

Lessons for Israel

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We publish excerpts of a speech by Meir Vilner, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Israel, at the international conference on Karl Marx in Berlin, April, 1983.

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The Communist Party of Israel is equipped with the sharpest ideological weapon — Marxism-Leninism — and acts in accordance with the central slogan of Marx and Engels: "Workers of all countries unite!" or in other words, in accordance with the principles of proletarian internationalism. In this way the Jewish-Arab Communist Party of Israel expresses the true national interests of both peoples in the country.

It is not by chance that our Marxist-Leninist party was the only party in Israel which correctly assessed the wars which the ruling Zionist circles in Israel ignited in alliance with imperialist powers in 1956 and 1967. We assessed, and today many people agree with us, that those wars were aggressive, colonialist and expansionist wars.

It is not by chance that our Marxist-Leninist party opposed in a consistent and uncompromising struggle from the first moment the new Israeli-American aggression in Lebanon against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples.

As Marxists we see the problem of Israel and the whole Middle East region in the context of the general struggle in the world between imperialism and reaction on the one hand, and socialism and progress on the other, between the forces of war and the forces of peace.

As Marxists we see the perspective of the inevitable change in the correlation of forces in the Middle East and the world, in accordance with the wishes and interests of the peoples, and to the detriment of imperialism and reaction. Therefore we assess that the continuation of the policy of force of the ruling Zionist circles in Israel, the continuation of service to the global policy of US imperialism against the independent states and against the national liberation movements, in the Middle East and outside it, and against the Soviet Union and communism; the continuation of the racist and expansionist policy against the Palestinian people and other Arab peoples — that this policy endangers the very existence of Israel as a Middle East state.

We have learned from our own experience how correct and topical the Marxist assessment is that a people

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which enslaves another people cannot itself be free, or as Marx expressed it: "A people, oppressing another, forges its own chains."

Israel now maintains a colonial occupation on the territories of three peoples: The Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian. But the people of Israel is not free but enslaved by American imperialism.

In today's Israel the danger of fascism has intensified. This stems from the policy of war, occupation and oppression, from the policy which serves the Israeli financial and parasitical capital which is connected, with and integrated in the financial capital of the U.S. and other NATO states.

In the Manifesto of the International Workingmen's Association in 1864 we read: "If the emancipation of the working classes requires their fraternal concurrence, how are they to fulfill that great mission with a foreign policy in pursuit of criminal designs, playing upon national prejudices, and squandering in piratical wars the people's blood and treasure?"

"Secure Frontiers"

The ruling Zionist circles in Israel are attempting to excuse their expansionist aspirations by the necessity of "secure frontiers."

Marx wrote: "If borders are to be fixed by military interests, there will be no end to claims, because every military line is necessarily faulty, and may be improved by annexing some more outlying territory; and, moreover, they can never be fixed finally and fairly, because they always must be imposed by the conqueror upon the conquered, and consequently carry within them the seed of fresh wars. Such is the lesson of all history."

"We, Israeli Marxists, have learned from history and call upon our people to learn from it; secure frontiers are only those which are recognized by all sides, by all involved states, that is to say frontiers of peace. Frontiers of peace are based on respect of the rights of all the peoples — in our circumstances, respect for the rights of the Palestinian Arab people, to establish their own independent state under the leadership of the PLO — their sole representative — alongside the State of Israel. We struggle for the withdrawal of Israel from all the territories which it occupied since 1967, and for a just solution of the question of the Palestinian refugees, in accordance with the UN decisions.

In our struggle against the policy of aggression and occupation of the ruling circles in Israel, which is backed by U.S. imperialism, we contribute also our share to the defense of general peace.

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Peace or War

There must be no neutrality or apathy on the question of peace and war. The fate of all the peoples is at stake. Our generation can, and must, choose between two existing worlds: One is the world of drowning capitalism which imperils the very existence of mankind, a sort of "Let my soul perish with the Philistines." As far as it is concerned all the world can be destroyed, as long as socialism will not be victorious. As against this there is the socialist world, which prospers and develops, which ceaselessly improves, raises the dignity of people, their well-being and culture; which develops democracy and,

most important, defends human civilization and the very existence of mankind against the danger of nuclear extermination.

In conclusion I want to say: Even if there is no agreement on various subjects, it is the duty of all of us towards the masses of the working people in our countries, towards our peoples, towards the whole of mankind, to act together, unitedly for frustrating the plans of the imperialist warmongers; for stopping the arms race and for disarmament; for extinguishing the hotbeds of war — in one word: To save humanity from a worldwide catastrophe; for detente in international relations, for consolidation of peace in the world, for social progress. □

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