

# Arab - Jewish Workers Strike

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PALESTINE—

In the last few months, some important strikes of Jewish and Arab workers in Palestine have occurred. Especially notable was the strike at the Oil Refineries in Haifa at the beginning of this year, and the general one-day protest strike of 40,000 Arab and Jewish workers in the military camps on May 20th, 1947.

The capitalist press, which pretends that British imperialism dominates Palestine to keep the peace between the different communities, naturally enough did not print a word about the Arab - Jewish unity in these strikes.

The British authorities decided to dismiss some thousands of workers from the military camps. The decisions as to who was to be dismissed was placed in the hands of Jewish foremen, in the hope that this would serve as a good opportunity to bring a clash between Jewish and Arab workers. Perhaps, there is some foundation to the rumours that that was the only reason for the dismissals. However, the provocation did not succeed. The reactionary bureaucratic leadership of the Arab Unions called on the workers to strike against the Jewish foremen. This took place at the end of March. A great majority of the Arab workers refused to accept this provocation and the strike failed.

Now, the provocation came from the Zionist side. On the 15th May, the train which carries the workers to the camps, and which does not fulfil any military function, was bombed by Zionist terrorists. The workers answered by a one day strike. The same Arab trade union bureaucrat, Sami Taha, tried again to incite the Arab workers against the Jewish workers. But he was shouted down by the Arab workers. The height of the provocation was reached when the Hagana (the official Zionist military organisation) attacked the Arab village Fejja, killing a few Arabs under the pretext that some Arab bandits either came from the village, or found refuge in it. Of course, the killing was done without a shred of evidence.

## Workers March Out Together

In the struggle against the oil colossus, the Iraq Petroleum Company, a British-American-French combine, which has a capital of more than £30,000,000, and which refused a wage increase of 3 piastres (7d.) per day, to the hungry workers, the Arab and Jewish workers again showed

solidarity. Notwithstanding the opposition of the official Union leaderships of both sides to any co-operation between the workers, they stood together in a sit-down strike for many days. When the Arab Union leader asked the Jewish workers present in a meeting to leave the meeting, all the Arab workers joined them and left him on his own. One Arab worker who found difficulty in expressing himself to his Jewish fellow workers, demonstrated his sentiments as follows: he stood up on the platform, and with two sticks, showed that he could not break them together, but separately they could be broken with the greatest of ease. Each stick represented the Jewish and Arab worker, while he represented British Imperialism. The workers greeted this with great applause.

In a leaflet issued in Arabic and Hebrew by the Revolutionary Communist League, Palestine Trotskyists, the political character of the strike was explained. It contained a warning of likely provocation from the Government, the Arab feudal leaders and the Histadruth (Zionist Labour organisation). It put forward the demand to extend the strike from a one day demonstration until the demands of the workers were accepted; the immediate introduction of workers' control of dismissals; and the formation of a body composed of delegates from all the military camps to constitute a permanent body representing the workers.

The Zionists try their best to prove that a Jewish state is necessary as no peace can exist between Jews and Arabs and therefore no possibility of an independent Palestine with an Arab majority, where the two communities will live in peace. The Arab feudal leaders and their lackeys are also afraid of every demonstration of workers' solidarity. Despite all these provocations, cases of solidarity action between Arab and Jewish workers occur again and again.