

Questions and Answers

Many more questions are received by this department than can be answered in the column. Many have recently been answered here or in articles in the Daily Worker. Questioners are asked to enclose self-addressed, stamped envelopes for a direct reply. Address all questions to Questions and Answers, care of Daily Worker.

Question: At Monday's meeting at the Hippodrome, Comrades Browder and Olgin told us that Arab and Jewish workers in Palestine must unite against British imperialism and Zionism. The Arab fellaheen are aroused; they demand that Jewish immigration cease; they also demand a legislative body with proportional representation. The Jewish workers are the Zionists whom we must consider. Can they possibly concede these demands and remain an active and vital Jewish cultural group in Palestine? Can they now turn against British imperialism? Can they unite with the Arabs? I, too, want a world where there will be peace, where workers will be united and where workers will rule, but what of the present?—A. B.

Answer: Yes, the Jewish workers, Zionist and non-Zionist, can do these things. Their alternative is not the peaceful growth of a "Jewish national home" in Palestine, which is impossible in the present situation. Their alternative is that they will be used by British imperialism and the Zionist leaders to fight against the growing forces of Arab nationalism in a battle in which they will be the victims.

The Zionists have been taught by their leaders to believe that British imperialism is their defender against the Arabs. The proof that this is not true lies in the fact that clashes between Jews and Arabs have always been instigated (long before there was a Communist Party in Palestine) either by:

1. The policy of the Zionists who, by barring Arabs from their trade unions, raising the chauvinistic slogan of "buy Jewish," refusing to employ Arab help, driving the Arabs off the land, play into the hands of anti-Semitic provocations;

2. The policy of British imperialism which alternately makes false promises both to Jews and to Arabs, and plays one off against the others to maintain its rule; or

3. The position of the wealthy Arab effendis, who after selling their land to the Jewish capitalists and driving the poor peasants off the land they have tilled all their lives, instigate strife in order to win the land back again.

In the last instance, of course, the position of the Communist Party is that the land belongs to the Arab peasant who has worked it, and not to the rich effendi who bleeds him of rent and taxes.

British imperialism, for which Palestine has immense economic and strategic importance, will not permit either the poor Jews or the Arabs to be free in Palestine. The fact that the Jewish minority enjoys a few slight privileges is but a device to keep Jewish and Arab poor divided. In return for their slight advantage, the Jewish workers, themselves oppressed in all other capitalist countries, are expected to play the role of oppressors, and to bear the brunt of the fight for liberation of the Arab majority.

There is no other choice. They must either play this role, which will bring them neither freedom nor prosperity, or unite with the Arab masses to throw off the yoke of poverty and oppression, and create the possibility of a free, happy and secure life in Palestine.