

Some Questions Concerning Zionism, the Jewish Army and Palestine

Some think that if the premise is accepted that the Jews of America have to help build the Jewish national community in Palestine, this means that the Zionist position has been accepted. This would mean that thereby Zionism is accepted. To that we have to answer that this is entirely not so. The Jewish Yishuv in Palestine is one thing, Zionism is another. Perhaps this was not always so, but in the last years this is quite definitely the fact.

Zionism is a political and ideological orientation in Jewish life. Its creators are bourgeois and petty-bourgeois Jewish nationalists who, on the question of Palestine, hold to the dogma that with the upbuilding of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, the Jewish question the world over will be solved. Zionism is also a political movement and a political party, which pursues a special party policy on the question of Palestine. We need hardly prove that the majority of the Jewish people, and among them the Communists also, who feel close to the Jewish community in Palestine, have not thereby accepted Zionism as a nationalist ideology, nor Zionism as a political movement. The Jewish community in Palestine is an entirely different matter.

The Jewish community in Palestine is part and parcel of the entire Jewish people. Consequently, the interests and the welfare of this section of our people are near and dear to the Jews of all other parts of the world, regardless of the order or system in which they live.

Especially since, during recent years, it has become clear

that the Jews in Palestine are building a free and organized national life for themselves in which there are the possibilities that, with time, there will emerge a new form of Jewish national existence for the Jews living in Palestine. Among the chief conditions for the translation of these possibilities into reality are first, the victory of the United Nations over fascism and secondly, brotherly and friendly collaboration between the Jews in Palestine with the Arabs in Palestine and with the Arabs of all other countries.

This is not Zionism. This is something quite different. This does not uphold the Zionist dogma that in Palestine there can be built a homeland for the Jewish people the world over. This also does not mean the acceptance of the bourgeois nationalist ideology of Zionism, which contradicts the internationalist ideology of the working class and which also is not in keeping with the interests of the Jewish people. But it does mean the acceptance of an orientation toward the Jewish community in Palestine which today is already supported by the greatest majority of the Jewish people, and that we have to help build and strengthen this community. As to the Jewish question in all countries, it is a different problem which will have to be solved and will be solved in a completely different fashion.

For instance, in the Soviet Union the Jewish question has already received its complete solution. The solution is built on the principle of complete equality of all peoples and nations in the Soviet Union. There a socialist society was built, and on this foundation they are developing various national cultures which are socialist in content and national in form, according to the principle which Stalin has formulated.

In the Soviet Union the Jews are developing various forms of national existence. In some parts of the Soviet Union the Jews live as a national minority, greater or smaller in number. On the other hand, in Biro-Bidjan, we are witnessing the process of the development of a completely different form of national Jewish existence. There the perspective exists that a compact mass of Jews will aggregate on a definite part of

Soviet territory, from which, with time, there can grow a new form of *full* national existence.

Quite different is the condition of the Jews in America, who are apparently in the process of developing a specific form of Jewish people's existence, which differs fully from the Jewish national minorities of the capitalist countries in Europe, and is also not similar to the forms of national life which the Jews have evolved in the Soviet Union or in Palestine.

We have, in other words, a varied picture of many forms of national and people's life, which the Jews are developing in different parts of the world, and which are dependent, to a great extent, on the social and political conditions in the countries in which this section or the other section of the Jewish people lives. It is clear, therefore, that the Zionist party solution for the Jewish question has nothing to do with the attitude toward Palestine and to the Jewish question as a whole, which is today being accepted by the greatest majority of the Jewish people in all countries, and that it is possible and necessary to support the Jewish community in Palestine, irrespective of whether one is a Zionist or not a Zionist.

There is such a thing as a Jewish people's attitude to the Palestine Jewish community, which is neither Zionist nor anti-Zionist. This is a stand which the movement of Jewish people's unity should and can accept. We uphold this position. This is a position which is intimately connected with the question of winning the war and of creating a people's unity among the Jews which will enable them to make their greatest and most notable contribution to victory.

It is also asked if it is necessary to support the proposal for a Jewish army, if this people's attitude to Palestine is accepted. The answer to this is: it depends upon what is meant by a Jewish army.

If the forming of a Jewish army of all Jews throughout the world is meant, which would join the armies of the United Nations in the same way as the armies of the Soviet Union, America or England, then the answer is: No.

The idea of such an army cannot be supported and the

majority of the Jewish people actually do not support it. The Jewish people see quite clearly that such an army is an illusion. Jews fight in the armies of the countries in which they are citizens and in which they will continue to live after the war. And this should really be so. Therefore there can be no talk about a Jewish army for the Jews of the entire world. Such a proposal contains very serious dangers which we have to guard against, although the motives of those who propose such an army can be the best in the world. The proposal for such an army, among other things, carries the danger that it questions the citizenship and the national rights of the Jewish masses in the countries in which they have lived up to now and in which they will continue to live, regardless of what the future of the Jewish national community in Palestine will be.

But there is also a proposal and a demand for another sort of army. We mean here the demand which comes from the Jewish community in Palestine itself. What is it? They demand that the Jewish national community in Palestine should be given the possibility to participate militarily in the war, first, to the extent of its forces and second, that the participation should be organized in such a way that Jewish military divisions, organized by the Palestine Yishuv, should take part on the battlefields together with the British and other armies of the United Nations.

This, as you can see, is an entirely different matter. This deals with the military participation in the war, not of the Jews of the entire world, but of the Jewish national community in Palestine. This deals with the national demands and rights of the Palestine Yishuv, and when we support the Jewish national community in Palestine and its national rights this demand should likewise be supported.

We have to add one important, principled point which the movement for Jewish people's unity must insist upon. That point is that the same right to participate in a full degree in the war against fascism must be guaranteed to the Arabs in Palestine and all the other Arab nations. More than this, the United Nations must take all steps to draw in the

Arab peoples as intimately and closely as possible into the war together with the Jews, and also adopt all measures to create brotherly bonds between the Jews and the Arabs.

Another question is asked. If this should be the attitude of the movement of Jewish people's unity to Palestine and to the Jewish army, is it possible for Zionists and non-Zionists to work together? The answer to this is simply "yes." Zionists and non-Zionists, the entire Jewish people, can very definitely work and fight together. The fact is that such collaboration has already begun. Zionists, although not all of them, have already seen that Jewish people's unity is necessary and that such unity is possible only on a platform which can unite all Jews. This cannot be the Zionist party platform, nor the position of the anti-Zionists. It can only be a Jewish people's platform, one which receives and will receive the support of the entire people.

It is therefore clear that Zionists and non-Zionists must put aside their ideological differences and subordinate their special party interests and must come together on such demands and on such policies which all Jews will support. From what has been said previously, it is clear that on the question of the Jewish national community in Palestine as well as on the question of a Jewish army, the Jewish people of all countries can unite on a policy of support to the Jewish Yishuv, on a policy which simultaneously seeks to defend Jewish interests, general, democratic and national, in all the other countries, according to the conditions under which the Jews live and according to the forms of national existence which they can develop there.

And now the last question which we want to deal with here. It is asked: Upon whom shall the Jews orientate on the question of the future of the Jewish community in Palestine? Shall they orientate on England, or America or the Soviet Union? It is known that in Zionist ranks there are various tendencies, some of which emphasize a second country or a third. From this some conclude that since there is no unity on this question among the Zionists themselves, how can unity of all Jews

be expected on this question?

To this question, too, there is a simple answer. Life has already demonstrated that the Jewish people orientate themselves, and must orientate themselves, not upon any one of these three great democratic countries, but on *all three*.

The Jewish people must orientate themselves upon the coalition of England, the Soviet Union and America, the coalition which builds and leads the United Nations. The question is clear. Whatever hopes the Jews have for the future, their first task is to guarantee that there will be Jews in the world who will be able to have a future. This means first of all winning the war and destroying fascism, and together with it—anti-Semitism. If this is accepted as the starting point of all our discussions, then it is clear that Jewish hopes must be based upon the chief forces which lead to victory and which will achieve victory. That is the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition. The Jewish people are therefore interested, together with all other freedom-loving peoples, that this coalition should continue, that it should be strengthened, that it should fight in coalition on the battlefields and that it should be continued after victory. It is clear, therefore, that on this question too, there can be full Jewish people's unity, in which Zionists, Communists, Socialists, religious Jews, and all other Jews can work together.