

The Israeli Socialist Organization (MATZPEN)

A COLLECTION OF POLITICAL STATEMENTS

1967-1969



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למה הפגנה
חודית-ערבית
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אזרחי

the palestine problem and the israeli-arab dispute

The nineteenth anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel will occur this month. During these 19 years the Israeli-Arab dispute has not come nearer a solution. The Palestine problem is still an open wound in the body of the Middle East; an incessant source of bloodshed, suffering and wrongs; a heavy burden on the economic resources of the region; a pretext for imperialist aggression and military intervention; a grave threat to world peace.

Especially grave is the state of the Palestinian Arabs -- the direct victims of the 1948 war and of the collusion between "the friendly enemies," Ben Gurion and Abdullah. The majority of Palestine's Arabs were dispossessed of their homes and fields during and after the 1948 war, and have since been living as refugees, in suffering and distress, outside Israel.

The leaders of Israel emphatically refuse to recognize their elementary right to be repatriated. The Arabs who were left in Israel are victims of severe economic, civil and national oppression.

During these 19 years, Israel has been an isolated island in the Middle East, a State which is independent only in the formal sense, being economically and politically dependent on the imperialist powers, especially on the USA. It has continually served as a tool of these powers against the Arab nation, against the progressive forces in the Arab world. The clearest manifestation (but not the only one) of this role of official Israeli policy was in 1956, when Israel's government joined Anglo-French imperialism in an aggressive collusion against Egypt, and even furnished these powers with a pretext for military intervention.

The state of war and hostility between Israel and her Arab neighbours has continued for 19 years, and Israel's Zionist leadership has no real prospect of changing this situation. Israeli policy is in a cul de sac.

The present economic crisis in Israel, which has caused grave unemployment of the workers and great hardship to the popular masses, also serves to underline the fact that Israel cannot long continue to exist in its present form, as a Zionist State, cut off from the region in which it is located.

Thus, the present state of affairs is against the interests of the Arab masses: Israel, in its present form, constitutes a grave obstacle for the struggle of these masses against imperialism and for a socialist Arab unity. The continuation of the present state of affairs is also against the interests of the Israeli masses.

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The Israeli Socialist Organization, in whose ranks there are both Arabs and Jews, holds that the Palestine problem and the Israeli-Arab dispute can and should be solved in a socialist and internationalist way, taking into consideration the unique features of this complex problem.

This is not an ordinary conflict between two nations. Therefore it is not enough to call for "Coexistence based on mutual recognition of the just national rights of the two peoples."

The State of Israel is the outcome of the colonization of Palestine by the Zionist movement, at the expense of the Arab people and under the auspices of imperialism. In its present Zionist form, Israel is also a tool for the continuation of "the Zionist Endeavour."

The Arab world cannot acquiesce in the existence in its midst of a Zionist State, whose declared purpose is not to serve as a political expression of its own population, but as a bridgehead, a political instrument and a destination for immigration of the Jews all over the world. Israel's Zionist character is also opposed to the true interests of the Israeli masses, because it means constant dependence of the country upon external forces.

We therefore hold that a solution of the problem necessitates the de-zionization of Israel. The State of Israel must undergo a deep revolutionary change

which will transform it from a Zionist State (i.e., a state of the Jews all over the world) into a socialist state which represents the interests of the masses who live in it. In particular, the "law of return" (which grants every Jew in the world an absolute and automatic right to immigrate into Israel and become a citizen of it) must be abolished. Each request to immigrate into Israel will then be decided separately on its own merits, without any discrimination of a racial or religious nature.

The Palestine Arab refugee problem is the most painful part of the Israeli-Arab dispute.

We therefore hold that every refugee who wants to return to Israel must be enabled to do so; he should then obtain full economic and social rehabilitation. Those refugees who will freely choose not to be repatriated should be fully compensated for loss of property and for the personal suffering which has been caused to them.

In addition, all the laws and regulations aimed at discriminating and oppressing the Arab population of Israel and at expropriation of its lands must be abolished. All expropriations and damages (to land, property and person) caused under these laws and regulations must be fully compensated.

The de-zionization of Israel implies also putting an end to the Zionist foreign policy, which serves imperialism. Israel must take an active part in the struggle of the Arabs against imperialism and for the establishment of a socialist Arab unity.

The Zionist colonization of Palestine differs in one basic respect from the colonization of other countries: whereas in other countries the settlers established their economy upon the exploitation of the labour of the indigenous inhabitants, the colonization of Palestine was carried out through the replacement and expulsion of the indigenous population.

This fact has caused a unique complication of the Palestine problem. As a result of Zionist colonization, a Hebrew nation with its own national characteristics (common language, separate economy, etc.) has been formed in Palestine. Moreover, this nation has a capitalist class structure -- it is divided into exploiters and exploited, a bourgeoisie and a proletariat.

The argument that this nation has been formed artificially and at the expense of the indigenous Arab population does not change the fact that the Hebrew nation now exists. It would be a disas-

trous error to ignore this fact.

The solution of the Palestine problem must not only redress the wrong done to the Palestinian Arabs, but also ensure the national future of the Hebrew masses. These masses were brought to Palestine by Zionism -- but they are not responsible for the deeds of Zionism. The attempt to penalize the Israeli workers and popular masses for the sins of Zionism cannot solve the Palestinian problem but only bring about new misfortunes.

Those nationalist Arab leaders who call for a jihad for the liberation of Palestine ignore the fact that even if Israel would be defeated militarily and cease to exist as a state, the Hebrew nation will still exist. If the problem of the existence of this nation is not solved correctly, a situation of dangerous and prolonged national conflict will be re-created, which will cause endless bloodshed and suffering and will serve as a new pretext for imperialist intervention. It is no coincidence that the leaders who advocate such a "solution" are also not capable of solving the Kurdish problem.

In addition it should be understood that the Israeli masses will not be liberated from the influence of Zionism and will not struggle against it unless the progressive forces in the Arab world present them with a prospect of coexistence without national oppression.

The Israeli Socialist Organization therefore holds that a true solution of the Palestine problem necessitates the recognition of the right of the Hebrew nation to self-determination.

Self-determination does not necessarily mean separation. On the contrary, we hold that a small country which is poor in natural resources, such as Israel cannot exist as a separate entity. It is faced with two alternatives only -- to continue to depend on foreign powers or to integrate itself in a regional union.

It follows that the only solution consistent with the interests of both Arab and Israeli masses is the integration of Israel as a unit in an economic and political union of the Middle East, on the basis of socialism.

In such a framework the Hebrew nation will be able to carry on its own national and cultural life without endangering the Arab world and without a threat to its own existence by the Arabs. The forces of the Israeli masses will join those of the Arab masses in a common struggle for progress and prosperity.

We therefore hold that the Palestine problem -- like other central problems of the Middle East -- can only be solved in the framework of a Middle Eastern union.

Theoretical analysis and practical experience alike show that Arab unity can be formed and exist in a stable way only if it has a socialist character.

One can therefore sum up the solution which we propose by the formula: de-zionization of Israel and its integration in a socialist Middle Eastern union.

We hold that the problem of the political future of the Palestinian Arabs should also be solved within the framework described above.

There are people who think that justice necessitates the establishment of a special Palestinian Arab political entity. Our view is that this question must be decided by the Palestinian Arabs, without outside interference.

However, we think that it would be a grave error to pose the problem of the political future of the Palestinian Arabs separately from and independently of the question of socialist Arab union. At present the Palestinian Arabs are in the first ranks of the struggle for unity. If they would be presented with a separate and dependent aim, the cause of Arab unity may suffer grave damage. Also, the establishment of a small separate Arab state is not consistent with the interests of the Arab nation, including the Palestinian Arab people.

We therefore hold that if the Palestinian Arabs decide in favour of establishing a political entity of their own, the necessary political and territorial arrangements should be made within the framework of establishing a socialist union of the Middle East. The countries that now hold parts of the territory of Palestine -- Israel, Jordan and Egypt -- should particularly contribute to such a settlement.

...

We call upon the revolutionary socialist forces in the Arab countries and in other countries to consider our present program and to start a wide discussion aimed at working out a common position on the problems of the Middle East.

JOINT ISRAELI-ARAB STATEMENT ON THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

by The Israeli Socialist Organisation and The Palestinian Democratic Front

The following statement was agreed and signed by an Arab and an Israeli organization on the day before war broke out. The statement analyses the entire problem, and both signatory parties stand firm by their analysis and principled solution irrespective of the outcome of the military campaign. The signatory parties are opposed to the official policies of their nationalist leaders, and are not favoured by current public opinion among their own peoples. But their existence proves that not everyone in the Middle East is sick with the nationalist fever.

The Israeli Socialist Organisation is an Israeli group, with a Jewish-Arab membership, operating legally in Israel and publishing a small newspaper. The Palestinian Democratic Front is a clandestine group of Palestinians operating inside Jordan. The groups have had contact in the past few years, and decided to publish this statement openly at this time, so that the bridges of understanding between Jews and Arabs in the Middle East will not be irreparably damaged by the present crisis.

The situation in the Middle East is explosive. A cruel war is breaking out. There is no doubt that this war will destroy many lives, but little hope that it will bring a political solution any nearer.

In the last minutes before the Middle East is drowned in its third bloodbath in 20 years, we, Jews and Arabs, representing two political organisations, Israeli and Palestinian, met under the auspices of the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, discussed the present crisis, analysed its history, propose a solution and make the following declaration.

The new generation all over the world is fed up with racist and nationalist ideologies, politics and strife. Too many times in recent years these policies have drenched whole areas of the world in futile, bloody wars, demonstrating to a disgusted humanity their inherent inability to solve the problem which their very existence creates. India and Pakistan, Greece and Turkey, Iraq and Kurdistan, Israel and the Arab states all provide examples of conflict situations which, however differing in political background, have one thing in common: the underlying political realities are swamped in a torrent of competing nationalisms. The only result such policies ever achieve is to turn persecutor into persecuted, oppressor into oppressed.

This new generation struggles to free itself from institutions and ideas imposed on it by a bloody past. It aspires to rid itself once and for all from politics and systems that have outlived their time, are unable to cope with the realities of the space age, and create a torture chamber for mankind. It watches with disgust the hysterical racialism and nationalism that is manipulated by the propaganda machines of all parties in the Middle East crisis.

The present crisis is a phase in one of the most complex political problems of our times. Apart from its complexity, it is a situation where the heritage of the past greatly influences the present issues. Nevertheless the historical realities are being ignored by those who stand to gain most from the crisis. An analysis of the history of the situation will expose the gigantic hoax which the emotion manipulators and moral blackmailers are trying to impose on their own people and on the world.

The Israeli-Arab conflict is the continuation in a new form, of the "Palestine problem." The "Palestine problem" is the conflict between political Zionism and the Palestinian Arabs. It is the result of the dispossession of the indigenous population of Palestine by Zionist colonisation. It has nothing to do with the age old problem of anti-Semitism, except that Zionism was a product of European anti-Semitism. Anti-Jewish attitudes were virtually unknown in the Arab world, where large Jewish communities prospered for centuries.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the Jews were driven to desperation by persecution in Europe. Political Zionism, accepting anti-Semitism as a natural, eternal quality in human nature, proposed to solve the problem by creating a national state for the Jews in Palestine. But Palestine was already populated by 700,000 Palestinians, some probably descendants of the ancient Hebrews. In 1900 the Jews constituted less than 10 per cent of the population and owned less than 10 per cent of the land in Palestine. The Palestinian too aspired to political independence in their homeland.

The struggle of the Palestinians was naturally directed against their foreign rulers, first the Ottoman Empire, then the British. The Zionist leaders, realising they could not achieve their objective if Palestine became independent before it had a Jewish majority, chose to further their interests by allying themselves with the foreign rulers. Between the two World Wars, the British supported whichever side could contribute most to their interests. Political Zionism gradually developed a closed Jewish society and economy in Palestine, excluding—on principle—the Palestinian Arabs. The Palestinian socio-economic structure became deformed. The Arab peasants lost their land because their feudal landlords sold it for artificially high prices to the Zionist institutions. The disinherited and unemployed masses fell prey to corrupted religious leaders like Hajj Amin el Husseini, who spent the war with Hitler.

In the thirties, the rise of fascism in Europe brought new waves of Jewish immigrants into Palestine. Then, in 1936, the general strike of the Palestinian Arabs sparked off the Palestinian rebellion, which was created by the Arab rulers and finally defeated by the British Army in 1939. As a result of this defeat, political Zionism and British imperialism were left as the only two combatants in the arena.

The Nazi regime introduced a totally new factor into the situation. The

planned, industrialized, racial extermination of 6,000,000 Jews shocked many people all over the world, who were unaware of the realities in Palestine, into the conclusion that the Jews must be granted political independence in Palestine. At the end of the war the Jewish community in Palestine, strengthened morally by world sympathy and militarily by participation in the fight against fascism, began its own struggle against the British.

All this culminated in the Palestine Partition resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations, on 29 November, 1947. Two states were to be established—one for the Palestinian Arabs, the other for the Jewish community in Palestine.

The British "Labour" Government of the day tried to create chaos in Palestine so as to invalidate the resolution. In a secret meeting in Bludan (Switzerland) Major I. C. Clayton, the liaison officer between the Arab League and the Foreign Office, planned and organised the invasion of Palestine by the armies of Farouk, Nuri-Said and Abdallah. The Jews were forced to fight not just for independence, but for survival. President Nasser was an officer in this war. In his book "The Philosophy of the Revolution" he describes how he felt the war to be an imperialist plot, designed to subdue the struggle against the Farouk and Nuri-Said regimes and, at the same time, to bring the British back into Palestine in the role of pacifier. President Nasser had friendly talks with Israeli soldiers, such as Yigal Allon, inquiring how they managed to get rid of British imperialism. The U.S.S.R., probably because of its anti-imperialist policy, supported the partition resolution. Czechoslovakia supplied the arms with which imperialism was defeated. It was not "the Arabs" who were defeated in 1948 but the policies of British imperialism manipulating the armies of the feudal monarchies of Farouk, Abdallah and Abdel-Ilah.

But the 1948 war was turned from a defensive act into an aggressive one when Ben-Gurion, after secret negotiations through Colonel Dayan and Golda Meir, approved by the British Foreign Office, concluded a secret agreement with King Abdallah of Trans-Jordan in 1949, by which each of them annexed half of the territory allotted to the Palestinian Arabs by the U.N. The U.N. resolution was thus violated not only by the British Government and its Arab puppets, but also by the Ben-Gurion Government. The Palestinian Arabs became the real victims of a war in which they hardly participated. They lost their land, property honour and independence. They were dispersed into the Gaza strip, Jordan and Israel. Ever since they have lived a wretched life as refugees in camps around Israel as second-rate citizens inside Israel, as betrayed people in Jordan, refusing to give up hope, victims of the plot compounded by the British, the Israeli leaders and the Arab monarchies to rob them of their rights.

Having forsaken U.N. recognition of their borders, Ben-Gurion and Abdallah looked for some international power to sanctify the accomplished fact of carving up Arab Palestine. Sure enough, Britain, France and the U.S. gave their blessing to this new situation, henceforth to be known as the "status quo", in the Tri-Partite Declaration of 26 May, 1950. This declaration, explicitly sanctifying a violation of a U.N. resolution, was never recognised by any Arab Government. Its authority rests entirely on imperialist power. Through this declaration, the "friendly enemies" Ben-Gurion and Abdallah, became dependent on the Western Powers for their territorial integrity. This state of affairs persists to this very day and underlies the whole problem and the present crisis.

The first Arab leader to recognise the Partition Resolution of the U.N. was President Nasser himself. It was he who formulated the Palestine Resolution at the historic Conference of Afro-Asian states in Bandung, in April 1955, which states:

"Owing to the tension in the Middle East, which results from the Palestine problem, and the fact that this situation endangers world peace, the Conference of the Afro-Asian States expresses its full support for the rights of the Palestinian Arabs, and calls for the implementation of the U.N. resolutions on Palestine, demanding a solution by peaceful means."

Ben-Gurion rejected this offer publicly because it contradicted the territorial annexations. His policy then and since was founded on the principle of accomplished facts sustained by force. Later, through co-operation with J. F. Dulles's pact making policies in the area, he tried to force acceptance of the "status quo" on the Arab states. Moreover, a state practising Jewish superiority in Palestine was boycotted by, and isolated from, the entire Arab world. Being economically unviable, it became completely

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economic and political support. On the eve of the Suez Campaign, President Nasser, sensing what awaited him, tacitly agreed to the "status quo" after secret contacts in Malta and Rome. But Ben-Gurion preferred to spearhead the Eden-Millet aggression, and supply the pretext for the "peace-making" case of the Anglo-French invasion. After this invasion even tacit agreement with Ben-Gurion became impossible.

Two weeks ago, President Nasser, undoing the last remnant of the Suez aggression, an accomplished fact which Ben-Gurion and U.S. imperial power imposed on him for ten years, implemented his legal rights in the straits of Tiran. This caused an uproar in Israel, not so much because of the economic aspect, but because this deed undermines the entire philosophy of the "accomplished fact" policy. If one such fact can be undone, what about the others? What about the territorial status quo itself? Especially now, when Wilson and de Gaulle consider their commitments under the Tri-Partite Declaration of 1950 no longer binding, and Johnson refuses to sacrifice his interests for the sake of a government which, by its own internal logic, cannot choose to serve anyone but him. Are accomplished facts, implemented by force, preferable to mutual agreement?

The Palestinians, whom Ben-Gurion and Hussein consigned to oblivion, saw their hope to become free people in their land nearer to realisation through Egyptian military power. They expected Nasser, the recognised leader of the anti-imperialist struggle in the Arab world, to topple the weakened Hussein, their arch oppressor and betrayer, and take up their cause. Until 29 May, Nasser, Cairo Radio and all the Egyptian propaganda apparatus viciously attacked Hussein, denounced his Premier as a C.I.A. agent and led the Palestinians to believe that they would re-establish their independence in Palestine. The corrupt Palestinian nationalist politician, Shukaiky, declared: "Hussein is a puppet of world imperialism. In order to liberate Palestine we must first overthrow Hussein."

Then, in a sudden and dramatic betrayal of the Palestinians, Nasser signed a pact with Hussein, gave "his Arab brother" a kiss of life in front of the T.V. cameras, and saved this feudal monarch and imperialist puppet in the most dangerous moment of his career. This racist Shukaiky, who only a few days earlier had screamed: "There will be no Jewish survivors in the Holy War of liberating Palestine", was a party to this opportunist pact. Simultaneously, Nasser offered a similar deal to Faisal, the well known pro-imperialist feudal ruler of Saudi Arabia. In the past it was always Ben Gurion and the British who saved Hussein's throne: suddenly—it is Nasser.

Just as the official Israeli policies offer no salvation to the Jews of Israel, Nasser's and Shukaiky's policies offer no salvation to the Palestinian Arabs. Once again national leaders have shown how cynically they exploit the interests of the people for their own purposes, but sell them out in their power deals. The present crisis illuminates in harsh light the futility of the nationalists of both sides. The Israeli leadership refuses to realise that the days of "accomplished facts" are over. As for the nationalist leadership of the Palestinians, their kiss of life to Hussein is a kiss of death to themselves. The present leaders of both sides cannot bury the issue because it is too much alive, and they cannot solve it because they suffer incurably from nineteenth century nationalism, because they are emotionally conditioned by territorial and national issues and majority-minority complexes. In Palestine it is not territory which must be liberated or defended: but the minds of the people which must be liberated from racialism and defended against nationalism. Only when the people liberate their minds from their own prejudices and misconceptions will they liberate themselves from the grip of rulers who drag them from one nationalist war to the next.

The Palestine problem has two fundamental political aspects: that of re-establishing the rights of the Palestinian Arabs; and that of integrating the Israelis into the political structure of the Middle East. These hard political issues have for years been submerged by nationalism. The Arab nationalist leaders pretend to have a solution to the first aspect; they do not even claim one for the second. But even their "solution" to the first problem is based not on political concepts but on policies of war, subjugation, and racial extermination. The shallowness of their policies is now being disguised by a hysterical outburst of racist emotion, which is as dangerous to those that feel it as to those against whom it is directed.

Moreover, since no human being with dignity can tolerate a policy of wiping out an entire population, as Nasser and Shukaiky have recently declared, Wilson and Johnson can enshrine their interventionist policies with an aura of righteousness, and rally to their support even those who oppose their Vietnam policies. Even worse, this racist propaganda provides the leaders of Israel with their most powerful moral weapon, silencing every internal criticism, consolidating the entire population behind the "national leadership", and mobilising the support of multitudes of honest people all over the world to their side. The incontrovertible moral rightness of the cause of the Palestinian Arabs has been sacrificed once more, this time on the altar of racist mumbo-jumbo, and the unholy "alliance" between the nationalists and the feudalists. Faced with the present crisis and the mass hysteria with which it has been invested, we say to the present leaders of both sides:

To the Israeli leaders: Do not take military initiative against any Arab state. Even a decisive military victory will not solve your problem but only aggravate it and postpone any possible solution. It is not the Arab armies which you have to face but the entire population of the Arab world. If you want free passage through the straits of Tiran—negotiate with Egypt and not with the U.S.A.

No military or political power can ensure, for long, free passage in Tiran if an Egyptian Government refuses to grant it. No government will surrender such rights under threats of force. It is Ben-Gurion, and his Suez policy, not Nasser, that you should blame for this fiasco.

Instead of threatening "to go it alone" militarily, try a policy of *political*

Note:

Because of the war it was impossible for the representatives of I.S.O. and D.F.P. in Europe to contact their parties in the Middle-East and consult them over formulations. It

independence from the U.S.A. Show readiness to re-discuss the Palestine problem, the "status-quo", and the refugee issue. In the historical context of the Middle East it is Israel that must take the initiative in making concessions to the Palestinians, and not the other way round. State that you recognise in principle the human and political rights of the Palestinian Arabs. Recognise that Zionism has outlived its declared purpose, that Israel has become not a refuge but the most dangerous place in the world for Jews to live in.

To President Nasser: Show by words and acts that you are ready to negotiate innocent passage in Tiran if Israel shows readiness to re-discuss its policies towards the Palestinians, the Western powers and the Arab states. Stop immediately all racist propaganda, all talk of "destroying Israel" and "total war to liberate Palestine". Suggest a political solution to the Palestine problem that recognises the political rights of the Israelis in Palestine.

If a war with Israel will aim to destroy the people or their state as a political entity, all Israelis will fight for survival, and every person with human dignity in the world, whatever his views on the wrongs which political Zionism has inflicted on the Palestinians, will actively oppose such destruction and such declared aims. The world cannot tolerate rulers who wish to destroy entire states.

Moreover, the struggle of the Israeli population to preserve its political identity will continue even after an Arab victory, just as the struggle of the Palestinian population to preserve its political identity will continue after an Israeli victory.

The steps mentioned above can be taken by those who are in power now to cool the crisis before it breaks into another war. They will not solve the underlying political problems. As we have said, the Palestine problem has two main political aspects:

That of re-establishing the rights of the Palestinians, and that of integrating the Israelis into the Arab-East. The Arab nationalist leaders pretend to have a solution to the first ("Liberation of Palestine"), they do not even claim a solution to the second. The Zionist leaders of Israel pretend to have a solution to the second ("preserve the 'status-quo'"), they do not even claim one for the first.

However, only a solution which simultaneously resolves both aspects of the problem can provide a viable, stable solution.

We herewith state our solution, which satisfies this fundamental requirement:

1. Israel must undergo a deep, revolutionary, transformation and become a normal state of its own inhabitants. The Zionist power structure and all elements of Jewish supremacy must be abolished totally. This must be achieved only through internal joint struggle of all non-Zionists inside Israel who wish to integrate this state in the Middle East.
2. This, non-Zionist Israel will repatriate the Palestinian refugees who wish to return, and fully compensate those who prefer not to return for their property, land and suffering. It will declare its readiness to make territorial concessions to the Palestinians, and help them to establish an independent Palestinian state should they wish to do so.
3. Whether the Palestinians establish their state or, for the sake of unity, do not, the new, transformed, non-Zionist Israel will pursue a policy of merging the Israelis and Palestinians in a federal, non-nationalist, socialist state, wherein Jews and Arabs will enjoy full civil rights and cultural freedom.
4. This federal state will participate in the process of political and economic unification of the entire Middle East.

The implementation of these principles will necessarily depend on actual circumstances, but we herewith solemnly declare that under no circumstances shall we allow measures of national discrimination or racial supremacy to be re-introduced.

Frankly, we do not expect these changes can be brought about by the nationalist parties any more than by the feudal monarchies. Even socialist parties will fail while they are still enslaved by nationalist attitudes. If Nasser's union with Syria collapsed, if the Ba'ath failed to unify Syria and Iraq, how can they be expected to tackle the much more complicated task of unifying Jews and Arabs in Palestine? It is not by accident that only we, socialists freed from the shackles of nationalism, can work together and jointly propose a solution. It is because our loyalty is not to this or that nation, but to humanity as a political entity, and to its only possible mode of existence—socialism.

We say to all chauvinist, nationalist and racist Israeli and Arab leaders: for 19 years you have failed to move one inch towards agreement. You have had two wars, and now you are preparing a third which will bring no salvation but death.

We, Israeli and Arab socialists, have produced our joint solution to the problem. We challenge you to produce yours—now. If you fail to do so you will go down in history not with your self-assumed moral aura of martyrs or liberators, anti-imperialists or patriots, but as victims of your own propaganda, prisoners of fossilised ideologies, and slaves of self-created emotionalism. Why can we reach mutual agreement, in full awareness of the intricacies of the problem, and you cannot? Is it because we speak, first and foremost as members of humanity, and only then as members of this or that nation, whereas with you it is the other way round?

We herewith re-assert our human dignity by firmly rejecting any racist and nationalist solution to the political problems of people.

More than once in this century nationalist leaders were thought of as saviours, and millions of blind followers' bodies paved their road to hell.

The Israeli Socialist Organisation
The Palestinian Democratic Front. 3rd June, 1967.

We call upon individuals, organizations and parties, who approve of the spirit of this declaration to endorse it.

certain formulations would have been different. However, apart from minor reservations concerning some formulations no group withdraws its signature, or support, of the

A joint Arab-Israeli statement

We, the Palestinian Democratic Front and the Israeli Socialist Organisation, published our first joint statement on the recent crisis in the Middle-East on June 3rd, prior to the Israeli attack. We stated there our principled, internationalist position with regard to the history, the pre-war situation and the imminent war. We now reaffirm our first statement and follow up with a second one, stating our position with regard to the situation created by this war.

The predominant political phenomenon of our times is the struggle of the people in the unindustrialised continents — Asia, Africa and Latin America — to free themselves from the political and economic domination of the industrialised imperialist powers. Every other political phenomenon is judged, first of all, according to its relation to this world-wide conflict. In this context there is little doubt that the recent war in the Middle-East, and its outcome, have served the interests of imperialism in this area and throughout the world. Can the consequences of the Israeli attack be isolated from the crushing of the anti-imperialist struggle in Indonesia or the U.S. intervention in Vietnam? It is evident, for example, from a recent statement of de Gaulle that even the imperialists think that it cannot.

In the last months before the war the anti-imperialist policies of the Syrian Government came increasingly into conflict with the oil monopolies in the Middle-East. This political background enabled Israel to launch an air attack on Syria on April 7th, and threaten Syria with a military invasion. Nasser, who opportunistically steers the anti-imperialist interests and sentiments of the Arab masses in nationalist channels, found himself, under the pressure of circumstances forced to support the Syrian regime against this threat. Moreover, American oil monopolies in Saudi Arabia, worried lest the anti-imperialists in Yemen and Aden win their struggle and endanger their interests, did their best to play Egypt and Israel against each other so as to weaken Nasser's support to the anti-imperialists in South Arabia. Nasser, being a nationalist and an opportunist, did not hesitate in the circumstances to sign a pact with Hussein, the well-known puppet of imperialism, ignoring the contradictions between the regimes and their objectives. Even

worse, he resorted to racist propaganda against the Israeli population. We, as internationalists, fully support the struggle of the Arab masses for political, economic and social liberation against the recent and all other aggressions; this does not mean that we support the nationalist leaders who purport to carry out this struggle. We would like to remind those who lend uncritical support to such nationalist leaders of the examples of Chiang-Kai-Chek, Attaturk, Sukarno. The struggle for genuine political and social liberation can be won only under a principled, internationalist leadership.

After W.W.I Sherrif Hussein and his sons Faisal and Abdalian (Hussein's grandfather and predecessor on the throne) promised the Arab masses that they would achieve independence by serving British imperialism. Between the two world wars Haj Emin-el-Husseini, Fawzi el-Kauki and others (and during W.W.2 Rashid Ali el-Kailani, General Aziz el-Masri and others) sought to do so by serving the interests of Nazism and Italian Fascism (some nationalist leaders even named Mussolini: "Saif el Islam"). Now we are asked to believe that the nationalists — the Nasserites, the Baathists and the nationalist Left which trails behind them — will carry this struggle to its end and even bring about a Socialist revolution. The recent "all Arab" alliance of the 'progressive' El-Attassi, the anti-imperialist Nasser, the pro-imperialist Hussein and the racist Shukaify, fits into this pattern of failure all too clearly.

As for the Zionist leadership of Israel we have already pointed out in our first statement that the alliance between political Zionism and first Ottoman, then British and nowadays U.S. imperialism, was not an accident. Political Zionism, because of its colonisatory history and because of its principled segregationist policies towards the Arabs of Palestine, has a vital interest in preserving imperialist influence in the Middle-East and has acted as an integral part of the imperialist power system. Political Zionism was always lined up against the struggle of the indigenous population of Palestine to liberate itself from foreign domination. Weizmann's pact with Faisal (1921), Ben Gurion's secret pact with Abdallah (1949), his participation in the Suez aggression, and the recent attack, are merely highlights of one and the same policy,

which — in the recent case — because of the racist propaganda of radio Cairo, Damascus, Amman was disguised as a defensive policy. While this propaganda led the Israeli population to believe it was fighting for its survival, the Zionist leaders of Israel took their chance to realise a lifelong dream of territorial aggrandisement. The policies of annexing new territory, especially Old Jerusalem, are not new. They were always latent in the Zionist aims, and could be expected to show themselves when the opportunity arose. This opportunity was presented to them by Arab nationalism.

This round in the anti-imperialist struggle can be summed up by saying that while the Israeli people were lined up behind the wrong leadership on the wrong side of the barricade, the Arab people were lined up behind the wrong leadership on the right side of the barricade.

Internationalists inside Israel must tirelessly explain that as long as the state is lined up with the imperialist system there can be no peace or normalisation of relations with the Arab world. The Arab masses will, eventually, sweep away every ruler and policy — Arab or otherwise — supporting imperialism. Moreover, as long as Israel maintains its Zionist segregationist policies against the Arabs, any talk of "peace" is hypocrisy or, at best, self-illusion. There can be no normalisation of relations with segregationist and pro-imperialist policies. A dictated "peace" or a "Pax-Americana" with Hussein is no remedy to this conflict. The temporary setback to the anti-imperialist struggle brought about by this war will soon pass and the struggle will be resumed with new vigour and under a better leadership. There can be no co-existence between imperialism and the anti-imperialist movement; it is doubtful whether there can even be a respite. The Zionist and pro-imperialist policies of the Israeli leadership antagonize not just this or that Arab leader, but the entire population of the Arab world. This fundamental antagonism cannot be overcome by military victories.

Internationalists inside the Arab world must tirelessly explain that the nationalist leadership cannot be relied upon to fight resolutely against imperialism, that it is always tempted to seek compromise or resort to opportunist policies, as the Nasser-Hussein pact has shown; that by resorting to racist propaganda this leadership commits a crime against the anti-imperialist struggle; that by borrowing imperialist ideology and morals to further its own aims it defeats these aims and defiles them. Shukairy's calls to kill all Jews, women and children included,

from radio Cairo are not some "minor defect" which may now be forgotten. Even Syria, considered by some to be the "most progressive" Arab state, spoke of destroying Israel, "neglecting" to mention what would happen to the Jewish population. Under no circumstances do we forgive such crimes or, for tactical reasons, abstain from denouncing them. Those who do so cause grave damage to the anti-imperialist struggle. As for Israel, every attempt of Arab nationalists to destroy the state by force only consolidates the entire Israeli population behind the Zionist leadership. Israel will be changed from the inside by its own anti-Zionist internationalists who will, in due time, join ranks with the internationalists in the Arab world in a joint struggle against imperialism and for establishing a genuine Socialist republic throughout the Middle-East.

Faced with the state of affairs created by the Israeli attack we say:

We oppose all territorial annexations brought about by this war, but we find it necessary to point out that the root of the trouble in the Middle-East is not a territorial issue; the roots of the problem lie in the existence of a segregationist and pro-imperialist power structure in Israel which dispossessed an entire people of their human and political rights; and in the inability of Arab nationalist policies to deal with it.

A dictated Israeli peace, a "Pax Americana" between Israel and Hussein, whether public or secret, and similar Western arrangements, will not solve the conflict between Israel and the Arab states; they will only defer it.

The creation of a Zionist Bantustan for the Palestinian Arabs while maintaining the segregationist policies towards them will not solve the "Palestine problem" any more than a South African Bantustan can solve the problems resulting from the existence of a racist state in South Africa.

The only viable solution is:

1. To abolish completely all segregationist measures of the Zionists against the Palestinians (this includes the implementation of their right to repatriation) and turning Israel into a normal state of its own population.
2. Active participation of the non-Zionist Israel in the anti-imperialist struggle of the Arab people.
3. Enabling the Palestinians to decide themselves about their political fate.

Knowing that the present rulers, on both sides, have no intention of implementing these solutions, we have little doubt that the conflict will continue as long as these regimes remain in power. To all those indulging in self-illusions we say: There is no salvation to the political problems of people through policies which, tacitly or overtly, implement measures of economic, social, racial or national supremacy of one group of people over another.

22nd March, 1968

DECLARATION BY THE ISRAELI SOCIALIST ORGANIZATION (MATZPEN)

The 1967 June War exposed and succinctly expressed fundamental contradictions and processes in the countries of the Middle East.

In Israel, the Zionist character of this state and of its leadership was made more prominent; the propensity for annexation and expansion, half-dormant since the Suez War, has now re-awakened. The bonds between Israel's Zionist regime and imperialism have also been manifested and strengthened sevenfold.

In the Arab countries, especially in Egypt, it has become more manifest that the national anti-imperialist revolution in these countries did not go further than half-way.

On the eve of the June War, Israel's rulers still disclaimed any desire for territorial expansion. But on the morrow all these declarations were forgotten. Appetite was whetted by eating. The truth is that the propensity for annexation and expansion had always been inherent in all the trends of political Zionism — not only in the Heruth party, which openly declared it, but also in the more moderate trends that did not openly admit it, for political and propagandistic reasons, when times did not seem opportune.

After the June war, Israel controls the whole of the Palestine Mandate territory as well as vast tracts of Egyptian territory and a region in the south of Syria.

In the beginning, the leaders of Israel claimed that in this situation, where "Israel holds all the cards," they would be able to force a settlement to their liking upon the Arabs, who would have to accept Israel's terms. But these hopes proved to be false. Victory in the war, far from solving the Israeli Arab problem, has actually intensified it.

The historical conflict between Zionism and Israel in its present form, on the one hand, and the Arab world on the other, springs from the fact that that the "Zionist Endeavour" was from its very beginning a planned and deliberate process of colonization by outsiders who settled in this country, displacing its indigenous people; in this, Zionism was backed by imperialism and sided with imperialism against revolutionary developments in the Arab world. One of the main reasons for the Arabs' refusal to accept the existence of Israel was that it appeared to them not only as the product of the Zionist colonization process but also as an instrument for furthering and expanding that process against them and at their expense.

By its conduct since the war, Israel confirms the Arabs' worst fears, thereby vastly deepening the historical conflict.

The short sighted attempt of Zionism to exploit this "opportune moment" for territorial gains and for forcing its own terms upon the Arabs, will no doubt boomerang back in the long run on Israel itself.

The belief that Israel's control over vast territories would improve her current security has also proven mistaken.

Victory in the war has not put an end to guerrilla and sabotage actions. On the contrary, in this new situation they have assumed larger dimensions. But whereas world public opinion before the war largely took exception to such actions, they are now increasingly regarded as natural and legitimate means of resistance of a conquered and subjugated people.

The Palestinian Arab people, the chief and direct victims of Zionist colonization, a people whose greater part was reduced during and after 1948 to the state of pauperized refugees, and another part of which has lived for 20 years in Israel under severe conditions of discrimination and persecution—that people has now entirely become a conquered people. It has been robbed not only of the most elementary political rights, but also of the very prospect

Israel (accompanied by pressure to emigrate from the annexed territory and even by measures intended to reduce Arab birth rate, "to deal wisely with them lest they multiply" — as Pharaoh had once put it . . .) to the setting up of a Bantustan, a political "Strategic Hamlet" in the form of a Protectorate camouflaged as a "federation" between Israeli overlord and Arab subject.

It is both the right and duty of every conquered and subjugated people to resist and to struggle for its freedom. The ways, means and methods necessary and appropriate for such struggle must be determined by that people itself and it would be hypocritical for strangers — especially if they belong to the oppressing nation — to preach to it, saying "Thus shalt thou do, and thus shalt thou not do."

While recognizing the unconditional right of the conquered to resist against occupation, we can support only such organizations, which in addition to resisting against occupation also recognize the right of the Israeli people for self determination. On such a basis the struggle of the Palestinian people can become combined in a joint struggle of Arabs and Jews in the region for a common future.

One thing is obvious — tightening the yoke of repression, mass collective punishments, blowing up houses, large scale massacre assaults (like that against Kerameh on 21st March) — all these are quite incapable of putting an end to resistance.

To those who express their abhorrence and indignation in view of the innocent Israeli victims of sabotage actions we say: your abhorrence and indignation are perfectly justified. This situation of horrible tragedy must be terminated at once; and the way to terminate it is immediate withdrawal from all the occupied territories. Only from that point will it be possible to advance towards a complete solution of the Israeli Arab dispute and the Palestinian problem.

The collapse of the Egyptian army in the June war exhibited before the world's eyes the grave social contradictions rending Egyptian society. These contradictions were only mirrored, and enlarged, in the army.

The "Free Officers" coup, lead by Gamal Abd-el Nasser established in Egypt a petit bourgeois regime. It was "half way revolution." By its very nature, this regime ever trying to balance between anti imperialism and its tendency to compromise with imperialism; between left and right; between the pressure of the masses and the interests of the over privileged bourgeoisie, bureaucracy and official caste.

That regime has carried through a series of important reforms, some of them quite far reaching, it also severed Egypt's exceeding dependence upon imperialism. But has not fulfilled the hopes of the masses or realized their interests; it did not go over to a socialist revolution turn the toilers from subjects to masters of the state. The exploiting classes of the ancient regime were battered, shattered. They have largely continued to exist side by side with a new bureaucratic-military stratum which is related to them by origin and outlook.

Following the war, the contradictions within the Egyptian regime became more acute. The President was forced to oust from positions of power and from military command some of the right wing elements whose shame had been exposed. He thereby weakened his own right and balancing between left and right became more difficult than ever.

At the same time, the pressure of the masses upon the regime has become stronger. At the end of February workers of Egypt went out into the streets and, for the first time since many years, spontaneously raised demands. In his speech on 3rd March, the Egyptian President had to retreat under the pressure of the masses. Two weeks later a new cabinet was formed with a most wily leaning.

In other Arab countries too, severe internal struggles are being waged.

This ferment, catalyzed by the outcome of the war, is creating a new situation in the problem of socialist trans-

We hold that the solution of the main problems of the Middle East, including the Israeli Arab problem requires a radical transformation of the regimes throughout the region; a socialist revolution which will bring the working class to power, liberate the immense energies latent in the masses and channel them to actuate social and economic progress. Such a transformation is needed not only in countries now under feudal monarchy, but also in the relatively progressive Arab countries which are now under a petit bourgeois, self styled "socialist" regime. Incidentally, socialist transformations in the Arab countries will no doubt affect the form of struggle of the Palestinian Arab people and lend it a clear left wing colour.

As for Israel, here a socialist revolution is needed, radically to change the character of this state, transforming it from a Zionist state, an instrument for furthering Zionist

colonization, a natural ally of imperialism — into a socialist state representing the true interests of the Israeli masses, a state oriented towards the surrounding region and both willing and capable to integrate itself in it.

We hold that the revolutionary socialist solution to the Israeli Arab conflict remains valid — is, in fact, more valid than ever — in the new situation created after the war. De-Zionization of Israel and its integration in a socialist union with the Arab countries — this is the road for solution.

In place of chauvinism and nationalist hatred which drag the Middle East into endless and futile wars, we offer to both sides, Arabs and Jews, the socialist prospect of economic prosperity, social progress and brotherhood between nations.

The following resolution was adopted at a meeting which took place in Tel-Aviv on May 12th, 1968, between representatives of the Israeli Socialist Organization (MATZPEN), a group of Israeli students and a youth group from Tel-Aviv.

The secretariat of the Tricontinental Congress has declared the 15th of May an International day of Solidarity with the Palestinian Arab people.

We, Jewish and Arab people of the Israeli Left, join this solidarity. We give expression to the forces inside Israel which radically oppose the Israeli government, and in particular its chauvinist Zionist policy against the Arabs and its alignment with American imperialism.

The Palestinian Arab people was from the beginning of Zionist colonization (carried out under the guardianship of imperialism) the main victim of that process.

During the 1948 war, and as a result of collusion between Ben Gurion and Abdallah, the territory allotted for an Arab Palestinian State by the 27/11/47 UN resolution was divided between Israel and Jordan. During that war and in the period which immediately followed it, the majority of the Palestinian Arabs became dispossessed refugees; another part of that people has since lived as an oppressed minority inside Israel.

During all these years the Israeli government refused to recognise the rights of the Palestinian Arab people and in particular the right of the refugees to be repatriated.

As a consequence of the 1967 June war the whole of that people has become a conquered people. The occupation denies them the most elementary political rights. Moreover, they are even denied all future prospects: the plans of the Israeli ruling circles vary between open and complete annexation and the establishment of an Arab ghetto state, a Bantustan, in part of the occupied territory with the rest annexed to Israel.

WE declare that we are opposed to these policies, which are detrimental not only to the Palestinian Arabs, but also, in the long run, to the Israeli people itself. We declare our support of the rights of the Palestinian Arab people, including the right to self-determination and the right to resist occupation by every means that are considered legitimate in any case of occupation.

The struggle against Zionism, and against the Israeli policies of partnership with imperialism, must not be confused with a chauvinist struggle against the Israeli people itself and with an attempt to penalise the Israeli masses for the sins of Zionism, or with a denial of the right of the Israeli nation to self-determination. If the struggle of the Arab people is guarded from such falsification, it can grow into a joint Arab-Jewish struggle against imperialism, for socialism and the interests common to both peoples.

DOWN WITH CHAUVINISM AND WITH OPPRESSION OF ONE PEOPLE BY ANOTHER! LONG LIVE THE BROTHERHOOD BETWEEN PEOPLES!

LONG LIVE SOCIALISM!

DOWN WITH THE OCCUPATION!

Statement of the Israeli Socialist Organisation (MATZPEN)

January 1 1969

The twenty months that have passed since the 1967 June war have repeatedly given the lie to the claim that an Israeli military victory can bring about peace or a normalisation of Israeli-Arab relations.

Since the end of the war – despite Israeli shows of strength like the recent attack on Beirut airport – official claims have been refuted on every level: on the level of international relations, on the military level and on the internal level. At the same time the nationalistic bragging of all spokesmen of the Zionist camp has grown louder and louder. Politicians, army officers, party leaders and journalists are brainwashing the Israeli citizen. They falsify, distort and obscure reality and foster a false feeling of self-importance and power in him. This activity is shared by both so called 'doves' and 'hawks'; it engulfs all Zionist and semi-Zionist parties, from GAHAL and the religious parties, through the Labour party and MAPAM to the Mikunis-Sneh party.

The debate taking place inside the Zionist camp itself may create a misleading impression, because it is sometimes loud and bitter and may appear to indicate the existence of different even conflicting political lines. But a careful and detailed scrutiny of that debate proves that all the participants adhere to the Zionist principle of 'Sacred Rights' according to which 'Jews throughout the world' are the 'rightful owners of the whole of Palestine.'

During the last twenty months various political parties and groups have come into existence. Some of them advocate total annexation of the occupied territories and indulge in overt fascist propaganda (e.g. 'The Movement for the Whole of Eretz-Israel'); some of them advocate the Government's policy, as expressed by the Foreign Minister Mr. Abba Eban (e.g. the movement Security and Peace-yes, Annexation – no) and still others advocate a federation on the basis of Israeli occupation (e.g. 'the Movement for an Israel-Palestine Federation'). It should be mentioned that those left-wing circles, the liberal intellectuals who (before the war) joined in the struggle against Military Rule (of the Arab-inhabited parts of Israel) have since the war been carried away on the wave of chauvinism that has swept the country. Moreover, some prominent persons in those circles are actively defending official policy and have been harnessed by the official propaganda machine, especially abroad.

Against this background the relative importance of the activities of the ISO (MATZPEN) and of the Israeli Communist party (RAKAH) far outweigh their actual public influence. Of all the political parties only these two are conducting each in its own way – a consistent struggle

against the continued occupation of the territories conquered in June '67.

On the international level

After the war the government led the people to believe that American backing of Israel was so certain that all other developments on the international scene were of no importance. According to this view, Israel's military strength in the Middle East and the strength of American Imperialism throughout the world is sufficient to secure the consolidation of the present situation, to perpetuate Israel's military victory and to force the Arabs to sign an Israeli-American inspired peace treaty. The possibility that American Imperialism – the gendarme of the world – might, clash with the interests of official Israel because of its own plans and interests, – that possibility was ignored. The popular formula was 'Let sleeping dogs lie and there will be no American pressure on Israel'.

Meanwhile it has become clear that the Israeli-American entente forged in 1967, classifies Israel as one of those states that are inseparably tied to the fate of American imperialism – in much the same way as is South Vietnam. Israeli policy faces world-wide denunciation, which is becoming increasingly sharp not only from governments but also from world public opinion as a whole, including the youth. The disdain with which Israel's leaders are meeting this criticism sometimes seems to border on megalomania – particularly when one recalls the size and objective data of Israel.

The historic conflict between the Arab world, the Zionist movement, and State of Israel in its present form will not be diminished even if a Soviet-American settlement on the Middle East is reached in the foreseeable future. Such a settlement, which will be described by the Soviets as a further achievement of the policy of peaceful coexistence, will nevertheless be incapable of solving the Israeli-Arab conflict and will not be in the interest of the peoples of the region.

On the military level

Shortly after the end of hostilities in June '67 the Israeli Minister of Defence, Moshe Dayan, announced that he was waiting for a telephone call from the Arabs who would ask for an Israeli-Arab settlement within 48 hours. That call never came through. It is now remembered in Israel only as a grim joke. At the same time Israeli strategists repeatedly stressed that the new borders (in their own terms 'the presence of the Israeli Defence Forces along the new lines, from the shoulder of Mount Hermon, along the Jordan river and on the banks of the Suez canal up to the Straits of Solomon') would provide security.

But security is far, far away. Hundreds of killed and thousands of wounded have since been sacrificed by Israel on the altar of that false security...

In the meantime, the activity of the Palestine armed organisations has increased. The official forecasts repeatedly pronounced at the beginning of last year, claiming that demoralization, desertion and inferior human material would soon finish off those organisations, have been proved false. Anyone who has studied the experience of other countries and other peoples cannot be surprised. Only a fool could believe that those organisations would remain static and would not recruit new members, increase their influence and improve their combat power.

Another official theory that has been disproved is that the Israeli occupation is super-liberal and that the Palestine masses are resigned to it. (By the way, with what other occupation do those who claim the Israeli one to be liberal compare it?) It is enough to recall the strikes and demonstrations in all the towns of the occupied territories...

Under these conditions of armed resistance, of strikes and demonstrations, Israeli acts of repression have become daily occurrences. Administrative detentions, collective punishments such as curfews, mass searches and restriction of the freedom of movement – all these have become commonplace under the occupation regime whose 'liberalism' is symbolised by the atrocious system of punitive demolition of houses. Another method that is continually used is the deportation of political leaders, public figures and ordinary men and women against whom no charge can be made except that they have taken part in political activity. It must be noted that deportations to Jordan are consistently used against those elements that in the past were victims of the Jordanian secret police – including socialists and communists of various trends. The underground leaflets published in the occupied territories are full of detailed descriptions (including names, addresses and dates) of cases of victimization and torture which are not disclosed to the Israeli public or even hinted at in the Israeli press.

On the internal level

The Zionist character of the state of Israel has become manifest. Zionism, which had been described as 'dead' before the war, even by some ardent Zionists, has now been revived. Zionist ideology can no longer be described simply as an irrelevant anachronism. It furnishes a basis for discussion about the annexation of the occupied territories, of their colonization by Jews; of the 'threat which the existence of an Arab population poses to the Jewish character of Israel' ('the demographic problem') etc.

Against this background, a fascist-chauvinist mood is growing in Israel, following classic patterns which are not necessarily characteristic of any particular nation. Expressions like 'the supremacy of the nation,' 'the sanctity of our historic values,' 'the cradle of our ancient culture,' 'the eternity of war and the sanctity of blood' etc. have gained wide currency. They are emphasized in print and in speeches, on radio and television, in the press and in schools, in the army and in youth movements. There is also a growing clamour for 'strong leadership' and a 'strong leader' as well as for preserving 'national unity.'

At the same time there is an increase in administrative and police repression against Israel's Arab citizens. Hundreds and thousands of Israeli Arabs are subject to restriction of their freedom of movement, house arrest, detention without trial, searches and harassment and are denied the legal right to organise themselves. Since the war, anti-Arab incitement has reached peaks hitherto unknown in Israel: and in Jerusalem, Jaffa and Tel Aviv there were even mass anti-Arab outbreaks.

In Israel, as well as in the occupied territories, British colonial laws are widely applied. These are the notorious 'Emergency Defence Regulations, 1945', which, when

promulgated by the British Mandate authorities, were strongly denounced by the leaders of the Jewish community (in particular the present Minister of Justice), who compared them to Nazi laws.

We hold that the solution of the main problems of the Middle East including the Israeli-Arab problem, requires a fundamental transformation of the regimes in all the countries of the region - i.e., a socialist revolution. As for Israel, the socialist revolution will transform it completely from a Zionist state, a tool for furthering Zionist colonization, a natural ally of imperialism - into a state expressing the real interests of both Jewish and Arab masses, a state which can and will be integrated in a socialist union of the Middle East.

But in the present circumstances it is impossible even to imagine working for that goal without a consistent struggle against a continued Israeli occupation of the Arab territories. Only through this struggle can the Jewish and Arab masses be mobilized for socialism.

We appeal to the masses of Israeli workers to combat the growing phenomena of chauvinism and to struggle against the fascist

tendencies which are spreading in the Jewish public.

Let the trade union struggle be conducted with Jewish and Arab solidarity!

Let the workers struggle together for equal pay for Arab workers!

Workers, beware of racialist provocations in factories and in the streets!

The Jewish workers must defend their Arab brethren in times of riots and pogroms.

This is in the interest of the Israeli workers, who are made to pay the price of continued occupation and war.

We appeal to students and youth to reject completely the propaganda for annexation of the territories, and to organize protests in universities and schools against the growing fascist propaganda, against the liquidation of democratic rights under cover of "security requirements", against the persecution of the Arab population in Israel and against anti-Arab incitement.

This is in the interest of Israeli youth, who also are made to pay the price of continued occupation and war.

Demonstrations, meetings, pickets, petitions, letters to the press - all these means should be used to struggle for withdrawal from the occupied territories.

The Israeli Socialist Organisation (MATZPEN)
Tel Aviv P.O. Box 28061

THE PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE AND REVOLUTION IN THE MIDDLE-EAST

The middle-East is coming close to the point where different ways depart. The Four Great are now holding deliberations, and they intend to achieve some sort of an agreement, concerning a "solution", that they shall want and impose upon the residents of the area; by means of this "solution" they hope to restore the stability shaken by the June 1967 war and its consequences. This conjuncture is heavy with grave dangers for the future of Revolution in the middle-East; the purpose of this article is to analyze these dangers.

The Palestinians are the significant new factor which has appeared on the political scene of the area. Even though independent Palestinian activity started a few years before the June war, only as a consequence of the war was this activity really really pushed to the forefront. The positive foundation in this phenomenon is that through their very appearance, the Palestinians have displaced the struggle, and takes it from the hands of the governments into the hands of the masses. For nearly twenty years the Palestinians were the object of History, a passive element who waited for salvation to come from the Arab states in general, or from the Arab states with the "progressive regimes" - in particular from Egypt, under Abd-el-Nasser's leadership.

The 1948 war revealed the bankruptcy of the old leadership of the Arab national movement - the leadership of the bourgeois and landlord classes. It is as a result of their spectacular collapse that a new leadership rose, a petty-bourgeois leadership from the standpoint of view of its class-character, which succeeded in effec-

tating the old regime in a few Arab countries and scored successful achievements in the anti-imperialist struggle.

The June 1967 war exposed the limitations of this leadership, inherent in its class-character and its nationalist ideology. Exposed, amongst other things, was this leadership's total incapacity to solve the Palestinian problem. In spite of Soviet support, Nasserists and Baathists face today overt political bankruptcy.

On this background it is easy to understand the development of the Palestinian popular struggle. As said earlier, the very appearance of this element is positive; but one can also discern in it a negative and dangerous trend. In certain fractions of the Palestinian movement the opinion developed that the Palestinian masses must and can solve their problem with their sole forces, independently from the all-Arab revolutionary struggle. Those who hold this conception present the problem as a purely Palestinian question, that can only be solved within a Palestinian framework. The rod hasn't been straightened, but bent the opposite way; instead of passivity and expecting redemption from others, a narrow regionalistic attitude has now come. The only help demanded from the Arab world as a whole is help to the Palestinian front itself. Such an attitude ignores the link between the Palestinian struggle and Revolutionary struggle in the Arab world as a whole, and that is why it values the formula of "non-intervention in the interior affairs of the Arab states".

encourage this attitude. The very mobilization of the masses in Arab countries, even if only around the Palestinian issue, endangers the present regimes. Thus they are interested in isolating The Palestinian struggle and leave it to the Palestinians alone. The Arab governments - the "progressive" ones and the reactionary ones - are trying to re-inject some stability into their regimes by paying the ransom of financial "help" to the Palestinian organizations. Moreover, through this assistance, the Arab governments aspire at directing the Palestinian struggle into the political paths comfortable to them, and they hope to use it, both as a card and as a means of control, so as to bring about a political solution that will serve their own interests. The governments of Egypt, Syria and Jordan in particular, want to recover the territories they lost during the June war (and thus recover their prestige and reinforce their authority inside). The Palestinian question for them is only secondary, it is a means, not an end. This is what the Arab governments mean when they talk of "cancelling the consequences of Aggression".

It is obvious that if the Arab governments get what they want (for instance, by way of the four Great Powers) they will be ready to abandon the Palestinians, and even to take an active part in the actual process of political and physical destruction of the Palestinian movement. There are enough reasons to believe that the Great Powers will make just that a condition to any political solution.

In the very same way that the results of the 1948 war created a favourable context for the fall of the old national leadership of the Arab world, and for the rise of a new leadership (that of the petty-bourgeoisie), the results of the 1967 war have created the objective conditions for replacing the old leadership with a new one, of a different class-character. Since the possessing classes have shown their incapacity to solve the political, social and national problems of the Arab world, it has become clear in the facts that only the exploited masses themselves, under the leadership of the working class, can solve these historic problems. However, there is a gap between the existence of favourable objective conditions and the development of a new leadership: for this there also needs to exist a subjective element, namely, a political organization armed with revolutionary theory, and guided by an All-Arab revolutionary strategy.

Yet, within the Palestinian movement itself there are important elements who overtly deny the need for political work and for an all-Arab revolutionary strategy. They limit themselves, consciously and deliberately, to the Palestinian scene, and devote their energy solely to a politically undefined armed struggle; even though both theoretical and balance of power considerations point to the impossibility of solving the Palestinian problem within a separate Palestinian framework.

What is the power equation? The Palestinian people is involved in a battle where in front of him stands Zionism, supported by Imperialism, and behind him stands Arab reaction and the reactionary Arab regimes, also supported by Imperialism. We have all reason to believe that as long as Imperialism has vested interests in the middle-East, it will go on supporting Zionism (its natural-born ally) and will not let it fall. It will protect Zionism to the last drop of Arab oil. On the other hand, one can't eliminate the influence and the interests of Imperialism without overthrowing the power of those classes in Arab society that are the associates and the agents of imperialist exploitation.

The conclusion is indeed NOT that the Palestinian people must wait in silence until the whole area liberates itself from Imperialist influence, but, to the contrary, that their struggle must serve as a mobilizing factor in the struggle for national and social liberation in the whole of the middle-East. And if one can't vanquish Zionism without eliminating imperialist power from the whole area, then the formulas offering a solution to the problem within the framework of the Palestinian territory are absurd from the theoretical standpoint of view. For if one talks of a situation wherein Imperialism has not been vanquished in the whole area, then even the de-zionisation of Israel and the building of a non-zionist Palestine are beyond the pale of possibilities. And if one talks of the situation as it shall be after the defeat of Imperialism, then what logic is there in raising a formula relating to Palestine only, not reckoning with the changes that will necessarily take place in the whole area?

In fact, the formula limiting itself to the sole "Palestinian" question, in spite of all its revolutionary outlook, is not based on a revolutionary, but on a reformist attitude, looking for partial solutions within the framework of the conditions existing at present in the area. When it comes down to deeds, a partial solution can only come about as a result of a compromise with Imperialism and Zionism.

Moreover, the limited Palestinian solutions can't even face the existence of the national problem. The formulas speaking of an "Independent and Democratic Palestine, where all citizens, regardless of religion, shall enjoy equal rights" fail to satisfy in two regards. For one, such formulas tend to create artificially a new "Palestinian" nation, wherein differences are not national, but religious. On the other hand, they ignore the national character of the Jewish settlement and give it the status of a religious community only. The authors of these formulas feel by themselves how absurd it is to separate the Palestinians from the rest of the Arab nation as a whole, and immediately add that " Palestine is a part of the Arab motherland." One starts getting the impression that this is nothing but the old slogan of "Arab Palestine" in a new, more obscure clothing.

This attitude bears witness to a grave misunderstanding of the national question in general, and of Israeli reality in particular. It is true that the Jews who live in Israel gathered there, in the great majority, under the influence and leadership of Zionism. It is true that they - as a social group - oppressed and continue to oppress the Palestinians. But one can't help facing the obvious fact that this social group constitutes a national entity (distinct both from the World Jewish people and from Palestine's Arabs) with a language of its own, and with its own economic and cultural life.

A solution of the Palestinian problem requires the liberation of that public (or at least an important part of it) from the influence of Zionism, and its attraction to a common struggle with the revolutionary forces of the Arab world, for the social and national liberation of the whole area. And it is clear that one can't achieve this aim by ignoring its national character.

This problem can't be solved within the only framework of Palestine. If one talks of a simple "Democratic" state - "One man, one vote" - it is clear that it will have a Jewish majority, and nothing will prevent it from being just identical to the present Israel, only with slightly wider borders, and a bigger Arab minority. If one speaks of a bi-national state, one refers to an artificial creation whereby Palestinians dissociate themselves from the Arab world and from the revolutionary processes in it. Aside from that, a bi-national structure in itself offers no guarantee that one people won't dominate the other. This is what can be said about the solutions which can be envisaged in the conditions existing at present in the area, without an overall social revolution.

To the contrary, if one speaks of a situation such as will exist after a victorious social revolution, after the defeat of Zionism and after the defeat of Imperialism, then there shall be no separate Palestinian question, but only a question of the various nationalities that live within the Arab world (Kurds, Israeli Jews, Southern Sudanese). The only way to solve this question is to give these nationalities the right to self-determination. Obviously, to recognize the right of self-determination is not to encourage separatism. On the opposite, such a recognition creates the proper basis for integration without coercion and without oppression. Moreover, there can be no real self-determination in the area as long as it is ruled, directly or indirectly by Imperialism, but only after the liberation of the whole area from Imperialism, which is to say only after a victorious socialist revolution. Such a situation necessarily implies the defeat of Zionism.

In conclusion: the objective conditions which exist now allow and demand the formation of a Revolutionary socialist mass movement, led by the working class, guided by a revolutionary Marxist Party that shall work in function of an all-Arab strategy, and that shall recognize the national rights of the nationalities living inside the Arab world, and be capable of calling their masses to a common struggle for the national and social liberation of the whole area.