

JEWISH AFFAIRS

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AN EVENTFUL MEETING

In our last issue we took note of a public meeting held at the Hotel Diplomat in New York on October 21 under the auspices of the Committee for a Just Peace in the Mid-East. Nearly 400 people attended.

The main speaker was Dr. Herbert Aptheker, head of the American Institute of Marxist Studies. Other speakers were Samuel Neuberger, civil rights attorney, and Donna Ristorucci of the Young Workers Liberation League. A resolution on the crisis in the Middle East was adopted.

We present here the texts of Dr. Aptheker's speech and of the resolution. For those who wish further information, the address of the Committee for a Just Peace in the Mid-East is 100 East 16th St., New York, N.Y. 10003.

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FOR A JUST AND DURABLE PEACE IN THE MID-EAST

by Herbert Aptheker

We are gathered together to gain an understanding of the path towards a lasting and secure peace in the Mid-East; and then, based upon that understanding, to act so as to help bring about such a peace.

To help achieve peace in the Mid-East one must comprehend the sources of war. They are three-fold: feudalism, Zionism, imperialism, and these are inter-related. Let us examine each briefly:

I. The dominant socio-economic system in the Mid-East, until the revolutions in Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Algeria, Yemen, Libya, and the Sudan commencing in the mid-1950's and continuing to the present, was a feudal one and that system still predominates in those Arab countries where revolutions have not yet matured, as in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Tunisia. But especially since World War II, the Arab masses have become persuaded that their misery and poverty are social phenomena, that they can be eliminated and that their own strength is decisive in eliminating them. Of the Mid-East, T. Cuyler Young, chairman of the Department of Oriental Languages at Princeton, wrote, back in 1955:*

*In: S.N.Fisher, ed., Social Forces in the Middle East, Cornell Univ. Press, Ithaca, 1955, p. 253. For much additional material, see chapter XV in my American Foreign Policy and the Cold War, New Century Publishers, New York, 1962.

One of the paramount changes in the area is the conviction of the masses that an economy of scarcity and their own poverty are no longer necessary nor inevitable, but rather it is possible--and their right--to share in the world's plenty.

This is a source of conflict in the Mid-East because the local feudalists violently suppress the masses and because they sell out the resources of their own country to metropolitan imperialist powers--Britain, France and especially the United States--which then actively and forcibly intervene to maintain the status quo and to suppress or subvert anti-colonial movements and/or governments.

II. Zionism begins as an anti-socialist and anti-Marxist movement; it accepts basic postulates of anti-Semitic concepts; it makes alliances with reactionary forces from the Kaiser of the 19th century to the British Prime Minister of World War I to President Nixon of today. It commences with the idea that Palestine is a land without people and that Jews are a people without land and that the obvious, ordained solution is to turn over that land without people to the people without land. This was false geography and chauvinist historiography. Zionism began as an ecclesiastical, chauvinistic, anti-socialist and pro-imperialist concept; it has functioned in accordance with those roots and its policies in Israel have been racist (not only against Arabs but against darker peoples in general, including darker Jews), anti-secular, anti-socialist and so, naturally, in basic alliance with reactionary and colonialist and imperialist forces everywhere in the world--from West Germany to South Africa to the United States. Placing such a force, with the economic, financial and military support of Washington in the center of the Mid-East--when that region's masses were in the midst of an anti-feudal and anti-colonial renaissance--meant to exacerbate the likelihood of armed conflict.

III. The Mid-East has been a center of imperialist exploitation for one hundred years. One source for this was geographic. This area lies at the hub of three continents and astride several strategic bodies of water. Another was economic, especially in terms of oil. With the end of World War I, the significance of oil and the great oil corporations to the economies and governments of the capitalist powers was enhanced. Today in the United States oil, not steel, is king. From 1901 through 1953 steel production in the U. S. increased 7 1/2 times; oil production 34 times. Today the oil companies in the U. S. have greater assets than those of all companies in the three next largest industries; oil tycoons control also enormous reservoirs of credit.

Today, oil leads in U. S. foreign investments; so great are they that more than half of the industry's total profits come from overseas investments. In fact, the rate of return from foreign investments in oil was six times greater than from domestic!

Some years ago, Karl E. Meyer, after studying the matter, concluded:

The American oil industry is one of the towering giants of the national economy. Its resources and profits are prodigious; its special tax privileges have no parallel in the business community; its impact on domestic political life is felt on every level of government; its influence in the field of foreign policy is often decisive. (The Progressive, May, 1957.)

As the late Senator Kefauver said, after chairing an investigation of the activities of the oil cartel: "What the oil companies want, the oil companies get."

That oil cartel is the greatest in the world. In it are seven companies, of which five are American--Standard Oil of New Jersey, Standard Oil of California, Standard Oil of New York, Gulf and Texas. Of the remaining two, one is British and one is Dutch. It controls 55% of oil production, 65% of oil reserves, 57% of oil refining capacity, 66% of oil tankers in what is quaintly called the "free world." What is involved may be indicated with just one set of figures--in one year (1956) the American-Arabian Oil Company (Aramco) reported a net profit of \$280 millions, on which it paid, as income tax, exactly one percent!

To preserve the geographic-naval position, to retain possession of these huge resources, and to guard these colossal profits, the governments of the imperialist powers will do anything and have been guilty of every crime--including inciting, supporting and waging war.

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Each of these Mid-East realities--feudalism, Zionism, imperialism--are interpenetrating. Zionism prefers backward neighbors chained by feudal orders; feudal overlords sell their countries to imperialists who in turn help the feudalists stay in power; Zionists serve imperialists for they hate socialism, they foster chauvinism, and they serve as fronts for their masters. And behind it all stands the system of imperialism--especially the oil cartel--heating up the witches' brew, dividing and distorting, corrupting and killing--and prolonging its life and reaping its crops of gold from the tormented bodies of scores of millions of men, women and children.

These are the sources of war in the Mid-East. What do they tell us as to the means towards a lasting and just peace in that area? In a strategic sense the necessary conclusions are the following:

I. The way to a lasting peace in the Mid-East is via the struggle against the imperialist center-pin. The struggle for peace in

the Mid-East cannot be conducted with Tel Aviv-Washington against the Arab peoples but must rather be with the Arab peoples against imperialism.

II. When the ruling circles in Israel--the Meir-Dayan government--tie Tel Aviv's policy to Washington, they tie the future of Israel to a foul, crisis-ridden and doomed partner. The biggest threat to the existence of Israel lies in the pro-imperialist, aggressive and expansionist policy of the Meir-Dayan government; if that policy is not substantially altered, Israel is doomed and quite possibly World War III is assured.

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Tactically, the necessary conclusions are:

I. It is necessary that it be made perfectly clear that the question before us is not one of Arabs versus Jews. On the contrary, the question before us is one of imperialism and colonialism and feudalism versus national liberation and social progress. It is one of the effort by imperialism to maintain the exploitative relationship with the so-called underdeveloped countries, many of whose inhabitants are "colored" peoples, especially in the Mid-East, an area which includes, let it never be forgotten, a large part of Africa.

II. It is necessary that it be made perfectly clear that what is involved here is in no way anti-Semitism, this being absurd as the Arab peoples themselves are, of course, Semitic. But it is necessary also to affirm clearly that it is not a matter of anti-Jewishness. This should be done with vigor, clearly denouncing anti-Jewishness as the poison it is and affirming the knowledge of the age-old use of that poison as the handmaiden of the worst forms of reaction. Simultaneously, denunciation must be made of all forms of chauvinism, and certainly the chauvinism directed against the Arab peoples which in the main communications media of the U. S. has reached scandalous and barbaric proportions.

III. Israel's right to existence, as created by the United Nations, is not in question as has been affirmed repeatedly, not only by the U.S.S.R. but also by the U.A.R. The greatest threat to Israel's existence comes from the present ruling circles in Israel itself, who have made of it a handmaiden of imperialism and expansionism.

IV. The U. S. government supports not only the reactionary government of Israel but also reactionary Arab governments. Thus, Washington has supplied Saudi Arabia with more arms than it has Israel; thus, Washington stood ready in the Fall of 1970 to intervene militarily on the side of King Hussein. Demonstrating this helps expose the imperialist essence of the Mid-East question rather than its being one of Jews vs. Arabs.

V. It is necessary to reiterate that the Israeli government and the U. S. government, in the months and days prior to the June 1967 aggression, solemnly affirmed the absence of any intention, so far as Israel was concerned, of territorial aggrandizement and, so far as Washington was concerned, of its commitment to the unimpaired sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states in the Mid-East. As events have demonstrated without any ambiguity, both were lying; at any rate it is clear that Tel Aviv has appropriated enormous territory from its neighbors and has pursued a policy of occupation and exploitation of that territory and that Washington has done all in its power to make possible the retention of the fruits of that ravishment.

VI. The so-called "preventive war" argument of Israel must be fully exposed for the falsehood it is. Here two main points must be made: (a) the Israeli action in 1967 was aggressive and pre-meditated and not preventive; and (b) in any case, in the age of thermonuclear weapons and the existence of the United Nations, such "justification" (which is exactly the "justification" of the U. S. in its atrocious war against the Vietnamese people) is absolutely impermissible. It returns us to the unimpeded power politics which produced World Wars I and II and will, if not halted, produce World War III.

VII. Exposure and denunciation of the atrocious behavior of the Israeli occupiers--forced exile, destruction of homes, preventive arrests, clubbing of girls and women, torturing of prisoners, wholesale punishment of districts and entire villages, prolonged incarceration of political prisoners--must be vigorously conducted.

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Within Israel war-weariness grows. The class struggle intensifies. The Communist Party of Vilner and Toubi--the only genuine Communist Party of Israel--increases its membership, with 80% of the active Party before the split with the Mikunis-Sneh group in its ranks. Its vote increases 35%; its YCL flourishes; and its Arab-Jewish unity is firmer than ever. That Party, too, now is invited by non-Party groups to present its case and its opposition to the policy of the government. Nationally, there are growing demands for an end to occupation and for a change in a government policy bringing something over 10% of the adult population into the army, spending well over 50% of the budget for war, creating inflation and a mounting national debt that is astronomical, causing mounting daily casualties, and providing no vista for any sort of peace and decent life.*

*The eye-witness reports from Israel by Hyman Lumer, published in several issues of the Daily World in October, 1970 document all these assertions.

The apparent unanimity of nationalistic madness among the Jewish population in the United States is declining also; and this will continue to decline. It is necessary that Jews in this country know that there is no such unanimity inside Israel itself and that on every hand Tel Aviv's policy is being challenged there and that the opposition to the war and occupation policy is growing inside Israel.

The world-wide isolation of the present Israeli government is a fact; its only ally is Iran and it remains a client of Washington, not its ally. It is a pariah in the world community of nations.

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A change for the better is therefore altogether possible. And the specifics of that change are before us and already have been unanimously approved by the Security Council and have been accepted by the U.A.R., Lebanon and Jordan. I refer, of course, to the U.N. Resolution of 1967.

To secure peace in the Middle East and the future of Israel, a reversal of the present Israeli policies is required. The Israeli government must accept the U.N. Resolution in its entirety and agree to proceed on its basis--this means, of course, abandoning the phony and calculatedly impossible idea of "direct negotiations" with particular Arab countries while Israeli troops occupy their territory and Tel Aviv annexes all Jerusalem and actively settles the newly-gained territory and exploits their resources.

To accept the 1967 Resolution means and requires, of course, abandoning the policy of annexation. It means accepting a just solution to the refugee question--again as recommended first by the U.N. in 1948 and reiterated every year since. Fundamentally it means a turn in the government of Israel--a policy of alliance with the Arab peoples against imperialism and not an alliance with imperialism against the Arab peoples.

This means now, at this moment, Israel's agreement, without preconditions, to negotiations with Ambassador Jarring of the U.N. The talk of "violations" of the cease-fire is propaganda; in any case both sides have accused the other and furthermore, both sides of the cease-fire line are Egyptian territory! Finally, missiles are defensive weapons, as the whole world knows, and bombers are offensive weapons and it was Israel which was regularly bombing deep inside Egypt--to Cairo's outskirts--and not Cairo that was bombing inside Israel.

The cease-fire must be maintained and the U.N.-sponsored negotiations must now be pursued. With that, and with Israel agreeing to the main element in the 1967 Resolution--withdrawal of troops from occupied territory together with fully secure borders for all States--peace can be obtained in the Mid-East.

To fight against imperialism is to fight for democracy. Hence to support the Arab peoples in their struggle for social progress, for national independence, for territorial integrity and sovereignty, is to support the forces of democracy, of justice, and of peace. Such an effort is the only one worthy of a human being; this effort simply cannot be permitted to fail, and it will triumph everywhere, including in the United States.

Ultra-Left and ultra-Right always and everywhere in fact work together. So in the present case, those who in the name of some mythical radicalism or some fanatical nationalism demand an end to Israel are exactly the ones who must strengthen the extreme Right forces in Israel and in Saudi Arabia and in the United States.

No, the survival of Israel is a matter of grave concern for all enlightened mankind; but the survival of a racist, expansionist, aggressive tool of oil cartels and of Nixon is not the same as the survival of Israel!

The line of reaction and aggression is the line of national catastrophe for Israel. The policy of justice and compassion, of brotherhood and decency, the creativity of peace are the means towards the securing and the flowering of Israel. This is as it should be for it is at the heart of the great teachings of the two ancient peoples whose fate is bound together inside Israel and in the Middle East--the Jewish people and the Arab people.

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RESOLUTION ON THE CRISIS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The Middle East cease-fire was welcomed by millions of peace-loving people all over the world. The silencing of the guns in the cease-fire zones that went into effect on August 7 was greeted with joy by the Israeli people, who are tired of continuous warfare.

The agreement for a 90-day cease-fire called for the immediate resumption of negotiations with the UN representative, Ambassador Gunnar Jarring. The UAR has kept its part of the agreement and stands ready to join the Jarring talks. Israel refuses to negotiate in blatant disregard of world opinion.

The Israeli government has consented to the Jarring mediation with utmost reluctance and has, from the very beginning, failed to fulfill its commitment. It stayed away from the talks, charging the UAR with alleged cease-fire violations. The government of the UAR has rejected these allegations and pointed to cease-fire violations by Israel.

We are faced with a renewed threat of hostilities in the Middle-East. Time is running out. The cease-fire will expire in a few

weeks, while the Jarring talks are still stalled. The intransigence of the aggressive ruling circles of Israel has sharpened the Middle East crisis and increased the danger of all-out war. The cry for peace, in Israel, in our country and throughout the world must be heard by the Golda Meir government and in Washington. The allegations of standstill violations cannot be considered as a valid reason for refusal to negotiate. The Jarring talks must be resumed now!

We believe that a just settlement of the Israeli-Arab conflict can be reached by full acceptance of the UN resolution of November 22, 1967. This resolution calls for a peace without territorial annexations and the recognition of Israel's right to exist as a sovereign state, within secured borders, as well as the national rights of the Palestinian Arab people.

Mutual acceptance of these principles in advance can form a base for negotiations of borders and the solution of all other questions, including Israel's navigation rights and the settlement of the refugee problem.

The governments of the UAR and Jordan have expressed full acceptance of the UN Resolution as a basis for negotiations. Israel has taken an equivocal position, vaguely agreeing to discuss the UN proposals, if and when negotiations start. At the same time the ruling circles of Israel are carrying out a policy of annexation of the territories occupied in the 1967 war, by way of accomplished facts, in disregard of the principle expressed in the UN Resolution concerning the "inadmissibility of acquisition of territory by war."

The peace movement in Israel is gaining strength. The Israeli people are becoming increasingly aware that their country cannot remain at war with the Arab world indefinitely and that occupation and annexation will not bring them tranquility and security.

The struggle in our country for a just peace in the Middle East must be strengthened and unified. Our struggle must be centered against the aggressive circles of Israel, supported by the Nixon administration, which have blocked Middle East peace efforts by refusing to accept the UN Resolution and sabotaging the Gunnar Jarring talks.

We urge that all pressure be brought to bear on the Israeli government and on Washington for an immediate resumption of negotiations and total acceptance of the UN Resolution.

"ANTI-SEMITISM OF THE LEFT"--A FALSE ISSUE

by Hyman Lumer

The recent bombings of synagogues, the emergence of anti-Semitism in the election campaign, the victory of a Buckley in the New York senatorial race, the continued shift of Nixon and Agnew toward the extreme Right, the growing aggressiveness of the ultra-Right generally--all these and other developments are alarming indications of a growing menace of anti-Semitism in the United States. But they meet with little more than a perfunctory response among the major Jewish organizations. However, the alarm is being sounded on all sides of an alleged upsurge of a new anti-Semitism--an "anti-Semitism of the Left."

Lothar Kahn, writing in the Congress Bi-Weekly, spells it out in these words:

For the first time in modern history, the Jew is imperiled from both the Left and the Right.... For the Left, the anti-Jewish course is hidden under the political label of anti-Zionism. It has been used by much of the Marxist camp, the so-called neutrals, and by Black Power groups and their sympathisers. It has served as a respectable political cover by Arabs inflaming their people to a new frenzy; by Communist states frustrated by their inability to assimilate Jews fully and exterminate every vestige of religious-cultural identity, by African nations eager to prove their solidarity with the anti-imperialist, socialist Soviet-Nasser bloc, by American black extremists merging their pro-Moslem bias with the charge of Jewish capitalism and exploitation. ("The American Jew in the Seventies," March 6, 1970.)

Similarly, Nahum Goldmann refers to the New Left as including an anti-Semitic dimension in its political aims. The New York Times reports (November 29, 1968):

In place of the "classic anti-Semitism of old-line reactionary forces," extremist elements of the New Left have engaged in such forms of anti-Semitism as attacking Zionism and equating Israel with "colonial imperialism," Dr. Goldmann said.

This alleged danger is built up by the device, illustrated in the above quotations, of equating anti-Zionism or opposition to the present policies of the Israeli government with anti-Semitism. And since such positions are current in the Left, it is branded as ipso facto a hotbed of anti-Semitism.

Standing out in the hodge-podge of so-called "anti-Semitism of the Left" are two supposed manifestations: "Black anti-Semitism"

and "Soviet anti-Semitism." In these, it is declared, lies the chief thrust of anti-Semitism today and the greatest menace to the Jewish people.

The hue and cry over "Black anti-Semitism" reached critical proportions in New York City in late 1968. At that time the Black and Puerto Rican ghetto communities were engaged in an intense struggle for community control of the schools, a struggle in which they faced a racist opposition inspired by ruling-class reaction and led by President Albert Shanker and other top officials of the United Federation of Teachers.

In the course of the struggle, the anger and resentment among the Black people found expression, among other things, in anti-Semitic utterances by a number of Black individuals. These were promptly seized on by certain Jewish organizations and leaders and inflated out of all proportion to reality. Thus, a report issued by the Anti-Defamation League of Bnai Brith declared: "Raw, undisguised anti-Semitism is at a crisis level in New York City schools where, unchecked by public authority, it has been building for more than two years."

Through such reactions an explosive situation was created, with grave danger of a violent confrontation between Jewish and Black New Yorkers. This, of course, played into the hands of the real anti-Semites, of the class forces which foster racist practices in the schools, which violently oppose community control, and which thrive on division between Jews and Black people.

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The fiction of "Black anti-Semitism" continues to be propagated; in fact, it has been magnified into a monstrous threat to U. S. Jews. Now, indeed, it is the Black Americans who are said to be the persecutors of the Jews. Milton Himmelfarb writes in Commentary:

Is the president of the teachers' union a Jew? Then call him a Zionist and warn him that he will not be allowed to perpetrate in Harlem the genocide that the Israelis are supposed to be perpetrating in the Middle East....

If that is not bad enough, the quota system is being introduced. Or reintroduced--only this time not, as in the universities and professional schools of the 1920's, to keep those pushy Jews (greasy grinds) from dispossessing the gentlemen, but to do justice to Negroes. ("Is American Jewry in Crisis?", March 1969.)

Here we have a flat equation of the quota systems imposed by the dominant Anglo-Saxon ruling-class elements with the efforts

of the oppressed Black people to secure some degree of equality through compensatory measures. The fact that the discrimination they have suffered in education is infinitely worse than that imposed on Jews is ignored. The only concern is that a higher percentage of Black and Puerto Rican administrators, teachers and college students in New York would mean a lower percentage of Jews in these categories. Hence, in the distorted thinking of the Himmelfarbs the demand for a higher percentage for these oppressed peoples becomes simply another imposition of a quota system on Jews!

Chaim Yahil, Chairman of the Israel Broadcasting Authority and Director of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, carries this warped nationalist thinking a step further. He writes:

A great part of American Jewry is seriously troubled by the mounting wave of vulgar and militant Negro anti-Semitism with its threat of violence. This movement, unrestrained as it is and unafraid of identifying its goals with genocide of a brand preached by the most violent of Israel's Arab enemies, or even with Nazi dogma, comes to most American Jews as a complete surprise. It follows a long period of economic and social progress such as American Jewry has not known hitherto, and which has made them forget all symptoms of anti-Semitism which had existed in American society in earlier periods. ("American Jewry on the Threshold of a New Era: New Prospects for Zionism," Dispersion and Unity, No. 10, Winter 1970.)

Mr. Yahil simply overlooks the fact--glaringly evident though it is--that Black Americans are the victims of genocide; instead, he seeks to classify them among its would-be perpetrators, indeed, as identifying themselves with Hitlerism!

But for Mr. Yahil, devout Zionist that he is, there is a silver lining. U. S. Jews, he says, had come to think that for them there was no Jewish problem, hence that while Israel was for other Diaspora Jews it was not for them. Now, thanks to the upsurge of Black anti-Semitism, Arab anti-Semitism, Soviet anti-Semitism and other forms of the new anti-Semitism, U. S. Jews would again look toward Zion.

Here we have the heart of the crusade to create a fictitious "new anti-Semitism" both in the United States and in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Here is the "proof" that there is no escape from anti-Semitism except to migrate to Israel.

Where does such a crusade lead? The concoction of a phony "Soviet anti-Semitism" and the diversion of the energies of the Jewish organizations to combatting this non-existent menace leads to aligning the Jewish people with all the reactionary enemies of

the Soviet Union, among them the most vicious Right-wing anti-Semites. And the raising of the fake issue of "Black anti-Semitism" leads to identifying the Jewish people with the most extreme racist elements in the country, who are also the most rabid anti-Semites.

The ultimate end of such views is expressed in the ads appearing in New York newspapers calling on Jewish voters to support the pro-fascist candidate James L. Buckley for U.S. Senate. On what grounds? That Buckley is a friend of Israel, that he is for "liberation" of Soviet Jews, and that he is concerned about "the threat of New Left anti-Semitism." All this is carried to its logical conclusion by the notorious Jewish Defense League. "Anti-Semitic black racists," it declares, "are battling for control of the cities...." These, they maintain, and, together with the Soviet Union, are the deadliest enemies of the Jews.

Thus are the Jewish people to be aligned with the forces of reaction and diverted from the struggle against their real enemies.

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True, the anger and resentment among Black people have found expression in certain cases in anti-Semitic utterances. Such utterances cannot, of course, be glossed over or excused. Anti-Semitism is no less poisonous than other forms of national or racial bigotry. But this question is being grossly exaggerated, distorted and inflated out of all proportion to reality.

For one thing, studies have shown that anti-Semitism is distinctly less pronounced among Black people than among whites. Moreover, as a statement on the subject by the New York State Communist Party points out:

It is not the Black people who are the source of anti-Semitism. It is not they who are responsible for the flood of anti-Semitic filth which befouls the country. It is not they who are guilty of the economic and social discrimination against Jews which exists in our country.

In a word, it is not the Black people who are the oppressors of the Jews. On the contrary, it is the white power structure, including a small sector of Jewish capitalists, which maintains and benefits from the oppression of Black people.

To fail to see these things is to divert the very fight against anti-Semitism into a racist blind alley. It is to fall victim to those who would use the fraud of "Black anti-Semitism" as one more club against Black Americans. (Daily World, February 19, 1969.)

By the same token it is not the Soviet Union which is the enemy of the Jewish people. Rather, the enemy is the ruling-class forces in this country, the same ruling-class forces which are responsible for oppression of the Black, Puerto Rican and Chicano peoples. It is these forces which have instigated and today support and encourage the ill-conceived campaign against a mythical "Soviet anti-Semitism." It is noteworthy that those Jewish organizations and leaders who are devoting such great energies to "freeing" Soviet Jews from a non-existent persecution find themselves in the company of some of the most notorious racists and anti-Semites in the United States. And furthermore, these organizations and leaders are diverting the Jewish people from the struggle against these anti-Semites--the real enemy.

To label those in the Left who oppose the Israeli government's policies of aggression and expansion and its oppression of Arabs as "anti-Semitic" is equally a diversion and a service to the enemies of the Jewish people. It is today becoming clear to growing numbers of Jews and non-Jews, hitherto misled, that only by reversing these Israeli policies can peace in the Middle East and the existence of Israel be secured. It is the people who demand such a reversal, not the Nixons and Agnews, who are the true friends of Israel and the Jews.

To fight anti-Semitism and racism requires a struggle against the growing aggressiveness of the ultra-Right and the growing manifestations of anti-Semitism which accompany it. It requires a struggle against the genocidal assault on the Black Panthers and full participation in the fight to free Angela Davis. It requires an end to the anti-Soviet crusade and a fight to cement relations of friendship with the Soviet Union. And it requires the scrapping of the whole fraud of "anti-Semitism of the Left."

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ON THE ARAB REFUGEE QUESTION

To the Editors:

The civil war in Jordan and other recent events in the Middle East have once more brought into focus of world public opinion the plight of the Palestinian Arab refugees. One could hear radio and television commentators, while denouncing the airplane hijackings, take note that these regrettable acts stem from the desperation of certain Arab groups, whose bleak existence in refugee camps drives them to extremism.

In view of this, I was amazed to read in the September 11th issue of the Morning Freiheit an article written by the editor of the newspaper, Paul Novick, in which it was implied that the refugee problem has been contrived by some Arab governments who want to keep the Palestinian Arabs under the most miserable conditions in slovenly camps, in order to use them as a weapon against Israel.

We read in the article:

The terrorists are looking for sympathy by calling attention to the fate of the Arab refugees. Tuesday night I saw an Arab extremist on a television newscast who said that he doesn't care what the world thinks of the plane hijackings because the world did not concern itself, the past 23 years, with the fate of the Palestinians. This assumption is not altogether correct. We find in the world Arab governments who are against the resettlement of Arab refugees. They required and still require, for political purposes, that the Palestinians should remain homeless and scattered in desert camps. The world (the UN) has given aid to the refugees throughout the years. This is a lot more than was given the Jews who ran away (or wanted to run away) from Hitler: were admitted nowhere (except in the Soviet Union) and were devoured by gas flames. In this instance, the world really didn't care. However, one can be miserable without being sent to gas ovens. The Arab refugees find themselves in such a situation. This is why the terrorists have gained such a strong base among the refugees, especially in Jordan; this is why the recent incidents have brought the refugee question into focus.

I'm in considerable agreement with some points made by Novick in the conclusion of the article. He calls for a political solution of the Middle East crisis, with due consideration for the national aspirations of the Palestinian Arabs. Condemning the Arab "pirates," he also criticizes the Israeli government for neglecting, after the 1967 war, the economic needs of the Palestinians, as well as their desire for self-determination and national identity.

I welcome Novick's criticism of the Israeli government and his call for a political solution of the Palestinian question. At the same time, I resent his attempt to put the blame for the suffering of the Palestinians on the shoulders of Arab leaders, which is being done, in my opinion, in order to exonerate the Israeli hawks who expelled hundreds of thousands of Arabs from their lands and homes and forced them into exile, to make room for Jewish settlers, thus bringing the Palestinian people to its present state of repression and suffering.

I would like to hear your comment on this matter.

A Reader

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Dear Reader:

With regard to the refugee question certain facts have to be put in proper perspective. First, how did this problem originate? In November 1947 the UN adopted a resolution to partition Palestine into Jewish and Arab states. A civil war broke out, inflamed by the intrigues of the British rulers, scheming to maintain their colonial domination over Palestine. This was followed by a war of certain Arab states, also instigated by British imperialism, against the new state of Israel. It ended in defeat for the reactionary Arab feudal rulers and their armies, largely led by British officers such as Sir John Glubb, who headed the Arab Legion.

During the fighting, hundreds of thousands of disorganized, leaderless, panic-stricken Arabs fled to neighboring Arab countries. Zionist spokesmen claim that this exodus was in response to the appeals of the Arab countries. But the evidence does not bear this out. Contrary to the Zionist claims, the record shows that Arab radio broadcasts at that time contained no such appeals.

The flight was largely the result of panic. The massacre perpetrated by the Irgun against the Arab village of Deir Yassin, in which 250 inhabitants were brutally slaughtered, contributed greatly to the panic and accelerated the exodus. It is interesting to note that Menachem Beigin, leader of the Irgun group that carried out this slaughter, is today a member of the Knesset and was, up to his recent resignation, a member of the Cabinet.

In large part the exodus was the result of deliberate expulsion. Of this, I.F.Stone writes: "Jewish terrorism, not only by the Irgun in such savage massacres as Deir Yassin, but in milder form by the Haganah, itself 'encouraged' Arabs to leave areas the Jews wished to take over for strategic or demographic reasons. They tried to make as much of Israel as free of Arabs as possible." ("Holy War," New York Review of Books, August 3, 1967.)

In 1949, when hostilities were over, there were some 750,000 Palestinian Arab refugees in the states bordering Israel. The Israeli rulers seized more than half the territory allotted to the Arabs in the UN partition. And they proceeded to take over the property of the Arabs who had fled. The Middle East expert, Don Peretz, relates in his book, Israel and the Palestine Arabs (Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C., 1958):

Abandoned property was one of the greatest contributions toward making Israel a viable state.... Of the 370 Jewish settlements established between 1948 and the beginning of 1953, 350 were on absentee property.... In 1954 more than one-third of Israel's Jewish population lived on absentee property and nearly a third of the new immigrants (250,000 people) settled in urban areas abandoned

by Arabs.... Ten thousand shops, businesses and stores were left in Jewish hands. At the end of the Mandate, citrus holdings in the area of Israel totalled about 240,000 dunoms, of which half were Arab-owned. Most of the Arab groves were taken over by the Israeli Custodian of Absentee Property. (Pp. 143, 165.)

In the 1967 war Israel occupied the Gaza Strip where 300,000 Arab refugees plus an indigenous population of 100,000 live under unbearable conditions. Another 600,000 refugees lead a distressful existence in the West Bank and other parts of Jordan. More than 2 1/2 million Palestinians are scattered throughout the Arab world, about half of them refugees driven out of their homes in 1948 and 1967.

An article by Tad Szulc in the New York Times (April 22, 1969) says:

... hate, fear and despair permeate life in Gaza....

The hatred is directed against the Israeli force, and it is something that Israeli army officers in Gaza say that they understand. An Israeli colonel, familiar with the drama of foreign occupation from the World War II days, when he ran an underground railroad to bring Jews out of Austria, conceded that "nobody loves us here."

With half of the refugee population now under the age of 18, pressure is mounting for action--any action--to end the frustrations. The older refugees who have lived in the camps for 21 years are resigned to die in them; the young desperately want a future.

Szulc points out that there are few jobs available. The schools have been closed for long periods of time to prevent demonstrations. There is a nightly curfew. Skilled craftsmen are idle most of the time. Small wonder that the camps have become breeding grounds for youthful extremists, led to desperate actions.

In the occupied territories the Arabs are deprived of their civil rights. They are subjected to administrative arrests and to long prison terms without trial, as well as to collective punishments such as the blowing up of houses. They are forced out of their homes to make room for Jewish settlers. They are made to suffer all sorts of indignities and persecutions. All this is done with the aim of annexing these territories and driving the Arab population out.

Whatever the reasons for the flight of the refugees, the Zionist leaders of Israel made certain that they would not be permitted to return. And now they are seeking to add to the numbers

of refugees. This whole crusade to drive the Palestinian Arabs out of their homes and territories stems from the fundamentally racist nature of the Zionist concept of a Jewish state as one which is exclusively Jewish. Israel has been such a racist state from its very inception. The Zionist middle-class settlers learned their lesson well from the Western colonialists. They looked with disdain on the Arab population, considered themselves a superior people, and degraded and exploited the Arabs.

Dr. John H. Davis, former commissioner general of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, has stated that many Arab refugees who have acquired skills and training have been absorbed by the Arab states. But the great mass of the refugees have been compelled to remain in the hated camps for some 22 years, sustained only by their dream of returning some day to their homes.

It is wrong to maintain, as Novick does, that these camps continue to exist because certain Arab governments require them for political purposes. Davis, in a letter to Commonweal (January 19, 1968), points out that it is the refugees themselves who oppose resettlement. He writes:

... Significantly the refugees [in the Gaza Strip], who have never ceased to demand the right to return to their former homes, have never once petitioned Egypt to make them citizens of the UAR....

Nor should there be any mystery as to why the Gaza refugees look to Nasser as "their savior"; the point being that he has been the strongest and most outspoken defender of the right of refugees to repatriation and compensation....

What is basic is the right of the refugees to return. I. F. Stone notes: "The argument that the refugees ran away 'voluntarily' or because their leaders urged them to do so until after the fighting was over not only rests on a myth but is irrelevant. Have refugees no right to return? Have German Jews no right to recover their properties because they too fled?"

As for Novick's statement that "the world has given aid to the refugees throughout the years," let us see what this aid consists of. It has been estimated that UNRWA spends for the food rations of each refugee whom it assists less than 8 cents a day. A 1968 UN report shows that the monthly ration per refugee consists of 22 pounds of flour, 1.3 pounds of sugar, 1.3 pounds of vegetable protein and 3/4 pound of fats and oils. This provides about 1,500 calories a day (in winter it is increased to 1,600 calories). This, Szulc notes, is barely enough to sustain a small child. Undernourishment is rampant.

It seems to us that to bring the Jewish refugees into the picture is inappropriate. The fact that this pittance is provided for

the Arab refugees does not absolve the Israeli government of its responsibility for recognizing the rights of the Arab refugees.

The Communist Party of Israel, and Communists generally, have consistently declared that peace cannot be secured unless the Israeli government accepts the right of the refugees to repatriation or compensation in accordance with the UN Resolution which has been adopted every year since 1948. Such a solution, with due regard to the rights of both Israeli and Palestinian Arab peoples, will best serve the interests of both.

The Editors

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SUPPORT OF MEIR-DAYAN AND SUPPORT
OF U.S. REACTION

By L.K.

Communists have often pointed out that adoption of an aggressive, pro-imperialist foreign policy results in the imposition of a reactionary domestic policy. One of the harmful consequences of accepting the Meir-Dayan-Eban policies is that it often leads to embracing the most reactionary and even pro-fascist elements in our own country.

Just as the Israeli government policy of joining with imperialism against the Arab peoples has led it to support Colonel Mobutu in the Congo, Biafran secessionists in Nigeria, South African racists, and U.S. aggression in Vietnam, so the support of these Israeli policies by U.S. Jews has led some of them to support racists and warmongers in the 1970 elections, and to oppose candidates committed to peace and freedom. Support to the Meir regime was made the touchstone of whom Jewish voters should choose.

Thus it was possible for a group calling itself "Concerned Citizens for Buckley" to surface. Chaired by George Jessel and including such names as Harry Hershfield, Professor Joseph Dunner, Rabbi Leon B. Fink, Professor Will Herberg and others, this group published an ad in the New York Times and the New York Post calling on the Jewish community to support the pro-fascist senatorial candidate James L. Buckley. The ad featured statements by the racist Buckley on Israel, Soviet Jewry and "New Left anti-Semitism."

In a similar vein Charles C. Bassine, head of the Korvette department stores, published a letter urging Jewish voters not to vote for Goldberg simply because he is a Jew, but rather to vote for Rockefeller since he is a "great friend" of Israel. We can understand Mr. Bassine's class comradeship with Rockefeller, but we reject his judgment that Rockefeller is a friend of the Israeli people.

Rockefeller's concern is for the big Standard Oil investments in the Mid-East, and as long as the Israeli leaders follow policies helpful to the oil companies we can be sure that Rockefeller and his fellow monopolists will render them full support. But such support helps the people the way a rope supports a hanging man.

How Rockefeller and Buckley help the Jewish people is revealed in a New York Post article by Allan Wolper on November 4, the day after the elections. The article points out that "Rockefeller strategists made an issue of the presence of four Jews and a black Catholic on the statewide Democratic ticket that was heavily weighted to New York City." Wolper reports that the Governor's staff bought up a magazine story by Daniel Moynihan that explained how the Jews had become a political power in New York. Copies were sent to Irish and Italian voters.

The article also states that many upstate Republicans (and we can be sure many Conservatives) referred to the Democratic slate as "the five J's-- four Jews and a jig." To this moment Rockefeller has not repudiated this flagrant, vile racism and anti-Semitism, and we must therefore assume that these actions by his staff were taken with his knowledge and approval. It is hypocrisy and sheer betrayal for so-called Jewish leaders to ask Jewish voters to support such people, whose political base includes the worst ultra-Right racists and anti-Semites in New York State. This is where blind support of the Meir policies can lead.

Perhaps an even more dramatic illustration of the harm of this line is the desperate effort by Albert Shanker, president of the United Federation of Teachers and a leader of the Liberal Party, to defeat congressional candidate Bella Abzug, a staunch fighter for peace, labor and the Black, Chicano and Puerto Rican peoples, and to elect her opponent Barry Farber, notorious for his pro-Nixon, pro-war and anti-Soviet views.

Again, one of the chief grievances against Mrs. Abzug was that she dared to question that militarism would solve the problems of the people of Israel. In this the Shankers were joined by the storm-trooper Jewish Defense League, which also thought that she was not sufficiently enthusiastic in her support of Meir and Dayan.

In the light of the above we feel that it is in order for the Jewish citizens of our state and nation to ask the following questions of the leaders of the established Zionist and pro-Zionist organizations, and particularly the rabbis and leaders of the American Conference on Soviet Jewry:

1. Why haven't you spoken out against the vicious anti-Semitism and racism of the Rockefeller forces in New York State during the election campaign?

2. Isn't it about time to understand that people can be for the existence and security of Israel and at the same time oppose

the militaristic and annexationist policies of the Meirs and Dayans as harmful to the achievement of that security?

Isn't it about time you stop straining to invent "Soviet anti-Semitism" and deal with the real anti-Semitism and racism on the Right that exists in every state in our nation?

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A VISIT TO MY FAMILY IN THE SOVIET UNION

An interview with Lena Levine, recently returned from her fourth visit to the USSR since 1965

By Tibby Brooks

Lena Levine is a lively 72-year-old retired businesswoman and former garment worker. Having heard about her latest trip to the Soviet Union, we arrived in her tastefully furnished home to interview her on her very large Jewish family in White Russia--some 70 members covering three generations--many of whom she met on this and on previous visits.

Lena was born into the Family Chlevniya, shoemakers in Chechersk, Byelorussia. Her father was raised by a poor uncle, who had five children of his own to feed. Lena had four brothers and two sisters, all of whom attended cheder (Jewish ghetto grade school) until the age of ten; the boys then worked as shoemakers alongside their father, all day and into the night, often falling asleep at the workbench; the girls worked in the orchard with their mother, guarding the orchard and gathering its fruits to sell in the market, as well as tending the house. Before the Revolution, only the rich could get an education. Lena does not consider her childhood a poor one. She remembers meetings of revolutionaries in her home and her oldest brother's Bolshevik literature and his pistol.

Having two uncles in America, Lena arrived here with a third uncle in 1914, and immediately entered the garment industry. She wanted the rest of her family to join them, but then, as now, they chose to remain. After the Revolution, her sisters had the opportunity to study and became school teachers; her brothers continued to work as shoemakers.

Many of the family were killed in World War II. Everyone fought fascism, both at home and on the front. Just after the War began, the family was evacuated from Chechersk (which later burned to the ground) to Gomel, and later to Takustan. All Jews were evacuated from the cities upon orders from Stalin. In a letter saved these many years, Lena's mother (who died during the war) wrote: "Thank God for the Soviet Government for saving our lives."

Upon her visit to Gomel, Lena expected to find many professionals in her family, but was astonished by the number. Her oldest

brother died ten years ago, and her three living brothers have been in Gomel since the end of the war. The eldest Chlevniya is now 83 years old and receives a small pension of 50 rubles (\$55) a month-- which he doesn't need, since he owns his own home, as do all Lena's relatives in Gomel. These are wooden houses, with everything but hot water. All have fruit orchards and gardens. Her brother sells the fruit from his orchard on the market. Produce of small privately owned orchards may be sold. His wife receives a pension of 40 rubles (\$44) a month. They pay no rent on their own home, of course. He mentioned that he has savings of 5,000 rubles (\$5,500).

This brother has three children. The eldest son was a school teacher in Gomel, but didn't like teaching, and became manager of an army restaurant at a good salary. The other son is an engineer. The daughter, a construction engineer, built an ammunition factory in Takustan during the war for which she was rewarded, and has been sent to construct factories in Warsaw. After her retirement, she was requested by the Government to return to work at her regular salary plus her pension. When a plot of her land was needed to build a playground, she was compensated. This niece is married to a Gentile, and is the only one in Lena's family to have inter-married. One of her sons is an engineer in Irkutsk; the other is a student in Moscow.

The oldest brother had three daughters and a son. The latter is a pediatrician in Gomel. One daughter is a judge and wife and mother. Another daughter teaches. The youngest daughter just had a baby.

Lena's other brother has many children, the oldest teaching in Gomel.

Lena's sister in Minsk, Sara Slavin, lives in the outskirts of the city in an old house with no hot water or indoor toilet-- but she has her garden and heat in the winter. Sara pays 7 rubles (\$7.70) a month for a three-room apartment. Sara has four children. Her son is a school teacher in Gomel. One daughter is a librarian, another is married to a military man. The oldest daughter is a nerve specialist and brain surgeon in Minsk, and pays 25 rubles (\$27.50) a month rent and mortgage on a four-room cooperative. Minsk's synagogue is a Jewish social center, and Sara went on Rosh Hashanah to be with her friends. There are two kosher slaughterers in Minsk. A kosher meal?--Sara bought her chicken live in market and had it killed by the kosher slaughterer.

Lena's other sister lives in Kiev in a modern four-room apartment, for which she pays 15 rubles (\$16.50) a month rent. She has four sons. One is an army colonel and university lecturer; after another year's study, he will be a general. Three other sons are factory managers. One returned from work and told Lena there had been an argument in the factory between a Jewish woman and a Gentile woman. The Gentile called the Jewish woman "Zheedovka!" (a derogatory and anti-Semitic term) and the "boss" had the Gentile woman arrested for this.

Coming from America, Lena was up on all the latest news items on alleged "Soviet anti-Semitism." As a Jewish woman with a large family in the Soviet Union, she looked for any traces of anti-Semitism. Her Russian family reacted as would her American family to the question of emigration to Israel. "Why do the American Jews want us to go to Israel? How come they don't go and send their children?" In Lena's Soviet family, everyone speaks Yiddish, and some can read and write it. The teenagers, however, know just a few Yiddish expressions. Lena's brothers and sisters attend synagogue for social and sentimental reasons. Their children and grandchildren, in general, do not attend.

Lena continued her search. When asked about anti-Semitism, her family replied: "We are well established in the Soviet Union. The Government has very strict laws against anti-Semitism and enforces these laws. We are not discriminated against. The remnants of anti-Semitism came down from Czarist times, and those Russians who display their prejudices are punished by the Government."

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION: Why does the USSR support the Arab states, where the Communist Party is outlawed, and not Israel, where the Communist Party is legal?

ANSWER: The Communist Party is legal in the United States and is not legal in several of the states of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Many of the latter are trying to wage a struggle against U.S. imperialism. The Soviet Union could not support the U.S. against these states, no matter what the situation might be in regard to their internal politics. To do so would be to become an accomplice in imperialist aggression. By helping these states resist imperialism, the USSR creates the possibility of a more favorable internal political climate within them. It also helps to change the whole world balance of forces in favor of socialism.

But the Soviet Union opposes the policies of governments which have directly allied their countries with imperialism against the national interests of their own peoples. This is the case in regard to Israel, Saudi Arabia, and other countries with pro-U.S. governments in power.

The Soviet Union's principled anti-imperialist support for progressive Arab states and its non-interference in their internal affairs is working a considerable change in the Arab world. The Communist Party of Lebanon recently was granted full legal status. In Syria and Iraq, Communists are in the government at the cabinet minister level. In the Sudan, Communists support the progressive government and form one of its main bases of support.

Part of the difficulty in Algeria and the United Arab Republic (Egypt) comes from the fact that those countries are governed by single parties and all other political groups are illegal. In Algeria the problem has not been solved, but in the UAR in 1965 the Communists voluntarily dissolved the Party and entered into the Arab Socialist Union (5.5 million members) where they are free to propagate Marxist-Leninist ideas and where they hold many important positions.

Communists still sometimes come under attack from reactionaries even within progressive Arab states. The internal struggle there is by no means over, but it is an internal struggle. Soviet support, however, indirectly can help the Left against reaction.

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FREE ANGELA DAVIS!

A statement issued by the Political Committee, CPUSA at the time of Angela Davis' capture says:

"Angela Davis, brilliant Black Communist and freedom fighter whom Nixon's Department of Justice seeks to implicate in an attempted prison break in San Rafael, California, has been seized by J. Edgar Hoover's ruthless FBI agents.

"It is imperative that a movement of national proportions fighting to free this heroic woman be immediately organized. There is no time to lose.

"Angela Davis is guilty of no crime save that she is a Black woman courageously fighting a racist policy of government, destructive of national morality, integrity and making for the dehumanization of millions of Americans....

"The defense of Angela Davis is of universal importance. Her freedom is our historic responsibility. Her right to be heard will be a monumental gain to the liberation struggle in the U.S.A."

The fight to free Angela Davis is of particular importance to Jewish Americans. Above all, every progressive Jewish individual and organization should be fully involved in her defense. We call upon our readers to organize meetings, affairs, resolutions of protest and other actions. For material and information, contact your local Angela Davis Defense Committee.

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