

‘The Sixth Party Conference of the Communist Party of Palestine’

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A short while ago there was held the 6th Party Conference of the C.P. of Palestine at which 27 delegates were present, most of them being Arab and Jewish workers. As was to be seen from the report of the Central Committee, the Party has in the course of the last two years considerably increased in numbers and in influence. Even in the provinces it has gained access to various strata of the working population who were formerly quite apathetic or were under the leadership of petty bourgeois parties. In addition to this the Party has created a communist movement in the neighbouring country of Syria and is still engaged in promoting its development. Thanks to its consistent fight against Anglo-French imperialism and to its connection with the Left wing of the Arabian national-revolutionary movement, the C.P. of Palestine has become a political factor whose influence is increasing in spite of the constant persecution on the part of English imperialism and its Zionist friends.

The three questions which formed the centre of attention at the Party Conference were connected with the concrete tasks of the C.P. of Palestine. In regard to the question of the Arabian national revolutionary elements, which under the present circumstances alone render it possible to carry on a determined fight against imperialist oppression, attention must be paid to the creation of a great national revolutionary organisation, the lack of which has up to now prevented the nationalist movement from achieving any considerable success. Within this organisation it would then be easy for the progressive Left wing to gain the upper hand over the patriarchal, reactionary nationalist leaders.

Differences of opinion were revealed in regard to the estimation of the revolutionary movement in Syria, as some delegates regarded it as hopeless in view of the military superiority of France and advocated a compromise as being the best solution for the time being. The majority of the Conference, however, called attention to the increasing anti-French movement in the towns, to the wave of strikes in Beirut and Aleppo, which show that the proletariat is beginning to play its part in the struggle, and to the antagonisms between the various imperialist Powers (Great Britain, France, Italy) which offer prospects of the Syrian revolt achieving its revolutionary aims if the French and international proletariat fulfills its duty towards the fighting Syrian workers and peasants.

The question of the tasks of the Party in the trade union movement called forth a lively discussion. While the leaders of the trade union organisation “Histadruth” are continuing their policy of excluding and boycotting the communists, there has developed among the working class a unity movement which is fighting for the reacceptance of the section of the R.I.L.U. in Palestine into the “Histadruth” and for organising the Arab workers. At the same time there is arising a whole number of oppositional but nevertheless centrist groupings, which are adopting various demands of the R.I.L.U., but in the fundamental demands – fight against imperialism and Zionism – fight shy of adopting revolutionary slogans. The Party Conference had to reject in a most decided manner the proposals of some delegates who recommended the liquidation of the “Workers’ Fraction” (section of the R.I.L.U.) in favour of centrist groupings. The Conference decided, on the one hand, to continue the fight for the unity of the trade union movement with all groupings which support this fight, but on the other hand not to surrender any of the fighting slogans of the broad working masses in favour of opportunist attempts at compromise.

The third question that was discussed was the problem of organisation. This is a problem the solution of which is very difficult in view of the illegality of the Party and its widely divergent tasks. While the first condition for a successful development is, of course, the getting hold of the broad masses, only a selection of revolutionaries is capable of carrying out the demands which an underground Party imposes on its members. In addition to this it must be remembered that in the backward oriental countries there exists practically no tradition of organisation. The various conflicting opinions, however, finally found common expression in a unanimously adopted organisation statute, based on the instructions worked out by the last Org Conference of the E.C.C.I., and which is adapted to the conditions in Palestine.

The Conference adopted almost. unanimously the resolutions on the peasant question (creation of peasant organisations, connection between village and town), on the role of the Jewish working population in the country — which, owing to disappointment in the illusions of Zionism and of the increased imperialist pressure, is gradually being converted into an anti-imperialist factor, — on the situation in the Communist International (condemnation of fractional activity, for the unity of the C.P.S.U. and the C.P. of Germany) as well as a number of congratulatory messages.

The 6th Party Conference of the C.P. of Palestine was marked by intensive practical work and has shown that this section of the Communist International is capable of fulfilling its tasks.