

The 'free world' will never accept the criteria of democracy defined by worker Marian Witkowski. The bourgeoisie tolerates 'freedoms' only as long as they do not encroach on the fundamentals: its power and its property. But the worker, too, knows what the fundamentals are.

He rejects a democracy that does not place the power and the ownership of the means of production in his hands.

Workers of the socialist world do not consider their state system either complete or perfect. But they have mastered and will continue to master the culture of democracy – of their own democracy, the democracy that rests on power of the working people.

Israel after the October war

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MOUNTING CONTRADICTIONS WITHIN RULING CIRCLES, REVITALIZATION OF OPPONENTS OF AGGRESSION

For more than six years Israeli official policy had fostered the view, according to which it is not only desirable, but also feasible to continue holding the Arab territories occupied in the June 1967 war. Golda Meir and other proponents of this line claim today that if the Israeli army had not held the Eastern bank of the Suez Canal and the Golan Heights, the gravest danger would have threatened Israel. The aim of this demagogic and unfounded claim, backed by references to the necessity of having 'defensible frontiers,' is to continue leading astray the masses in Israel, vindicate before public opinion in Israel, as well as in the world, the policy which has gone bankrupt, and continue sabotaging efforts for a just and stable peace between Israel and the Arab countries.

Completely at odds with reality

Throughout the recent years the Israeli government, with the support of American imperialism, acted for foiling the implementation of the Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967. The government acted against the realization of any international initiative directed towards the solution of the Middle East crisis by means of this resolution – a solution based on Israel's withdrawal from the territories occupied in the June 1967 war; the recognition of the right to sovereign existence and security of all the states in the region, Israel's as well as the Arab states': a just solution of the problem of the Palestinian refugees; and free navi-

gation of the region's international waterways, including for Israel of the Suez Canal and the Tiran Straits.

As is well known, the governments of Egypt, Jordan and other Arab countries expressed their consent to comply with Resolution 242 and deemed it necessary to continue the search for acceptable solutions on its basis. In reply to the questionnaire of the UN emissary, Gunnar Jarring, of February 1971, the Egyptian government consented to sign a peace treaty with Israel and to recognize the guarantees of the frontiers of all states of the region, including Israel's, providing Israeli troops were withdrawn from territories occupied in the June war.

But the reply of the Israeli government was that Israel would not return to the lines of June 4, 1967, and that the frontiers to be determined would have to be not only recognized and safe borders, as said in Security Council Resolution 242, but also 'agreed' ones.* Thereby the Israeli government strove for dictating to the Arab states a consent on their part to territorial annexations by Israel.

If that resolution had been implemented, it would have been possible to save the numerous Jewish and Arab victims, it would have been possible to save many billions wasted on military expenditures, it would have been possible to avoid the October 1973 war, whose price was thousands of additional victims. Briefly, if the resolution had been implemented, there would have been just and stable peace in the Middle East.

It is the striving of the ruling circles in Israel for territorial annexations which prevented and is preventing any advance toward a settlement of the conflict in the Middle East. Only one month before the renewal of hostilities on October 6, the ruling Labor Party endorsed a document, termed the 'Galili Document,' a blueprint for extending and perpetuating the policy of annexing the occupied territories and to accelerate the creation of accomplished facts in them.** This document was adopted on the eve of the elections as the platform of the Labor Party and MAPAM bloc – under the ultimate pressure of the annexationists of the sort like War Minister M. Dayan, and the pressure of the extreme right-wing opposition. The Minister of Finance, M. Sapir, who is considered to belong to the 'doves' in the Labor Party's leadership, virtually admitted after the October war that it was passed under pressure of these forces, saying: 'If I had not lent my hand to the "Galili Document" . . . I would have been lynched.'

One of the Labor Party's leaders, the former Minister of Justice, Y.Sh. Shapira, described the 'Galili Document' as the embodiment of the hope that in the course of time it would solve the problem of the occupied territories, if not of all, then at least of the greater part of them, in such a way that the territories will be either annexed by, integrated, or united with, the State of Israel. It was assumed that the population in these territories would be under Israeli rule, but their citizenship would be Jordanian. This was how, Shapira said,

*By 'agreed borders' the Israeli government implies that peace negotiations must result in new borders incorporating portions of the occupied territories into Israel. – Ed.

**See N. Ashhab, 'Colonialist Policy of the Israeli Aggressors.' WMR, August 1973.

the ruling bloc conceived the implementation of its slogan, 'not one inch of land,' embodying the policy of territorial annexation.

The ruling circles in Israel are closing their eyes to the change in the balance of forces in the world, in favor of the forces of peace, national independence and socialism, and to the deepening of the anti-imperialist and social content of the liberation movement in the Middle East, and the worldwide increase of support for the struggle of the Arab peoples for the restoration of their occupied territories, and the increase of international recognition of the legitimate rights of the Palestine Arab people.*

During the October war and after it the isolation of Israel in the international arena became more obvious. There has been an essential change in the position of the West European states' attitude towards the Middle East crisis. One expression of this was the decision of the foreign ministers of the nine states belonging to the European Economic Community, in November 1973, about the necessity to implement Security Council Resolution No. 242, and their refusal to permit the American airlift bringing arms and equipment to Israel, to pass over their territories. Twenty-eight African states severed their diplomatic relations with Israel.

This is the reason why the expansionist Israeli policy is given support by precisely those forces in the capitalist world who aspire to sabotage the détente in international tension, to prevent the victory of the principles of peaceful coexistence in international relations between states with different social regimes, and to turn back the wheel of history to the epoch of the cold war. The Israeli rulers placed their whole trust on American imperialism, banking on the Zionist lobby in the USA and the broadly advertised military superiority over the Arabs.

Crisis of the annexationist policy

Before the October war, and also during the first days of the war, boastful and pretentious declarations depreciating the Arab states were sounded in Israel. It was said that 'if war will flare up, it will be shorter than the six-day (June 1967) war,' that the 'Arab armies will be completely routed,' that the USA too 'is sure that Israel can deal within a few hours with any Egyptian offensive' (said by former Israeli Ambassador to USA, Y. Rabin), and according to Lieut.-General A. Sharon on July 20, 1973, 'the Israeli army is capable of destroying, within a few hours, Cairo and Damascus and to threaten every Arab capital.' Israel, he said, is a military power of the rank of England and France. In the days of combat itself, the war minister, M. Dayan, defined this war as the 'doomsday war' - meaning doomsday for the Arab states.

Today, however, the talk in Israel is about an 'earthquake' and 'the destruction of many conventions.' Even the foreign minister, A. Eban, one of the architects of the Israeli foreign policy, speaks of 'the collapse of the concept of securitism, which was based on the

*Following the October war, Golda Meir reiterated the refusal to recognize the right of the self-determination of the Arab people of Palestine.

notion of territorial and political stagnation, never accepted by me.' General M. Peled wrote that after the 'exhausting' war of three weeks the aim of 'breaking up the enemy's power' was not achieved.

Even Dayan said that he 'is no partner of those who claim that the Egyptians and Syrians lost and we won.' Israeli military commentators, too, admitted the fighting quality of the Arab armies, their tenacity, discipline, and confidence of officers and soldiers.

In the Labor Party a sharp controversy has developed between those termed 'hawks' and those termed 'doves.' Chiming in with the extremist Right opposition groups in the country, the 'hawks' are trying to camouflage from the public the collapse of the policy of perpetuating the territorial seizures conducted from positions of strength, and are doing what they can to concentrate the public's attention on the so-called 'breach of security' that had allegedly arisen on the eve of the October events. That is how they are explaining away the heavy losses and the breakdown of their military plans. What goes against their grain is the cease-fire resolution of the UN Security Council of October 22, 1973. They want the Israeli government, which had accepted that resolution, as they put it, 'in response to a call from the U.S. government and its president,' to continue creating difficulties and obstacles to peace in the Middle East. The government is indeed following this course. The already quoted Shapira said in so many words that the Israeli leadership, such as the Prime Minister, Golda Meir, and the ministers Dayan and Galili, are not a peace party and are incapable of achieving peace.

Those relatively moderate elements in the Labor Party who are styled as 'doves' have never been more critical of the government's policy. This may be seen, among other things, from the statements published some time ago in the party's semi-official paper, *Davar*.

For example, Daniel Bloch, member of the paper's editorial board, wrote on October 23, 1973: 'We have to remember all the time that our main objective is the achievement of peace. There is no substitute for peace, and it contains the only prospect for preventing a further war . . .'

Another author, Yitzhak Taub, wrote with disappointment on October 25, 1973: 'The security borders of 1967, the eulogies and clap-trap about which could fill a bulky volume, did not hold for more than six years, and during those years there was a hard and sanguinary war of attrition . . .'

And Yehuda Gotthelf, former editor-in-chief of *Davar*, wrote on October 26, 1973: 'The hawks told us that peace is no insurance against war. But certainly the absence of peace is no insurance either! We stand in need of secure borders, but we need peace just as much. It takes more than secure borders to bring peace, it is peace which shapes secure borders.'

The weakness of the 'doves,' however, lies in the fact that they, too, are basing their proposed solution of the Middle East crisis on the annexation to Israel of a part of the occupied Arab territories.

Nevertheless, the assumption is being verified that subsequent to the changes taking place in the international arena and in the region, and subsequent to the strengthening of the struggle within Israel against the annexationist policy of the government—the internal struggle within the Labor Party will increasingly sharpen and there will also take place positive changes in the positions of broad sections of its rank and file.

The internal situation in the country is giving added impulse to this evolution. The October war cost a tremendous amount of money. According to official evaluations it cost close to 17,000 million Israeli Liras (approximately 4,000 million dollars). According to other assessments—even more.* Israel's foreign debt has soared at a staggering rate, and was as much as \$42 billion at the beginning of 1973. This giant figure speaks of the extent of Israel's political and economic dependence on the USA. The government and the big bourgeoisie aspire to impose the yoke of financing the war expenditures on the shoulders of the workers and the people. In addition to collecting money by the Zionist movement in the capitalist world, in addition to receiving further allocations of \$2,200 million from the U.S. government, which are earmarked for acquiring new equipment and arms, in addition to all these, the government decided on an obligatory war loan and on a 'voluntary' war loan; raised the price of fuel and electricity, cut down the subsidies for vital commodities, and raised the indirect taxes and customs duties. Actually, there has been an additional general rise in prices, which rose an estimated 25 per cent in 1973.

Apart from the tendency toward a drastic lowering of the toilers' standard of living, the employers and government ministers demand the cancellation of the attachment of the worker to his place of work and the introduction of 'mobility of the workers,' involving the loss of rights and the deterioration of work conditions. There has also been a demand to lower the social conditions of the workers and lengthen the workday to nine hours, with the last hour to finance the wages of workers mobilized into the army. This would mean that the working people would have to bear the full cost of the government's intention to continue to keep reservists in the army. Yet the workers already can barely make ends meet and are compelled to work overtime or seek side jobs.

More and more workers are beginning to realize that the way out from the present difficult situation lies in organizing, together with their mobilized fellow-workers, for a struggle against the offensive of the government and the employers aimed at lowering the standard of living.

The way to peace

The Israeli Communists have always struggled—before, during and after the war—against the anti-popular and anti-national policy of the government. On the very day when combat was renewed, Oc-

*Former Chief of Staff Y. Rabin estimates that every hour of the war cost Israel 50 million Israeli Liras (\$10 million), not counting outlays in foreign currency.

tober 6, 1973, the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Israel published a statement: 'Stop the Bloodshed! Stop the policy of occupation and annexations! For a just and lasting peace!' The statement said that the responsibility for slithering into the war rests on the government because of the continuing occupation of the Arab areas occupied in 1967 and because of its sabotaging—with the backing of the ruling American circles—all the peace initiatives of UNO and other international factors. The statement pointed out that even in the grave situation created, the possibility to achieve peace still exists by full implementation of the Security Council Resolution 242, including retreat from the territories occupied in 1967, ensuring the right to the sovereign existence of the State of Israel and of the legitimate national rights of the Palestine Arab people.

The lessons of recent years have not been entirely lost for Israeli society. During the June 1967 war and in the first period after it, the voice of the Communists against the war had been an isolated voice. However, now one can point out that immediately after the beginning of hostilities in October 1973, in addition to the statement of the Communist Party, there also appeared one published by members of SIAH ('New Israeli Left') in which the main guilt for the war is put on the government. In October also statements of members of the working and creative intelligentsia and other public figures appeared calling for an end to the bloodshed, peace in accordance with the Security Council Resolution of November 22, 1967, without any annexations, and recognition of the national rights of Israel and of the Palestine Arab people.

More people in Israel have begun to assess correctly the constructive policy of the Soviet Union in the region, and more voices are heard calling for the normalization of relations with her. The war which broke out in the region in October again emphasized the important task fulfilled by the Soviet Union in defense of peace and the rights of the peoples. The Soviet Union has worked consistently against the annexationist policy of the Israeli government and for enduring peace in our region on the basis of implementing the Security Council Resolution 242 in all its parts. And after the outbreak of the battles in October, the Soviet Union contributed a decisive share in stopping the carnage and to the endorsement of the Security Council Resolution No. 338 of October 22, 1973.

The Soviet Union's stand in the Mideast conflict was set forth with utmost clarity by the General Secretary of the CC CPSU, L. I. Brezhnev. Speaking at the World Congress of Peace Forces in Moscow, he said: 'In keeping with the general principles of socialist foreign policy and in view of the fact that this region is in direct proximity to our frontiers, we are interested in seeing that a really durable and just peace is established in the Middle East and that the security of all the countries and peoples of that region and their right to build their life peacefully and in a manner of their own choosing are ensured. For that very reason the Soviet Union has always insisted that the territories seized by

Israel should be returned to the Arab states and that justice should triumph in respect to the Palestinian people.' 'Our firm stand,' he went on, 'is that all the states and peoples in the Middle East - I repeat, all of them - must be assured of peace, security and the inviolability of borders. The Soviet Union is prepared to take part in the relevant guarantees.'

More people in the country are evincing a desire for just and stable peace in the Middle East. Just and lasting peace in which all the peoples of the region and all mankind are interested, means that the peoples will be freed from the threat of war, that the frontiers of their states will be safe and recognized frontiers, that their efforts and resources will be devoted to developing their economies and that a foundation for cooperation between them will be laid.

The Israeli Communists are struggling for establishing a peace front, in which all champions of peace, regardless of political views and party affiliation, will take part. Their struggle for establishing just and stable peace and for preventing a new war conflagration, their struggle against the policy of occupation and annexation and for a change of the Israeli policy into a policy of peace, independence and social progress - this struggle is regarded by the Israeli Communists as their patriotic as well as their international obligation. They are combining this struggle with efforts for establishing the unity of action of the toilers in defense of their standard of living and against the rising prices, the heavier taxes and the danger of expanding unemployment.

Our Central Committee is calling on all peace forces to unite and intensify the struggle against the adventurist official policy of such figures as Golda Meir, Dayan, etc., and for a new policy that would advance Israel along the path to peace. The documents adopted by the 10th Plenum of the CC CP of Israel, held December 3-4, 1973, stress that time is working against the Israeli government. Good political opportunities have appeared in the Middle East and the rest of the world for establishing a just and stable peace.
