

# DOCUMENTS

## THE PATH I FOLLOW

By Dr. Moshe Sneh

*Following is a shortened version of a speech made by Dr. Sneh in Hebrew at the organizing meeting of the United Workers Party of Palestine on January 24, 1948. It was originally published in the party organ, Al-Hamishmar.—Eds.*

NOT all paths lead to socialism, nor into the revolutionary camp. But the paths that do lead there are many and varied. For the Jew of our generation, one path is soul-searching analysis, thorough, truthful, awful and honest.

Jewish history has punished our generation with the most tragic actuality since the Second Temple—with the devastation of European Jewry. History has also, however, granted our generation the most wonderful reality since we were driven from our land—the beginnings of redemption, the promise of a Jewish state. Both perspectives together impose on every Jew the duty of looking deeply into his soul, of scanning the depths of the abyss and of turning his eyes to the farthest point of the new horizon.

Standing at the edge of the precipice of destruction, you must ask yourself: who was the murderer of my people? Who is the *Ashmedai*?<sup>1</sup> The simple reply that the children of this or that nation are responsible, does not answer your question. Everyone knows that the children of this or that nation were only a club in the hands of the great destroyer. Do you want to know who the *Ashmedai* really is and who it is that turned civilized man into a devouring beast? In the depths of the abyss you will find only one answer. It is fascism which destroyed the six million. *Fascism*—that is the real name of the *Ashmedai*.

And then you must ask yourself: is it true that this fearful enemy, the murderer of your people, has been wiped off the face of the earth or does he still live? If he is still alive, how can you, who are a Jew, rest? How can you fail to rise in mighty battle against him, to destroy, to annihilate him? The truth is, he is not yet crushed. On the contrary. He is emerging once again from hiding. He is sharpening his sword.

Of course fascism can change its forms. It can disguise itself. If you have peered

into the abyss that swallowed up fathers and mothers and millions of brothers, if you have looked and have not been frightened, then you will know that the new form of the fascist *Ashmedai* is a new war, a third world war. And this, too, you know: a new world war means new Treblinkas. It does not matter in the name of what swindle this war will be pursued, whether in the name of "western culture" or of "political democracy," of "individual freedom" or of "advanced civilization." You know that under the mask is hidden the *Ashmedai*, hidden fascism.

And your heart, the heart of the Jew, trembles for the fate of your people, for the fate of eleven million surviving Jews. Your heart trembles for the great and peaceful Jewish community in America, for the Jewish community in England and South Africa, for the displaced Jews in Germany, the country that once again is becoming a strong power. Your heart knows that the wild hysteria against communism can be transformed in a moment and break out as an attack against the Jewish people; that the preparation of the masses for an attack on the Soviet Union must inevitably begin to develop an hysteria to attack Jews.

And this, too, you see: not only war, but the very preparations for war threaten our existence. The force that is preparing the war and breeding the atmosphere for it, is a mightily and powerful force. In your deep Jewish concern you turn your eyes to the camp of peace, to the forces which stand against war. And you find these forces for peace spread over the entire world—in the east, west, north and south. They are the progressives of the world, the forces of real democracy, of real socialism. But if you want to know where the fortress, the pillar of these world forces is, you will find it in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. And the banner which marches in the vanguard of this entire camp, the enemy of fascism and war, is the banner which was raised in October thirty years ago.

This is what your eyes behold when you stand at the brink of destruction, when you make the soul-searching reckoning of our generation, the reckoning of an honest Jew.

At this moment the power of an international decision has opened broad perspectives for us, broad horizons for a new Jewish independence, for mass immigration, for powerful rehabilitating activity

and accomplishments. But on the very day that the door of hope opened for us, a wild and bloody attack was launched against us.

The Jewish people again must stand on guard and look into the horizon. And again the question arises: who is the enemy? Who is trying to destroy our hopes? This question cannot be directed against those who shoot at us in Kfar Szold, in Yeche Am and in Haifa. We know who is shooting at us. But who is working out this evil plan? Who gave these destroyers the right to destroy? Who makes the task easy for the destroyer? When you answer that it is British imperialism, you have not yet got to the heart of the truth. For the decisive fact is not that it is British, but that it is imperialism.

The *Chalutzim* of our people, the defenders of our land, are pitted on the battlefield against the wild attack of imperialism, against the aggressors, who are tools in the hand of imperialism. We stand alone and though we have suffered heavy losses, we have suffered no defeats. It has been said with justice that the stronger, the more courageous our stand will be, the greater will be the help that we will receive from outside. But there is another side of the coin: the more fully we recognize that we are not isolated and alone, that by defending our land and the independence of our people we are fulfilling a mission of freedom on our sector of the world front, the more powerful will be the inner strength of our struggle. For it is true that we have allies in our struggle against imperialism. Where are they? The Jew who makes the soul-searching reckoning of his generation will find them in the same camp and under the same banner as he will find the enemies of fascism and war.

And this, too, you see on the horizon. Zionism, among other things, signifies also the return of the Jewish people to East Asia. The problem of our relationship with the Arab world, with the people of the Middle East, with the people of Asia generally, is also that of our future and development in this part of the world. The choice is between enmity of oppressed peoples to the advantage of oppressive and inciting imperialism and an alliance of free peoples who are together freeing themselves from the foreign yoke. The second alternative is a national imperative for us in the Jewish state, the basis for transforming economic unity into real unity and for restoring our country's integrity in the future. This integrity is necessary in view of our political, economic and cultural relationship of interdependence with neighboring countries. But this can be realized only by strengthening those forces in the Jewish community and in the Arab world that are capable of building

<sup>1</sup> The Devil Incarnate.—Eds.

relations among peoples on the basis of free international partnership. You must turn to the forces of freedom, progress and socialism when you seek to free yourself from the chains of imperialism and to build a free life in alliance with that people to which your geopolitical and historical fate is tied.

There are people who are able to reach this point in their soul-searching but fear to think further. Where must the soul-reckoning of the Jew lead? Consider: fascism threatens a new blood-bath. It is the force that is pushing the world to a new war. Consider: imperialism is jeopardizing freedom and the establishment of the Jewish state. For these two there is a common name—imperialism. And against imperialism stands revolutionary socialism, the force that will not compromise with imperialism, has no interest in patching it up, but works to bring about the downfall of imperialism. Upon this struggle, upon its course and outcome hangs your fate, Jew! Can there be any doubt where

you must belong as a human being, as a Jew? Where our people belong?

As I said before, the paths which lead to socialism are many and varied. I reached this path as a Jew, a son of our generation, who made a deep reckoning with himself. Socialism is not only a political system, it is the recognition of historical, worldwide and Jewish necessity. It seems to me that every free Jew, every young Jew, every democratic-minded Jew must go through such a searching of his soul. I must confess that this did not come easily to me. But it is also true that it was no sudden leap. As a person who in 22 years of activity did not separate himself for a moment from pioneer and labor Zionism—for one who in exile linked his Zionism with the struggle against reaction and fascism in his country—for such a person it was necessary to take the last step in this fateful hour for our people, for our land and for humanity. I have taken this step and placed myself under the banner of socialism, to serve as one of its soldiers.

In these fateful days the Central Committee warns the *Yishuv*, its institutions and political parties that the danger has increased! The imperialist enemy is trying to destroy the hopes of the Jewish people for independence and threatens the very physical existence of the Jewish *Yishuv* in Palestine.

In view of this critical situation, the Central Committee considers that the *Yishuv* is not yet mobilized to the extent that the needs of this emergency require. While millions of pounds are urgently needed for the acquisition of arms and ammunition and provisions for the *Yishuv* and its defenders, the big capitalists are evading their duties as citizens towards our national struggle. While the sons of the rich evade recruitment to military duties, their parents evade the mobilization of their means and property.

In this emergency it is impossible to take half-hearted measures. Profiteers and people who raise prices and hide foodstuffs must be regarded as saboteurs of the *Yishuv's* war effort. Profiteers and those who evade their duties should be treated as traitors! It is necessary to requisition the stocks of the profiteers, to control and push down prices, to organize public resistance against the attack of the employers upon wages, to introduce a ration system and to impose heavy prison sentences upon profiteers. Heavy taxes must be imposed on the propertied classes commensurate with their means, income and profit. The Communist Party is opposed to shifting the whole burden of raising funds onto the working class and poor people.

## NO COMPROMISE! A CALL TO ARMS!

### *Resolution of the Central Committee Palestine Communist Party*

THE Central Committee of the Communist Party of Palestine considers the security of the *Yishuv* as well-nigh destroyed. British rule is mainly responsible for the deterioration of the situation. British rule has passed through three stages in the organization of the military campaign against the United Nations' decision on Palestine.

In the first stage, the British, with the help of the Arab Higher Executive, mobilized gangs among the backward elements of the Arab population. Many Arab villages as a whole and broad sections of the Arab people (workers, artisans, shopkeepers and merchants) have been and are opposed to the bloody disturbances. Consequently, the attempt of imperialism to rouse considerable parts of the Arab people of Palestine to fight against the Jewish *Yishuv* has failed.

Imperialism was obliged to pass to a second stage: mobilization of gangs from among sinister elements abroad, mainly from the neighboring Arab countries (Syria, Iraq, Transjordan and Egypt) and also from more distant states. Further, imperialism is recruiting for these gangs nazi officers, Anders brigands, Yugoslav Ustashi and others. At the same time, British rule has intensified its activities of seizing defense weapons, blowing up defense positions of the *Haganah*, and imposing a political terror against the Arab

progressive forces (the closing down of their weekly, *Al-Itihad*).

However, in view of the heroic stand of the Jewish *Yishuv*, which has not surrendered a single village, and in view of the refusal of the vast majority of the Arab people of Palestine to take part in the attack upon the *Yishuv*, imperialism has advanced toward a third stage: direct participation of the British army and police in the attacks upon the *Yishuv*. In this stage the *Palestine Post* building was bombed, mass murder was perpetrated in the blowing up of part of Ben-Yehuda Street in Jerusalem, defense weapons have more systematically been seized, and disarmed Jewish defenders were delivered to the Arab bandits (four Jews were murdered near Damascus Gate at Jerusalem, nine at *Hayotzek* factory near Tel-Aviv, etc.). At this stage, also, hundreds of military technicians from the British police have been supplied to the gangs under the official disguise of "deserters."

The front on which the *Yishuv* fights today is not only politically, but also militarily, a front against British imperialism and Arab reaction.

For maximum efficiency in our military struggle it is necessary to set up a single army of the fighting *Yishuv*. It is also necessary to abrogate the agreement with *Irgun Zvai Leumi*, which amounts to a recognition of this fascist group as a separate and independent military body. The democratization of the army and the participation of all democratic parties in the determination of military policy is indispensable.

### *The Provisional Council of Government*

The Central Committee considers that, to assure the democratic character of the Jewish state and a correct direction for our military and political struggle, the Provisional Council of the Jewish state should be set up in accordance with the following principles:

a) Representation in the Council should correspond to the political balance of forces in the *Yishuv*;

b) Participation in the Provisional Council should be limited to those parties only which declare publicly their adherence to the UN decision regarding the setting up of two independent states in Palestine—Jewish and Arab—with economic unity between them;

c) The democratic forces among the Arab population in the Jewish state should be represented on the Council. If conditions should not allow immediate adequate Arab representation, seats should be left open for their affiliation in the future.

The Central Committee therefore regards the proposals of the *Vaad Leumi*

and Jewish Agency executive as unsatisfactory from four points of view:

1. The Council is not constituted on the principle of the balance of forces within the *Yishuv*.

2. The representation of the United Workers Party is arbitrarily cut down.

3. The Revisionists are represented on the Council despite their opposition to the UN decision.

4. An attempt is being made to prevent the Communist Party from exerting any practical influence within the Council, and to turn the Council into a body without power of decision, by assigning actual authority to a more limited body.

The Central Committee demands increase in representation of the United Workers Party in the government and an opportunity for the Communist Party to exercise practical functions in the Council.

In view of the emergency situation prevailing in Palestine, the increased attack of imperialism and the Arab gangs upon the *Yishuv*, the deterioration of the political situation during the Palestine talks in the Security Council as a result of the retreat and hypocrisy of United States policy, and the urgent need to set up the Council before the first of April as a step towards the implementation of the UN decision, the Central Committee has decided that the Communist Party of Palestine will participate in the Government Council, reserving the right to raise the problem of the composition and character of the Council at a later date.

It is the duty of the Council to begin without further delay to act as a *de facto* government. The Council must proclaim a state of emergency and call for a full mobilization of the whole *Yishuv* in manpower and property. The Council must mobilize the help of the Jewish people everywhere. In its capacity as Council of Government, it must appeal to all democratic countries to extend their aid to the *Yishuv* against the aggression of British imperialism and of Arab gangs from neighboring countries.

In view of the open war of the British government against the setting up of the independent Jewish state, and of the deliberate sabotage of the UN decision by the U.S. government, the Government Council must draw full conclusions from this state of affairs.

The Council of Government should raise its voice against any attempt at a compromise prejudicial to the sovereignty of the Jewish state. *It should proclaim explicitly its opposition to any attempt to leave foreign military bases and foreign armies on the territory of the Jewish state.*

The Council should proclaim that it will regard as treason against the Jewish homeland and the Jewish people any at-

tempt to agree to submit to political, economic or military pressure from the imperialist enemies.

It is the duty of the Government Council immediately to act independently of the laws of the Mandatory Government, to oppose by force the seizure of defense weapons, to call upon the *Yishuv* to cease payment of taxes and to organize independent services in order to deal with the prevailing chaos.

#### **A National Democratic Front**

The Council of Government should proclaim a democratic program for independence. The Communist Party calls upon all democratic forces in the Council to set up a national democratic front.

The Central Committee proposes the following principles as foundations of the Council's policy and of the national democratic front:

a) Organization of the war effort of the *Yishuv*.

b) Full sovereignty of the Jewish state in the political, economic and military fields.

c) Democratic home policy, securing the democratic liberties of all citizens, securing the full national rights of the Arab minority, a policy tending towards raising the living standard of the masses of the people in the Jewish state.

d) A policy of social progress, based on progressive labor and social legislation for all residents irrespective of faith, race and sex.

e) A democratic foreign policy based on an alliance with the forces of peace and anti-imperialism and on a struggle against the imperialist warmongers.

f) Political and economic collaboration with the neighboring Arab states and in particular with the future Arab state in Palestine.

g) A policy of economic development and land reform, with a view of:

1. Raising the living standard of the population.

2. Securing the independence of the state.

h) Creating the maximum possibilities for immigration by the Provisional Council, in spite of the British government's immigration laws.

The Central Committee considers that already today it is important to establish principles for a clear and democratic policy by the Provisional Council in the national and social fields, in order to mobilize maximum support from among the world democratic forces and to isolate the Mufti gangs among the Arab population.

Based on the above program of full military, economic and political effort for the implementation of the UN decision for setting up the Jewish state, the Commu-

nist Party proposes to set up a national democratic front of all those political parties and bodies which are interested in true independence.

The Communist Party appeals in this critical hour to the United Workers Party to set up a united front with the Communist Party. This collaboration shall constitute the fundamental nucleus of the national democratic front. This is the demand of every class-conscious worker in the *Yishuv*, this is the great contribution which our two parties can make to the cause of our national struggle!

The Central Committee repeats and emphasizes its decision that the whole party mobilize for the people's fight for independence.

Let us be proud that we were the first to show the *Yishuv* that imperialism is its arch-enemy, that the British mandate must be abrogated and that foreign troops must leave Palestine. One year ago we fought, despite the opposition of the *Yishuv* leadership, for the Palestine problem to be brought before UN; today, these demands of our party have been adopted by the *Yishuv* and the United Nations.

The fight for independence and evacuation of foreign troops is still going on. American and British imperialism are doing everything—in spite of their proclamations—to leave under a new disguise the old imperialist rule in Palestine.

Comrades! We call all party members in this fateful hour to join the first ranks of those who fight against any compromise with imperialism, to repulse any attack, be it military, economic or political, on the Jewish *Yishuv*. It is the duty of our comrades in the defense trenches of Galilee and the Negev, on the borders of our towns and villages, to set an example of devoted and true fighters for freedom.

Our comrades who remain on the home front have to lead the fight against profiteering, for securing the existence of the soldiers' families, for housing for refugees from the border districts.

Full mobilization for full independence! This is our slogan.

March 13, 1948.

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