

Palestine's Masses Suffer From Effects of Imperialist Conflict

(By Intercontinental News)

STOCKHOLM, Jan. 3.—

The war in the Mediterranean has seriously affected Palestine's economy. The building trades, apart from the building-for-traders purposes, is almost at a standstill, while conditions in the citrus industry the mainstay of the land go from bad to worse.

During the 1938-9 season, more than 15 million cases of fruit were exported. During the 1939-40 season only seven and a half million cases were exported. With the extension of the war, the prospects this season are even worse and the yield is not expected to exceed nine million cases. Many citrus groves have been allowed to run to rot, causing increased unemployment.

In past years the fruit-picking season, usually from October to March, absorbed a large proportion of the unemployed. But owing to reduced cultivation there was unemployment on a fairly wide scale even during last year's picking season. This season unemployment will be even more widespread.

The Economist of November 9 gives a false picture of Palestine's economy. It gives prominence to the Government barracks and other building activities, declaring that this will absorb surplus labor from the groves and private building which has been hit by the check on the influx of private capital into Palestine.

Citrus, however, is the mainstay of Palestine's economy. Tens of thousands of Arab and Jewish workers are dependent on it for their livelihood and government building will actually absorb only a fraction of them.

STRIKES ON INCREASE

The cost of living has risen sharply. By July, wholesale prices were 29.6 per cent higher than on September, 1939. Grain and meat have risen by 34 per cent; other food supplies, including fruit and vegetables have risen by 16 per cent. Wages have been on the decline since 1934. By last year wages were already 18.3 per cent lower than five years ago.

Strikes have enormously increased, with the result that the Palestine Administration is conducting an inquiry into labor disputes. And Whitehall has sent out a special labor "expert" to advise the Administration.

Against this gloomy economic war background a meeting of Arab workers took place in Petach Tikvah. It was organized under the auspices of the League for Arab-Jewish Cooperation. This body consists of Jews who are in sharp opposition to the official Zionist leadership with its anti-Arab and pro-imperialist policy. It includes such long standing Zionist notables as Margolin Kalvarist, who stands for the abandonment of the pro-imperialist Weizman policy and is for an immediate rapprochement with the Arabs; S. Klapianski, removed from the Histadrut, Jewish Federation of Labor leadership for opposition to its official policy; and Dr. Judah Magnus, chancellor of the University.

Arab workers voiced their just and long standing grievance against the Federation's policy of demanding that Arab workers recognize the principle that Jewish enterprises must employ only Jewish labor.

A DANGEROUS POLICY

This policy is one of the basic causes of Arab-Jewish friction. Zionist penetration and the pre-arranged relations has proletarianized a large section of the Arab population. Only a fraction of this mass of unskilled Arab labor can be absorbed by Arab enterprise and Government work such as railways, harbors, post and telegraph. Consequently, large numbers have been compelled to seek work in Jewish enterprises or starve. The Jewish

capitalists have employed them because their labor is cheaper.

If the Histadrut were a genuine trade union movement it would long ago have organized the Arab workers, raised their standards of living, and removed the threat of cheap labor to the much higher wages of the Jewish worker.

It would have built up a strong bi-national labor movement which could have forced the Arab capitalist to employ Jewish workers. A strong, united Arab-Jewish Labor movement would have made the Administration employ more Jewish labor in the government works. It would also have deprived the Jewish capitalist of the weapon of cheap Arab labor with which he has forced down the higher wage of the Jewish worker.

Instead, the official Histadrut policy has been one of attempting to oust the Arab workers from Jewish enterprises. What will happen to these Arab workers does not concern the Histadrut leaders. Their concern has been to keep the Jewish sector "pure" from Arab workers.

Their policy of squeezing out the Arab worker from Jewish enterprises has led them to force down the wages of the Jewish worker almost to that of the Arabs. They subsidized the Jewish employer as an inducement for him to employ Jewish labor. They gave the Jewish worker certain social services free of charge, such as education for his children and medical attention.

This is the "trade unionism" of Ben Gurion and Katznelson, the Histadrut leaders. And these were the issues brought out at the Petach Tikvah conference, and resolutions of protest were adopted.

In addition, a resolution of protest was adopted against the Tozeret Haaretz movement, which stands for a monopoly for Jewish products in the Jewish markets. In effect, it means that Jews must only buy Jewish produce. The Arab producer must keep his goods out of the Jewish market; but Jewish products often produced cheaper than Arab products by better equipped factories and farms, find their way into the Arab markets.

BRITAIN—THE COMMON FOE

It is to the credit of those Jews in the League for Arab-Jewish cooperation that they recognize the danger of such a policy. It is to the discredit of the official Zionist leaders that they have not yet realized that their chauvinist policy is one of the basic reasons for Arab-Jewish conflict. Even the Zionist Palestine Review is forced to admit

that there is some justice in the Arab workers' grievances. It says:

"There is no doubt much force to the argument that active political cooperation cannot be achieved without cooperation in the economic sphere. Exclusion of Arab labor and Tozeret Haaretz propaganda in its present forms are not conducive to either."

So it recommends a "wise and forward looking wage policy on the part of the Government and loyal support of both Arab and Jew in carrying it out could do much to remove the main obstacles to a practical rapprochement between the two elements of Palestine's population."

To expect British imperialism to bring together Arabs and Jews is mere wish fulfillment. British imperialist rule in Palestine is based on keeping Arabs and Jews divided and at each other's throats. In the political sphere the Petach Tikvah meeting called for Arab Jewish unity against the "common Nazi foe" of both Jew and Arab.

This resolution is a dangerous one. It does not recognize that the "common foe" of Jew and Arab is still British imperialism which conquered Palestine and has played off the aspirations of the Jews against the national independence aspirations of the Palestine Arabs, creating antagonisms which had not existed.

It does not recognize that the obstacle to a free and independent Palestine is British imperialism and that the struggle of Arab and Jew for independence must be directed against British imperialism. Not to appreciate this may mean that the sincere desire of both people for the better relations is being utilized by British imperialism.

In spite of this resolution, the conference was a reflection of the sharpening economic crisis in Palestine which is strengthening the elements of both sides who are anxious for an Arab-Jewish rapprochement.

32 Die in Wreck Of Yugoslav Ship

LONDON, Jan. 3.—Reuters, the British news agency, quoted the Swiss radio as reporting today that thirty-two members of the crew of the Yugoslav steamship Srebren were lost when the ship broke in two yesterday after having grounded on the Dalmatian coast.

The 3,304-ton vessel was en route to the United States.

Young Communist Leader Workers School Value as

By Claudia Jones

(Educational Director, Young Communist League of New York State)

All of us in the Y.C.L. are deeply conscious of the fundamental purpose of our organization—to build character and educate youth in the spirit of socialism, as Comrade Browder has so beautifully expressed it. In all branches we strive to deepen our understanding and thus to enrich our practical activities through our educational programs. Like all youth organizations, however, we face difficulties in finding trained and skillful instructors.

Fortunately we do not have to depend for our education entirely upon our own efforts. The Workers School provides us with an established, well functioning institution, a staff of experienced Marxist teachers, and a tradition of 17 years' activity in the field of workers' education.

Hundreds of Y.C.L.ers and other young people have attended classes

every term of the Workers School in recent years. In view of the pressing need for education to equip us to meet the increasing problems of the hour, we are anxious to increase the attendance of our members at Workers School classes. We have set ourselves the goal of an attendance of at least 1,500 for the next term, which opens Jan. 14. The following evenings have been set aside as special Y.C.L. registration evenings: Thursday, Jan. 9; Friday, Jan. 10; Tuesday, Jan. 11.

SPECIAL CLASSES

Two special classes for young people, of special importance to Y.C.L.ers, have been arranged for Tuesday evenings. One will be a class on trade unionism, to be taught by Richard Allan. The other will be a thorough study of the History of the CPSU, to be taught by Joe Clark.

A wide variety of subjects, indispensable for a knowledge of the problems confronting our country and the world today, are offered by