

# Readers of Labor Action Take the F

## Calls Charge "The Blood Libel"

Editor:

At every Yahrzeit (anniversary) of Chaim Arlasoroff, certain writers for the Yiddish press, who belong to the Poale-Zion Party, remember to mention the Revisionists as his murderers. It's time this accusation should once and for all be cleared publicly. Our opponents continue to repeat that blood libel, for the Revisionists have not the courage to answer them as they really deserve. Well, here is one Revisionist who will. Now to the point.

On June 15, 1933, a shot was fired

The article by Ed and Al Findley, "Irgun: Threat to Israel Democracy," which appeared in the December 27 issue of LABOR ACTION, has occasioned wide comment. (Copies of it may still be ordered.) In presenting the Findley article, which we believe to be the best and most complete yet written on the subject, we invited comment, notably from official spokesmen of the Irgun movement, offering to withdraw any part of the accusations that could be proved false. We herewith publish a long letter from one who describes himself as a "rank and file revisionist," with a brief reply by Ed Findley.—The Editors.

in Tel Aviv. As a result, Dr. Chaim Arlasoroff a member of the Jewish Agency died a few hours later. Immediately the good "Zionists" created a blood libel against the Revisionists.

On June 18, 1933, David Ben-Gurion wrote in the Heint of Warsaw the following: "I am one of those who wages a battle of life and death with the Communists and I know of their destructive pogrom efforts in the Yishuv. But as regards the murder of Dr. Arlasoroff, I must declare that they cannot be charged with it, for their work is directed in the direction of provoking pogroms and not terroristic acts. Nor do I accuse the Arabs of this murder because whoever is familiar with Eretz-Yisroel knows how impossible it would be to disappear as easily as the murderers of Dr. Arlasoroff. I opine, however, that the terroristic acts perpetrated upon Dr. Arlasoroff are political. Then he starts to discuss the Revisionists. Did he have to say more to point at a certain direction?"

Here is a statement by the Polish Zionist Organization: The pain burns and the heart palpitates in agitation, grief and wrath at the bloody crime in Zionism. Rage is within us. With the greatest misgivings did we follow all the time the development of the Revisionist plague. We saw the flood of hate and venom disseminated by that movement. Boldly do we declare that the moral responsibility falls upon the Revisionist movement which has produced such a murderer. Against such a movement, we must all defend ourselves. Let our motto be, "Expel the Revisionist gangs from Jewish life."

The president of the American Zionist Organization also accused the Revisionists. Many other ghetto slaves did likewise. All this was done before the British even suspected anybody at all. It took the British a month to take the various hints of their "Zionist" friends and arrest Abraham Stavsky, Zvi Rosenblatt and Abba Achi-Meyer.

Achi-Meyer was cleared of the murder immediately. If Achi-Meyer was innocent, then so were the others, for he was accused of being the instigator. Now if he didn't instigate, then his followers could not have committed an act they were not told to carry out. But the "justice" loving British butchers sent Achi-Meyer to prison for two years for a "crime" for which he served a term once before.

Zvi-Rosenblatt, who was supposed to have fired the shot, was freed. Why should any court free a suspect of murder, but try his accomplice?

Stavsky was convicted by one court, but was acquitted by a higher court because of lack of evidence.

But Stavsky is innocent, because someone else is guilty. They could not have committed the same crime. We shall attempt to prove the guilty one.

Ben-Gurion was correct, when he said, the communists didn't commit that murder. The "comrades" are great cowards and would not dare murder a Jewish leader, who was very popular. Besides, communists don't believe in individual terror. They practice mass terror and liquidations against their opponents.

The Arabs are not guilty of this crime either. Arlasoroff was a friend of the Arab people. They are not as stupid as some Zionist leaders.

Is it possible that Revisionists committed the murder? It would be, if it occurred at a different time and against any other person. Let us say, Chaim Weitzman. Arlasoroff was a friend to our movement. He always wanted peace with the hated Revisionists.

Arlasoroff was murdered one month before the Zionist Congress. Therefore, it would certainly be idi-

## In Brief Reply:

The "revelations" and "proofs" presented in this communication are not new. When the Brith Biryonim-Irgun activists, Zvi Rosenblatt and Abraham Stavsky, were positively identified as the murderers by the slain labor leader's wife, their defense and the Revisionist press engaged in a slanderous campaign to impugn her credibility. One can see from the above vituperative letter how meager is the factual evidence on which these slanders were based. Snide comments about alleged family quarrels and common-law marriage can hardly be taken seriously.

Yes, the Court of Criminal Assizes freed Abba Achimeir, the instigator of the assassination. Although he had conducted a lynch campaign in the press against Arlasoroff in the days leading up to the latter's assassination and was the ideological leader of the terrorist Brith Biryonim whose members were implicated, Achimeir himself was not identified as one of the actual participants.

Zvi Rosenblatt, the other Brith Biryonim-Irgun activist implicated, was definitely identified as one of the killers but the corroborative evidence required by Palestinian law was unavailable. In the case of Abraham Stavsky, the Court of Criminal Assizes felt the corroborative evidence to be sufficient.

No, Stavsky was not acquitted by the Criminal Court of Appeals because the court felt him to be innocent, but due to a Palestinian legal technicality. Here is how the chief justice of that court, in announcing the reversal of the lower court's decision, put it:

"To sum up, I can see no reason whatever for criticizing the Court of Assizes in accepting Mrs. Arlasoroff's evidence, and if this case were being heard in England or in most British dependencies, that would be the end of the appeal and the conviction would have to stand. But the Legislature of Palestine has seen fit by Section 5 of the Law of Evidence, Amendment Ordinance 1924, to provide that no judgment shall be given in a criminal case on the evidence of a single witness unless such evidence is admitted by the accused person or is corroborated by some other material witness, which, in the opinion of the court, is sufficient to establish the truth of it." (Emphasis mine.)

We cannot retry the case in LABOR ACTION, but this much stands out. Both the entire Palestinian Jewish labor movement and the criminal courts accepted the fact of Abraham Stavsky's direct participation in the murder of one of the main leaders of the Jewish trade union movement in Palestine. We can hardly accept the fantastic charge of collusion between the trade union movement and the British police merely on Revisionist say-so.

What interests us is the fact that both the instigators and actual murderers played and continue to play a leading role in Beigin's Freedom Movement (Heiruth) (except for Stavsky, who was recently killed while fighting against Israeli government troops in the treasonous Altalena putsch).

Ed FINDLEY

otic for Revisionists to commit any deed that would discredit our movement in the eyes of Zionist voters. On the contrary, it would have been in the interest of the opposing party to commit that crime and then blame their opponents just as Hitler burned the Reichstag and blamed the Reds. Didn't the Histadruth have a slogan, "Don't vote for murderers to the Zionist Congress"? Could it be they created the possibility for such slogans?

But let us examine some of the evidence. Arlasoroff and his "wife" returned to Eretz-Yisroel from Europe on a Friday. He had promised his mother to spend the Sabbath with her. But he was murdered in Tel-Aviv while his old mother lived in Jerusalem. Who was interested enough to change his mind and not be with his mother on the Sabbath? We must remember Arlasoroff was a very faithful son.

At the time he was shot he and his "wife" were walking near the Arab cemetery at the end of the city. Why did they walk in such a deserted place? There are many beautiful parks in Tel-Aviv. Whose suggestion was it to walk at that section?

"Madame" Arlasoroff testified that she asked her husband to turn back. Why could it not be just the opposite? It was not his idea to go there in the first place. He wanted to be in Jerusalem with his mother.

"Mrs." Arlasoroff was in the possession of a revolver that fatal night. For what purpose did she carry that

weapon? It couldn't be to protect her husband? It would be more logical had it been the opposite.

How come the "Madame" didn't faint when her "husband" was shot? She must be some "woman." Another woman could not have been so calm.

She also testified that Stavsky (how she remembered so well) held a searchlight against her face. Then how could she have seen? We know that a searchlight blinds you.

The bullet taken from Arlasoroff's body matched the "Madame's" revolver, but the weapon was not produced at the trial. Why? Surely it wasn't for Stavsky's benefit. The British police had that weapon "disappear."

According to the "Madame's" testimony, the murderer was facing them directly. But, Arlasoroff was shot in the side. Who was standing beside him?

But, the "Madame" was not beside her husband when he died. Why? Was she afraid to face him? Still, Arlasoroff tried to shield his unfaithful "wife" by saying before his death, a Jew didn't shoot me. No, it was a "Jewess."

There were two witnesses who saw and heard the "Madame" walking on her hotel balcony saying, what shall I tell the police? Innocent people are not worried in such cases. Those two witnesses were not given the chance to testify. The reason is obvious.

Now as for the motive. Dr. Arlasoroff was never legally married to the "Madame." They lived, as many other Marxists, a free love. They had

many quarrels in the last few years of his life. Such things happen every day. In the United States the "Madame" would have been convicted to the electric chair. This was a civil case.

But, the British with the help of the Jewish Agency saw a chance to discredit their mutual opponents and created the blood-libel. It's strange while Stavsky and Rosenblatt were allowed to remain in Eretz-Yisroel, the British sent the "Madame" out of the country. Why? Because everyone in Eretz-Yisroel knows that Arlasoroff was murdered by his unfaithful "wife."

We asked, is it possible that Revisionists or any other patriotic Jewish group would assassinate one whom they considered a traitor. Our answer is "it's possible" but not in this case. Arlasoroff was not a traitor. Suppose a certain Zionist group did execute a Jewish renegade. So what? The penalty for treason is death among all nations. Why should the Jewish people be an exception?

As a matter of fact, the first to carry out an act of assassination were members of the Poale-Zion. In 1933, a leader of the Agudath Yisroel was shot for being an informer for the British. His name was Jacob De Haan. One of those participants is still living in Eretz-Yisroel. Her name is Mara Shocket, who was herself an informer for the Russian police against revolutionists. We do not denounce this deed, but merely state a fact. So, why condemn others, who were only accused of doing the same? We must also remember the crime of De-Haan was not greater than those committed by Chaim Weitzman and he is still among the living. Our chaverim (comrades) refrained from taking Jewish lives, unless it could not be helped any more. Such cases did arise.

Why did the Revisionists return to the Zionist Organization, when members of that body still consider us as the murderers of Arlasoroff. People with self-respect should act otherwise. We should demand a Jewish (we don't recognize the British) court of Justice and once and for all clear Rosenblatt, Stavsky and Achi-Meyer, through them the Revisionist movement.

Elihanan BEN-AMI

## Praises Findley's Analysis of Irgun

Editor:

Your long and exhaustive article, "Irgun: Threat to Israel Government," in the issue of December 27, certainly deserves the thanks of every right-minded Zionist and every sincere friend of the young state of Israel. You may expect that some of your statements will be refuted by representatives of the Heiruth movement or writers friendly to it, but the undeniable fact remains that this movement exists mainly as an opposition to Israel's workers' organization, Histadruth. This movement, indeed the old Revisionist Party under a new name, is ready to carry over its tactics and underground fight against our enemies, the British, into the open field against the Histadruth, thus preparing the ground for civil

## ARTICLE ON IRGUN:

Copies of the December 27 issue of LABOR ACTION which carried Ed and Al Findley's thorough documentation on the charge that Irgun is a threat to Israeli democracy are still available. It is the best work on the subject. Order from LA, 4 Court Sq., Long Island City, 1, N. Y.

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