

Self-Determination for Palestinian Arabs!

West Bank Mini-State No Solution

The international recognition won by the Palestine Liberation Organization in recent months culminated at the Rabat summit conference of Arab rulers and PLO-chief Yasir Arafat's dramatic visit to the United Nations last week. At Rabat the PLO was recognized by the assembled colonels, kings and sheiks as the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people on any liberated Palestinian territory." At the UN Arafat was accorded protocol reserved for heads of state.

This international approval has been granted as a reward for the increasing "moderation" of the PLO, in particular its shift in policy last year on the issue of a Palestinian "mini-state" consisting of the Gaza strip, the West Bank and possibly the small El Hamma area at the southern end of the Golan Heights.

A West Bank state led by the PLO would soon become a "bantustan" in which neighboring states could dump their unwanted Palestinian refugees—900,000 in Jordan, 300,000 in Lebanon, 300,000 in Israel and 200,000 in Syria. It would be only a very partial and deformed expression of the Palestinian Arabs' right to self-determination.

The Spartacist tendency opposes a fifth Arab-Israel war, a war which would not bring liberation to the Palestinian people but only further senseless slaughter in the service of reactionary nationalism. Nevertheless, we defend the Palestinians' right to an independent state and demand unconditional Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories.

A genuine exercise of Palestinian Arabs' right to self-determination is conceivable only on both banks of the Jordan, including all of what is now Israel and Jordan. Both of these states were carved out at the expense of the Palestinian people. But while the Hebrew nation is today an oppressor nation in relation to the Palestinians, a democratic solution is not one which simply reverses the terms of oppression—i.e., an Arab Palestine in which Hebrews are denied their right to self-determination.

Only within the framework of a binational Palestinian workers republic, created by a united proletarian revolution of Hebrew and Arab workers against the clerical Zionist state and the bloody Hashemite throne, can an equitable solution of the counterposed national claims be reached. ■