

INFORMATION BULLETIN

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*A Statement of the Jewish Problem*

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## I N T R O D U C T I O N

For some time, a feeling has permeated various members of the Workers Party that the Party lacks a principled statement of its position on the Jewish question.

After every report in the daily press dealing with the sadistic annihilation of the Jewish communities in Europe, another member of the party felt himself or herself moved to cry out against Nazi barbarism, or allied subtle murder of Jewish innocents. After several such outcries, the party came to realize that these individual cries didn't make a harmony. Cacophony reigned.

Some several months ago, a few members of the party met for the purpose of discussing the matter and eventually presenting the party with documents. This document is an outcome of that meeting.

Realizing that some members of the party might not be too well informed about the background of the Jewish problem, I have attempted to delve, even if only in a cursory manner, into the background of the problem; some Jewish history and sociology. I then attempted to present an analysis of the Zionist solution to the Jewish problem because in a sense it is the solution to the Jewish problem alternate to ours.

It is my hope that this document will open a discussion in the party around the Jewish problem. My essay doesn't exhaust all the phases of the question. For example; someone might attempt a study of the occupational peculiarity of the Jewish people of the diaspora, the Borochovist conclusions from this peculiarity, and our rejection of his opinion. Perhaps other phases of the question may be worthy of research. In any event, here is a document from which most of our comrades can learn something about the Jewish question. I hope it serves that purpose.

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## A STATEMENT OF THE JEWISH PROBLEM

The Jewish Problem is the problem of a people living in a strange community who by virtue of the social forces which obtain in the community, are forced to retain their economic and social differentiation from the rest of the community. They are consequently made to suffer as the scapegoat for the economic ills of the community over and above the general suffering of the community. In order to concretize this conception of the Jewish problem let us review some verifying details of Jewish history.

The Jews originating from Palestine, migrated to the proverbial four corners of the world. Yet the Jewish problem, that is, the problem of anti-semitism as we have defined it, originated primarily as a problem of the occident, of Western civilization. The Jews of Palestine migrated to Islamic territory. Yet they did not suffer anti-semitism. They were persecuted by zealous Islam as misbelievers. However, the Jews who were willing to accept Allah were welcomed by the Arab community. They were granted complete social, political, and economic equality with the rest of the Arab population. After some years, these Jews were assimilated by the Arab community and they lost their Jewish identity. Any persecution which continued to prevail was purely a religious persecution.

In the west, however, the persecution of the Jew took on an entirely different form. Many Jews, particularly in the historically more recent years, were quite willing and did adopt Christianity. Many Jews were quite willing and did accept assimilation as their solution to the Jewish problem, only to be belched forth at varying intervals from the Christian community and to be made to suffer as Jews or descendants of Jews. The western Jew was not accepted by the community as an equal in all respects except religion. The Jews were looked upon by the community as a people indigenously evil and basically different, religion being only one aspect of this difference.

This is not the place to explain with detailed elaboration why the hatred of Jews took these two divergent forms, religious persecution in the east and anti-semitism as we have defined it in the west. However some cursory remarks are quite a propos to our task and will enlighten the meaning of our conception of the Jewish problem. The Jews, in wandering into the East wandered into fairly bountiful economies considering the standards of the dark ages. In the nomadic section of the Islamic community, the people supported themselves by herding light cattle, and facilitating trade. There was sufficient land to provide for a few more shepherds, or caravan travelers. In the more sedentary sections of Islam, the land was fairly rich and fertile, was benefited from a comparatively higher agricultural technique, and again could assimilate more farmers.

There are accounts of Jews travelling as far as China, settling there, and after a period of years becoming assimilated by the native racial stock. There again the territory was vast. The Jew had but to open a new parcel of land, cultivate it and the basis for his economic existence was assured. Conditions were quite different, however, for the Jews who migrated to Europe.

The Jews of Europe came upon a land which was not so very bountiful for the serf who husbanded it. This was due to the low level of agricultural technique, the comparative poverty of the soil, and the exploitation of the serf by the lord of manor who gathered about himself a host of parasites who did nothing but war among themselves and gather tribute from the serf. There was no abundance of land on the European continent and whatever land there

was, was already parcelled out among the lords as fiefs and then among the serfs as latifundia. This land was handed down from father to son. The Jew entered upon a land which had no place for him; and consequently he had to find a place for himself among the niches, crannies, and cracks of the socio-economic structure of the community.

## II THE JEWS DURING THE MIDDLE AGES

We speak of the problem of anti-semitism as being a problem of capitalism. Yet, instances of anti-semitism go back to the middle ages. The Jew who was denied access to land, became the first middle man of the western communities. Coming from the east where trade flourished more readily even during the age when the west was blackest, and every community was self-sufficient, the Jew became the pioneer of trade on the European continent plying his way between manor and manor. The Jew became the money lender, the man who gave away money for percent. In this latter trade he generally came in contact with the kings and rulers of Europe. They were the biggest borrowers of money which they used to carry on their battles royal. The Jew then became the agent of the feudal absentee landlords for the collection of tribute from the serf. The Jew served the western community in the capacities of doctor, and scientist. In some instances he served as minister of state helping the king plan big wars of plunder, in others as the local saloon keeper at whose hostel the serf would drink away his trouble and his grain. The position of local host and minister of state appear to be at the opposite extremes of the social ladder. Yet both of these positions have something very significant in common. Neither of these positions affords its arbiter a normal economic existence, normal in the sense that it is typical of the community. The peasant earned his livelihood by the sweat of his brow. The Jewish middleman earned his livelihood by sweating the peasant still further. The interest which he exacted from the lord for the use of Jewish money also indirectly shifted to the shoulders of the peasant. This special economic status coupled with the difference of religion, of mannerisms, and of origin, strengthened the individuality of the Jews as a special economic caste against the background of a feudal Europe.

The pogroms of Bogdan Chmelniezki in 1648, an example of mass anti-semitism during the latter middle ages, can help one understand how the peculiar economic existence of the Jews helped to make them extremely vulnerable to the economic ills of the community. At that time the Polish Empire was at its zenith and Polish absentee landlords exacted tribute from the Ukrainian peasants. These landlords delegated their authority to Jewish tax collectors of the Ukraine. The Ukrainian peasants in their lust for vengeance looked upon the Jewish middlemen as their immediate exploiters. The Jew was the tax collector and was therefore to be killed. The peasant in his unthinking manner did not stop to consider that the Jew was forced into this ungratifying position by economic conditions, that the Jew had no choice but to gather crumbs from the table of the lord. Chmelniezkie's legions swept over the Jewish community like locust and the Jews who escaped with their lives were very few.

During the Black Plague of 1348-49, the Jews who existed as an unassimilated strange community in Germany with a different religion, different customs, traditions, and who also earned their livelihood in a peculiar and ostensibly unjust manner, were blamed for that catastrophe as well. There too almost the entire German-Jewish community was destroyed.

No small explanation of anti-semitism, particularly towards the close of the middle ages, was the jealousy that the native rising petite bourgeoisie

bore the Jew. They desired to take over the Jewish monopoly of trade and lending for percent. An excellent example of this type of anti-semitism, anti-semitism from above, is the case of the Jewish expulsion from Spain. The Spanish merannos had risen to the very height of the socio-economic ladders during the fourteenth and fifteenth century. The native ruling class, the nobility was losing its temporal power to the centralized monarchy of the Bourbons, to Ferdinand and Isabella. The only manner in which they could compensate themselves for this loss in power and prestige was to usurp the economic and political position of the Jew. This cause coupled with the strong zeolotical fanaticism of catholic Spain led to the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492.

#### LEGAL STATUS OF THE JEWS

The Jews acquired a special legal status during the middle ages in conjunction with their special economic status. The Jews were strangers in a foreign land, and had no right to reside upon European soil, without the special permission of the king, the local lord, or the freeholders of the city. Hence, Jewish History of the middle ages is filled with edicts of banishment. Every so often a European ruler would banish the Jew from his domain in order to assuage his religious conscience, but above all in order to rob the Jews of their wealth.

The Jews of the Holy Roman Empire acquired the legal status of "Kammerknechte" - King's-men. This status allowed these foreigners the privilege of living in Germany and the right to carry on their trade. The Jews were also entitled to the dubious protection of the Holy Roman Empire. In return for this privilege of dwelling upon the land, the Jews had to pay very high taxes and declare their fidelity to the Emperor. During the fourteenth century, this tax privilege was handed over by the Emperor to the seven German electors who from then on took over the right to protect, rule, rob, and in general make life miserable for the Jews. This legal fiction prevailed generally all over Europe, in Poland and Russia as well.

Under this legal structure, the Jews retained a large amount of self rule. They were limited in their places of dwelling and their conditions of trade by the charters granted to them by the kings and lords. However, within the scope of these charters, the Jews were ruled also by their own religious and lay leaders. Thus, the Emperor or an elector might impose a certain amount of tax upon a community, whereas the leaders of the Jewish community would determine the per capita rate of taxation and the method of collection.

The best organized system of self rule that the Jews knew in the middle ages was under the Polish Empire in the "Council of Four Lands". The conditions of the Jews were comparatively very good in Poland during the middle ages. The Jews were granted a very liberal charter by Casimir the Great during the fourteenth century which was continued by his successors. The Jews were allowed many privileges and under such conditions, Jewish self-government flourished. The Jews of the entire Polish Empire, Poland, Little Poland, Lithuania, and Russia were dealt with as a unity. The king imposed taxes and legislated for the entire Jewish community. The "Council of Four Lands" imposed the share of the tax on each community. It carried out the law of the land with regard to trade and living conditions. It also promulgated its own social, political, and economic laws. It also served as the supreme judge in all legal cases among the Jews and ever so often between Jew and non-Jew.

This organization of the entire East European Jewish community into a self-ruling body began to disintegrate toward the end of the middle ages. Again it is not our task to go into too great detail of Jewish history, but it is worth mentioning in passing that the Sabbati-zvi movement which split the Jewish community into warring factions, the partition of Poland into three parts which served to destroy the "council of the Four Lords" led to the breakdown of the bonds within the integrated Jewish community of the middle ages. These facts together with the rise of the "Age of Reason" and its culmination in the French Revolution served to destroy completely the middle age organization of the Jews. The last person to be looked up to by the Jews as the successor of the "Council of Four Lords" and the leader of the entire European Jewish community was the Gaon Elijah of Vilna.

### III THE JEWS SINCE THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

The French Revolution which was based in principle upon "reason" and "equality of man" answered the problem of the exclusivism of the Jewish people by denying that exclusivism, at least in principle. During the French Revolution the question of the status of the Jew came up before the National Assembly. This question was answered by a citizen Duport of the Jacobin Club in the following manner. "I believe that freedom of worship does not permit any distinction in the political rights of citizens on account of their creed...I demand that...a decree be passed that the Jews of France enjoy the privileges of full citizenship." Judaism was relegated to nothing more than the frame of a distinct religious creed. There were Catholics, Protestants, Deists, and Jews in France. They were all Frenchmen and citizens. During the excesses of the revolution religious Jews were persecuted by the government. However, they were persecuted not as Jews, but as oppositionists to the God of Reason.

This was the legal answer of the French Revolution to the Jewish problem during its moments of extreme devotion to the principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. It is in the light of this democratic ideal that we can appreciate the Haskalah and the reform assimilationist movement among the Jews of Germany during the nineteenth century.

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\* Jews were also every now and then sought out during the height of the revolution and pumelled with rocks by peasants who interpreted the revolution as an opportunity to get back at the Lords and the peasant petite bourgeois elements of the community, particularly the Jews. However, the Jews who suffered at the hands of the enraged peasants suffered because at that point the dialectic of revolution had led the revolution momentarily to a post bourgeois stage. Some Jews were bourgeois exploiters of the peasants, again through no fault of their own, and the peasant sought simple revenge.

The Haskalah movement flowed logically from the philosophy of "Reason." All men were equal and therefore by right one people. If the Jews could throw off their narrow-mindedness, their in-group feeling, and learn the language of the land, the people of the land would accept the Jews as equal citizens, Moses Mendelsohn translated the bible into German. This Bibel became the text of the Hebrew schools and introduced the Jewish children to the German language. In one generation, the Haskalah movement turned into a religious reform movement and assimilationist movement. The German Jews thought that the millenium had come. The democratic ideal guaranteed the Jews equality if only they could learn the ways of the land. They reached for the highest position within the German intellectual society. They aspired to enter into high positions within the German, economic ruling class. Being of the middle class, they looked down upon the rising German proletariat, and the German peasantry. They sought to prove their gentility by joining the exploiters of the masses. However, the democratic ideal did not guarantee a democratic reality.

The democratic ideal concretized in the demand for Liberty, Equality and Fraternity was utilized by the rising bourgeoisie as a theoretical justification for their own enfranchisement, and their usurpation of political power from the hands of the King and the feudal aristocracy. However, once the bourgeois revolution was over, the democratic ideal was forgotten by the new ruling class. True democracy for the proletariat, peasantry, and all oppressed minorities fell short of realization. The new economic structure brought new economic ills, capitalist crises, unemployment, capitalist exploitation of the masses. The need for a scapegoat remained and to complement the new economic ills, anti-semitism tried and true continued in existence. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, when Jewish national sentiment was beginning to awake, there still remained a strong anti-semitic feeling in Germany.

In Poland and Russia, the Haskalah movement also made some inroads into the Jewish community, but not to the same extent and not in the same assimilationist form. In these countries, the anti-semitic movement was even stronger than in Germany.

In the wake of the French Revolution there followed the spirit of democracy. But the spirit of nationalism followed as well. This too had its effect upon Jewish life, particularly in the very late nineteenth century and in the twentieth century when Jewry became more and more disillusioned with a democratic assimilationist solution to the Jewish problem.

Napoleon, the Stalin of the French revolution, at first favored the organization of Europe into large national states, and the organization of people into national units so that he could best administrate them through a central authority. This policy turned into a boomerang against the Emperor when the national leaders turned against the Emperor. He favored a form of national organization of the Jews as well in his proposal for the calling of a Sanhedrin. It was his plan to bring over to his side and under his aegis the Eastern Jews as well as the French Jews by inviting them to join the Sanhedrin. However, the Sanhedrin was as short lived as the Emperor himself. Even shorter.

\* It was against these Jewish "strainers" that Karl Marx fulminated.

The nationalist feeling made stronger headway among the other nationalities on the European continent, who were living on their own soil. These nationals were living in cultural, political, social and economic proximity to one another. Among the Jews, however, the desire to solve the Jewish problem democratically, in the manner prescribed by the French Revolution, generally dominated. This was particularly true in the economically and politically more progressive countries like Germany and France. However, in the economically and politically more backward countries of Eastern Europe, in the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Empire, where the anti-semitic movements were strongest and Jews suffered most, the nationalist aspiration ultimately prevailed. The "Love of Zion" movement began in Russia at the close of the nineteenth century as a cry against the Russian pogroms. Where the Jew suffered most, his nationalist aspirations were strongest. Where the Jew suffered least, the democratic assimilationist solution to the Jewish problem prevailed. It is symptomatic, that even among the Jews of Russia who espoused socialism, nationalist sentiment remained. Thus the Bundists were territorialists. The obverse also prevailed for even the Zionist movement had its socialism from the militant and Marxian Left Poale Zion to the reformist socialist Right Poale Zion.

#### ARE THE JEWS A NATION?

The discussion as to whether the Jews constitute a nation has been going on since the days of the French Revolution. To this day sociologists have arrived at a conclusive statement on this matter. This is due to the manner in which the question is posed. The analysis of the problem usually starts with a statement of the criteria of nationality. "A nation must possess its own territory, its own government, its own languages, culture, history, tradition, and must have a common social origin." Then the question is posed. "Are the Jews a nation?" One sociologist replies, "Yes, the Jews are a nation. They have a common racial origin, common tradition, culture, history, and even a common language in Hebrew or Yiddish or Spaniole. The next sociologist then says: "But they have no territory of their own, no political state. Therefore they are not a nation."

This is a very casuistic, fallacious, and unreal method of procedure. Students, thinking along the lines of Aristotelian logic of proceeding from the general to the particular fall into this pitfall. The following is a more sensible and democratic approach to the problem of nationalism. This approach is the only one worthy of true liberal and socialist thinkers. We should consider and treat as a nation all those people who wish to live a national existence. All people who are emotionally moved to band together on one territory, under one state, to use a common language, continue the development of a common culture and tradition and write a common history are democratically entitled to live that way, and are to be dealt with as a national group. It follows from this that if there are Jews who wish to live together as a national group, it is the democratic task of a socialist to aid these Jews in the realization of their national aspiration.

However, the moot question in regard to Jewish nationalism is exactly what are the national sentiments among the Jews of the world. It is to be recognized that generally the national feeling among the Jews the world over is by far weaker than the nationalist feeling of other groups because of the extraordinary history of the Jews, and the fact that they are a cosmopolitan people. The desire to live as a national group, as we have defined it, on a common territory, and under a common government is not a popular mass desire.



What the Jews of the world really want is the right to live wherever they are without the perpetual fear of anti-semitism. Even the Eastern European Jews who have suffered most as Jews would in all probability prefer migration to the U.S. if they were given a choice of migrating to Palestine or to the U.S. As a matter of fact Palestine arose as the main center of Jewish immigration from Eastern Europe after the doors of the United States were closed to Jewish immigrants by the Johnson Immigration law in the mid-twenties. Yet it must also be recognized that among the more downtrodden Jews of Eastern Europe a great many desire to live a nationalist existence. However as the democratic assimilationist solution to the Jewish problem has proven itself ineffectual in a capitalist world so must the nationalist solution to the Jewish problem remain ineffectual in capitalist society in general and particularly right now in a war torn world which is led by British imperial foreign policy. Either solution of the Jewish problem can be brought about only through a previous struggle for socialism.

Footnote:

There are some members of the Workers Party who have expressed the opinion that our party ought to come out with slogans and support for a movement to transport the remaining Jews of Eastern Europe to Palestine in order to build up in a bi-national Palestinian state a Jewish national center. Their argument is that so long as the national desire to go to Palestine exists among European Jewry we ought to lead this movement and in this way channelize it into revolutionary socialist channels.

The thesis that it is wise revolutionary policy to lead a nationalist movement into a revolutionary socialist channel is a very sound one. However the fact that there exists among the Jews of Europe a desire to return to Palestine en masse to the exclusion of any other solution to the Jewish problem is very erroneous. Were the Jews of Europe really given an opportunity to act freely and were they given a choice of movement and migration, the Jews of Europe would act in divers manners. Such a program as suggested by these comrades would only serve to foist nationalism, as we have defined it previously in this essay, onto the shoulders of European Jewry.

We have until now presented the national and sociological background to the Jewish problem, and the proposed solutions to this problem with hardly any mention of the role that socialism plays in the true solution of the Jewish problem. This is merely a method of presentation. In actuality as we have already mentioned in the last paragraph, socialism is the key to the solution of anti-semitism. Let us now mention the position of revolutionary socialism on national movements and minority problems.

It behooves revolutionary socialists dealing with national questions to realize that the final goal of socialism is something quite opposed to national sentiment. The struggle for a proletarian socialist state is the struggle for an international political economic order. One of the aspirations of socialism is to do away with national sentiment and to teach the peoples of the world that the highest level of human devotion is a devotion to the human race at large and not to any particular national group. We do not advocate national sentiment. However, and this however must perforce weigh heavily upon the practical considerations of a socialist movement in dealing with national situations, we must deal with them as part of the reality with which we have to work in order to evolve our eventual socialist order. We must not refuse to recognize the existence of a nationalist movement, if and when it exists because nationalism plays no role in our ultimate socialist ideals.

During the last war, the question of how to deal with national minorities was taken upon in debate by Lenin and Luxemburg. Rosa Luxemburg argued that the progressive role which nationalism played in the nineteenth century was a thing of the past. Today the world is moving on to an international socialist order and consequently nationalist aspirations were reactionary. The Polish self-determination and the Luxemburgists opposed Ukrainian self-determination. Instead they advocated the inclusion of these territories into a workers' state which would not oppress them economically and politically, and would grant them equal political rights.

Lenin disagreed and argued against Luxemburg. One cannot destroy national sentiment from above by decree. Such an attempt would only arouse the oppressed minorities against the revolution. Where nationalist feelings exist, one must work with them as part of reality. The revolutionary vanguard among the workers must channelize the nationalist pressures in a revolutionary socialist channel. The revolutionist must explain to the oppressed Poles and Ukrainians that their nationalist aspiration for political and social equality can only be realized under an international socialist economic order. It was capitalist society that oppressed them. A workers' order is not an oppressive order. The Poles and Ukrainians could realize their nationalist aspirations by a struggle on the side of the revolutionary vanguard of Russia, and by cooperating within the international socialist order. It is this Leninist position which the Workers Party accepts. It is the position of merging the nationalist struggle in the struggle for socialism. We do not advocate national sentiment but we essay a working arrangement with it wherever possible. As our socialist economy strikes deeper roots, the capitalist superstructure part of which is national sentiment, will rapidly disappear.

In our approach to whatever elements there are among the oppressed of world Jewry which desire to live a national existence, we must use this Leninist approach. The only realistic approach to the realization of their nationalist aspiration is through their alignment with the revolutionary forces fighting for socialism.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AMONG THE JEWS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

The circumstances and political sentiments which prevailed among the Jews in the past World War I and pre-World War II period generally mirrored the strength of revolutionary socialist movement all over the world.

In the early years after the Bolshevik Revolution, Bolshevism and labor zionism made great progress among the Jewish people of Europe. The illegalization of anti-semitism in communist Russia left a strong and favorable impression upon the Jewish masses. However, with the deepening of capitalist crisis, the advent of counter-revolution, and the coming into power of fascism and Hitler, a wave of pessimism and defeatism swept over the Jewish community. Mimicing the anti-semitism of Hitler, the small central European countries at the instigation of the Nazis brought down over the head of the Jews anti-semitic persecutions which in many instances superceded medeavel persecution of the Jews in harshness and bestiality. This point needs no further elaboration for a reader of the daily press.

Out of the deep-rooted crisis among European Jewry, Revisionism, Jewish Fascism, gained a constantly increasing following, during the Thirties. Like other national fascist organizations, the Revisionists proceeded to glorify the Jewish People as a "People". And in true Hitlerian fashion, preached the insignificance of the person in relation to the national group. The Revisionists adopted the most opportunistiq policy of aligning themselves with elements from all economic classes espousing most reactionary anti-labor politics. and of fighting against the progressive national aspirations of other people.\*

With the degeneration of the Russian Workers' State and the Communist Party, the Jewish labor movement became more and more a reformist movement. Thus at the outbreak of World War II, even the Left Poale Zion, a one-time member of the Communist International during the lifetime of Lenin, came out in support of the imperialist camp of Britain and the United States against Germany, ostensibly to help in the fight against anti-semitism and Hitler.

In the United States, three thousand miles away from the fulcrum of anti-semitism, a parallel development took place although not with the same intensity. The United States was effected by the deepening capitalist crisis. However, of all the capitalist nations it suffered last and least. The Nazi ideology of race hatred brewed in the United States, and found its ways into the highest places, even the Congress and state legislatures. Yet in no way was it comparable to the annihilatory anti-semitism of Germany. American anti-semitism was the milder form of anti-semitism which flourished on such signs as "no dogs and Jews allowed", "restricted clientele," and "only Christians need apply". The American scene had and still has its own exclusive "Jews", the Negro people. The American crisis was not deep enough to require another major scapegoat.

\* At the time of this writing, the latest development within this fascist movement has been the organization of a "Hebrew committee of National Liberation". The committee demands the recognition of the stateless Jews of Europe as a Hebrew nation, one of the nations constituting the United Nations. By this recognition it hopes to speak in the name of the European Jews although the Jews have never delegated them such authority. It offers complete support to the capitalist war effort of the allies in return for the independent organization of a Jewish army and the recognition of Palestine as the Jewish Nationalist home, thus making the Palestinian arabs second rate citizens or

In the early twenties, the Jewish labor movement in the United States grew, again as a result of the Bolshevik Revolution. The Jewish needle trades union expanded. The Zionist movement in the United States developed predominantly into a philanthropic Zionist movement. American Jewry sent money to Palestine to purchase the land for European Jewry. It preferred, however, to remain in the land discovered by Columbus. Zionism as a national movement as we have previously defined it was virtually non-existent. This again serves to corroborate our previously stated rule that in the countries where anti-semitism was weakest, national sentiment was also weakest. During the Thirties when even the mighty United States began to suffer from the crisis, anti-semitism became more virulent. Revisionism raised its head particularly among the more recently migrated members of the Jewish committees, the Jews who still smelled Poland on their breaths. Most of the Jewish working class joined the bandwagon of the ever popular reformism of Roosevelt's New Deal. This process was aided by the degeneration of the Communist Party.

The wealthy capitalist elements of the Jewish-American community, with ostrich-like simplicity, buried their heads in the exclusive clubs which would accept them and refused to see the rising anti-semitic movement in the United States. Their class solidarity superceded their racial sentiments to the point of resenting the presence of the lowly Jewish immigrant who always brings on anti-semitism.

The prospect of a rise in anti-semitic sentiment in a post-war capitalist America is very great. With the economic disillusion which must undoubtedly prevail after the war, the threat of fascism will rise. Fascism breeds anti-semitism. The danger of anti-semitism is particularly great because many Americans consider this as a war to save the Jews from the hands of Hitler. A wave of anti-semitism swept the United States after the last war. The wave that will follow this war must be higher because the capitalist crisis is now deeper. This must happen unless the union movement and the prospects for a worker will grow in the post-war period.

A statement of the conditions of World Jewry is hardly complete without analyzing the scene in Palestine or as the Zionist Jews call the country - Eretz Israel - the Land of Israel.

The Jewish community of Palestine consists predominantly of Jewish refugees from Poland, Russia and Germany. These Jews have returned to Palestine as a last haven of refuge against the scourge of anti-semitism, and anti-semitism as we have defined it is not existent in Palestine. However, hatred of Jews exists in the form of the hatred of one third of the population, the Jewish population, by two thirds of the population, the Arab population. The ever-recurrent Arab-Jewish riots are an outcome of this hatred.

That the Arab-Jewish animosity and the difficulties facing the Jewish settlement in Palestine is partly due to the underhand back stabbing of British Imperial policy can be deduced from many considerations. Britain still follows its old imperial policy of "Divide and rule." perfidious Albion has much at stake in Palestine, the crossroad between the East and the West. Since the independence of Egypt from the British Empire, Palestine has become very important to England as an east Mediterranean naval base. Palestine is perfectly situated on the hub of Asia minor, and is growing rapidly as a shipping center. Haifa is one of the latest ports in the Near East and will undoubtedly become the largest port in Asia Minor. Tel Aviv is also expanding as a shipping center. Palestine is similarly well suited as an air base for \* cont'd - eventually no citizens at all in the land of their birth. The WP should exert a special effort to fight this extreme nationalist organization among the unsuspecting Jews who equate the "Hebrew Committee" with other national committees, with the underground movements of Europe, with Liberalism

post war commercial and military avaratum. The Mosul pipe line empties into Haifa.

The Balfour Declaration was issued during the last war at a time when the allied fortunes of war were at their lowest ebb. In 1917, French soldiers were deserting, Russian forces were leaving the war, American strength was not yet felt. Britain needed a friend even if it was only the Jewish population of Europe and America. Today Britain wishes to do business with the Arab world, and therefore Britain realized that it must return to its old policy of playing politics with the reactionary feudal leaders of the East. Before World War I, Britain was pro-Ottoman and supported the Sultan against the Christian crusaders. Now the Sultan is no more but there are Arab Kings, Ibu Saud of Saudi Arabia, King Flesal of Egypt, Abdulla of Transjordan, Faesal of Iraq. Britain regrets its Balfour Commitment and hopes to negate it by pointing at the Arab animosity against Jewish migration. Britain therefore continued to encourage the reactionary Arab leaders by dealing leniently with Arab brigands and rioters.

However, to an even greater extent, the troubles of Jewish community of Palestine are due to efforts of Zionist movement itself. In spite of the differences between the various Zionist parties, the sum total of the Zionist effort up until now has been to make all of Palestine a nationalist Jewish state. Dr. Helder, an ex-chairman of the Zionist executive put the aim of Zionism into the following words. "There can be only one national home in Palestine and that a Jewish one, and no equality in the partnership between the Jews and Arabs, but a Jewish preponderance as soon as the number of the race are sufficiently increased." This arrogant usurping attitude of the immigrant Jewish community has made the ear of peasant Arab fellahin docile to the fulmination of the reactionary Arab leaders against the Jews.

The Jewish community under the guidance of the Vaad Leumi, and the Zionist executive adopted a policy of "Kibbush Avodah" whereby the Jews were given preference in employment and Arabs were hired only as a second choice. Even those Arabs who were hired by Jews were hired on a lower wage scale. For example: Whereas permanent Jewish workers in orange groves were paid from 200 to 300 mills per day before the 1936 Arab riots, permanent Arab workers were paid from 150-200 mills per day.

The land buying policy of the J.N.F. for the exclusive use of Jewish immigrants also seized to arouse the animosity of the Arabs. Although the Arabs receives payment for the Arab land, the fellah very often felt that he was being done out of his holding. Most of the Arab fellahin are in debt to usurers and so little of the selling price remained with them. As the fellah couldn't compete with the subsidized farm land of the JNF, he faced the prospect of second rate economic citizenship unless he too could receive some form of monetary or technological subsidation which he saw no prospect of receiving. Many Arabs became landless. Those Arabs who migrated to urban communities found that most industry was in the hands of the Jews and because of the Jewish discriminatory practices in hiring labor they were the first to suffer from depression, the first to be unemployed. Under such conditions it was quite simple for the Arab ruling class to arouse the Arab against the Jew.

There is a stock answer to the Arab question which is circulated among Zionist circles. It sounds something like the following - actually the Arab masses have gained much by Jewish immigration into Palestine. With Jewish immigration came capital subsidization via the JNF. The land was developed eco-

nomically. Arid lands were reclaimed, industry was introduced and the demand for labor rose. Hospitals were built and disease was fought. The wages and standard of living of Palestinian Arab population has doubled since the last war. The Palestinian Arabs have gained from Jewish immigration into Palestine.

Like the best of lies this too is a half truth, and like half truths this argument is a great lie. The presentation of statistical data that the standard of living of the Arab has risen by a certain percent or that his rate of birth has risen does not soothe the fears of an Arab when he is the first one to be discharged from his job when a depression sets in. When he is forced out of his land by a usurer who sells it to a Jew, the harnessing of the Jordan for electrification doesn't release his anxiety. The relegation to second rate economic citizenship of the Arab masses by Jewish immigrants still serves to antagonize him. The relative economic position of the Arab masses has fallen even if the absolute economic conditions of some individual Arabs has risen.

The Jews of Palestine must wean the Arabs from the political control of their reactionary landlords and usurers. This can be done for the economic welfare of the Arab population is quite compatible with economic expansion and the increased immigration of European Jews. The Jewish Kvu-Zot movement instead of ignoring the Arab ought to come to his aid and wean him from his effendi. The abolition of the Kibbush Avodah policy, and the subsidization of Arab agriculture through the establishment of Arab-Jewish colonies would help show the Arab that his real friend can be the western Jew who has come to modernize his country and raise him out of his economic depravity. His own effendi however wants only to collect rent and exploit him.

This attempt, which until now has been quite successful, to relegate the Arab masses into a position of second rate economic citizenship, has militated against the even expansion of the Palestinian economy. It has set up a condition whereby two economies, almost independent of each other exist side by side.

The Arab economy is primarily agricultural and technologically backward. It follows along the method of agriculture traditional in the East for the last thousand years. No modern machinery is used, and the high labor cost and low produce yield account for by the low standard of living of the Arab. This indigenous Arab agriculture grows most of the cereal of the country, and also some milk, eggs, fruit and vegetables. To a limited extent Arab producers of vegetables compete with Jewish producers of vegetables. However to the greatest extent Arab farmers produce for Arab consumption. Arab also own about 40% of the countries citriculture.

The Jewish economy is also predominantly agricultural. However it makes full use of modern technological methods. It produces a little cereal, but specializes mainly in mixed farming as dairy farming, poultry, fruits and vegetables. Jewish farmers also control the major part of the citriculture of the country. Like the Arab economy, the Jewish economy also produces primarily for the Jewish community.

In the last two decades, the industry of the country has expanded by leaps and bounds, and it is 80% controlled by Jewish private capital which has been brought into the country. The number of factories and workshops

with more than five employees grew from 1,794 in 1921 to 4,615 in 1935. During that time the number of workers increased eight fold and the amount of capital increased twenty fold. Although the 1936 riots brought a halt to the rapid expansion of Palestinian industry, the present war has again accelerated the expansion of industry in Palestine.

The splitting of the Palestinian economy into two sections has served to retard the possible expansion of the Palestinian economy. It has first of all limited the market of agriculture and industry by keeping the standard of living of the Arab down. It has further forced the duplication of effort in some economic activities such as marketing, and even more in transportation.\* An Economic Survey of Palestine written in 1938 has the following to say about transportation: "With about half of the population still sunk in the rut of primitive production, it is not to be wondered at that the road and rail traffic in the country is extremely limited. If the Jews would awaken the Arab to the need of industrialization, to the need of new roads, it would facilitate the expansion of the country immensely." Furthermore the ever recurrent riots which can be traced back ultimately to the discrimination against the Arab masses economically serve to retard the expansion of the country's economy. Because of the uncertainty that it engenders investment falls off. Immigration ceases, the consumers market contracts.

One thing can be said with certainty about the Jewish "Yisshuv" in Palestine. If the Jewish Yisshuv is to increase continuously and constantly, the expansion of the economy agriculturally and industrially must go on continuously. Palestine is a small country about one fifth the size of New York State. If it is to support a population of several million, it must be highly industrialized. As the country does not possess the basic industrial natural resources like coal, iron and steel, it must gear its industrialization towards the higher levels of industry, towards consumer production. Immigration statistics for Palestine show a direct correlation to the industrial expansion of the economy. According to Horowitz and Hinden, (Economic Survey of Palestine) "The peaks and troughs of immigration into Palestine correspond exactly with the fluctuation in general prosperity in Palestine." From 1932 to 1935, Palestine experienced its greatest prosperity, at a time when the rest of the world was suffering from the 1929 recession. Terms of trade was favorable to Palestine because the Palestinian pound linked to English sterling was depreciated. There occurred a large influx of foreign capital. Imports were cheap. There was a boom in the citrus industry. During this period Jewish immigration into Palestine rose to the highest level ever experienced by the country. In 1935, close to 40,000 Jewish immigrants came to the country. In 1936 the country suffered a recession and immigration immediately fell off.

The most significant fact about the Arab-Jewish riots in Palestine is that they always occurred at a time when the country was suffering from a depression. The Arab-Jewish riot of 1936 occurred in the first year of a recession in Palestine. In 1929 a world recession was taking place, and 1921 the post World War I recession was being enacted on the world scene. The Arabs were generally the first to suffer as we have already mentioned, and hatred of Jews was the outcome of the depression. The riots in turn engendered further recession because the "uncertain condition" stopped foreign capital from entering the country. The building industry which is a labor intensive industry and consequently does much to raise the effective demand of the internal Palestinian market stopped expanding. Consequently unemployment opportunities fell off and immigration suffered.

\*Horowitz & Hinden - "Economic Survey of Palestine"



Can a capitalist Palestine guarantee a continuous expansion of the Palestinian economy? To date it has proven itself incapable of rising to such a task. Palestine is a small and non-sufficient country. It must therefore, under ordinary courses of events, be materially effected by the economic conditions beyond her boundary. In a world fraught with capitalist crises, Palestine too must suffer. Because of capitalist crises, and because the present Jewish leadership is incapable of solving the Arab-Jewish problem, the future of Palestine looks black for both the Jews and the Arabs. Only a workers' Palestine, with the proletariat at the head of a planned economy can a continuous expansion of the Palestinian economy be assured. Only a government of Arab and Jewish farmers and laborers can resolve race hatred in Palestine. Only a workers' Palestine shall be able to expand the Jewish Yisshuv in Palestine.

Many Jewish sources have conveyed the impression to the world that the economy in Palestine today is a special type of equalitarian socialist economy, a type of economy which is admired by both the capitalist Jews of America and the poor working class Jews of Europe. The scent of socialism that is so agreeable to American philanthropy is to be found in the cooperative "Kvutzot" of Palestine. These agricultural establishments produce and consume cooperatively. However they trade with outsiders on a capitalist basis and of course run their cooperatives on a profit basis. Only a fool female philanthropist and a utopian youth can see no difference between cooperatives and socialism.\* Were there any real dangers of Palestine turning socialist through the effort of the Zionist movement, the flow of American money would cease overnight.

But the extent of the Palestinian economy proceeds far beyond the cooperatives. This movement has made a strong inroad into the large farms devoted to mixed farming. However, citriculture is predominantly owned by private enterprise, and industry is owned almost exclusively by private English and Jewish capitalists. As the country becomes more industrialized private capital producing for a profit and subject to all the laws of capitalist production becomes more strongly embedded in the roots of the economy. There can be no socialist Palestine in a capitalist world. There can be no workers' state in a near east dominated by British imperialism.

#### THE POLITICAL SCENE IN PALESTINE

In spite of imperialist chicanery of Britain in establishing a Jewish National State, the Jewish community of Palestine is united behind the Allied war effort ostensibly supporting the lesser enemy of the Jews against the greatest enemy, Adolph Hitler. The political scene is completely social patriotic and even the Shomer Hatzair, the most left Zionist group supports the Allied effort. Although the British government has no legal power to draft soldiers from the Palestinian population, the Jewish community has taken all steps to railroad men into the army. The Jewish agency, the Histadruth, the Tel Aviv municipality discharge all employees who do not present themselves to Jewish recruiting bodies. Application for admission to the Hebrew University and to the Technological institute of Haifa must present certificates of exemption from military service.

\* See Karl Minter on how the JNF discriminates against the Kvutzot and favors private entrepreneurs in granting loans.



All the Zionist organizations assume capitalist society as a premise for the Jewish state to which they aspire, with the exception of the Hashomer Hatzair, the Stalinist Left Poale Zion. When one further recognizes that JNF the gradient of Zionist activity is committed to the support of capitalism, one is left with little hope for the socialization of the present Zionist effort. This capitalist policy coupled with national discrimination against Arabs practiced by all groups with the exception of the Hashomer in their "Kibbush Avodah" policy of giving employment preference to Jews and keeping Arabs out of Jewish unions is to be descried and fought against by Jewish socialist and revolutionists.

However in spite of all this sycophancy on the part of the Jewish Palestinian population to British imperialism and capitalism, the truth is clear to anyone who truly comprehends the political situation in Palestine, so long as British power is intact in the Near East and so long as capitalist politics prevails in that part of the world, His Majesty's government will look with disfavor upon a Jewish state and will fan the flames of race hatred between Arabs and Jews. Consequently there can be no independent state in Palestine.

#### REVOLUTIONARY SOLUTION TO THE JEWISH PROBLEM

First and foremost it must be stressed again and again in our approach to the socially oppressed Jewish masses and the Jewish proletariat that anti-semitism is part and parcel of the large bag of ills concomitant with the capitalist economic order. In any economy of scarcity and plenty, in a society whose individuals are burdened with trials and tribulations, a scapegoat is often necessary. If there exists a group within society which because of its abnormal social existence can best be singled out as a scapegoat, it will be persecuted as such. The solution to the Jewish problem therefore lies on the road to the solution of the plethora of social and economic problems caused by the inadequacy of capitalism. Its solution lies on the road to socialism. It therefore behooves the Jewish masses and the Jewish proletariat to align themselves with the forces struggling for Socialism with the vanguard of the proletariat in the struggle for the abolition of capitalism, with the Fourth International and with parties like the Workers Party.

For those Jews who have national aspirations and wish to live a nationalist existence it must be pointed out that the realization of their aspirations is not possible under a capitalist order. If they try to establish a Jewish national state under the aegis of a capitalist power and capitalist social order, they are only fooling themselves for such an effort will not solve the basic problem of anti-semitism the world over. They can only realize their aspiration by aligning themselves with those forces that struggle for an international socialist economy.

To those Jews the world over and in Palestine who look towards the present Zionist effort for a solution to the Jewish problem, the inadequacy of the present Zionist movements must be explained. All the Zionist organizations support Great Britain in the war. So long as Great Britain will have its say over the Near East, an independent state in Palestine is mere chimera and wishful thinking. A prerequisite for a genuine independent Palestinian state is the destruction of British imperial power.

The controlling forces in the Zionist organization favor capitalism and in this way abet a social condition which gives birth to anti-semitism. These same Zionist leaders multiply the difficulties facing the construction of an independent state in Palestine by their anti-Arab policy and their demand

for a Jewish national state. In a country where two thirds of the population is Arab and one-third is Jewish a bi-national state or a Palestinian state is the only sensible and just possibility. Such a state in a progressive socialist order would in no way militate against the reconstruction of a Jewish national cultural existence.

#### SLOGANS

1. The struggle for socialism is the struggle against anti-semitism.
2. Open the doors of the world to Jewish refugees as well as to all political refugees.
3. For the right of the Jews and Arabs, the population of Palestine to create a Palestinian state independent of the British Empire.
4. All organized and individual forms of anti-semitism are to be declared a state offense.
5. For the organization of Jewish defense guards with the aid of the labor trade union movement wherever anti-semitism raises its head.
6. For the peaceful co-existence of all nations in an international socialist order.

\* \* \*

Eugene Vaughn