial programme detailed above, and thus accelerate the development of the Jewish working-class vanguard beyond Zionism.

2. Revolutionary Communist League of Palestine: Partition in Palestine

THE statement printed here was an editorial in the Hebrew language publication *Kol Ham'amad (Voice of the Class)* of the Revolutionary Communist League of Palestine, a section of the Fourth International.

The translation appeared in *Fourth International* in May 1948, the magazine of the SWP USA, led at that time by James P Cannon.

An editorial introduction denounced the UN partition plan for Palestine, "which stifles the rising tide of class struggle in Palestine, blurs class lines and creates an atmosphere of antagonistic 'national unity' in both of the national communities in Palestine." Because of the "national hysteria in both camps", the Communist Party of Palestine had split into two national sections.

POLITICIANS and diplomats are still trying to find a formula for the disastrous situation into which Palestine has been plunged by the UNO deciding upon partition. Is this a "breach of international peace" or are we dealing with merely "hostile acts"? As far as we are concerned there is no point in this distinction. We are daily witnessing the killing or maiming of men and women, old and young, Jew or Arab. As always, the working masses and the poor suffer most.

Not so very long ago the Arab and Jewish workers were united in strikes against a foreign oppressor. This common struggle has been put to an end. Today the workers are being incited to kill each other. The inciters have succeeded.

"The British want to frustrate partition by means of Arab terrorism", explain the Zionists. As if this communal strife were not the very instrument by which partition is brought about! It was easy for the imperialists to foresee that and well may they be satisfied with the course of events.

What axe have Bevin-Churchill to grind?

Britain was a loser in the last world war. She has lost the bulk of her foreign assets. Her industry is lagging behind. Building up her productive apparatus requires dollars and manpower.

"Keeping order" in Palestine costs England over 35 million pounds a year, an amount which exceeds the profit she can extort from this country. Partition will release her from her financial obligations, and enable her to employ her soldiers in the productive process while her source of income will remain intact. But this is not all. By partition a wedge is driven between the Arab and Jewish workers. The Zionist state with its provocative lines of demarcation will bring about the blossoming forth of irredentist (revenge) movements on either side, there will be fighting for an "Arab Palestine" and for a "Jewish state within the historic frontiers of Eretz Israel (Israel's Land)". As a result the chauvin-

istic atmosphere created thus will poison the Arab world in the Middle East and throttle the anti-imperialist fight of the masses, while Zionists and Arab feudalists will vie for imperialist favours.

The price Britain has to pay for the advantages gained by partition is to renounce her ruling monopoly in this country. On the other hand, Wall Street has to come out into the open and contribute its share toward the foul business of safeguarding imperialist positions. This, of course, blackens the "democratic" reputation of the dollar state while at the same time it adds to the prestige of Great Britain. Partition, therefore is a compromise between the imperialist robbers arising from a changed power constellation.

If the Anglo-American imperialists had forced this "solution" on Palestine of their own, the rotten game would have been patent in the whole Arab East. However, they dodged: the "problem" was passed on to the UNO. The function of the UNO was to sweeten the bitter dish cooked in the imperialist cuisine, dressing it, in Bevin's words, with the twaddle of the "conscience of the world that has passed judgement". Exactly. And the diplomats of the lesser countries danced to the tune of the dollar flute, reiterating the "public opinion of the world". And the peculiar casts in this performance enabled Great Britain to appear as the Guardian Angel overflowing with sympathy for either side.

And the Soviet Union? Why did not her representatives call the UNO game the swindle it really is? Apparently the present policy of the SU is not concerned with the fighting of the colonial masses. And as the Palestine question is a second-rate affair for the "Big", the Soviet diplomats saw fit to dwell upon what Stalin had said about "the Soviet Union being ready to meet America and Britain halfway, economic and social differences not withstanding".

This is how the UNO has "solved" the Palestine problem. Yet it is the same unsavoury dish that has been set for India, Greece and Indochina.

What do Jews stand to gain by partition?

THE Zionists were overcome with a sense of triumph when offered the bone by the UNO cooks. "Our world, our righteous case has been won... before the forum of the nations".

The Zionists have been in the habit of asking "justice" from the enemies of the Jewish people ever since Herzl: from the Tsar, the German Kaiser, the British imperialists, Wall Street. Now they saw their chance. Wall Street is distributing loans and "political independence". Of course, not for nothing. The price has to be paid in blood.

The Jewish state, this gift of Truman's and Bevin's, gives the capitalist economy of the Zionists a respite. This economy rests on very flimsy foundations. Its products cannot compete on the

world market. Its only hope is the inner market from which the Arab goods are debarred. Thus the problem of a Jewish immigration has come to be a problem of live or die.

Who is going to foot the bill?

THE workers and the poor. They will have to pay the stiff prices following the ban on Arab goods. They will break down under the yoke of numberless taxes, direct and indirect. They will have to cover the deficit of the Jewish state. They are living in the open, having no roof over their heads, while these institutions have "more important business" to attend to.

The Jewish worker having been separated from his Arab colleague and prevented from fighting a common class struggle will be at the mercy of his class enemies, imperialism and the Zionist bourgeoisie.

And what promises does the Jewish state hold out? Does it really mean a step toward the solution of the Jewish problem?

The partition was not meant to solve Jewish misery nor is it likely ever to do so. This dwarf of a state which is too small to absorb the Jewish masses cannot even solve the problems of its citizens. The Hebrew state can only infest the Arab East with anti-semitism and may well turn out — as Trotsky said — a bloody trap for hundreds of thousands of Jews.

Partition is grist in the mill of the Arab reactionaries

THE leaders of the Arab League reacted to the decision on partition with speeches full of threats and enthusiasm. As a matter of fact, a Zionist state is to them a godsend from Allah. Calling up the worker and fellow for the "holy war to save Palestine" is supposed to stifle their cries for bread, land and freedom. Another time-honoured method of diverting an embittered people against the Jewish and communist danger.

In Palestine the feudal rule has of late begun to lose ground. During the war the Arab working class has grown in numbers and political consciousness. Jewish and Arab workers stood up against the foreign oppressor, against whom they together went on strikes. A strong leftist trade union had come into existence; and the "Workers' Association of the Arabs of Palestine" had been well on the way of freeing itself from the influence of the Husseinis. The murder of its leader, Sami Taha, committed by the hirelings of the Arab High Committee, could not restrain this development. But where the Husseinis failed, the decision of the imperialist agency, the UNO, succeeded. The partition decision stifled the class struggle of the Palestine workers. The prospect of being in the hands of the Zionist "conquerors of soil and labour" is arousing fear and anxiety among the Arab workers and fellahs. Nationalist war slogans fall on fertile soil. And feudal

murderers see their chance. Thus the policy of partition enables the feudalists to turn back the wheels of history.

A first summary

THE early crop of partition policy: Jews and Arabs are drowned in a sea of chauvinist enthusiasm. Triumph on the one hand, rage and exasperation on the other. Communists are being murdered. Pogroms among Jews instigated. A tit for tat of murder and provocation. The "strafing expeditions" of the Haganah are oil for the propaganda machine of the Arab patriots in their campaign to enlist the masses for more bloodshed. The military conflict and the smashing to pieces of the workers' movement are a boon to the chauvinist extremists in either camp.

What about the Jewish "communists"?

The patriotic wave makes sitting on the fence very uncomfortable. The Zionist "socialist" parties soon "corrected" their anti-imperialist phrases and stubborn "resistance" against "cutting up the country to pieces" and gave way to full and enthusiastic support for the imperialist partition policy. That was a trifling matter, a question of merely changing Zionist tactics.

Yet the Communist Party of Palestine might have been expected to take up a different position. Have they not repeatedly warned against the fatal results bound to come with the establishment of a Jewish state? "Partition must be disastrous for Jew and Arab alike... partition is an imperialist scheme intended to give the British rule a new lease on life ..." (evidence given by the PCP before the Anglo-American Commission of Enquiry on March 25, 1946). The secretary of the party loyally stuck to the UNO commission: "We refuse the partition scheme point blank, as this scheme is detrimental to the interests of the two peoples." However after this scheme had been pulled off with the support of the Soviet representatives, Kol Ha'Am (the Stalinist central organ) hastened to declare that "democracy and justice have won the day(!)" And overnight there appeared a newly baptised party: the name Communist Party of Palestine was changed to Communist Party of Eretz Israel (Communist Party of the Hebrew Land). Thus even the last vestige of contact with the Arab population was broken off. The gap that still separated them from Zionism was finally bridged. Instead of being the vanguard of the anti-imperialist struggle of the Arab and Jewish masses, the Palestine Communist Party became the "Communist" tail of the "left" Zionists. Precisely in an hour when Zionism shows to everyone its counter-revolutionary face, its blatant servility to imperialism. Thus the Communist Party itself held up all its former exposure of imperialist and Zionist deceptions to ridicule.

Why have they gone bankrupt?

THE policy of the Palestine Communist Party lacks any continuous line. The policy of the PCP reflects both the needs deriving from the class war of the Jewish worker in Palestine and the needs of Soviet foreign policy. The needs of class war, however, required a consistent international policy, the negation of Zionism, of its discrimination between Arab and Jew. On the other hand the need to adjust the party line to the diplomatic manoeuvres of the Soviet Union calls for

an "elastic" policy, one that lacks backbone. As a result we find the notorious shilly shallying and zig-zagging which has the PCP now to the Zionist wagon. The fifth wheel!

And the Arab "communists"?

THE Arab Stalinists, the "National Liberation League", did not fare better than their Jewish counterparts. They were in a pretty fix having to justify the Russian support of the Jewish state. The Arab workers could not be expected to accept this line. Not by a long shot. They knew the meddling of Soviet diplomacy for what it was: breaking up the Palestinian workers' unity and a treacherous blow. After the pro-partition declaration of Zarakpin, the National Liberation

The problem worrying all in these days is the problem of security.

Jewish workers ask: "How to protect our lives? Should we not support the 'Haganah'?" And the Arab workers and fellahin ask: "Ought we not to join the 'Najad' or 'Futuwah' to defend ourselves against the Zionists' attacks?"

people found themselves surrounded by scorn and hostility.

At present, the National Liberation League stands for peace and it is busy exposing the provocative role played by the British government. But since it had cried out for "national unity" (with the feudal Husseinis, the present war instigators during the past years), its present attitude fails to convince. The two camps today mobilise the masses under the mask of "self defence". "We have been attacked, let us defend ourselves!" say the Zionists. "Let us ward off the danger of a Jewish conquest!" declare the Arab Higher Committee. Where does the truth lie?

War is the continuation of politics by other means. The war led by the Arab feudalists is but the continuation of their reactionary war on the worker and the fellah who are striving to shake off oppression and exploitation. For the feudal effendis "Salvation of Palestine" means safeguarding their revenues at the expense of the fellahin, maintaining their autocratic rule in town and country, smashing the proletarian organisations and international class solidarity.

The war waged by the Zionists is the continuation of their expansionist policy based on discrimination between the two peoples: they defend kibbush avoda (ousting of Arab labour), kibbush adama (ousting of the fellah), boycott of Arab goods, "Hebrew rule". The military conflict is a direct result of the policy of the Zionist conquerors.

This war can not on either side be said to bear a progressive character. The war does not release progressive forces or do away with social and economic obstacles in the path of development of the two nations. Quite the opposite is true. It is apt

to obscure the class antagonism and to open the gate for nationalist excesses. It weakens the proletariat and strengthens imperialism in both camps.

Each side is "anti-imperialist" to the bone, busy detecting the reactionary — in the opposite camp. And imperialism is always seen — helping the other side. But this kind of exposure is oil on the imperialist fire. For the inveigling policy of imperialism is based upon agents and agencies within both camps. Therefore we say to the Palestine people in reply to the patriotic warmongers: make this war between Jews and Arabs, which serves the end of imperialism, the common war of both nations against imperialism!

This is the only solution guaranteeing a real peace. This must be our goal which must be achieved without concessions to the chauvinist mood prevailing at present among the masses.

How can that be done?

"THE main enemy is in our own country!" — this was what Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg had to say to the workers when imperialists and social democrats were inciting them to the slaughter of their fellow workers in other countries. In this spirit we say to the Jewish and Arab workers: the enemy is in your own camp!

Jewish workers! Get rid of the Zionist provocateurs who tell you to sacrifice yourself on the altar of the Hebrew state.

Arab worker and fellah! Get rid of the chauvinist provocateurs who are getting you into a mess of blood for their own sake and pocket.

Workers of the two people, unite in a common front against imperialism and its agents!

The problem worrying all in these days is the problem of security. Jewish workers ask: "How to protect our lives? Should we not support the 'Haganah'?" And the Arab workers and fellahin ask: "Ought we not to join the 'Najad' or 'Futuwah' to defend ourselves against the Zionists' attacks?"

A distinction must be made between the practical and the political sides of this question. We cannot thwart mobilisation and do not therefore tell workers to refuse to mobilise. But it is our duty to denounce the reactionary character of the chauvinist organisations, seen in their own house. The only way to peace between the two peoples of this country is turning the guns against the instigators of murder in both camps.

Instead of abstract "anti-imperialist" phrases of the social-patriots which cover up their servility to imperialism, we are showing a practical way to fight against the foreign oppressor: masking its local agents, undermining their influence; so that the Arab worker and fellah will understand that the military campaign against the Jews helps to bring about partition and helps only the feudalists and imperialists, while it is fought on his back and paid for by his blood; so that the Jewish worker recognises at last the illusion of Zionism and understands that he will not be free and safe as long as he has not done away with national discrimination, isolationism and imperialist loyalty.

We have to keep up contact between the workers of both peoples at whatever place of work that this can still be done in order to prevent provocative acts and to safeguard the lives of the workers and on the roads. Let us form revolutionary cadres. In this burning hell of chauvinism we have to hold up the banner of international brotherhood.

3. Hal Draper on Israel, 1948: War of independence or expansion?

HERE we reprint an editorial on Palestine from the US Marxist newspaper *Labor Action* and part of an article from magazine, *New Internationalist*. Both were written by well known author Hal Draper. The editorial, "War of Independence or Expansion?", appeared on May 24th and 31st 1948, on the eve of Israel's declaration of independence. "How to Defend Israel" appeared in July 1948 after the surrounding Arab states, led by British officers, had invaded Israel.

Draper's article is warped by the call that the Jewish nation, fighting for its life, should become the leader in a war of liberation for the Arab masses too — that Israel should take on the messianic role played by revolutionary France in Europe at the end of the 18th century, and lead a general war of liberation in the Middle East. Despite this, Draper has a firm grip on the realities.

THE British line was consistently directed toward fomenting the Pan-Arab reaction against the partition. As long as the two people can thus be "sicked" against each other, the shadow of imperialist domination does not leave the scene. This is the end of UN policy.

If there is to be peace at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, and if the Jews and Arabs are to live in fraternal unity, no one can look toward the United Nations or to American and British imperialism to bring this about. If there is to be peace, it has to be made by the peoples.

Labor Action has made clear its belief that the partition of Palestine into two non-viable states was not calculated to achieve any real solution of the Palestine question, and cannot. We have reiterated that, before partition, the road to a basic solution lay only in the joint struggle by the socialist workers of the Jewish community together with the oppressed peasant masses of the Arabs to throw off the yoke of their common oppressor — British imperialism based on the two ruling classes, Arab landlords and Zionist capitalists; and such Arab-Jewish cooperation from below could have forged a united Palestine in the fire of anti-imperialist struggle. Now that partition is virtually an accomplished fact, this basic road only takes

a different form.

There is a war on — not yet full-scale war as this is written, but not far from it. The socialist working class of the Jewish territory has chosen to follow its Zionist leadership in achieving a separate state. As Marxist socialists — that is, as the only consistent democrats — we believe in and accept the democratic right of all peoples (including the Palestinian Jews) to self-determination, to work out their own destiny as they see fit. We said this even while advising against the exercise of this right to the point of separation.

The politics from which the Pan-Arab war and threats of invasion flow is perfectly clear — the aim of depriving the Jews precisely of this right to self-determination. There is therefore not the slightest iota of common ground between the Arab landlords' opposition to partition and our own. While we are more firmly than ever of the opinion that the Jews' choice of separatism was a mistake and a setback for the only long-range solution, we believe that the imposition of "unity" upon Palestine by Abdullah [King of Transjordan, now Jordan] the Mufti [of Jerusalem] or the Arab League would be a reactionary solution even more disastrous in its consequences and a violation of the democratic rights of peoples.

To recognise the right of the Jews to self-determination, if it is not merely to be a pious obeisance to a formula, requires socialists also to recognise the right of the Jews to defend their choice of separate national existence against any and all reactionary attempts to deprive them of that right, whether by Arab feudal lords or UN imperialism. That is why we demanded recognition of Israel by the government, and why our British comrades particularly must demand similar action by the Labour government — as the concretisation of the demand that the imperialists keep out. That is why we demand the lifting of the imperialist embargo on arms to the new Jewish state.

But the defence of Israel's right of self-determination against a reactionary war of invasion is only one side of the picture. Surely even the Zionist leaders do not believe that the "Palestine question" will be over if only Abdullah stops short of Israel's borders! On the contrary, it only enters a new stage. On the one hand, the Jews face the possibility of permanent guer-



Haganah fighter

rilla warfare, unending "border incidents", and above all, such permanent national hostility with the Arab world as would make national existence a nightmare of the Jewish splinter state. On the other hand, the unproved demands by the Irgun and Stern gang for the conquest of all of Palestine raises the same question of future relations. For the socialist working class of Palestine that question is posed in terms of the present struggle as follows:

Are the Jews — socialist workers in their majority — to wage a war of nationalist expansionism, or a revolutionary war for the reunification of Palestine from below against both the Jewish and Arab ruling classes?

Today their struggle is a war of defence in the immediate circumstance. But tomorrow their struggle will inescapably be transformed into one or the other!

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Before this question can be answered, the first illusion that needs destroying is the illusion that the splinter state of Israel can "go it alone". To be sure, given Haganah military victories, Israel can succeed in maintaining its formal independence. But world imperialism — British, American and Russian — will remain on the scene with their fingers in the pie as long as the Balkanisation of the Middle East continues.

The present situation in Palestine, the fruit of partition and the end product of Zionist policy in the country, can only continue to inflame nationalist hostility on both sides.

Even if the Arab legions' invasion is beaten back, the new state of Israel exists in an impossible economic and political situation. Its leaders will be forced to seek to fortify the stability of the new state in face of an encirclement of hatred and they will look for aid and comfort only towards the imperialists. Such will be the inevitable drift of these "practical politicians" whose conception of statesmanship will consist of attempts to manoeuvre with the imperialist interests which hold Palestine in a net. And the price of such statesmanship can only be their willingness to act as an imperialist outpost in the Middle East for one or the other of the contending forces, hoping for protection and support in exchange.

Behind all this is the sorry fact that Israel cannot exist as a splinter state quivering in the flesh of the Middle East without constant war-skirmishing or imperialist entanglements or both. This is guaranteed both for economic and political reasons.

This is why the only road that can save the Jews from subservience to imperialism or destruction by the Arabs is a course directed toward the reunification of Palestine on a basis which will permit the two peoples to live together in fraternal harmony. Such an outcome is simply impossible on the basis of the present policy of the Israeli leadership. And it is equally impossible as long as the Arab masses are under the unchallenged domination of their semi-feudal dynasties, landlords, effendis and militarists.

The reunification of Palestine and of the two peoples in it can take place only through a struggle from below. The conditions for such a struggle are present as they were before partition — the class struggle within Jewish society, and the grinding exploitation of the Arab peasants by their lords and masters.

We believe that the main (not exclusive, but the main) responsibility for taking the initiative in this direction lies with Jewish workers — precisely because, as the Zionist leaders boast on any occasion, it is the Jews who are the most advanced socially and culturally, because it is they who claim to be socialists, etc.

While opposing any attempt by the Arab landlord regimes to overthrow the Jewish state and impose their reactionary sway on the whole land, it is the duty of real socialists in Israel to fight for a policy, programme and a government of the working people which can bring about such reunification instead of deepening the nationalist gulf.

The key to such a programme is in the first place the policy of the people of Israel toward the Arabs now within their own borders. Israel must demonstrate that they are fighting not against the Arab people but against the Arab dynasts and landlords who are also the oppressors of the Arab people themselves. It must demonstrate that it seeks the alliance of the Arab masses against their own exploiters — an alliance of classes.

It can demonstrate this only by sharply reversing the whole Zionist policy toward the Arab people — accepting them as equals and collaborators in the building up, not of a Jewish state but of a bi-national state. We use the term "bi-national" (which has been used with various senses) to designate merely the aim of a state which is the home of two peoples and comports itself as such, the forms to be worked out in common agreement.

Complete equal rights to the Arabs within the state of Israel: equality, not Jim Crow, in the Jewish-controlled trade unions, the abandonment of the economic nationalism which has reigned in the Jewish community hitherto, the constitutional and de facto guarantee of the Arabs' fully recognised status as a national people — here are the elementary beginnings of such a programme in Israel which can demonstrate in action the basis for a reunited Palestine.

Only such a government in Israel could seek to stir up the Arab masses of the invading nations against their own oppressors, raising in the first place its sympathy with the demand for land to the Arab fellaheen and the other social interests of the submerged masses of the Arab semi-feudal world.

Such a state, which appears in the Middle East not as the representative of Jewish nationalist chauvinism but of the social aspirations of all the people, Jewish and Arab, could fight for a reunified Palestine — and live.

Such a programme for a revolutionary war against the Arab feudal lords, not a war of nationalist expansion against the Arab people, cannot be expected from the present rightist government of Israel, dominated by the Jewish capitalist class and tail-ended by the bourgeois labour leaders of the Histadrut, which in the longer run can only stumble from disaster to stalemate to subservience under outside imperialism.

Such a programme demands the fight for a workers' government in Israel as the vanguard of the future United Socialist States of the Middle East.

Without such a programme all the heroic sacrifices of the Jewish people and all the military victories of the Haganah will not be able to make of Palestine anything but a death trap for the peoples and a happy hunting ground of revived imperialist influence.

4. Palestinian Trotskyists January 1948 Against all chauvinism

THE following document was issued by the Palestinian Trotskyists in 1948. When the left today writes or speaks about the 1948 Israeli-Arab war, it is a story of anti-Arab atrocities by the Jews, and no more the clear implication is that the Arab side deserved support, whatever the faults of its leadership.

Marxists in 1948 saw it quite differently. Some Trotskyists internationally backed the Jews; the Trotskyists in Palestine itself condemned both sides as chauvinist. They could all see that the Arab forces were led by corrupt feudalists, manipulated by British imperialism and engaged in a "racial war".

We also print here an introduction of the Palestinian Trotskyists' document by the official magazine of the world Trotskyist movement, which published it in 1948. The introduction softens the line considerably. Here the mass Arab chauvinism indicted by the Palestinian Trotskyists has mystically become a force for "the Arab revolution" which drives forward despite the crushing of socialist and working-class organisation among the Arabs. It is a first early example of a way of thought which would grip the whole Trotskyist movement, in which any nationalist mobilisation or disturbance, whatever its form, is automatically a "new rise of the world revolution".

The Trotskyists had maintained that the formation of a Jewish state was impossible; it now existed. The Trotskyists had insisted that the main issue in Palestine was the determination of British imperialism to keep it as a military base; the proposal to partition Palestine was denounced as a manoeuvre to stabilise the presence of British troops and the document ended with calls for joint Jewish Arab struggle against Britain which had no grip on the situation. Now the British troops were leaving.

The focus on "British troops out" had served to cover up lack of answers on the question of how both Jewish and Arab rights could be protected. Now the Palestinian Trotskyists offered no general political slogans, confining themselves to the task of keeping links among the tiny minority of Jewish and Arab internationalists. Their comrades in Paris said "a united and independent Arab Palestine, with full national minority rights for the Jewish community"; but how, in the actual situation could the Jews have had any national minority rights without the right to their own state?

Introduction by *Ouatrieme Internationale*

THE theses of our Palestinian comrades, which we publish here, were drafted before the formal proclamation of the State of Israel and the invasion of Palestine by the armies of the Arab states.

The theses explain the basic developments, so it will be sufficient here to outline briefly the position of the Fourth International on the recent events.

What we said at the time of the UN decision to partition Palestine remains completely justified in relation to the new miniature "State" of Israel. Far from resolving the Jewish question, it will give it an even more tragic sharpness, not only by sharpening anti-semitic tendencies in Britain and in the countries of the Near East, but also and above all by crystallising the anti-imperialist sentiments of the Arab masses in all the neighbouring countries.

Even apart from the question of the attitude of the great powers, this state has no historic future. Subject to permanent crises and convulsions — permanent civil war having been avoided only by the complete purging of all the Arab villages on its territory — it will collapse in terrible butchery at a forthcoming stage of the Arab revolution, unless the Jewish proletariat separates itself in time from Zionist chauvinism.

The task of Jewish revolutionaries in Israel is to prepare that break. Their political line should remain unshakably that of struggle against the partition of Palestine, for the reintegration of the territory of Israel into a united Palestine, in the framework of a Federation of Arab States of the Middle East which will guarantee the Jewish minority all the rights of national cultural autonomy.

The Arab feudal potentates, Farouk (king of Egypt) and Abdultah (king of Jordan), far from struggling against the partition of Palestine, seek above all to partition this unfortunate country between their own kingdoms. Their invasion aims above all to divert the attention of their own subjects from the mounting social tension in their countries.

At the same time, they have tried to exploit the anti-imperialist sentiments of the masses to cover their own miserable capitulation to world capital (the Sudan affair, Iraq's and Jordan's treaties with the city, etc.) A few weeks of war have been enough to show the lamentable organisation of their military forces.

It is not under their leadership that the Arab masses will be able to reunify Palestine. Still less will the struggle against imperialism develop under their aegis, when even in the case of Palestine the Arab sovereigns are ready at the end of the day to have the compromise currently being worked out by the great powers imposed on them.

The opposition that the Arab masses everywhere manifest to the State of Israel and to the intervention of imperialism in this part of the world is quite another matter. This opposition is an incontestably progressive force which tomorrow will reinforce the general current of the Arab revolution in the Middle East.

Today, the masses remain in a waiting mood, as long as their own masters seem to be taking up the battle. When the treason of the latter is exposed to the world, the independent intervention of the Arab masses will be on the agenda.

It will permit at that point a convergence of the struggle against the feudal lords and the terrible social misery, and the struggle against imperialism and Zionism. To prepare, as from today, this convergence, is the task of the revolutionaries in the Middle East who, while struggling against any chauvinist or anti-semitic current, will concentrate their propaganda on the following slogans:

* Down with the partition of Palestine! For a united and independent Arab Palestine, with full national minority rights for the Jewish community.

* Down with imperialist intervention in Palestine! Out with all the foreign troops and the UN "mediators" and "observers"! For the right of the Arab masses to determine their own future. For the election of a Constituent Assembly through universal secret suffrage! For the agrarian revolution!

* Down with the Arab League, instrument of imperialism! Down with the corrupt kings and the feudal exploiters! Long live the Arab socialist revolution in the Middle East!

Against Arab chauvinism! Against Zionism

1 THE weakness of British imperialism after the Second World War, the consolidation of the native bourgeoisie in certain important colonies and the development of the working class, with the intensification of its social and anti-imperialist struggle, have forced Britain to withdraw its troops from certain colonies and to propose a readjustment of the defence of the Empire.

British imperialism is withdrawing some of its troops from Palestine and Iraq and leaving the UN, that is, American imperialism, the job of deciding the fate of Palestine; and, on the other hand, it is inciting "holy war" in Palestine to gain political influence in the Arab world and it is trying to ally itself with the Arab states, as in the projected treaty with Iraq which would give British imperialism as much power as possible in conditions of indirect domination.

The decision to divide Palestine, supported by the United States apparently in opposition to Britain, has created the following situation in the Arab East. Britain has gained the possibility of withdrawing some of its troops while enhancing its prestige in the Arab World. America, whose oil interests have not suffered by a certain loss of prestige, thanks to the economic links which tie the native bourgeoisie to American imperialism, has gained a direct agent there: the Zionist bourgeoisie which, through this, has become completely dependent on American capital and American policy.

Besides, American imperialism now has a justification to intervene militarily in the Middle East whenever that suits it.

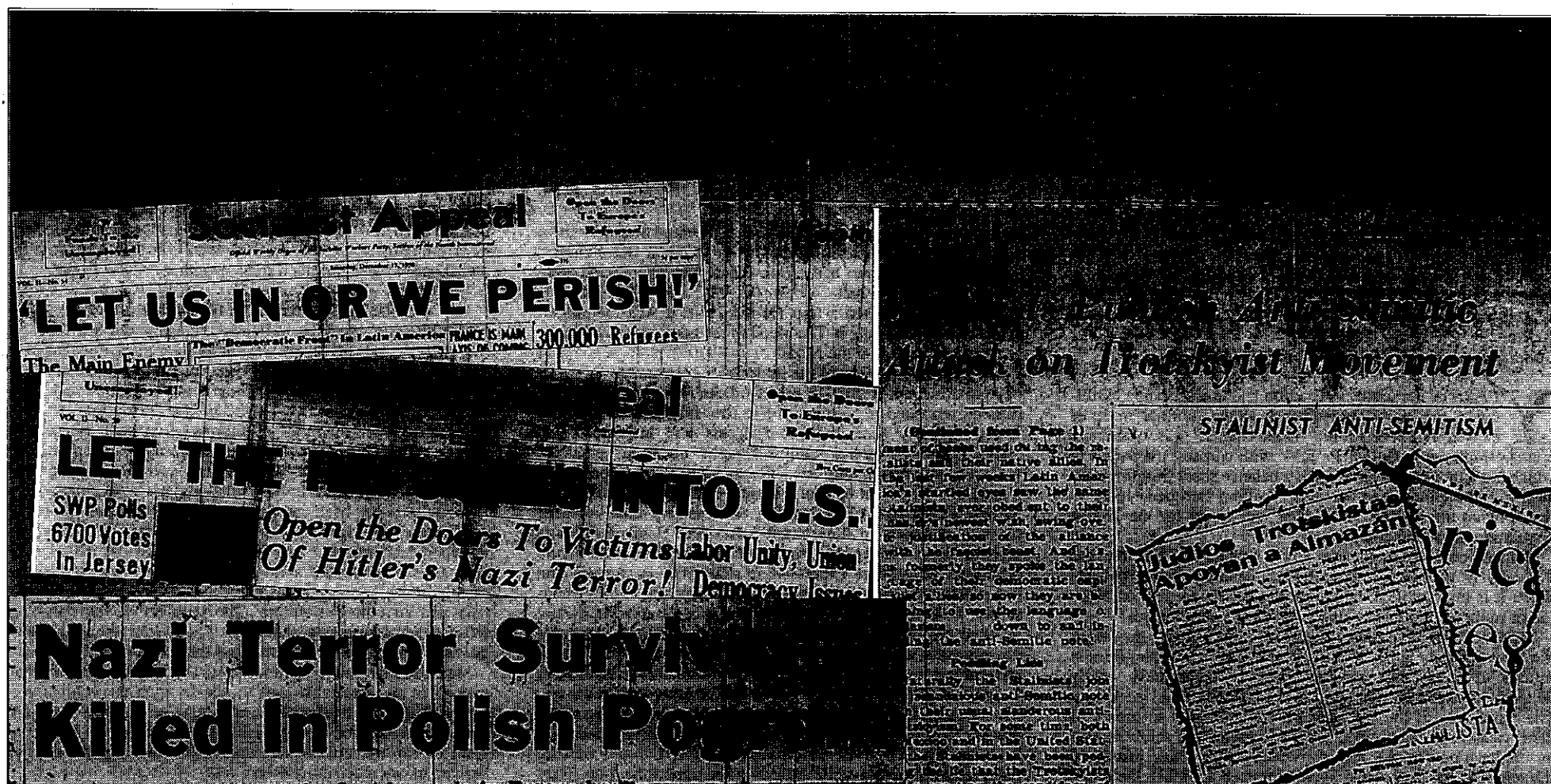
The two imperialisms have created a situation of mounting chauvinism in which has become possible to crush the Arab working class and all the left movements in the whole Arab East — and the Russian support for the imperialist plan for

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dividing Palestine must equally be blamed for this.

2 The Arab feudalists and the Middle East bourgeoisie see the Zionist bourgeoisie not only as a competitor on the consumer goods market (as regards Egypt), but also on the market for imperialist agents in the Middle East.

By its racial war against the Jews of Palestine, the Arab League wants to limit the zone of activity of the Jewish industries and to prove to imperialism that it is a factor that can serve it even better than Zionism. At the same time, it favours imperialism in its large scale plans in the Middle East, and it is only too interested in following its orders with a view to using this chauvinist war to boost anti-Russian sentiments and brutally to crush the Arab working class and all the left groups.

It sees the Zionist bogeyman and the Palestinian problem in general as a good opportunity to divert the attention of the oppressed masses of the Arab countries from their social problems and from native and imperialist exploitation, to heighten racial hatred against minorities, and to recruit the jobless for the "jihad" in Palestine.

3 The Arab feudalists of Palestine, knowing that in such a racial war they are the natural leaders, want in this way to regain their authority over the Arab population of Palestine, an authority which had been weakened by the development during the war of the young bourgeoisie of the coastal cities and by the growth and the organisation of the Arab working class in Palestine.

While the revolt of 1936 began by a general strike, and was concentrated at the start in the cities, this time the main feature of the activity has been, from the start, military action by bands of rural guerillas. While in 1936-9 many of the "battles" were waged against British troops (even if the main drive was against the Jews), this time it is mainly the Jews who are attacked, while the functionaries of British imperialism and its officers and soldiers are treated in a friendly way or at most

accused of not holding to the promised "neutrality".

In this way the Arab leaders have managed to create an atmosphere of extreme chauvinism, in which a provocation can lead to a massive massacre of Jewish workers, as in the retineries of Haifa, by the backward sections of their Arab fellow-workers (some of the most advanced Arab workers did not participate in this action, and others rescued Jews), and where there are no more joint strike struggles by Jewish and Arab workers for the same demands, but, on the contrary, the struggles are waged separately, for the introduction of security measures against possible attacks.

The Arab bourgeoisie, to the extent that it exists in Palestine as an independent class (the owners of lemon plantations and urban elements of the coastal cities — the followers of Muss el-Alami) want order and security in the interests of business, but its 'national guard', in the midst of mass chauvinist attacks, is less and less important in comparison with the feudal-led guerillas.

4 Zionism, which seems to be at the height of its diplomatic successes, has managed to help imperialism in which the Jewish masses have to learn what it means to be the scapegoat of imperialism.

The present civil war, which raises the chauvinism in the Jewish masses to the extreme, is itself in part the result of the Zionist chauvinism which accompanied the establishment of a closed Jewish economy.

Imperialism has managed to divert from itself the discontent of the Arab masses in the Middle East and to direct it against the Jewish masses in Palestine, and the inevitable consequence of this war will be the total dependence of Zionism on American imperialism.

5 In these circumstances the decline of the influence of the Arab workers' organisations is obvious. After having managed to become an important factor in Arab political

life, they are today almost paralysed. We must moreover expect that they will not be able to regain their position in the near future, for the following reasons.

a) The wave of crushing of leftwing and working-class organisations in the Arab East developed before they were strong enough to defend themselves and hold their position. If that is true in the centres of the Arab working class, particularly in Egypt, then undoubtedly it will influence the more backward working class of Palestine.

b) In the near future, we have to expect a numerical decline of the Arab working class in Palestine, firstly as a result of the decline of work for the British Army and secondly as a result of the stoppages of work caused by the conflict.

c) The Arab Stalinists have lost part of their political and organisational influence because the masses see them as the representatives of Russia, which has betrayed the Arab masses by favouring partition and the Jewish state.

d) The growing chauvinism of the Jewish workers, and the open support given to partition by the 'left' Zionist leaders, including the Jewish Stalinists, are mirrored among the Arab workers, and constitute another factor pushing them into the arms of feudal reaction.

On the other hand, the social composition of the Arab working class is much more progressive today than it was at the beginning of the 1936-9 revolt.

6 In the past the political activity of the revolutionary party among the Jewish workers was difficult because of their privileged position in the closed Jewish economy.

It will be all the more so today, now that this position is supported not only by American imperialism but also by Russia.

On the other hand, the increased influence of the Arab feudal reaction is mirrored by an increased chauvinism on the Jewish side. There is a certain perspective for our work in the possibility of individually winning over Stalinists who have remained firmly opposed to partition and who may therefore recognise the treachery of Stalinist Russia.

7 The foregoing analysis shows that in the near future (the next few months) we cannot expect large scale actions by the Arab workers, still less common actions by Arab and Jewish workers.

Until the weariness caused by the deterioration of the economic situation and the bloodshed makes itself felt — that will be the starting point of a new revolutionary rise — it is very probable that there will be a strengthening of chauvinism and massacres on a grand scale.

In the near future, our work will be limited essentially to maintaining links between the Arab and Jewish comrades, and to strengthening the cadres, particularly on the Arab side, as the basis for revolutionary activity in the future.

We must explain patiently to the most advanced sections of the Arab proletariat and the intelligentsia that racial military actions only deepen the gulf between Jews and Arabs and thus lead in practice to political division; that the fundamental factor and the main cause of division is imperialism; that the present battles are only strengthening imperialism; that, thanks to the bourgeois and feudal leadership of the Arab countries — which is the agent of imperialism — we have been beaten at one stage of the anti-imperialist struggle; and that we must prepare for victory at the next stage — that is, for the unification of Palestine and the Arab East in general — by creating the only force which can achieve these goals, the revolutionary proletarian party of the Arab East.

Our success will depend in large part on the consolidation in good time of the revolutionary communist forces in Egypt.

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5. Ernest Mandel

The Jewish question since World War Two

THE hopelessness of this explanation in this article are adequately discussed in the rejoinder by Albert Glotzer below. Readers might read Lenin's rejoinder to Bukharin, Y Bosh and Y Pyatakov in *The Nascent Trend of Imperialist Economism*. This is the concluding chapter written by Comrade Mandel for the book *The Materialist Conception of the Jewish Question*, by A Leon.

YEARS of incessant persecution and indescribable humiliation, the life of hunted beasts as the "normal" form of existence, deportations, "death trains," gas chambers, crematoriums, antitank ditches filled with corpses; massacres in which not a family was spared and a balance sheet frightful in its clarity: five million dead out of six million European Jews — that is what the Second World War has meant for the Jewish population of the old continent.

Human imagination, quick as it is in grasping the horrible, has difficulty in picturing concretely the meaning of this balance sheet. It is impossible to compress this unprecedented crucifixion of millions of human beings into a few vivid images.

Separated from the overall picture of a world in ago the fate of the Jews not only appears cruel, it seems unbelievable. Reason refuses to admit that, material interests could have coldly dictated the extermination of these countless defenceless beings. The fanaticism of the SS, their blind submission to orders of their leaders are called upon for aid in giving the semblance of an explanation for the tragedy which Europe has just lived through. But the interpretations do not even approach the horrible reality. They are based on the assumption that the destruction of European Jewry constitutes a sudden and unique catastrophe in the troubled history of this people. Lack of understanding of the past is transformed into illusions in the future, and all this while a new and terrible threat hovers over the surviving Jews in the entire world.

The fate of the Jews is a symbol of the fate of humanity

ALTHOUGH the Jews have been stricken more sorely than any other people, they have lived these most tragic hours of their history in a period when all humanity is struggling through a frightful crisis which threatens like a tidal wave to engulf everything that Twentieth Century civilisation has so slowly constructed. Alongside of five million murdered Jews are sixty million victims of imperialist war. The barbaric treatment of the Jews by Hitlerite imperialism is only an extreme expression of the barbarism of the general methods of imperialism in our period.

As against the Jewish deportations we now find the deportation of millions of Germans from Poland and Czechoslovakia. As against the return to the yellow star we now find the branding of all Germans by external markings in many countries in Central Europe. The death trains have again begun moving but this time in the opposite direction and with a different human freight. The burning of books has been renewed by the Americans. All the atrocities of Nazism, from the execution of hostages up to the burning of entire villages "as reprisals" have been faithfully reproduced by the emissaries of Anglo-American imperialism, whether it be in Indonesia, the Philippines or Korea.

Far from being a phenomenon isolated from the destiny of humanity, the tragedy of the Jews is only the herald to other peoples of their coming fate, if the decline of capitalism continues at its present rate. Maddened by the blood of its millions of victims, world imperialism has progressively brought entire social layers to a point of barbarism where human life no longer has the slightest value and where corpses are as common a sight as pedestrians crossing a street in a great city. This rapid transformation of human reflexes has nothing to do with the specific explanations generally made for it.

The calm of an SS officer playing chess while thousands of women and children are being burnt a few hundred feet away in crematoriums is identical with the calm of a British officer as he steps over cadavers cluttering the road to his night club in Calcutta. The American "reporter" filled with curiosity, rushes to the ruins of Hiroshima in search of sensational headlines for his paper, but isn't stirred for a moment by the idea that he is walking over the pulverised remains of 100,000 human beings who disappeared into thin air in a few seconds... Humanity has gone a long way since the days when it was outraged by the fate of the victims of the Crimean War.

Responsibility of all governments for the fate of the European Jews

IT is not alone the methods of cruel oppression on the part of American imperialism and the barbaric mentality resulting from it that bring it closer and closer to that of Nazi imperialism. The very fate of the Jews of Europe was determined as much by the calculations of American imperialists as by the direct massacres of Hitler. For months hundreds of thousands of Jews could have been saved: in Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary and the unoccupied French zone. These hunted unfortunates had their eyes turned towards the only road for escape: across the seas. To every voice which condemns the crimes of Hitler must be added the voice of those who accuse London and Washington. While these governments knew what was being prepared for the Jews and exploited it for their propagandistic ends, they did not make the slightest gesture to help those who could have been saved, but on the contrary bluntly refused to grant them passage across the ocean.

Against the few thousands who were able to escape — the

rich, those who had "connections" in the United States — there are hundreds of thousands against whom the door was slammed shut, who were driven back from Palestinian shores and were returned to the Nazi hell.

If Hitler constructed a trap for the Jews, it was the Anglo-Americans who sprang it. The blood of the innocent falls on their heads as well as upon the Nazis.

But the responsibility of the imperialist governments goes far beyond this simple refusal of direct aid. An American diplomatic mission remained in Germany up to the end of 1942. The Red Cross regularly sent its trusted agents and inspectors into German prisoner-of-war camps. Despite numerous cases of violation of "international law," there can be no question that in a general way the lot of war prisoners of all nations, excepting Russia, was "tolerable" in Germany and was very close to that of German prisoners in the United States and England. That is particularly true in regard to the lot of officers. (The class nature of society is nowhere expressed so sharply as in camps.) The imperialists observed the rules of the game insofar as they themselves were involved. Why was this rule of reciprocity not invoked for the Jews? Why didn't the British and American governments, allies of the Polish government, make the German government understand that reciprocity would also be invoked in the case of civil internees, of whom the Germans in Allied countries numbered in the hundreds of thousands. The truth is that in practice the Anglo-Saxon imperialists completely washed their hands of the fate of the unfortunate Jews of Europe, viewing them only as a propaganda subject at the opportune time. They did not even try to exert any one of the great many pressure levers at their disposal in behalf of the Jews.

The epic revolt of the Warsaw ghetto is painted up by the whole democratic press of the world. But in the last appeal that the Warsaw fighters made to the world, they accused the British, Polish, and Soviet governments, they accused the "official" leaders of the Polish national resistance movement of having deliberately refused them weapons that they had been demanding for weeks for the continuation of their struggle against the SS hangmen. Let their last pathetic words: "Brothers, all the governments are guilty," be engraved in the heart of each Jewish worker, of every class conscious worker in the world. For the massacre of the Jews is borne equally with Nazism, by all the governments of the earth, by all of imperialism, by the entire regime of capitalism in its death agony as it plunges into barbarism.

The tragic lot of the survivors in Europe

After the terrible ordeal it has just experienced, European Jewry is reduced to less than a million beings. Of these 900,000 Jews, at least half have lost everything in the tempest: jobs, property, means of existence, families, homes. The vision of these people is clouded forever. The war has brutally cut all the roots that nourished them in their social environment. If they cannot develop new roots elsewhere, these people are condemned to perish. Those who have been lucky or courageous enough to return to their homes or to come out of their individual hiding places feel themselves surrounded by hidden hostility. It would be ridiculous to hold Nazi propaganda responsible for this. Certainly the latter has left traces in the primitive minds of many layers of peasants and backward workers. But the basis of anti-semitism, lucidly etched in its social contours and traced back to its historical origins in this book of A Leon, continues to persist more than ever after this war which has been so devastating for the position of the petty bourgeoisie.

The elimination of Hitler can change nothing essentially in the position of the Jews. A temporary improvement in their lot will in no wise affect the continuation of all the profound roots of twentieth century anti-semitism. These prophetic words written by Leon in 1941 have just had their confirmation in the uninterrupted series of pogroms which have rocked Poland, Hungary and Slovakia since "liberation," in which more than 20,000 people have already fallen victims.

After having momentarily "softened" the terrible crisis in which "Aryan" artists and small business men found themselves in Central and Eastern Europe by the closing of Jewish businesses, these strata were in their turn hard hit by monopoly capitalism. "Mobilisation for total war" led to the suppression of several hundred thousand small businesses. Deportations of the entire labour force to Germany uprooted millions of petty bourgeois. Restrictions, red tape, constant contraction of the free market in raw materials and consumer goods, the disastrous effects of inflation — all these contributed during the last years of the war and the first post-war months to make the position of the artisans and small businessmen of Central and Eastern Europe more precarious than ever. But the more precarious their position becomes, the more fiercely do they resist the return of their former Jewish competitors. The newspapers recently reported that all the small shops in Budapest were forced to close their doors because they could no longer withstand the vertiginous inflationary spiral. Is it astonishing that under such conditions their hatred against the small Jewish businessmen is exacerbated when the latter, upon returning from the concentration camps, attempt to reopen their shops and thereby to compete with them for the already too meagre share of the national income? The general stagnation of economy since the war, accompanied even by a slight deindustrialisation, robs the surviving Jews of the possibility of proletarianisation or of passing into other professions, at the same time that it prevents any resumption of their former positions. There is no way out for them. If the high clergy, the dispossessed provincial nobles and other reactionary elements are successful in arousing great layers

of the Polish, Slovak and Hungarian population against the Jews as "Communists" and "Russian agents" it is solely because the social base of anti-semitism remains intact.

"On the Planet Without a Visa"

THE surviving Jews in Poland, Hungary and Slovakia, are desperately seeking a way out of their misfortune far from the land which has witnessed tragedy for their families. Even worse is the situation of more than 100,000 Jewish fugitives in Germany who, one year after their "liberation" continue to live under the infamous conditions of concentration camps and are subjected to a thousand and one frauds on the part of the military authorities. This has created a scandal reaching right into the bankers' circles in New York; and the government of the United States has been compelled to send a Commission for an on-the-spot investigation. The Commission has come and gone, its report has been read and discussed, but the 100,000 expatriated Jews who do not want to return to Poland continue to remain in the German camps suspended between a horrible past and an unknown future. The problem of the surviving refugee Jews, urgently demands a solution: the imperialist governments haven't even broached the problem.

When military aims were involved, 48 hours was more than enough in an imperialist staff to decide upon the voluntary or forced displacement of millions of human beings. But a year has not been enough for the "specialists" of capitalism to find some place on earth where several hundred thousand victims of Nazi barbarism can reconstruct their lives.

For every government the cause of the surviving Jews is becoming a shameful instrument of blackmail against a rival power. England and America invite each other to show hospitality by opening the doors of the countries which they control to the refugees. But in the calculations determining imperialist policy, the solution of human problems does not occupy the thousandth place.

But this problem also has great economic and social importance. Under present conditions it is excluded that the survivors will regain their former professions. The question is posed of their professional re-education. But it can be posed from the economic standpoint only in countries which are industrially very advanced, in which the integration of two or three hundred thousand men into the process of production is a rather usual matter. If barbaric capitalism refuses to "take the risk" because of the threat of unemployment, it is for the proletariat, for the workers' movement of these countries, to advance this demand of elementary humanity: "Open the doors of the United States, of Canada, of Australia, of the five continents to the victims of Nazi persecution!" The working class, struggling against the plague of unemployment by demanding the reduction in working hours, will have no difficulty in integrating several hundred thousands of Jews. On the contrary, it will thereby make of them very valuable allies for the general struggle against capitalism which is responsible for their fate and for the blind alley in which all humanity finds itself.

The development of anti-semitism, the result of definite social and historic causes, is producing the spread of Zionist nationalism among the despairing and declassed petty bourgeois Jewish names. The brutal equalisation of Jews of all strata in the extermination camps sharpened nationalism even among Jewish workers, in the degree that international solidarity remained too weak on the part of the workers of other nations.

It is up to those who find themselves in a favoured position as compared with the Jewish workers to take the leadership now and bring about freedom of immigration into their countries for the survivors. It is the best way to win the Jewish workers from the Zionist utopia.

Palestinian immigration is no solution

If thousands of Jews in Europe are now demanding the right to migrate to Palestine, the primary reason for this is that the doors of the rest of the world are closed to them. It is also the product of the incredible persecutions of these past years and of the relative passivity of the world proletariat.

The war caused a brief period of uneasy prosperity in Palestine, as it did in the whole Middle East, as a result of the isolation of these countries from the world market and their transformation into vast military arsenals of the Eighth Army. Within one year after the war, the "prosperous" industry of Egypt is already experiencing a relatively greater degree of unemployment than in the most industrialised countries in the world.

Every little step ahead that Palestinian economy would make while conditions on the world market are not yet normal, would be transformed into a supplementary source of economic crises. The central concrete problem for Palestinian economy in the coming years will not at all be that of "making the country able to absorb 100,000 men per year," it will be the problem of assuring a livelihood to hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who will be victims of the economic crisis. We confidently predict that despite the artificial influx of American capital, even this problem will prove insoluble.

If solution of the problem of the Jewish survivors of Europe by immigration into Palestine is impossible from the economic point of view, it is even more so from the socio-economic point of view. The forces opposing this immigration have a crushing superiority over the Palestinian Jews and over world Zionism. Consistent Zionist leaders feel this strongly themselves and precisely for this reason have entered upon the desperate road of terrorist guerrilla action.

It is the Arab bourgeoisie of Egypt, of Lebanon, of Syria, and

even of Palestine which is beginning to take increasing leadership of the anti-Zionist movement and give it unity and cohesion. Every new economic development in the Near East can only aid in the formation of an Arab bourgeoisie firmly united by common interests and make the obstacles to the creation of a Jewish state more insurmountable than ever.

The illusion of building a prosperous country in the midst of a world in decline becomes the absurd illusion of building a "Jewish state" in the midst of an Arab nation twenty times as populous and in process of reaching the same state of advancement.

Disappointed by the English, the Zionist leaders are turning to the Americans and are prepared even to throw themselves tomorrow into the arms of the Stalinist bureaucracy for a temporary support. Vain attempts. If American imperialism pretends to support the Zionist cause now, it is far less because of the electoral calculations of Truman than as a factor of the systematic penetration carried on by Americans in the Near East. Already strongly entrenched in Saudi Arabia, the oil magnates have likewise turned avid eyes on Iraq, trans-Jordan, and the entire Arab world. They are ready and willing to gain entry there on the back of the Zionist movement. They are ready and willing to raise difficulties for the British on the Arab side by forcing them to act contrary to the interests of the native population. But their goal is not that of favouring the Zionist cause but that of competing with the British for the "friendship," that is to say the right of exploitation, of the Arabs. In a general way, the same thing may be said of the Soviet bureaucracy. The choice between 20 million Arabs and less than a million Jews is in no way doubtful. For every great power, temporary "help" to the Zionists is only a wedge for gaining entry into Palestine only to obtain the support of the Arabs at the next stage. On the international chessboard, the Zionist cause is lost in advance.

The working class movement and the Palestine question

SO long as Arab society remained in a primitive state, the domination of British imperialism appeared to be safe. Here the City had a favourable arena for demonstrating its classic and clever art, the product of centuries of experience, of exploiting the differences between various royal dynasties, between various families of landed proprietors, between various religious sects and various desert tribes. Unity of the Arab world against imperialism was never realisable in pre-capitalist society.

The rapid industrialisation of the Middle East and the creation of an Arab bourgeoisie have overturned the conditions of the problem. Imperialism must withdraw to new positions. The demonstrative departure of imperialist troops from Egypt and Lebanon are a clear indication of what is in process of change in this part of the world. But if the Arab bourgeoisie is able to achieve unity as against Zionism, it is far from being able to do so as regards imperialism. It finds itself in its turn suspended between British rule on one side and the rise of the young proletariat on the other.

This consequently indicates the immediate duty of the Palestinian workers' movement: to integrate itself in the overall workers' movement of the Middle East against British imperialism. An obstacle on the road to unity of the Jewish and Arab proletariat, Zionism at the same time bars the road to this integration, and prevents the concentration of all Palestinian working class forces around the slogans: Immediate and complete independence for Palestine! Immediate withdrawal of all British troops! Election of a Constituent Assembly by direct and secret vote! All intermediate formulae, such as the "binational state," represent at bottom only the refusal to give up a nationalist position in favour of the general interests of the proletariat and will rebound directly against their authors.

Only a position by the vanguard of the Jewish workers calling for Palestine independence will allow it in the next stage to pose the question of Jewish immigration to the Arab workers in a sovereign Palestinian Assembly. Only the Arab masses, once they are freed from the imperialist yoke, will have the right to decide whether or not they are opposed to the immigration of Jewish workers. But the division of the Palestinian working class movement along nationalist lines can only act to stimulate opposition by the Arab masses to this immigration. The Jewish workers of Palestine must be forewarned! If they do not integrate themselves into the workers' movement of the Middle East in time, the unity of the Arab world against imperialism may take place over their heads, with the complete destruction of their position. Caught between the Arab hammer and the British anvil, Palestinian Jewry heads for certain ruin if the Jewish proletariat does not take its class road.

The threat of the future

EXTERMINATED in Europe, mortally threatened in Palestine, the Jewry survives in fact only in the United States and the USSR. But even in these two remaining centres, a dark future looms. The massive integration of Jewish petty artisans and businessmen in Russia since the period of the First Five-Year Plan into the lower layers of the bureaucracy exposes them particularly to the hatred of backward layers of the proletariat and peasantry. The rising tide of anti-Semitism in the USSR and the episodic utilisation that Stalin made of it in his fight against the Left Opposition have been sufficiently described so as not to require repetition. They were tragically verified at the time of the Nazi invasion into the Western Ukraine where veritable massacres of the Jewish population took place even before the SS "resolved" the Jewish question in their own fashion.

The conglomeration of well-to-do peasants and high bureaucratic layers (which include only a tiny minority of Jews), constituting together the nucleus of an eventual exploitive class in the USSR, will unavoidably exploit to the hilt a renewal of anti-semitic moods in a civil war or an open struggle against the regime.

Like all the other reactionary forces which Stalin has recalled to life, anti-semitism will rebound violently against himself. Galvanised by the hatred of the new candidates for exploitation, confronted by the "Jewish authors" of the October Revolution,

stirred by a new fanatical religious mysticism, this anti-Semitism may well sweep away the whole Jewish population of Western Russia at the moment when the regime begins to crumble under the combined blows of imperialism and the internal enemy. One can predict with certainty that a breakdown of the Soviet regime will take place over the corpses of Russian Jewry.

In America it is practically impossible for a Jew to get into certain "stylish" universities, to belong to certain clubs or to get a job in certain business and banking houses. Among the lower layers of the petty and middle bourgeoisie, who will on the morrow furnish the most dangerous contingents of American fascism, this sentiment is far less defined, but it developed enormously in the Army as well as within the country itself during the war. American Jews are established in certain well defined branches whether it be as artisans, businessmen, intellectuals or workers. A violent social crisis, by sharpening competition and increasing unemployment in these branches, would make the militant anti-semitism of these layers into a terrible potential force which would require only a political party to transform it into a crushing dynamic force.

Let it not be said that "the Americans will never go as far as the Nazis." Even a timid semi-liberal like Sinclair Lewis understands "that it can happen here." Ruling social classes pushed to the wall, and classes as rich and cynical as the American bourgeoisie, will stop at no infamy or cruelty in order to continue their rule, even if only for a few years.

Let one read the hundreds of published reports on the "systematic education in cruelty" of American soldiers to the Japanese, which so closely resembles the attitude of the German SS to the Jews; let one study concretely the degeneracy and cruelty — reaching unsuspected depths — of certain American occupation troops in Germany and Japan, and he will conclude "that not only is it possible but probable" that an American fascist movement will excel in technical perfection in the exploitation of anti-Semitism.

If the next decade does not witness the proletarian revolution in the United States, it will prepare hecatombs for American Jewry which will surpass Auschwitz and Maidanek in horror.

The Jewish question can be resolved only as part of the solution of the world crisis

THESE perspectives may appear too sombre, too frightening. They pose as a possibility the complete extermination of the Jewish people in the next decade or two. But what Auschwitz and Maidanek mean for the Jews, the atomic bomb signifies for all humanity. The perspective of the disappearance of the Jews from the earth is part of the perspective of the destruction of the human species.

But if the Jewish tragedy is only the symbol and to a certain measure the "mirror of the future" for humanity, the only way out which still remains open to humanity is at the same time the solution of the Jewish question. The sombre possibility outlined above is only one of the alternatives posed before humanity. It presupposes a previous defeat of the world proletariat and above all of its most powerful army, the American working class. The class struggles in all the countries of the world, which will

decide the fate of humanity in the next decade, will at the same time, decide to one degree or another the fate of each people in particular.

The peculiarities of Jewish history have only determined a special subordination of the future of this people to the outcome of the unfolding social struggles. Fundamentally, however, they do not make the destiny of the Jews any more dependent on a victory or defeat of the proletariat than is the case with the people of Russia or of China.

It is unnecessary for us to introduce any changes in the solution of the Jewish question as A. Leon has outlined it in the conclusion of his work. That capitalism will first pass through a period during which the Jews will go through a process of assimilation and of "national-cultural renaissance" this perspective no longer constitutes a subject for discussion save among incurable dreamers who will continue to discuss such subjects as the sex of angels on the very eve of their being reduced to atomic dust. The problems which are posed before the Jewry, like those which are posed before humanity, demand such radical solutions and are so urgent that no one dares any longer to seek refuge behind a propaganda for temporary palliatives. But all those who still continue to call revolutionists illusory thinkers will find, if they have not already done so, that there is no illusion worse than an expectation of viable solutions from a regime which is no longer able to introduce improvements in anything except machines for death.

The ordeals through which humanity has just passed have stultified many minds and paralysed many wills. The petty bourgeoisie and especially the intellectuals have been the most affected. Those who were in the habit of thinking of the world as "rational" are themselves losing their reason in face of such irrational decay. But it is not these sceptics who will determine the fate of humanity. The will to struggle of the working masses of the entire world has already affirmed itself more mightily than ever during the year which has followed the end of hostilities. It is upon this will to struggle of the proletariat that the vanguard must fix its hopes and growth.

As the most sorely wounded, the Jews have especially allowed themselves to be carried away by the psychosis of despair and demoralisation, which has been further sharpened by the specific social structure of this people. But in a few years, the immediate effects of the nightmare will disappear. The collapse of Palestinian hopes will become obvious. Whereas for the moment there exist only negative poles which repel each other, by that time the positive pole, that of the international revolutionary proletariat, will have already confirmed its attractive force with striking victories. Since we have no reason to doubt the fate of humanity, let us also not doubt that the Jewish working masses, after passing through a series of disappointing experiences, will recognise that their future is indissolubly linked with that of the proletariat — and the revolutionary movement, and that they will again, as in the past, take an important place in this movement, and will owe their final emancipation to a devoted struggle for the cause of socialism.

1 July 1946

6. Al Glotzer

The Jewish problem after Hitler

"What is obvious is not always known,
And what is known is not always present."

Samuel Johnson

THE reaction of the official Fourth Internationalist organisations to the Jewish question and the problem of Palestine in the new situation produced by Hitlerism and the war is a measure of their incapacity to free themselves from outlived theories and political positions. This results in a dreary reaffirmation of old ideas and programs accompanied by the repetitious explanation that "there is no reason to change our position" since "there is nothing new in the situation." Thus it is the same with the Russian question, the national question and the Jewish question. For the most part, these organisations, most notably the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, have remained virtually silent on the Jewish question. The silence is not wholly accidental; it is a reflection of policy. Real and concrete new problems of the day are approached with extreme caution and conservatism.

I

IN relation to the current world Jewish question, the leading spokesmen of the official Fourth International rely upon theoretical and political reasoning which has its roots in the bygone eras of 1905 and 1917-23.

Aside from a short statement or two dealing with the concrete problem of Jewish immigration, and a rather long and abstract article on Palestine by T. Cliff, the *Fourth International* and *The Militant* in this country, as well as the press of other Trotskyist organisations, have refrained from comment on the Jewish question on the ground that there is really nothing different to say about this complicated international problem from what has already been said for dozens of years. That is, until the *Fourth International* reprinted an essay by Ernest Mandel entitled "The Jewish Question Since World War II." This essay first appeared as the concluding chapter of the late A. Leon's book, *The Materialist Conception of the*

Jewish Question.

Mandel is the new theoretical luminary of the official Fourth International; his writings read like a lawbook; he is regarded as the outstanding interpreter of the theories of Trotskyism, especially on the Russian question, wherein he "brilliantly reaffirmed" (according to James P. Cannon) the outlived theory of the "degenerated workers' state."

The First Attempt at an Answer

Mandel's essay, which marks one of the first efforts of the official Fourth International to speak somewhat concretely on the Jewish question, is distinguished by its utterly detached and abstract approach to the problem, but which is characteristic for its unquestionably correct interpretations of parts of an old Marxist position which has little to do with life today. Where Mandel is on his own, i.e., where he is compelled to concern himself with the concrete problems of the day, he is thrown into one quandary after another. But they are of no consequence, for thereafter he sweeps away the whole problem with lofty disdain born of the supra-historical approach.

We had occasion to direct attention to this type of theorising in an earlier article in the *New International* in which we referred to T. Cliff's competent analytical work on Palestine, and here, too, we observed a fine study of the economic growth and problems of the Middle East and the place of Palestine in that situation. Yet the whole work was outstanding for its studied evasion of the political questions of the class and national struggle taking place there. He even failed to mention the slogan of an all-Palestinian constituent assembly in the struggle for independence and against imperialism.

Not written as a reply to the position advocated by the Workers' Party, *The New International* and *Labor Action*, it nevertheless has been published by the SWP (*Fourth International*, April, 1947) as a polemical gesture, for in their

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minds the Mandel essay is an answer to what they call our "right-wing" position on the Jewish question.

Some of our readers may be aware that one of the main differences between us and the official Fourth International and the SWP is on the question of the right of the Jews to free immigration to Palestine. In advocating the right of free immigration to all countries, and in the first place to the United States, we advocate, at the same time, that democratic right for Palestine. The Fourth International and its adherents, however, are in favour of free immigration of Jews to all countries, the United States, Great Britain, France, Australia, etc., but ... not to Palestine — the one country to which they want to go! Mandel's article seeks to give the theoretical and historical justification for this obviously contradictory position.

This article can be summarised briefly: The Jews of Europe have undergone almost inhuman suffering; this is due to the nature of capitalism. But the Jews are not alone in this suffering. Other peoples, other national minorities are faced with the same or similar prospects of extermination or near-extermination. This is a symbol of the decay of capitalism. There is no hope for these people except in the victory of socialism. It is true, the Jews may be entirely exterminated between now and the future, but... oops, sorry... that can't be helped, you know. That's capitalism for you. The Jews, despite this grim prospect, must not allow themselves to be emotionally worked up by the fact that six, seven or eight millions of them have been wiped out in Europe!

II

THE first part of the article summarises the bestial nature of a society which destroyed five out of six million European Jews. Why and how did this happen? "Reason refuses to admit," says Mandel, "that material interests could have coldly dictated the extermination of these countless defenseless beings." What then did? Capitalism, he answers! As though capitalism did not embrace material interests and factors. The general answer is undoubtedly correct, but it is much too simple. One has to go further and examine the concrete conditions under which this extermination took place at the hands of a specific German fascism. Mandel's failure to go beyond his generalisation produces, in turn, a faulty approach to the problem of the "guilt" of German fascism, its hierarchy and its bourgeois sponsors.

If one approaches the question of "material interests" from the narrowest of premises, then it would be difficult to say: yes, this factor or this person alone was responsible. Material interests did play an important contributing role to the actual unfolding of events in Germany. But if one understands the general social conditions which produced the fascist movement, the class warfare and the capitulation of Stalinism and social democracy, which insured the victory of Hitler, and understands at the same time the fact that the fascist movement embraces the "social scum" of society, it is not difficult then to grasp the multiplicity of factors which produced this situation, the great historical factors, as well as the mean ones, the big bourgeoisie which enriches itself on the basis of state policy and the fascist agent who enriches himself from the disfranchised and murdered Jews. For this one must understand the molecular process induced by the specific features of German decay after the First World War, and the plane to which violence is raised as a method of solving the social crisis in declining bourgeois society. Violence has universal traits in bourgeois society but it also has some specific national characteristics and forms which the Marxist cannot overlook.

Mandel characterises the experiences of the Jews as a symbol of the fate of humanity in general and as the product of a sick society. And he adds: "The tragedy of the Jews is only the herald to other peoples of their coming fate." The correctness of this generalisation has a strange ring: the expression of sympathy for the Jews seems constantly to be apologised for and qualified by the observations, that their sufferings are socially and historically conditioned, as if that in some way mitigates the condition of this people.

Thus after describing the unrelieved horrors of the Jews, Mandel is under compulsion to write: "Alongside of five million murdered Jews are sixty million victims of imperialist war. The barbaric treatment of the Jews by Hitlerite imperialism is only an extreme expression of the barbarism of the general methods of imperialism in our period. As against the Jewish deportations we now find the deportation of millions of Germans from Poland and Czechoslovakia."

The purpose of comparison

WHAT is the point of these comparisons? To show the Jews that there is nothing unique in their position in European society today? But that is silly, for the conditions which the Jewish people face are unique. While it is true that Germans have been deported from Poland and Czechoslovakia, undergoing severe suffering in the process, the comparison ends at that point. For these Germans return to their own nation, however divided it may be under conditions of military occupation. They may return to friends and relatives. They do not remain in concentration camps where their families and friends had been exterminated by the hundreds of thousands and millions. They do not return to a hostile country which hates them.

Chancing the charge that I do not have real feeling for the sixty million victims of the imperialist slaughter, I still say that the comparison made by Mandel is false. The Jews were not merely victims of an imperialist war; they were the victims of a social and political programme of German fascism serving its big business masters, and would have faced the same extermination whether there was a war or not.

But is there not some special point to Mandel's observation? Yes, there is. It is to affirm by commission and omission that there is really nothing unique in the position of European Jewry, no special problems created by their homelessness and landlessness. We shall soon see exactly how this penetrating method settles the problem of a displaced people who face, by his own admission, total extermination.

The "historical" fixation, the extreme impartiality of Mandel in assessing the responsibility for the extermination of the Jews

in Europe produces some curious reasoning. For, if the position of the Jews in Europe today is a product of a sick and dying capitalism — and this is undeniable — how can you blame Germany alone? No, it is quite obvious that all the imperialists are equally responsible. All? Yes, all... except the "Soviet Union", the "degenerated workers' state", and without soviets and where the workers do not rule, have no rights and are at the mercy of a ruthless bureaucratic ruling class. As Mandel writes: "the very fate of the Jews in Europe was determined as much by the calculations of American imperialists as by the direct massacres of Hitler.... If Hitler constructed the trap for the Jews, it was the Anglo-Americans who sprang it. The blood of the innocent falls upon

That they have become nationalist, have developed an increased consciousness of their existence as Jews, goes without saying. To expect anything else, after their experiences of the past decade or more... in a situation where the world revolutionary socialist movement is for all practical purposes almost non-existent, is to expect a miracle.

their heads as well as upon the Nazis."

A warped analysis

AS a historical generalisation describing the imperialist world, this is true, but as Mandel applies it to the concrete situation involving the Jews, it is only half true, for the logic of the point he pursues is to blur the differences between the imperialists and to make it impossible to distinguish the demands of conflict in state policy of the various powers. Having made this generalisation, how does it alter what happened in Germany and Europe during the years 1933 to 1945? One can say, correctly, that Great Britain and the United States did not do anything because they did not help the Jews to emigrate from Germany. But that is not the same thing as saying they are responsible for Hitler's internal policies. Hitler was prepared to carry out his extermination programme no matter how many protests were made. The extermination of the Jews was part of his national program. Not even the threat of war would have deterred him, if it is conceivable that Great Britain or the United States would have gone to war on behalf of the Jews.

In attacking British and American policy as equally responsible for the plight of the Jews in Germany, Mandel very gingerly by-passes critical comment about Stalinist Russia and its role in the slaughter of Europe's Jews. The only reference made to Russia is the quoted charge of the Polish resistance movement that it was betrayed by the British, Polish and Russian governments. But again Mandel even twists this with his own comments directing attention only toward the capitalist imperialists, because, as everyone knows by now, he not only does not believe that there is such a thing as Russian imperialism, but continues to find something magically progressive in that slave society. Beyond that reference there is not another word about Stalinist policy!

This conception of the responsibility of German fascist barbarism for the Jewish slaughter produced some bizarre reactions in the SWP. Working from the same analytical premises adopted by Mandel, *The Militant* denounced the first reports and pictures of the massacres in Buchenwald, Belsen as fakes, "war horror" and "atrocities stories" that could not possibly be true. Certainly *The Militant* understood that the publication of these reports and pictures had the purpose of inciting greater support of the masses for the war, but it was not necessary to deny their authenticity in order to recognise the purposes of the Allied governments in publishing them. *The Militant's* reaction, however, revealed a "touchiness" on the Jewish question that is reflected again in the Mandel opus.

All sense of proportion is lost in the methodology of Mandel. He still has to explain: why did this happen in Germany, and not in the United States? Why was not this vicious anti-semitism an integral part of Italian fascist policy as it was of the Germans? What is responsible for the terrible legacy of virulent anti-semitism on the whole continent today; and in Russia, too, where it has never really been stamped out by the Kremlin but on the contrary is slyly fostered by it?

Mandel passes these questions by. Given his Russian position, he is congenitally unable to introduce into this discussion of responsibility or guilt for the extermination of the Jews the role of Stalinist Russia. If Great Britain and the United States sprang Hitler's trap, what did the Stalin-Hitler pact of 1939 contribute to the well-being of the Jews? Did the pact relieve the sufferings of the Jews or intensify them? Did the closed borders of Stalinist Russia assist the Jews or help seal their doom in Europe?

No, Mandel has no time for such trifles. He has a theory and he is on his way. Do you want proof that Great Britain and the United States are co-responsible with Hitler for the extermination of the Jews? Well, here it is: Allied war prisoners in Germany and German war prisoners in Allied countries are treated "tolerably" well, but not so the Russian prisoners. This is supposed to prove by some method or other that the Russians could in no way be held co-responsible for the fate of the Jews. Nay, if the Germans treated Russian soldiers worst of all, then it is proof that Russia must have been trying to do something to relieve the sufferings of these people. Absurd, you think? Then how else follow Mandel's logic?

But, as a matter of fact, the whole point Mandel tries to make is absurd. The treatment of US and British prisoners in Germany and vice versa was a product of the war, of military policy and not of good will. If the Germans treated the Russian prisoners worst of all, you can be sure that Stalin did not turn the other cheek. The methods of the Third Reich and the "degenerated workers' state" were strangely similar. How does the fact fit into Mandel's schema that tens and hundreds of thousands of German prisoners in Russia were also treated "tolerably" well? The reasons for this were entirely political and the fruits of the policy can be observed now in Stalinist policy in Germany. And again,

if one is to measure the Jewish question by the yardstick employed by Mandel, what is one to say about the extermination of the Poles, civilian and military, by both Germany and Russia?

III

THE lofty historical point of view taken by Mandel has led him into devious roads. At one point he shows the condition of the European Jewry by calling attention once more to the fact that there are less than a million of them left on the whole Continent. "The war," he writes, "has brutally cut all the roots that nourished them in their social environment. If they cannot develop new roots elsewhere, these people are condemned to perish." Yes, yes, yes. How true! And that is not all. "More than 100,000 Jewish fugitives in Germany... one year after their 'liberation' continue to live under the ignominious conditions of concentration camps, and are subject to a thousand and one frauds on the part of the military authorities."

Yes, Mandel proves beyond peradventure of doubt that the Jews cannot remain in Europe unless they accept their total extermination. Therefore, since the capitalists themselves will not succor the Jews, it is up to the workers' movement, especially in the more advanced and better situated countries, to "advance the demand of elementary humanity: Open the doors of the United States, of Canada, of Australia, of the five continents to the victims of Nazi persecution!"

Mandel argues that the countries named could easily absorb these few hundred thousand Jews. No doubt. But, the nub of the problem is the ugly fact that none of these countries will take them in and that a great deal of opposition exists to their immigration among wide layers of people. Let us leave this for the moment and go on.

Mandel adds: "The development of anti-semitism, the result of definite social and historic causes [this obviously places it on another plane entirely!] is producing the spread of Zionist nationalism among the despairing and declassed petty bourgeois Jewish masses. The brutal equalisation of Jews of all strata in the extermination camps sharpened nationalism even among Jewish workers, in the degree that international solidarity remained too weak on the part of the workers of other nations." So what is to be done? The workers in "a favoured position as compared with the Jewish workers take the leadership now and bring about freedom of immigration into their countries for the survivors." To save them from extinction? Undoubtedly! But, in addition, because those in "a favoured position" may "win the Jewish workers from the Zionist utopia."

This, you see, is the gravest of all problems. The fact is however, that the Jews have not turned to Palestine because they have become Zionists. That they have become nationalist, have developed an increased consciousness of their existence as Jews, goes without saying. To expect anything else, after their experiences of the past decade or more, their absence of any place to live and in a situation where the world revolutionary socialist movement is for all practical purposes almost non-existent, is to expect a miracle.

The world is closed to them

Mandel contradicts himself in the very next paragraph of his essay when he adds: "If thousands of Jews in Europe are now demanding the right to migrate to Palestine, the primary reason for this is that the doors of the rest of the world are closed to them. It is also the product of the incredible persecutions of the past years and the relative passivity of the world proletariat." I could not put it better myself. Unwittingly, Mandel stumbled on what is crucial. The Jewish question is a part of the broader national question today, in its altered forms resulting from the successive defeats of the revolution, the Hitler experience and the rise of Stalinism. For the rise of the national question in its varied forms is dependent in large measure on the size, influence and integrity of the revolutionary socialist movement. Given the absence of such a viable movement, the problems of today necessarily assume new forms and seek different solutions.

Where does this bring us? To Mandel's blind alley: the Jews cannot live in Europe. They must leave. However, there is no place for them to go. The brutality of the conditions they experience daily and their homelessness has resulted in their universal desire to go to Palestine. Therefore we are for opening the doors of the whole world-five continents, no less, Africa included — but ... not Palestine! Why not Palestine? According to Mandel:

1. From an economic point of view, Palestine and the whole Middle East will suffer terrible devastation in the coming world economic crisis. That means no future for the Jews there.

2. From the "socio-economic" point of view, "the forces opposing this immigration have a crushing superiority over the Palestinian Jews and over world Zionism."

But from an economic point of view, the whole world will suffer just as severely from the coming world economic crisis, and from the "socio-economic" point of view, the populations of other countries are just as opposed to the migration of the Jews as the Arab nationalists. No matter. This does not deter Mandel and his co-thinkers from demanding, the right of the Jews to enter those countries. And so we find that the slogans for the right of free immigration for Jews to all countries and to the five continents did not, in Mandel's mind, mean complete free immigration, and not to all countries.

Are the Arabs right in opposing Jewish immigration? If the demand for free immigration is a correct democratic, socialist slogan, shouldn't revolutionary socialists issue it despite the opposition of the Arabs and try to convince, not to oppose it? Is there any special merit in criticising only the reactionary positions of the official Jewish organisations and to say not a word about the reactionary feudalistic concepts of the Arab chieftains? On our part, we have made our severest criticisms of official Jewish policy, but we have not lost sight of the false attitude of the Arab rulers whose opposition to immigration has a strong reactionary base and coincides in part with British imperialist policy. For the truth is that the British use both Jews and Arabs with varying success.

And yet the fate of the Jews is sealed. The continued existence of bourgeois society will mean not merely the extermination of the Jews in Europe, but over the whole world, and especially in the United States. Can anything be done about it? No, not really.



Cartoon from the Militant, 1945 — the snake strangling the worker reads "race hate"

for "the only way out which still remains open to humanity is at the same time the solution of the Jewish question." Worse than that, "the peculiarities of Jewish history have only determined a special subordination of the future of this people to the outcome of the unfolding social struggles." Only the Jews? And other peoples? Apparently not. In this case, the Jews are unique, says Mandel. For them there really is no hope unless socialism comes and quickly, too. Even if we are to agree that the prospects of Jewish survival are slim indeed, must revolutionary socialist policy rest upon this prospect of extermination? Is it not likely that the extermination of the Jews of the world will be accompanied by a descent of all society into barbarism? Even so, revolutionary socialists do not therefore treat the daily problems of the class struggle (of which the national and Jewish questions are a part) with historical aloofness and a fatalism which springs from the conviction of inevitable doom. They try to do everything in their power to prevent the doom of society. This would seem to dictate the formulation of a policy, a realistic one too, that would offer some prospect of reversing the dominant social tendency and to reverse it in the direction of socialism.

Mandel holds out a hope

DOES not Mandel, who on so many other questions holds ultra-leftist positions, offer us some hope to the Jews? Yes, he does in the following paragraph:

"As the most sorely wounded, the Jews have especially allowed themselves to be carried away by the psychosis of despair and demoralisation [!], which has been further sharpened by the specific social structure of this people [?]. But in a few years, the immediate effects of the nightmare will disappear.... Since we have no reason to doubt the fate of humanity, let us also not doubt that the Jewish working masses, after passing through a series of disappointing experiences, will recognise their future is indissolubly linked with that of the proletariat and the revolutionary movement, and that they will again, as in the past, take an important place in this movement, and will owe their final emancipation to a devoted struggle for the cause of socialism." Fine words, these. But in the meantime? Suppose the previous forecast of Mandel is realised and the Jews are exterminated? What then? Well, that's just too bad. The fault will be capitalism's, not ours.

IV

ONLY dogmatic and schematic thinking could produce such abstractions on the current Jewish question. The fundamental error of Mandel's approach is that its thinking is rooted in the "assimilationist" era of the movement at a time when the Jewish question seemed close to solution. At the same time he suffers myopia produced by his inability to understand the Jewish question today as part of the national question, i.e., national question of 1939-47 and not of 1917-23. As will be clear to any reader of Mandel's essay, he rejects the thought that the Jewish question in Europe today is a part of the national question; moreover, he does not grasp the full meaning of the consequences of the new position of the Jews on the continent. To appraise this new position, one need only recall the position of the Jews in the pre-Hitler period.

For decades the conditions of the Jews in Europe had steadily improved. Centuries of oppression, persecution, discrimination and ghetto life seemed to disappear in the advance of capitalism and the expansion of its modern industrial system. While the position of the Jews had improved everywhere, it reached its height in the advanced capitalist countries. In those nations, assimilation of Jews went on uninterrupted. So deep-going was this process that many Jews came to believe that the days of great trial for their people had ended. Only in the most backward nation, Czarist Russia, did the Jews still face the problems of another age. There the putrescent nobility and its camarilla still employed the "pogrom" as an instrument of state policy for the purpose of preserving their rule. But even the capitalist world was aghast at the treatment of the Jews in Russia.

For the most part, the Marxist movement regarded the occurrences in Czarist Russia as an "aberration" not characteristic of world capitalism. And on the scale of world history, the persecution of 10,000,000 scattered people, residing in small numbers in dozens of countries, would have been a truly grotesque and senseless practice. Persecution of the Jews had, in any case, ceased to be an international practice, or, if it had not ceased entirely, at least the tendency was unmistakably toward an end of such persecution and for assimilation of large

and ever-increasing numbers of the Jews in the general national patterns of the countries in which they lived.

Aspects of the new situation

GIVEN this general objective situation, one could understand the validity of the old Marxist position, most forcefully expressed in the old Russian and Polish revolutionary parties, the Bolsheviks as well as the Mensheviks, in favour of "assimilation" and against the revival or survival of Jewish nationalism, which sought to reverse the process of history. In the eastern European movement, the Jewish Bund remained the strongest force which fought for the maintenance of "Jewish integrity", a Jewish national life, and a Jewish national culture. Lenin, for example, opposed this part of the programme of the Bund as reactionary, as an attempt to move backwards on the Jewish question, at a time when everything pointed toward a progressive solution of the problem, particularly in view of the rise of the revolutionary socialist movement, the imminence of the revolution in Russia and the prospect of a not-too-distant world socialist victory.

The Jewish problem today is so different qualitatively from the past, that it is almost entirely a new one demanding new solutions. This much was already indicated by Trotsky shortly before his death when he forecast the extermination of the Jews during the war. Trotsky's position was nearly realized in the tragic extermination of from five to six million Jews in Europe.

As a measure of the difference of the modern Jewish problem, consider the tremendous revulsion of the whole world to the Czarist pogroms in the 1905 period and the relative indifference of a world accustomed to mass destruction of wealth and peoples to the scientific mass murder of the Jews in the Hitler era. Then the world was horror-stricken; yes, even the bourgeois world was aghast at the cruel slaughter and persecution of the Russian Jews. Cruel slaughter and persecution! Lenin recorded the depth of these pogroms when he wrote: "It is calculated that in 100 cities at that time 4,000 were killed and 10,000 were mutilated."

But the Jews could flee Russia to havens of safety. There was the United States with free immigration and its vast areas of land. There was western Europe — the center of modern capitalist civilization. As a result, there was no mass movement to Palestine in those days and no amount of Zionist agitation could create one. The Jews as a whole did not seek "national survival," a "Jewish state," a "homeland." They were content to be permitted to reside in the countries of their choice and to become full citizens of those lands on a free and equal basis with other inhabitants.

Is that era comparable to the present? All one has to do is to examine the real world of today to see how clearly different it is, how completely insecure is the position of the Jews now. Is it an exaggeration to say, after more than ten years of Hitlerism in a decaying world characteristic for its social degeneration, that the existence of the Jews is as perilous in 1917 as it was in 1940? The virus of anti-semitism has spread to all borders and has infected nations and peoples whose relative tolerance was conspicuous in former years. The truth is that the Jews have no place in Europe to live. They cannot return to their old homes and resume their former occupations. They are for the most part, the few hundred thousand European Jews who are left, inhabitants of former concentration camps in an atmosphere polluted with the stink of crematories, dungeons and fresh-dug graves. A person would have to be thick-skinned indeed not to feel the depths of despair which have seized hold of the Jewish population of the world, especially those who remain in Europe today.

Some of the new problems

OUT of the cemetery in which the remnants of European Jews now temporarily reside has come a mass desire for emigration to Palestine, a desire which took almost spontaneous form. Why Palestine? Why not the United States, Australia, South America, England or France? The principle reason, as Mandel himself admits, is that none of these countries will permit the entry of Jews or other displaced persons. In these circumstances the Jews have, in fact, only one place to turn to that offers them some realistic prospect of salvation, namely, Palestine. Without going into a discussion now as to all the reasons why emigration to Palestine is justifiable, let me cite an important reason for it. More than one third of the population of Palestine, who are Jews, want their fellow nationals to come there. The weight of persecution has created a deep bond of solidarity between the European and Palestinian Jews. Palestine can absorb these several hundred thousand European Jews and offer them a haven in a world whose doors are closed to them. In a way it is an answer to the disgusting, hypocritical sympathies expressed for the Jews by the United States, Great Britain, Russia and the leading powers of the UN who are using the Jewish question as a political football in the new imperialist struggle for world domination.

To recognise the validity of these national aspirations for survival among Europe's Jews is not a violation of Marxist principles. On the contrary, to deny them would reveal not only all obstinate misunderstanding of everything that Lenin wrote on the national question, but a failure to understand what has happened in Europe in the past twenty-five years.

There are many other aspects of this problem, Arab-Jewish relations, policies of the official Jewish organisations, binational state, partition and some broader aspects of the national question which we must leave for another article.

But we cannot leave off at this point without reminding Mandel and his co-thinkers that, no matter how successful they may be in evading concrete answers to new problems by the dogmatic assertions of old theory, they must still answer the living questions of the day — and answer them correctly. For, whatever Mandel may think, events in the Middle East rush on swiftly.

7. Socialist Appeal June 1939 The anti-Jewish line

WHEN Epstein arrived in Palestine in the spring of 1936, a prominent figure in the Communist movement, he found himself greeted with open hostility by the Arab secretary of the Palestinian party. "Who sent for you, who needs your advice?" this man said to Epstein, "We get our advice from Moscow, and you stop interfering."

As a result of his encounters with this man and his investigation of the actual conduct of the Stalinists in Palestine, Epstein was driven to the conclusion that "the general secretary of the Communist Party of Palestine is a bitter enemy of the Jews."

Moscow's appointee as chieftain of the Palestinian Stalinists worked on the basis of the outlook which he expressed to Epstein, that all Jewish Communists were actually secret sympathisers of the Zionist movement. As a result he took measures to drive most of the Jewish Communists out of the organisation.

In accordance with Moscow's line of refusing to distinguish between the genuine aspirations of the Arab masses and the corrupt and unprincipled games played by the Mufti and his terrorists, the Palestinian Stalinist organisation not only defended the bombings and assassinations carried on by the Mufti's gangsters, but actually itself engaged in such bombings, Epstein discovered.

Jewish Communists were singled out for the horrible task of throwing these bombs. In cases where Arabs were assigned, the Jews were required to manufacture the bombs.

Epstein had a meeting with a group of Jewish Communists who had been driven out of the organisation, and learned further corroborating details along the same line. Since then, these dissidents have organised around the paper published in both Arabic and Hebrew, *Haor-El Nour*, on a programme of Arab-Jewish workers' and peasants' unity. Epstein learned of the assignment of two young Jewish Communists to throw a bomb at a Jewish meeting in Tel Aviv. He sought out those assigned and prevailed upon them to abandon the project.

Horrified by what he had seen in Palestine, Epstein went to Spain and there saw the chieftain of the colonial department of the Communist International. The latter, when appealed to by Epstein, told him that his only recourse was to secure the aid of the Central Committee of the American party.

The foregoing facts were reported by Epstein to a select meeting of members of the Jewish Bureau of the CP and editorial associates on the Freiheit. Weber was at this meeting, and the terrible facts reported by Epstein and the failure of the Stalinist leadership to do anything about them led him finally to break with Stalinism.

Epstein never succeeded in bringing the matter to the point of discussion in the Central Committee. He was merely called before a sub-committee and confronted with a ready made resolution supporting the policy of the Comintern in Palestine. A bureaucrat without much courage, Epstein soon enough capitulated. His sole act of resistance was to refuse to write an article at the time defending the line of the Central Committee's resolution.

The jackals around him took advantage of the weakening of Epstein's position as the result of his raising the Palestine question, and after a period of defending himself, Epstein was finally forced to resign his post as editor, and go into exile for two years at the other end of the country.

Weber's story provides a minor link in the broader story which requires no revelations at all, but is known to the Jewish workers and Arab workers and peasants of Palestine. The Stalinists have sought to win the good will of the Arab landowners and bourgeoisie in preference to the Palestinian masses. Having no faith in the colonial revolution which is indicated for the Near East, the Stalinists prefer to link themselves with the Arab exploiters and to use them as a form of pressure upon Britain on behalf of Stalin's diplomatic moves. The Stalinists never criticise the Arab exploiters, and have discouraged all moves to organise the Arab workers as an independent force. This is the basic policy lying behind the anti-Jewish orientation of the Palestinian Stalinist organisation.

8. Communist League of America 1929

Pogrom or revolution?

THIS article expressed the response of the American Trotskyists to the historic turn of the Stalinist Comintern to a new type of "anti-Zionism". It was the beginning of a new departure whose consequences are today most noticeable in the ostensible Trotskyist movement. The Communist League of America regarded itself as an expelled faction of the Communist Party of America. Shachtman's "solidarity" with the party and efforts to influence its members and sympathisers lead him to take a too even-handed "balancing" approach to the conflict between the Stalinist Jewish paper *Freiheit* and the social-democratic Jewish daily *Forward*. Some of the anti-semitic cartoons published in the *Freiheit* can be found in the AWL's pamphlet *Two Nations Two States*. What is important here is the attitudes such as support for free Jewish immigration to Palestine.

POGROM or national revolution? The answer to this question, arising out of the recent events in Palestine, has brought confusion and sharp dissension into the labour and Communist movement in this and other countries. An understanding of the present situation is prerequisite for an answer.

The artificially-established country known today as Palestine has been inhabited by Arabs for more than twelve centuries.

Palestine and the Empire

With Cyprus and Egypt, Palestine forms the triangular protective collar of the jugular vein of British imperialism: the Suez Canal, the great route to India and China, the other end of the long Mediterranean gap guarded on the Atlantic by Gibraltar. Moreover, Palestine is of additional strategic importance for England. The pipeline for Mosul oil will terminate at the seaport of Haifa, and with it the railroad to Mesopotamia; Britain's imperial airways, of the commercial and military variety, have an important post in Palestine, over which lies the land route to India. To retain a stranglehold on Palestine by throttling any Arabian movement for independence has become a cardinal section in the British imperialist code.

Largely to this end, as well as for the purpose of distracting the sympathy of the Jews from the impending Bolshevik revolution, Lord Balfour issued his notorious declaration on 2 November 1917, which proclaimed England's intention to assure Jewry "a national homeland", that is, by their domination of the Zionist movement to inject into Palestine a solid base for British imperialist support, and a source of friction with the Arabs, a bulwark against the nationalist wave. The reactionary-utopian character of Zionism lent itself splendidly to this design. Misled by the glowing promises of the Zionist leaders, thousands of Jewish workers were brought to Palestine to serve as the instruments of British imperialism against the Arab natives and the reactionary aims of well fed Jewish magnates in establishing a state in Palestine dominated by the Jews — who to this day form only about one-seventh of the population — and serving the cause of the Union Jack.

The expropriation of the Arabian peasants began on a big scale. Their land was "bought" by Zionist speculators at incredibly low prices, usually paid to the rich Sheiks and Effendis, leaving the Arab fellahin without any source of livelihood. Together with thousands of Jewish workers, the Arabs were transformed into objects of almost limitless exploitation as agricultural workers and proletarians in the incipient industry of the country.

The nationalist misleaders

THE natural growth of Arab resentment against British imperialism and its Zionist trail-blazers, expressing itself in a movement for national liberation by the unshackling of England's fetters, was checked, perverted and emasculated by the Arabian feudal landlords, the religious caste and the budding bourgeoisie. From the Grand Mufti to the lower-caste Sheiks, there is hardly one of the leaders of the Arabian nationalist movement who has not at one time or another been bought, or who could not be bought to serve British or French imperialism. And outside of this reactionary element, dominated largely by religious and Pan-Islamic notions, there is no substantial anti-imperialist movement except the Communist Party of Palestine. Today there is not even as advanced a movement in Palestine as was represented in China by the Kuo Min Tang.

It is this element that is today leading Arabian nationalist movement, particularly in Palestine, and much to the detriment of the interests and aspirations of the Arab peasant. It wants the establishment of an Arab state in Palestine, if not throughout all the Arabic countries proper — an Arab State in agreement with the British, "if necessary", and even under their benevolent protectorate. Thence arises their sharp antagonism to the Zionists and their servile attitude towards the British master.

Therein lie the causes of the present struggle. To jockey for a better position in Palestine, to advance their desires for greater power, the Arab and Zionist bourgeoisie continue to set their respective peoples into conflict with each other. The Arab workers and peasant is depicted to the Jew as the source of all his difficulties. The Jew is pointed

out to the Arab as the source of all evil.

The reactionary Arab leaders have diverted the nationalist movement of the masses into Pan-Islamic and anti-semitic channels and out of its natural current against British imperialism. Is not this clear from all that has happened? Here is an interview (*New York Times*, September 7, 1929) with Auni Abd-el-Hadi Sij, secretary of the Arab Executive, secretary to Feisal of Iraq at Versailles and co-signer of the treaty.

The Arab Congress

"At our congress today we solemnly declared that we would not budge from our conviction that Palestine must again form a part of the Arab Empire of our dreams." The Arab leader went on to say that the Arab Executive gave orders to the Arab population not to shoot at British troops even when these troops, blinded by London orders, were shooting at them. In the last outbreaks the Arabs shot at Jews only; those Englishmen reported killed, he said, were the victims of stray bullets. "We are by no means anti-British"

Furthermore, the Executive Committee of the Arab National Congress, in a message to the League of Nations, asked it to see that a parliamentary government, representative of the Arabian majority, was installed in the "Holy Land". Between these gentlemen and their Zionist contemporaries there is about the same difference as between the Polish nobility and the favour-courrying Jews under Tsarism.

The cause of the street struggles is therefore not to be found in the dispute over the so-called Wailing Wall. Rather the latter is only a religious cloak for deep-going social conflict. Only the passionately blind or the wilfully deceptive fail to acknowledge this obvious fact now. Have not even the National Council of Palestine Jews, and Chief Rabbinate and the pious British High Commissioner, that the Wailing Wall is only incidental to the main struggle?

Is the Arab attack upon the Jews a pogrom? That the action of the Arabs had anti-Semitic features is quite clear, and is implicitly admitted even by the Communist Party Thesis (*Daily Worker*, September 3, 1929) when it says that "the action of the Arabs transformed itself rapidly (but from what? M. S.) into a national revolutionary uprising." That it was not a pogrom on the Jews, however, is eloquently evidenced by the fairly reliable figures of the Literary Digest, which reports that the first two weeks of the upheaval brought the following fatalities: Muslim killed, 870; Christians, 4; Jews, 175. That the main responsibility lies up British imperialism and its Zionist salesmen, and only in an entirely secondary sense upon the Arabs, is attested by no less an "unbiased" authority than the editor of the American Hebrew: "The arrogance of the so-called Zionist revolutionists is doubtless a causative factor behind the unhappy Muslim outbreaks against Jews. The bravado with which they claim Jewish Palestine against the Arabs, the aggressive zeal with which they demand an exclusive Jewish nationhood in Palestine, the inflammatory political harangues with which they demonstrate their foolhardy assertiveness are in no little measure to blame for the ill-will and recurrent clashes between Muslim and Jew in the Holy Land." No, it is not a pogrom. It is an uprising of the down-trodden Arabian masses, seeking expression for their hatred of the British oppressor, but still strangled and retarded by their corrupt feudal and bourgeois leaders, sold out at every opportunity, and often dragged off into reactionary by-paths.

The role of The Forward

It is, therefore, the lowest kind of reactionary nationalism, jingoist incitement of backward sentiment, and contemptible insult to an "inferior race", when the "socialist" *Forward* writes in its leading editorial (31 August 1929): "The main motive (so!) of the pogromists, the forces that drove them to their bloody work, was 'Gold and women'. In the Jewish houses you will find hordes of gold and lovely women." That was the cry, that was the fire that excited the blood of the mob and drove it to carry out its diabolical work." The Southern Bourbon reaction always uses precisely the same "reasoning" when it proceeds to lynch Negroes. And every workers to whom the cause of Labour is dear, will condemn unmeasuredly the scandalous lynching campaign of the *Forward* and its Zionist allies against the Communist Party, and its Jewish Organ, the *Freiheit*, in particular. The daily incitement of the *Forward* and the *Jewish Day*, aided, as in Chicago, by the American Legion, has resulted in hooligan attacks upon the *Freiheit* office in Chicago, intimidating newsstand dealers from selling the papers, pressing advertisers to withdraw their contracts, and breaking up Communist street meetings. These are the same despicable methods used by Burselson and Palmer against the socialist and the labour press during and after the war, and they have nothing in common with the working class. We protested against these actions when Stalinists sought to break up our Opposition meetings and tear up our press. We will fight with the party against the present methods of the yellow *Forward*.

The Arab leaders

NOW, is the Arab uprising a national revolutionary movement, as the official Party press declares? No. Not every movement led by spokesmen of an

oppressed nationality is a revolutionary movement. It is a lamentable fact that at the present time the Arab movement is directed by unconcealed reactionaries, with no substantial left-wing of revolutionary force to challenge their leadership, outside of the Communist Party of Palestine which has virtually no influence upon the recent events and which these same reactionaries helped drive into illegality and imprisonment. The Arab leaders have curbed the genuine movement of the masses, they have stunted its growth and prevented the development of its natural courses of struggle, they have repeatedly misled and devitalised it.

They are still the only spokesmen of the movement, and they speak for reactionary aims. They fight for an "Arab Empire". They have compromised with imperialism and are willing to do it again. They are against all Jews as Jews. They set up the reactionary demand for the "restriction of the Jewish immigration into Palestine".

They do not even pretend to a programme one-tenth as advanced as that of the Kuo Min Tang three years ago. They promise the peasant no land and the worker no social improvement. They are vehement enemies not only of Bolshevism, but of the mildest kind of labour movement. In this respect, they far "excel" their Zionist competitors.

But all of this means to the Stalinist high priests of the "Third Period". They have their idiotic and empty formula and feel compelled to make every event, occurring anywhere in the world, fit into the cherished blueprint. The confused and misdirected action of the Arabs is therefore touched with the magic wand of the "Third Period", and presto! it has become a "national revolutionary uprising against British imperialism". And endless as the Arabian deserts are the theses written to "prove" this contention. But who is leading this movement along national revolutionary lines? We are not told, because discretion is the better part of the New Line. Were an answer give, it would have to be: the Grand Mufti, the rabid Pan-Islamists, the effendis, the feudal lords are as yet unchallenged leaders of the movement that has been generated.

But, you say, thereby the contention falls to the ground. Yes, that is precisely why we have the astounding pictures of three-theses of the Political Committee and its Agit-prop department (30 August, 3 September and 7 September issues of *Daily Worker*) that do no say a word about these reactionary leaders of the Arab masses, much less condemn them. The September 3rd thesis has nine slogans at its conclusion, without a single one of them implying the need of struggle against these elements who will never lead a national revolutionary movement or allow one to develop. The 7 September thesis says: "We must point out the distinction between the Jewish bourgeoisie and the exploited and misled Jewish working masses in Palestine." Excellent! But why is there not a whisper about the "distinction" between the Arab fellahin and their oppressive Effendis and Mukhtars? Are we perhaps to understand that the Grand Mufti has become the leader of an Arabian "Bloc of Four Classes" as was Chiang Kai-Shek before him? Has the green banner of Islam replaced the blue of Kuo Min Tang? Are we to witness another period of exaggeration of the essence of the movement, of praises sung to the "national revolutionary anti-imperialist bourgeoisie" until they again decimate a whole generation of workers and peasants?

Behind all the "revolutionary" blabber of the Stalinists on the Palestine uprising is concealed an abysmally opportunist appraisal of the movement and its leaders.

The Freiheit's zig zag

DOES this mean that we have the same viewpoint as that of the *Freiheit* before it was condemned by the Party Political Bureau? By no means. The viewpoint of the *Freiheit* was indistinguishable from that of a reformed rabbi with leanings towards the labour movement. "The Arabian attacks bear all the signs of the Tsarist pogroms," it said (26 August). "Protest against the British government with permits the pogroms upon innocent people!" (Ah, coldhearted MacDonald, why don't you send some warships and troops to shoot down these confounded Arab pogromists!)

What happened was that when the incurable Menshevik Olgin, and the Zionist-trained Epstein, were scratched by a struggle, their thin coat of Bolshevik veneer was scraped off to reveal the Bundist underneath. The fact that Olgins and Epsteins (there are many of them, all specialists in slaughtering Trotskyists by the way) covered their scratches inside of an hour with some more varnish as soon as they found they were ordered to by the Political Committee, changes nothing about them. It mere made them throw away the speeches prepared for the Plaza Hall meeting, and rewrite them, using the same facts, but adding on new slogans furnished them by the agitprop department. But you will never make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, or a Bolshevik out of Olgin.

British imperialism, with the help of god and "comrade" MacDonald and Webb, not to speak of the anointed Zionists, will suppress the present uprising, but since its causes remain, the situation will continue to cast up new and greater insurrections. But the Arabian masses will win their liberations only under the banner of Bolshevism.