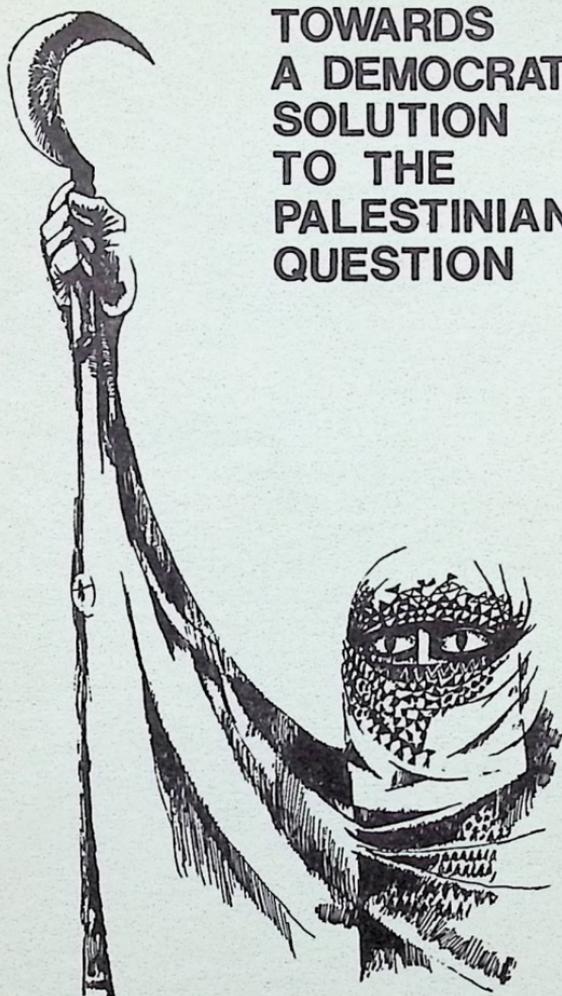


DEMOCRATIC POPULAR FRONT FOR THE
LIBERATION OF PALESTINE
(DPFLP) 30¢

TOWARDS
A DEMOCRATIC
SOLUTION
TO THE
PALESTINIAN
QUESTION





PLEASE NOTE!

Corrections;

page 12, line 2

**...between the western Jews (Ashkanazeem) and
the eastern oriental Jews (Safardeem)...**

page 14, line 12

**Israel is an oppressor in the same manner with which
Lenin described the Russian nation as being an oppressor nation**

DEMOCRATIC POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION OF PALESTINE

"Towards a Democratic Solution of the Palestinian Question"

May 1970

The Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DPFLP) laid before the Sixth National Palestinian Congress meeting at Cairo in September of 1969 a proposal for a democratic solution to the Palestinian question. The proposal, as was expected, aroused different reactions (critical, reserved and supporting). It was met with a campaign of distortion and misunderstanding, to such an extent, that it became imperative for the Front to clarify its attitude on this important matter by giving an explanatory analysis of this attitude.

THE SPECIFIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ZIONISM AND IMPERIALISM

Zionism came about chiefly as a result of the reaction on the part of the petit and middle Jewish bourgeoisie, who make up the hardcore of Jewry, toward two issues:

(a) The worsening of the conditions of the Jews, who in Eastern Europe, represented primitive capitalism. This condition was aggravated by the disequilibrium between capitalistic development and the fall of feudalism (with its associated primitive capitalism), thus making it extremely hard for the Jews to become integrated into the new economic order for new production relations were slowly developing in place of the old relationship.

(b) The widening wave of anti-semitism in Western Europe, caused by the consolidation of capital (the rise of monopoly capitalism) which destroyed the middle classes. These classes reacted against the Jewish elements in these classes on the grounds that the Jewish elements competed with them for their livelihoods and were detrimental to their economic situation.

Zionism, however, as an ideology, is but a distorted reflection of reality and a false presentation of a material need. As a distorted reflection of reality, Zionism dispenses with the pain of searching for the motives and reasons lying behind the different forms of anti-semitism and the social function it performs, as well as, the nature of the socio-economic system which created it. Zionism claims that human nature does not change and that anti-semitism and the persecution of minorities are two of the characteristics at the core of human nature. Consequently, it is perpetual and impossible to control or eliminate. From postulating the perpetuity of anti-semitism, Zionism moves on to resolve the problem by skipping over it, that is, by saying that salvation lies in accepting anti-semitism as a normal state of being and emigrating to Palestine, in order that the minority there is transformed into a majority under its own autonomous rule in a national state. Similarly, Zionism, as a false presentation of an objective materialistic need is but an expression of the reaction of the community in the face of economic pressures. These pressures threaten to create internal discrimination in the community, that is, to transform it into classes and consequently put an end to its social role as a unified class, and then an end to

its role as a community (with characteristics stemming definitively out of its social role). That is to say, Zionism is a reflection of the refusal of the petit and middle Jewish bourgeoisie to fall to the rank of the proletariat, and their need for an independent national market in a national Jewish state. Like every national ideology, Zionism attempts to relatively obscure the traces of its recent emergence by creating for itself a legendary origin going back to the vastly remote past (the legend of the adherence of the Jews throughout history their motherland – Palestine) and poses its nationalist claims and ambitions as being a revival of an old ownership (the historical right of Jews to Palestine).

It is natural that the solution for the Jewish question which Zionism puts forth, the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, is a "petit bourgeois utopia." The Jewish question which takes the form of an international question, because of the existence of Jews in many countries, cannot be solved on this level within the capitalist framework, since the elimination of anti-semitism cannot be achieved except by eliminating its causes, that is by eliminating the economic system which created it. In fact the establishment of Israel has not solved the Jewish problem for anti-semitism is not at an end, though it may have been relegated astern by the appearance of other forms of racial and communal persecution in the West (racism towards the blacks, racism towards foreign workers, particularly Arabs of Northwest Africa and the persecution of gypsies). Moreover, anti-semitism is not combated by the existence of a Jewish state, just as the existence of the great Chinese state does not protect Chinese nationals in other countries from racial persecution. Actually, the Zionist claim of representing the Jews of the world, as well as, its propagation of the slogan of unconditional collaboration of world Jewry with Israel actually encourages anti-semitism. In the end, the situation of the Jews is subject to the universal economic, social and political situations of the world. We could contend that Israel could absorb all the emigrants from the West in case the wave of anti-semitism there should grow, but then those immigrants would find themselves confronted with Arab hostility.

However, it is the imaginary solution which Zionism offers for the Jewish question which gives definition to the particular nature of Zionist colonization in Palestine and makes this colonization different from the typical colonialism. Typical colonialism resorts intentionally to destroying the primitive economy of the colonized country so that it may exploit the natives in capitalist industry, mining and agriculture, but Zionist colonialism is of a particular nature dictated by its specific objective (the establishment of a Jewish state). Zionist colonialism with its aims as the appropriation, usurpation and occupation of land and the disappropriation of its native inhabitants (or at best reducing them to a minority in a state of singular race) even differs from the colonialism nearest to it, that is the white colonialism of South Africa. This latter state survives on the establishment of a closed white society isolated from the black society (segregation of residential areas, schools, transport facilities, and all means of life for the whites). This segregation, however, does not prevent the whites from exploiting the native inhabitants and merging them in production relations, in

which they are an exploited and persecuted class. The Zionist colonialism establishes a closed Jewish society and while it does not exploit the natives, it totally expels them. Zionist colonialism had no alternative, even before the establishment of Israel, but to be hostile to *all* the Palestinian people for they constituted a direct negation to its national existence and a glaring transgression and denial of its national rights. This hostility was necessitated by the Zionist strategy which aimed from the start at imposing a status quo, by establishing fortified agricultural settlements which represented a military and economic status quo. Thus setting up and imposing an isolated Jewish community in Palestine from the beginning of colonization until the independence of this community, after the expulsion of the Palestinian inhabitants in 1948. The Zionists continued this policy of enforcing the status quo by occupying the South Negeb triangle during the truce talks in 1948, occupying Beer Qattar in the Auja triangle in 1950, occupying the central demilitarized zone on the Syrian border in 1951, usurping shipping rights in the Gulf of Aqaba at the close of 1956, and occupying Arab lands in 1967. This policy of imposing the status quo has an obvious expansionist character, its purpose being not just an attempt to establish Israel's security by means of military expansion (taking over new lands to protect old ones), for it fundamentally relates to the basis on which the Israeli society arose. The basis being the rallying of the scattered Jewish communities throughout the world to Israel and because of this goal expansion becomes inevitable if Israel is to attract and rehabilitate stray Jews. This expansion not only means the acquisition of more land, but the securing of its protection as well. A policy which will in turn impel further expansion and so forth. This expansionist nature of Israel has given rise to a sharp conflict between it and the Arab peoples, as a whole, who reject a society that is foreign to them, planted on their land to become a constant threat posed at them as well as a force standing against their hopes of national liberation, unity and social progress.

Further, the solution which Zionism has given to the Jewish question has dictated the particular relationship between Zionism and imperialism. When the productive forces began to feel too constricted within the national boundaries, Zionism attempted to create an artificial and insular national state at the time so Zionism had to ally with imperialism for its projected artificial national state could only stand as a colonial entity tied to the imperialism that controlled the area. One aspect of the history of Zionism is nothing but a history of an alliance with one imperial power or another (approaching the Kaiser of Germany and the Ottoman Sultan in its beginning and allying with Britain after 1917 and with America after 1945). This alliance with imperialism is not a matter forced by Arab animosity, as some Zionist leftists contend, but rather a necessary choice dictated by the objective which Zionism set up for itself. This point will become clear with a quick review of the initial diaries of Theodore Herzl, founder of political Zionism.

Today Israel is attached to imperialism, chiefly United States imperialism, with more than one tie. Israel by its existence and constitution as a hostile antagonist to the Arab people as a whole, renders a great service to imperialism

by compelling the Arab people to wage a war of an ultra-nationalistic nature. This helps to keep the imperialist interests in a shadow, remote from the reach of the Arab struggle which is occupied with the nationalist war. This also permits reactionary systems, allies of imperialism, to strengthen their existence under the guise of contributing to the nationalist fight and continue to survive for a longer period than they could have otherwise. Israel also plays the part of the policeman who directly protects the interests of imperialism in the area, standing ready to move on the Arab national liberation movement whenever this movement poses a serious threat to imperialist interests, even going as far as to the point of sweeping off state bourgeois regimes, such as the Nasserite regime, which are hostile to imperialism but because of their class structure are incapable of assuming an effective role against it. Israel additionally assumes the role of an outright protector of some Arab reactionary regimes, such as those of Jordan and Lebanon, for Israel has more than once declared its readiness to move militarily if either of them were toppled. The Israeli role is not restricted to the service of imperialism in the Arab area, but crosses beyond to Africa where the network of Israeli technical missions extends into many countries forming an excellent outlet for the penetration of imperialist capital into those countries. In return for all these services, imperialism guarantees the existence of Israel by continually injecting it with financial and military assistance on the one hand and by conserving the weak and backward traditional regimes in the Arab area, on the other.

This specific relationship between Israel and imperialism makes the Palestinian question one that enters within the core of the struggle against imperialism in the area and this specific relationship makes Israel especially hostile to the class forces and progressives which wage this anti-imperialist struggle.

We infer, from all this, that Israel in itself is a colonial power of a special kind, but it is at the same time a part of the imperialist camp linked for the time being with the United States (the power in control of the imperialist camp). However, the special nature of Israeli colonialism gives Israel a relative independence which is apparent in special policies dictated by the special interests of Israel which at times are inconsistent with the general interest of the imperialist camp. But this independence is relative, because recognition of Israel's relative independence does not breach the unity of the imperialist camp and at the same time the unity does not cover this recognition.

THE ORGANIC LINKS BETWEEN THE PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE AND THE ARAB REVOLUTION

If strategy were, as it actually is, priorities and delimiting of roles and the relations exchanged between these roles, then the petit-bourgeois nationalist intellectual outlook (as well as the petit-bourgeois Palestinian intellectual outlook) on the relationship of the Palestinian struggle to the Arab Revolution would lead to the absence of any clear strategy because of their conceptual triviality.

The petit-bourgeois nationalist intellect tends to oppose any attempt to delineate the role of the Palestinian struggle within the Arab revolution, by obscuring it with cloudy terms of "pan nationalism." This attitude is nothing but an attempt to escape a delineation which will doubtlessly lay bare the incompetence of the petit-bourgeois nationalist program, a program which postpones the "struggle against Zionism until the Arab nation is liberated from colonialism" thus overlooking the active part that Israel plays in supporting the imperialist presence in the Arab area. The result of this program was that the Arab liberation movement, hostile to imperialism, under the leadership of the petit-bourgeois reached a limit. A limit, which because of its class structure, it was unable to transcend thus leaving the Zionist danger to grow. This program also hides in its folds an attempt to bring the Palestinian struggle under the current program of the petit-bourgeois nationalists who seek, on the one hand, to contain the Israeli danger, not remove it and who seek, on the other hand, to suppress the fury of revolutionary change which the area is witnessing; a change which threatens the petit-bourgeois outposts in another respect. Furthermore, this opposition tries, in the name of "pan nationalism," to cover the inability of the nationalist bourgeois movement to go beyond the laws of the Arab relations game as it is imposed by the reactionary regimes. Thus we have the submission of this movement, because of its incompetence, to silence in the face of the reactionary regimes' attempts to besiege the Palestinian Resistance and abort it and if not submitting to silence they try to assume the role of intermediary between the reactionaries and the Resistance.

The petit-bourgeois Palestinian intellect's reply to the inability of the petit-bourgeois nationalist program goes to the extent of arbitrary discrimination between the Palestinian struggle and the Arab revolution. Thus they depict the struggle against Zionism as becoming the jurisdiction of the Palestinian revolution with the role of the Arab masses limited to backing and supporting the Palestinian revolution, and forming the so-called "Arab Supporting Front." This position ignores the fact that the Palestinian people, in the final analysis, are unable to destroy the Zionist structure by themselves, if the role of the Arab masses is restricted to static support. This position also overlooks the fact that the struggle against Zionism has become an urgent duty lying on the agenda of the Arab national liberation movement, as a whole, since the June war of 1967 committed the entire area into the struggle. In the end, this position also overlooks the organic connections which link Zionism to imperialism. This all amounts to the absence of a clear-cut strategic perspective leading to an opportunist policy of working with Arab reaction, the ally of imperialism, at the expense of the anti-imperialist struggle and consequently, at the expense of the struggle against Zionism itself.

The Arab revolution is a composition of two connected and contemporary struggles, the struggle against Zionism and the struggle against imperialism. The two struggles are interconnected because of the interrelationship of Zionism and imperialism. They are also inevitably contemporary and overlapping, because the final victory over Zionism depends on the emergence of Arab revolutionary regimes capable of mobilizing the Arab resources and energies into a popular war of liberation, a war which will confront the enemy's superiority in culture and

technology. This means that the final victory over Zionism is dependent upon the removal of the imperialist control from the Arab area or at least from most of it. On the other hand, as long as Israel plays the part of policemen for imperialism there is no alternative but to step up the struggle against Zionism (to prevent Israel from attacking the Arab national liberation movement when this movement approaches the point of becoming a serious threat to imperialist interests).

However, the struggle against imperialism is basically a class struggle, since imperialism exercises its authority and control over the Arab area primarily through its alliances with the Arab ruling minorities (ruling under reactionary systems) and because of the failure of the state bourgeois systems to launch a determined, methodical and cohesive struggle against imperialism. Here, in the Arab area, the struggle against imperialism shall have to set the classes who have interest in this anti-imperialist struggle against the classes which have interests in allying with imperialism. This must become a struggle to crush the regimes allied with imperialism and to establish popular democratic systems in which the toiling classes may achieve final liberation and social progress.

It is not possible to put off either of the struggles for the sake of the other, since deferring the struggle against imperialism and approving the policy of class alliance will only bring about, under the best circumstances, incompetent regimes, such as the Nasserite, which amounts to confronting Zionism under terms in its interest. Terms which comprise Arab weakness in the shadow of reactionary regimes or state bourgeois systems. On the other side, the putting off of the struggle against Zionism until fulfillment of strength requirements under revolutionary regimes will mean, in the first place, the subjection of the Arab national liberation movement to the danger of continuing Zionist attacks and will, in the second place, lead to depriving the class struggle (opposed to imperialism) of the detonating factor which takes on the form of instigation against social contradictions in the area (struggle against Zionism). As long as this is the state of affairs it is not possible to postpone either of the two struggles, but the struggle against Zionism must be launched in a manner that will fire and support the struggle against imperialism and in the same manner launch the class struggle against imperialism so that it will support and back the struggle against Zionism.

The objective conditions for the bonding of the two struggles are obtained. Israeli reactions to the Palestinian Resistance are directed, which they have to, against the Arab countries exposing the incompetence of these regimes before the Arab masses. This exposure drives ever wider cross sections of the masses into the field of revolutionary struggle, permitting escalation of the struggle against imperialism. On the other hand, the successive clashes between this or that Arab regime and the Palestinian Resistance proves to the Resistance, itself, that it cannot but ally with the Arab revolutionary force hostile to imperialism. However, availability of the objective conditions does not mean that the two struggles shall join forces automatically, for this depends on the obtaining of the objective condition, an Arab revolutionary strategy which will take into consideration the connection between the two struggles and at the same time

recognize their differences. Differences arising from one, the anti-Zionist struggle, being a nationalist struggle and the other, the anti-imperialist struggle, being a class struggle. Thus this front needs a strategy which gives to the first a special logic, the logic of national unity, and gives to the second a different logic, that of class struggle; and also takes into account the overlapping of the struggles so that the maximum possible amount of effectiveness and efficiency may be achieved.

From all of this we can deduct that the victory of the Palestinian cause depends on the creation of a united Arab revolutionary instrument with a coordinated and unified strategy, so that it can wage a full struggle across the theatre of the entire area. But the creation of such an instrument presupposes the availability of class forces capable of entering the anti-imperialist class struggle, whereas the dilemma of the Arab revolution as a whole, including the Palestinian Resistance, lies in the fact that such forces hardly exist. This is so because of the historical failure of petit-bourgeois nationalism to carry out its historical duties at this stage, for the national democratic revolution has not been accompanied by the emergence of a new class in the Arab political arena. This means that the central mission of the new revolutionaries is to build up popular forces from among the workers, peasants, and lower segments of the petit-bourgeoisie, and to wage the struggle under a leadership with a working class ideology, program and slogans. Thereby will the bonds of the great alliance be strengthened and will the building up of the one and only Arab revolutionary instrument be possible.

As the victory of the Palestinian cause depends on the creation of the unified Arab revolutionary instrument, no revolutionary solution to the Palestinian question can be visualized except within the framework of an all-out Arab revolution in the entire area, and any program that may be advanced within the sheer Palestinian scope cannot be but a partial reformist solution. A program based on the desire to bring about a solution to the question without the radical revolutionary transformation of the entire area. On the contrary, the advancement of a program embracing the entire area will take into account the fact that the conditions for the victory of the Palestinian cause are themselves the conditions for the ending of the state of artificial division from which the area suffers. The conditions which are, in both cases, the rise of popular forces under the leadership of the working class and its program, for the conclusion of the experiment depends on one internally unified class, which is the working class, assuming control. As for the petit-bourgeoisie, it is incapable of this, because it is a fragmented class and its components in power are incapable of uniting owing to extreme jealousy over the privileges which its presence in power secures for it, as well as its severe competition within itself for the enjoyment of these privileges. If it ever did achieve unity, then it would achieve a formal disintegrated unity because of its inability to secure a common economic base for this unity.

FUTILE SOLUTIONS

In the handling of a difficult and intricate question such as the Palestinian question, several solutions are advanced, each of which in the final analysis is an expression of a class attitude. Thus Arab reaction has offered a verbal chauvinistic solution based on the principle of "slaying the Jews or throwing them into the sea" or, in the best of circumstances, emigrating them in entirety. In its verbal offer of this solution, reaction attempts to give the Arab people a chauvinistic fanatic education, aiming to conceal the internal class strife. It is indeed a long-lived practice of reaction to employ embezzling threats against the Arab revolutionary forces, accusing them of disintegrating the national and communal unity and consequently, serving the Zionist enemy. This at a time when Arab reaction constitutes the best guarantee for the existence of Israel because it is an ally of imperialism and because it conserved the traditional backward structures of Arab society in the face of Israeli technical and cultural progress. This objective alliance with Zionism is what Arab reaction wishes to hide behind its tons of chauvinistic clamoring words. This chauvinistic solution implies that every Jew is a Zionist which is what Zionism has endeavored and still endeavors to establish, thus Arab reaction will have secured fast the links of its objective alliance with Zionism. However, this solution necessarily implies belittlement of the forces of the Zionist enemy, for which reason it was not possible to continue to offer it after the defeat of June 1967. So, Arab reaction jumped up with chauvinistic logic once again, exaggerating the power of the enemy to the furthest limit, picturing the situation as follows: — There is an international Zionist-Jewish conspiracy to take over control of the destinies of the world, and the establishment and expansion of Israel is but the first step of this conspiracy. This is a conspiracy to which Western capitalism, in its support and backing for the establishment of Israel, has fallen a victim. Armed with this logic, Arab reaction wants in the first place to shed the burden of defeat from itself. "If the enemy had so much power as to be able to manage an international conspiracy to which Western capitalism, with all its power and might, falls a victim, then defeat at the hands of such an enemy becomes an understandable matter thoroughly justified;" secondly, it wants to acquit imperialism of the crime of supporting and protecting Israel as well as to justify the continuance of its alliance with it. So the West is the victim of international Zionist conspiracy, it is innocent but duped. So what could be the solution that brings in its wake such logic? "The struggle against imperialism and Zionism is not the solution, the solution lies in reinforcing Arab alliance with the West, and explaining and convincing the West that it is the victim of the plot, then it will cease to help Israel."

As for the state bourgeois systems, these offer a solution springing from their historical crisis. They look at a mere military defeat and see there being no way of getting rid of its traces except by a military victory, to be won by regular troops. They are not able to wage a programmatic cohesive struggle against imperialism since that would mean sacrificing their newly-acquired privileges, nor are they in a position to ally with imperialism for the latter has more loyal

and faithful allies which are the Arab reactionary systems; thirdly, they are unable to surpass the rules of the Arab political game as postulated by the Arab reactionary system; fourthly because of their contradiction with the popular masses they cancel out the role of these masses, equally in response to the Palestinian question or to the problem of backwardness. As long as the winning of a victory over the Zionist enemy calls for determined struggle against, and the destruction of, the reactionary rule in the Arab political arena and arousing the popular masses by giving them a full role, these systems will not find a solution before them, except to resort to the Security Council Resolution (November 1967). The resolution, acknowledged by them seeks to reverse the situation to what it was before the June War. But this solution is not, in fact, a solution, as Israel, whether in narrower or wider boundaries and even if the refugees were to return, will continue to constitute a trespass to the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, and will continue to be an advance outpost of imperialism and a danger to the Arab national liberation movement.

There is also the solution which the Zionist left and Palestinian reaction on the West Bank adopt, it is based on the establishment of a Palestinian state, in a part of Palestine, to co-exist with Israel and recognize it. This solution aims to melt the Palestinian cause and struggle on the one hand and, on the other, to create a puppet state in the hands of Israel, forming an economic outlet through which Israel may subject the Arab world to its economic power.

Another solution is based on the establishment of a bi-national state in old Palestine (the Matzpen Organization advocated this solution but later abandoned it). This solution is faulty because in one respect it sets up an arbitrary partition between Palestine and the Arab area, that is to say, it purports to solve the question within the existing reality, that is by settlement with Zionism. Also, the bi-national state will not give a guarantee that neither party will persecute the other, and since "the solution" will exist within the bounds of the present reality, the Israeli side will certainly be the party to exercise persecution.

Yet another solution is advocated by Uri Avneri, it is based on a federation of Israel and a Palestinian state. This "solution" is of a reformist petit-bourgeois type, it does not propose to destroy Zionism and Israel but wants only to remove from them some of their "bad points." This "solution" overlooks the essence of the problem, that is the existence of Israel as a state, in any form, constitutes a contradiction of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination.

THE DEMOCRATIC SOLUTION

Against all these futile solutions stands the democratic solution to the Palestinian question. It is not the result of personal wishes nor mental excesses, but the result of study and analysis of the objective situation, the laws which govern the possibilities of development of the situation, the direction of these possibilities, and is the outcome of a strategic vision based on this study and analysis.

This analysis is based on distinguishing between the Jews and Zionism, and considers as a fact, that the conflict is not between the Jews and Arabs, but

between Zionism on the one side and the Arab nation, including the Palestinian people, on the other. Hence it is Zionism and not the Jews that this solution postulates to uproot. So long as Zionism continues to be the cement which draws together the Israeli society, the Israeli community will remain an oppressing community, hence there is no alternative but to destroy Zionism and its colonialism in Palestine. Zionist colonialism is of a particular nature, it is represented by the Jewish control of Palestine as a single race state considering Palestine a land for the world Jewry only. Only by abolishing the "law of return," which contends that any Jew in the world has an inherited right to make Palestine his home, and by destroying the Zionist outlook and its structural characteristics can the Arabs and Jews live in Palestine in the shadow of total equality, removed from any of the shades of national or religious oppression.

Nor is the destruction of the Zionist outlook enough, it is necessary to lay down the basis which will guarantee that there will be no reincarnation of Zionism. This cannot be achieved except if the future Palestine becomes a socialist unified state linked to the whole area. If we assume that Palestine, after the destruction of the Zionist state apparatus, is an independent state then this state will have a Jewish majority and nothing can then prevent this state from becoming a "new Israel" with larger borders and a larger Arab minority, thus exercising harassment of the Arab minority and creating anew all the structural characteristics of present day Israel. But, as long as the destruction of Israel depends on the success of the Arab revolution in removing the imperialist control and removing all artificial partitions it would be fallacious to imagine a future Palestine independent of the area, isolated from the revolutionary operations in it. Furthermore, if the unified state is to be a socialist state it is a guaranteed foundation for the Palestine of the future becoming truly democratic, devoid of any trace of community persecution, since socialism alone has the capability to solve the problem of national persecution, for it abolishes the material grounds for national oppression.

The advocacy of a secular democracy, basically stems from the assumption that the conflict between Arabs and Israel is a religious one, and thus falls into the pitfall of the prevailing reactionary ideology and the acceptance of its faulty basic postulation. In its context it does not solve the problem, since liberal democracy does not in itself form a guaranteed solution of the question of national persecution. In the best of circumstances it may exchange one persecution for another reversing the persecution of the Arabs by Israel to the persecution of the Israelis by the Arabs. The democratic solution cannot be obtained except via the revolutionary struggle, and will not be automatically realized by destroying the Zionist existence. It will depend on a revolutionary action which will bring about a reversal of the balance of power in favor of ending the Israeli superiority. This is a matter which cannot be achieved except by a popular war of long duration in which the struggle against Zionism is joined along with a struggle against imperialism.

The fallacy of the reactionary objections to the democratic solution becomes obvious to us. Arab reaction floods the world shouting that the

democratic solution will lead to a settlement and portraying the situation in a sarcastic manner by saying "what if Israel agree to the democratic solution?" Arab reaction bases its stand on a preposterous hypothesis, for how could Israel agree to the democratic solution when it means its annihilation and destruction? There is no system in history that would relinquish its existence and choose decadence of its own accord.

THE TRANSCENDING OF NATIONAL ALLIANCE AND THE QUESTION OF SELF-DETERMINATION

The Israeli society was built up through a colonial settlement operation in the shadow of Zionist reactionary chauvinistic ideology. The various classes of this society, in their relationship with the settlement operation played roles complimentary to one another, this gave rise to the hostile conflict between the Israeli community as a whole and the Palestinian people as a people. This makes fallacious the formal viewpoint of "superficial Marxism" which advocates in all simplicity the need for allying the Arab proletariat with the Israeli proletariat. This view overlooks the fact that the Arab national liberation movement does not encompass, for the coming phase at least, the Israeli ruling class only, but the entire Zionist society. It overlooks the fact that the Israeli workers and agricultural settlers have constituted, historically, the backbone of the Zionist settlement and specified their roles in relation to the Arab inhabitants as antagonists hostile to them. Does this mean the impossibility of transcending the national alliance in the long run? To answer this question it is necessary to take a look at the Israeli society.

The Israeli society experiences deep conflicts, the contradictions of the capitalist society. The bulk of the Zionist means of production developed before the year 1948, was developed under the banner of collective ownership. This was a natural course because the operation of Zionist settlements was being carried out by public Zionist agencies (such as the Jewish Agency, the Jewish National Fund and the Histadrut). The Zionist pioneer spirit had at the start a utopian socialist color, in reaction to Jewish misery and anti-semitic accusations that the Jews are by nature unproductive. In spite of this collective growth of the means of production, the capital which flowed in following the establishment of the state soon weakened the two sectors (the collective which was created before 1948 and the public which was founded after 1948). Today the private sector controls 93% of industrial establishments employing 76% of the labor force, while the role of the public and collective sectors does not go beyond assisting the private sector to maintain its equilibrium and flourish. As for the kibbutzes, their inhabitants have today dwindled to 3.3% of the population, and they produce 3.5% of industrial production and not even one third of agricultural produce. These kibbutzes have for some time been employing hired labor which they treat in a typical capitalist manner. In the Israeli society the working class comprises 30% of the population and the peasants nearly 20%, while 10% of the population owned half the national income in 1956 (but their share was increased considerably in the subsequent years). Neither the income distribution

nor social status follows the pattern of class affinity for these two matters are showing itself in the discrimination between the western Jews (Safardeem) and the eastern oriental Jews (Aşkanazeem) as, in 1964 the average income of the oriental Jews did not exceed 49% of the average income of the western Jews and the ratio of orientals in the state (or civil) service reached only 1% although their numbers exceed 60% of the total population.

Zionism deliberately resorted to submerging the class differences within the Israeli society in order to maintain its hegemony as a colonizing society, so it at once set up the Histadrut (as a labor-employer-social security establishment), the kibbutzes (with an "internally socialist" character but with an outwardly capitalist role at the same time), and linked various Israeli parties left and right to the Jewish Agency. Over and above all this they added the factor of Arab danger, and no doubt the Arab chauvinist propaganda ("throwing the Jews into the sea") rendered grateful services to Zionism in the field of achieving a high level of internal unity and the blocking of internal class contradictions.

But the Israeli society being a capitalist one means the impossibility of burying class differences forever. These differences are deep in the roots of the society, even if they haven't expressed themselves in open conflict for a long time. The nature of Zionist society makes the abandonment of Zionism a matter impossible for the Zionist society itself, in fact it is impossible to do, except by wearing it away from outside the state of Israel.

This is not a condition unique by itself in history, as Marx himself has pointed to a similar state of affairs in reference to Ireland. He says "for a long time I believed that it would be possible to overthrow the Irish regime by English ascendancy. I always expressed this point of view in the New York Tribune."

"Deeper study has now convinced me of the opposite. The English working class will never accomplish anything until it has got rid of Ireland... The English reaction in England had its roots in the subjugation of Ireland." Similarly, the roots of Zionist chauvinism and the cohesion of the Israeli society stand on the enslavement of the Arab people and on Zionist colonization of Palestine. Hence, the possibility of the destruction of Zionism cannot be achieved except from without, and the possibility of the class differences within Israel cropping up depends on the driving of the Israeli society to crisis, that is, it depends on the changing of the present balance of power in favor of the Palestinian and Arab national liberation movement and on the political maturity of this movement. This will enable this movement to speak to the inhabitants of Israel and explain to them that Zionism has not solved the Jewish question and that their salvation lies in the abandonment of Zionism, for Zionism meets halfway with anti-semitism inasmuch as the aim is the driving out of Jews from various countries and dispatching them to Israel. It may offer them a democratic solution to the Palestinian question, affording them democratic horizons. So here we see the role of a strategic slogan, based on the democratic solution, in breaking down the internal front of the enemy. Does all this mean the possibility of transcending national alliances and enjoining Arab and Israeli revolutionaries? The nature of Zionism makes it impossible to bring together the loyalty to

Zionism and the revolutionary stand, nor is it possible to consider the Israeli a revolutionary unless he is actively and determinedly hostile to Zionism, and this calls for struggle against the Israeli framework inside it and the recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. This alone will guarantee the laying down of the objective foundations for an objective alliance between Arab and Israel revolutionaries.

Some "leftist" European circles, and particularly the Trotskyists are inclined to say that it is the duty of Arab revolutionaries to recognize the right of the Israeli people to self-determination, and add that as long as the inhabitants of Israel comprise a people, there is no way for the revolutionaries other than to recognize their right of self-determination. This position implies incomprehension of the national question in general, and the Palestinian question in particular. They stand, in the name of internationalism, equidistant from the two parties of the national struggle to condemn both sides and press each to recognize the right of the other, imagining that such an attitude will solve the problem. Thus forgetting that there are oppressed and oppressors and that it is the duty of the revolutionaries to rescue the oppressed from the oppressor.

It is true that the inhabitants of Israel constitute a people, or more correctly, they are in the process of formation although their formation is being achieved by way of a colonizing operation. The American people, too, have formed by way of a colonizing operation. The Zionists have managed, with a considerable measure of success, to merge immigrant groups through an intensive program and through a rigorous shaping of the society. The factors which contribute in giving the Israeli society the appearance of balance and unity, themselves permit the absorption and fusion of the immigrant groups.

But does this mean it is necessary to recognize the right of the Israeli people to self-determination? In Marxist terms self-determination means the right to separate, and Marxism acknowledges in principle the right to self-determination in a negative way only. It does not make this right a holy utopian one but answers yes or no to every one of the questions of separation according to each separate case, subjecting the question to the interest of class struggle and world socialist revolution, aiming to achieve national peace to free the class struggle from the fetters imposed upon it objectively by national strife. Lenin says: "the proletariat recognizes equality of rights and acknowledges to all nations an equal right for establishing a national state, but places the interest of alliance of the proletarians of all nations above every consideration. It looks at every national claim and every other consideration. It looks at every national claim and every national dissension in the light of workers class struggle."¹ He also says: "therefore the proletariat is limited to the demand for recognition of the right of self-determination in a negative manner, if the term fits, without guaranteeing anything to any nation and without pledging itself to anything at the expense of another nation."² Marxism therefore sees that it is the duty of the revolutionaries of the persecutor nations to recognize the right of self-determination of the persecuted nation, while it obligates the revolutionaries of the persecuted nations to include the demand for separation in their program

if they see that it is in the interest of socialism. In this vein Lenin says: "and it did not occur to any Russian Marxist to reproach the Polish social-democrats for their opposition on the separation of Poland, and the social-democrats are not mistaken except when they try to deny the need of a Marxist program in Russia to recognize the right of self-determination. Russia is the persecutor and Poland the persecuted."³

Marxism also sees clearly that national questions cannot be solved except at the expense of the privileges of the persecutor. Lenin says: "the recognition of the right to secession for all; the appraisal of each concrete question of secession from the point of view of removing all inequality, all privileges, and all exclusiveness."⁴

Israel is persecuted in the same manner with which Lenin described the Russian nation as being a persecuted nation. Since the existence of Israel as a state constitutes an attachment to the meaning Lenin stresses. He says: "the reasoning of attachment usually assumes 1) the reasoning of violence (annexation by violence); 2) the reasoning of foreign national persecution (annexation of a foreign zone, etc.) and at times 3) the reasoning of breaking the present status quo" he then asserts that annexation as understood by Marxists is "violation of the right of freedom of a nation to self-determination, and drawing up the borders of a state contrary to the will of the inhabitants."⁵ So here it becomes the duty of the Israeli revolutionaries to recognize the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, and it becomes their duty to struggle against annexation, as this is the only path to bypass the national character of the Arab-Israeli confrontation. Lenin says: "in order to be able to carry out the social revolution and bring down the bourgeoisie, the workers ought to unite closely, and the struggle for self-determination (against annexation) will make possible such a union." As to asking the Arab revolutionaries to recognize the right of the Israeli people to self-determination, that would be an inverted understanding of the question, for if we view the question in the light of the interest of world socialist revolution, as we ought to do, we shall find that this interest necessitates the obliteration of Israel as an entity and an existence (as a single-race state in Palestine). But this will not suffice, we must also establish the basis which will guarantee against the renaissance of Zionism after overrunning it. Herein lies the problem. The right of the Israeli people to self-determination means the formation of a separate state in Palestine, which will open wide the opportunity for the renaissance of Zionism. Then what is the meaning of solving the national question at the expense of the oppressor if that does not mean in our case the basic privilege of Zionism, that is, its setting up of a separate Israeli state. Our attitude does not constitute a departure from Leninist principles in national politics as some would wish to say, since Lenin says: "The various democratic demands, including the right of nations to self-determination, are not absolute but are part of the whole world democratic movement (today — the socialist movement, ed.). And it is possible in certain specific and tangible cases that the part may contradict the whole, and in this case the part must be dismissed."⁶ Any solution to the Palestinian question must take into consideration that the

formation of an independent state in Palestine by the Jews (right to self-determination means right to separate) is a transgression of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

The democratic solution to the Palestinian question is the only solution and anything else would be a devotion to the status quo. This democratic solution makes the Israeli progressives responsible for supporting the Palestinian struggle by struggling against Israel from within. Once again we assert that the implementation of this solution calls for a revolutionary process, in struggle terms it is the popular liberation war, under the leadership of a great alliance between the forces of the Palestinian struggle and the forces of the Arab revolution.

1. *National and International Proletarian Political Question*, V.I. Lenin, p. 89.
2. *Ibid.* p. 90.
3. *Ibid.* p. 89.
4. *Ibid.* p. 120.
5. *Ibid.* p. 92.
6. *Ibid.* p. 202-3.



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