

A council communist class analysis of Palestine/Israël (1935)

The proletariat

“cannot side either with the Arabs or with the Jews; it can take up neither for the division of the soil nor for its control thru the feudal masters or jewish societies. It can only be completely internationalistic and thus completely immune to all palestinian conflicts. It has to attack the most immediate direct exploiter without regard for the consequences on the national plane” (Conclusion).

THE LAND OF PROMISE

Report from Palestine

The reports on the new situation in Palestine generally speak of the building up of the country by way jewish capital and jewish labour, of the resulting prosperity, of the more or less uniform participation in this prosperity by the entire jewish people, and of the good prospects for a more and more extensive happy development. These-reports are the more calculated to arouse comment and hopes as for some time now in the other countries the lot of the working class and middle bourgeois elements is an increasingly wretched one. Throughout the world, as the crisis continues, products and means of production are being destroyed. Everywhere unemployment reigns, and the masses are looking forward apathetically to a new world war. Only Palestine, the country in process of building up, is said to form an exception.

In Palestine, the moneys of jewish and british capitalists are being turned to account. Toward Palestine press the increasingly impoverished jewish artisans and workers from Eastern Europe and the U.S.A., the arab nomads and peasants, the oriental Jews. With the setting in of the crisis and with the advance of monopolization, a migration to Palestine arose thru the growth of Fascism with the accompanying impoverishment of the jewish middle stratum, as in Germany, thru anti-Semitism. In these countries a nationalistic sentiment takes form among the Jews; and there is a strengthening of the same sentiment among the Arabs, among whom a great national movement had existed as early as 1917.

[Politics]

Zionism or Palestinism, the national movement of the jewish masses, is divided into various parties. corresponding to the class stratification. There are two democratic-liberal parties, which arose thru the split in the party of the “General Zionists”. The smaller of the two new parties stands closer to the fascists, the larger to the labour party. There is a large fascist party, the "Revisionists", with a few small splinter groups in its train. Furthermore, a large clerical party of the "Misrachi". The labour party (MAPAI) and the "General Federation of Jewish Labour in the Land of Israel" (Histadruth) are reformist-nationalistic. To these may be added also a reformist organization ("HashomerHazair") made up of the members of the agrarian labour communes; various youth organizations; and a women's organization ("Wizo").

All these groups advocate immigration of the Jews of all countries to Palestine. This immigration is opposed only by the illegal group of the Comintern (PCP).

[Geography]

Palestine is bounded on the west by the Mediterranean Sea, on the north by Mount Lebanon, on the east by the River Jordan and on the south by the desert of Sinai. It has an area of about 10,000 square miles.

From west to east, Palestine is divided into three plains which run approximately parallel to the seacoast. In the west, the fertile lowland; in the middle, the highlands; and in the east, the Jordan depression. The central highlands attain an elevation of 2500 feet. The surface of the Dead Sea, into which the Jordan issues, lies about 1300 feet below sea level.

[History]

Within the Ottoman Empire, Palestine consisted of a few administrative districts (vilayets) of the Turkish province of Syria. After the War, and the Arab uprising, Palestine was separated from the other Arab countries and made a British mandate territory, which was to be administered by England under the League of Nations. (The same sort of thing occurred with the northern part of Syria, which was divided into four parts and placed under a French mandate.) The mandate over Palestine goes back to the Balfour Declaration, (November 2, 1917), according to which the government of His British Majesty looked with favour upon the establishment in Palestine of "a National Home for the Jewish people, ... it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and the political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country".

[Government]

The government for Palestine is located in Jerusalem. It consists of the High Commissioner and his three leading officials and the department heads. The government is subordinate to the Colonial Office in London, to which all laws must be submitted for approval. In Jerusalem is located also the headquarters of the English aerial and land troops. Jerusalem is connected with the two other large cities, Haifa and Jaffa-Tel-Aviv, by good automobile roads and a railway.

[Traffic]

Jaffa is mainly a port for the orange export trade. Haifa, whose harbour has been improved, is at the same time a base of the British Mediterranean fleet. Into Haifa runs the southern arm of the pipe line which brings the oil from Mosul to the sea; the northern arm passes through mandate territory of France. There are also a few airports of the lines running between Europe and South Africa and Europe and Eastern Asia. Further airports are being planned.

[Borders]

On the eastern boundary of Palestine is the Transjordan, which likewise is administered under an English mandate, and by the same High Commissioner in Jerusalem. In Transjordan also "reigns" the Emir Abdullah, a brother of Feisal. In the southwest, Palestine borders on Egypt. A railway line connects Cairo by way of Jaffa with Haifa and Jerusalem; it is joined onto the Hejaz Railway and has a bus connection with Bagdad and Beirut. Palestine is thus

an important part of the British Empire, for communication by water as well as by land, and — still more important today — by air.

[Language]

The officially recognized languages are English, Arabic and Hebrew. English is hardly spoken except by the higher officials; the rest of the population speaks Arabic, except for the Jewish youth and the Oriental Jews who speak Hebrew. The Jewish population also speaks the languages of their country of origin, and mostly Yiddish. The Jewish press, however, comes out in Hebrew.

[Population]

The population of Palestine, according to the government census of Oct. 23, 1922, was distributed as follows: Rural — 389,534; Urban — 264,317; Nomads — 103,331; a total of 757,182.

In 1934, the racial division of the population was estimated as: Arabs — 870,000, and Jews — 310,000.

[Economy - Arab]

The methods of production in Palestine are in part still biblical in their primitiveness. Among the Arab nomad tribes the closed family economy (clan) is dominant. This form is breaking up, thru sale of animals and lands, into wage labour. A large part of the Arab agriculture is still reminiscent of the Middle Ages and Feudalism. The large landed proprietors (effendis) lease the ground to Arab peasants (fellahs), by whom it has been tilled for long generations. The rental amounts in general to one-fifth of the yield in kind. The effendi also lends money to the fellahs so that they may purchase the necessary harvesting implements. The interest rate ranges up to 150%.

The effendis form a part of the population of the Arab city, insofar as they don't prefer to consume their revenue, raked in by the overseers, in foreign parts. Some of them also sell parts of the soil and set up on the balance an intensive plantation economy. In the measure in which the effendis make the transition from leasing to running plantations, the fellahs become wage workers. A 1929 estimate proportions the soil of Palestine, from the agricultural point of view, as follows: cultivated — 5515 sq. km., cultivable, but not cultivated 3389 sq. km., uncultivable (forest and pasture land) 7750 sq. km., not specified 3346 sq. km., a total of 20,000 sq. km. The balance of 6,000 sq. km, is probably desert.

The Arab city is mainly a trading center. The inhabitants, tradesmen and artisans, are usually also land owners.

[Economy - Jewish]

The Jewish colonization began around 1880. The first Jewish villages, confronted by economic collapse, were rescued at the time by a Baron Rothschild thru the introduction of improved plants and by financial support. The first Zionist Congress was held in 1897, at which the goal proclaimed was that of "establishing for the Jewish people a publicly recognized and legally secured home in Palestine."

There is in existence a Jewish National Fund (KKL) and a Palestine Foundation Fund (KH). The KKL, which is the central land purchasing agency of the Zionist organization, was brought into being in 1902 for the purpose of acquiring land as the inalienable property of the Jewish

people. The land is purchased from the arab owners, effendis and families, clans and village Communities, and often leads to the driving off of the fellahs from the land of the effendis. In a few cases, more recently, the Arabs are left in possession of smaller surface areas, which they are now intensively cultivating with the aid of credits and modern implements. In 1934 the KKL possessed an area of 41,500 hectares. The KH began its activity in the year 1921; it finances agricultural and urban colonization, education, immigration, health, religious and communal institutions. Both funds are subject to the executive authority and the committee of action, elected by the Congress which meets every two years. The congress is elected on a democratic basis by the zionist organizations of all countries, and thereby financed: anyone who pays a shilling has the right to vote in selecting the delegates. The zionist bodies are combined with other non-zionist, but still jewish bodies to form the expanded Jewish Agency.

The jewish agricultural activity is divided between plantation economy, cereal culture and mixed farming. On the plantations (end of 1934: 15,000 hectares jewish, 10,000 hectares arab) the products are citrus fruits, almonds and wine. The operation is by estates (5 ha upward), intensive peasant farms (1.5 to 2.5 ha) and communes, (1 ha is equal to nearly 2.5 acres). In the mixed farming there is market-gardening, cattle raising for the production of milk and cheese, and poultry raising with production of eggs. In this type of farming, small peasants are dominant, and are bound together in producers' cooperatives.

The cereals are planted by the approximately 10,000 workers of the communes and workers settlements in the valley of Jezreel and by the peasants in Galilee. Agricultural settlements also exist around Haifa, Petach Tiqva, Kefr Saba and the jewish colonies, the owners of which are also engaged as workers and employees in the city. It appears, however, that these auxiliary enterprises are on the way to becoming basic.

Owing to the large amount of immigration in the last few years, there exists in Palestine an increased demand for soil for agricultural purposes and in the cities for constructions, so that land prices are gone constantly rising and land speculation has assumed an enormous scope. According to the palestinian (turkish) land law, a fourth of the purchase price must be paid and the rest in six months. The realty companies accordingly buy up land to the extent of about four times their capital. They then split it up into lots and, as is natural in view of the land hunger, sell it at a very considerable profit, thus being in a position to meet their obligations. When, however, the land hunger has a relapse — as, for example, thru the offer of cheap land and the possibility of exploiting cheap labour power on the island of Cyprus, and the companies fail to get the land off their hands, hence are unable to pay the balance due, the amount paid down is forfeited and the purchase lapses. The companies have then lost their capital, and thus arises a possibility of crisis which, in a country where land speculation plays such a dominant part, is bound to have noticeable consequences. The KKL is trying to eliminate speculation, and gives away its farms in perpetual lease. But since this Fund (as well as the KH) exists on gifts and collections, it is unable to keep pace with the land hunger. For the land hunger, like the immigration itself, is a consequence of the increasing impoverishment of the jewish masses and their fear of outright proletarianization. And the continuing impoverishment is bound to exert a restraining influence upon the money collections. Besides, the land is in the possession of the feudal nobility and its prices mount. The money at the disposal of the KKL is inadequate, and the Fund finds itself compelled to promote large land purchases of private companies, in which it acts as an intermediary. Thus speculation wins more and more influence, and the

landhungry masses of the arab and jewish country population are confronted with the task of breaking the chains of the feudal and capitalist property relations.

The most immediate consequence of these conditions is a building boom, which has been in progress in Palestine for several years. A part of the raw materials originates within the country, while lumber and iron are imported. The cement production in Palestine had increased in 1934 to 155,000 tons of which only 700 were exported while an additional 148,000 were imported.

In existence also are numerous brick factories. In line with construction, there developed a large industry for carpentry, locksmith and similar construction work. The form of operation is generally that of the workshop: the proprietor as master and about five workers; modern tools and machines; electricity for power. The constructions are carried out by building contractors, who have a staff of special workers and also engage unskilled workers according to need. The differentiation between skilled and unskilled workers is not as yet very highly developed in Palestine, since of course the jewish proletariat is only beginning to take form and had little technical experience until a few years ago. Even today the technical training, in line with the pressing demand for workers, is still very defective and the waste in production is relatively great. Recently, however, that demand has declined, and there is forming more and more rapidly an army of unskilled workers who no longer have any prospect, within the existing property relations, of "coming up". And within this army there is also to be found a *constant* number of unemployed. That is to say: the different individuals get work from time to time, and the duration of the unemployment per man is still slight, but the absolute number remains constant. The panic arising from the italo-abyssinian conflict has had its effect also in this particular, increasing the unemployment. Figures, however, cannot be given since the trade union, which alone would be in a position to represent the unemployment statistically, (obviously for nationalistic reasons) attaches no value to the matter.

An important role in the construction industry is played also by the workers' cooperatives which appear as enterprisers. They take contracts, carry out the construction works and also engage unskilled workers. All receive the same wage, and the earnings are divided among the members of the cooperative (called *kwuza*), with the exclusion of the wage workers not belonging to the *kwuza*. A wage worker can work in the *kwuza* for only a maximum of three months, after which he must either become a member and pay a contribution, or, since the contribution is usually very high, he is obliged to leave the job. Thus this rule of the trade union has an effect the opposite of that professed: instead of liberating the workers within capitalism from wage labour, it throws them back every three months onto the market. The entire jewish bus transport industry likewise is in the hands of such cooperatives; and owing to the small railway network, the bus lines are highly radiated. With the development of traffic there arose also motor-car works, though the engines are still imported. Road construction also is carried out on a large scale, mainly by the government, in part also by the communes.

A water main also is under construction from Ras el 'Ain (Jaffa) to Jerusalem. Its length is about 65 kilometers, and it rises from sea level to a height of 800 meters. This work is being carried out for the government by the federation as enterpriser. The Palestine Railways maintain very large repair shops in Haifa. The Palestine Potash Company, an english-jewish concern, has the concession for exploiting the mineral wealth of the Dead Sea, and is a modern large scale chemical enterprise. Entering upon the premises of the company is,

however, strictly forbidden (it is said to be engaged in the manufacture of war toxics). Factories for the production of artificial silk have closed down recently, because it was not possible to lower the wages of the workers sufficiently and because the working methods could not be further intensified to withstand the Japanese competition.

This entire industry is in general powered with electricity except for the rural water pumps, which in part are driven by Diesel engines. All the electric current for Palestine (apart from Jerusalem) is produced by the Palestine Electric Corporation, whose president is the former left social-revolutionary engineer Rutenberg, known for his participation in the execution of the priest Gapon. The company operates the power works with water power and Diesel engines. There is a factory and several smaller workshops for machine construction, and an iron foundry.

Joined onto agriculture is a food industry which makes fruit juices and fruit and vegetable preserves. The fruit juices are especially an important product for the Near East, since Islam forbids the use of alcohol and, owing to the climate, a great demand exists for refreshing drinks. Hence this industry exports its products also into the entire Near East. A special industry is based on olives, mainly of Syrian origin; it produces technical oils and fats, salad oils and soap.

The financing is carried out, on the one hand, thru the National Fund (purchase of ground and industrialization of agriculture) and, on the other, thru Barclay's Bank and the Anglo-Palestine Bank and its daughter enterprise, the General Mortgage Bank of Palestine. There is also a large number of credit cooperatives (agricultural and industrial) as well as speculative banks. The government bank is Barclay's.

The total value of industrial production in 1933 was 5,400,000 pounds sterling; in 1934 - 6,500,000.

Number of industrial workers: end of 1932 - 9,500; end of 1933 - 14,000; beginning of 1935 - 18,000. The total number of workers, employees, foremen, etc. engaged in the industries at the beginning of 1935 was 25,000. The total number of all Jewish workers in the country may have amounted around this time to between 70,000 and 20,000. The wages could not yet be determined; one may assume, however, an average wage of 200 mils or, roughly, \$1.00.

[Jewish – Arab relations]

The party of the "Revisionists", the fascist party of the Jews, aims to establish the Jewish state on both sides of the Jordan (hence also Transjordan.) Its program resembles that of the Italian fascists. It advocates class collaboration on the basis of the Jewish tradition. In this they have points of contact with the Misrachi, the Jewish clerical party, which watches over the Sabbath rest and over religious cooking and education, and which in these respects received at the latest Zionist congress far going concessions from the Labour party, which had almost 50% of all the representation, and from the liberal parties. The Revisionists wish to solve the question of the relations of Jews to Arabs in the sense that the Arabs in Palestine shall form a national minority with certain rights of cultural and religious autonomy under control of the Jewish state. The Revisionists have withdrawn from the general organization of the Zionists and no longer take part in the congress, but hold a congress of their own. A fraction of them, however, the Jewish State Party, has remained in the general Zionist world congress, where it forms the extreme right wing.

Every Jew in Palestine is automatically a member of the Knesset-Jisrael, an organization to which are subordinate the entire jewish educational activity, the jewish church, relief work, etc., and whose executive committee or national council represents the jewish public in dealing with the government.

The Arabs are represented before the government mainly by the Moslem Supreme Council, headed by the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. There are, however, also arab parties which had their origin in the great arab liberation movement and in the arab uprising which in 1917-18, with the support of the English, freed the arab countries from the age-long turkish oppression. But the arab bedouins and urbanites did not yet have the strength to resist the power of english and french imperialism; and these latter are much more clever than the Turks in the matter of ranging the arab countries into their world empires.

The arab parties are not as yet so much distinguished by their programs as by the families at their head. The party of the Mufti and his family, the "Party of the Palestinian People", which receives a bounty of 70,000 pounds from the Moslem Council and owns two daily papers (Al Jamea Al Shabab), aims at the independence of Palestine and the liquidation of the league-of-nations mandate: "Palestine to the Arabs", entry of Palestine into the union of the arab peoples. It maintains relations with Ibn Saud, the ruler of Hejaz. The party of the Nashashibi family, the "Party of National Defense", a sort of fascist organization which maintains relations with the king of Iraq and the Emir of Transjordan, demands the independence of Palestine, a purely arab national government, and wants to promote the development of agriculture. It has three daily newspapers (Falastin, Al Aslamiah, Adifa). A "reform party" under the leadership of Dr. Khaldis, the mayor of Jerusalem, unites the mayors and village directors of many arab communities. This organization seems to be the most modern of the arab parties and has more similarity with the party forms known from Europe. It demands the independence of Palestine in the pan-arab league of states and an alliance agreement with the English, similar to the anglo-iraq league. It rejects religious separatism between islamic and christian Arabs and combats Zionism. The arab youth organization, led by Jacob Bey Dissin, sets border guards against the illegal jewish immigration, combats in the villages the sale of land to Jews and has connections with the egyptian national circles, It was also connected with Chilmi Pasha, who founded a private bank called the "Bank of the Arab People", in order to finance purely arab land transactions. The Bank of the Arab People could not, however, overcome the distrust of the arab people and went bankrupt.

[Trade-unions and workers' parties]

There are two arab trade-union organizations, concerning which, however, little is to be learned. They are said to be conducted, on the one hand, by Jacob Bey Dissin, and on the other by Chilmi or Nashashibi, to be in vigorous competition among each other and to be a collecting center for the political parties in question. At any rate, they appear to be completely under the influence of the arab bourgeoisie.

The General Federation of Jewish Labour in Palestine (Histadrut), which is affiliated with the Amsterdam International, had increased its membership (Jan. 1, 1935) to 67,562 of which about 45,000 were urban workers.

The normal working day in Palestine is eight hours. The average wage in urban construction amounts to 400 mils per day (about \$2.00); in village construction, less. The building trades pay the highest wages.

The Histadrut publishes a daily newspaper, the "Davar" which also includes an evening edition and, every two weeks, a children's paper. All these publications appear exclusively in the Hebrew languages (and script). Thus it comes about that to a large part of the workers, who speak nothing but Yiddish, the publications of their organization are almost or quite unintelligible. And so the workers are compelled to sit once more at the school bench in order to learn the difficult language and the almost undecipherable script. (While in countries where the Latin alphabet is employed, the children learn to read and write in one year, here the process extends over about four years.)

In the year 1934 the Histadrut conducted a total of 68 strikes (in Tel-Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa and the agricultural colonies), involving 1104 workers and the loss of 11,403 working days, and 51 of which were won. In 34 cases the Revisionists attempted to break the strike, and in six cases were successful. The strikes led to five prosecutions in which 34 workers were sentenced to a total of 33 months' imprisonment and forced labour, and to fines of 220 pounds. The Histadrut also supported eight Arab strikes in which 785 workers walked out for a total of 4145 days. Two of these strikes were won.

The Histadrut controls the entire Jewish labour market. There are neither state nor city employment bureaus, nor is there any unemployment relief. The Histadrut supplies the workers to the employers who thereby recognize the rates of pay. The employers are furthermore combined in their own unions which, however, do not as yet possess any general organization. On the other hand, the Histadrut is generally in a position to force acceptance of the wage rate, in which connection the relatively slight unemployment, the still prevailing lack of specialized workers and the relatively low wages exert a favourable effect. Nor is the Jewish bourgeoisie in a position simply to exploit the cheaper Arab labour power, because there is not so much skilled Arab labour on hand and the Jewish working class is said to offer a certain political protection with respect to the Arabs. In the rural districts, on the plantations, the matter is different. Here the exploited labour force is made up in large part of Arab workers, who are experienced and cheap, though their wages also have gone up considerably. In spite of the fact that the Histadrut is fighting very vigorously, by way of picketing, against the influx of Arab workers onto the plantations, it cannot prevent the planters from continuing to employ such workers (mostly former fellahs) nor prevent these Arab workers from becoming familiar with the forms of trade-union struggle, which they now and then put to good use. The Histadrut has even gone so far as to combat an enterprise in Tel-Aviv where a revolutionary Arab worker was employed. When the workers of this enterprise declared their sympathy with the Arab comrade, a brawl arose between these workers and the trade-union functionaries, and a process was instituted with a view to debarring the workers from the Histadrut. Exclusion from the Histadrut is equivalent to losing the possibility of working; for while officially the Histadrut obtains work for all workers, still the protectionism in vogue is such that oppositional or excluded workers get none. In this respect, the Histadrut may be regarded as a state organization. In most cases it can be seen that workers who are not in its organization are no longer employed by any enterprise.

To the Histadrut is attached a general sick benefit fund which has the disposal over hospitals, recreation homes and good physicians. The Histadrut builds workers' settlements and blocks of dwellings in which workers' families acquire homes which, thru installment payments, become their private property.

The predominant faction in the Histadrut is the Labour Party (MAPAI). It has about 6000 members and is loosely attached to the Second International. It has, besides, in the various countries where Jews reside, affiliated groups (Palestine League for Labor.) It is still more nationalistic than the other parties adhering to this International. It fills all offices in the Histadrut where it reigns in absolute fashion; the more so as the functionaries are appointed by the governing board.

The "Hashomer Hazair", originally a Jewish youth organization widely disseminated in Eastern Europe, is increasingly acquiring in Palestine the features of a party. Hitherto, however, it has embraced only such working men and women as live in the country on labour communes (so-called Kwuzots). The Kwuzots want to actualize socialist life in this way: that first with the aid of loans from the KKL and KH and on the basis of common purchase and sale, common cooking and common education of the children, they till their own soil and engage no wage workers.

The party which goes by the name of the "Left Poale Zion", with about 250 members in Palestine and various groups in other countries, especially in the U.S.A. and Poland, forms the opposition within the Histadruth, demanding democratization of the apparatus and equal right of the Arab workers to organize. Its final goal is a Soviet Palestine. It is nationalistic insofar as it demands the formation of a Jewish labour centre in Palestine. The LPZ is at one with the other Zionist parties on the point that an assimilation of the Jewish middle strata and proletarians in the countries of the Diaspora — even in the Soviet Union which is regarded as the first stage of communism — is impossible. They insist that after the abolition of private property and of the State a stage must be passed thru in which there is given to the nations on their own territories the possibility of their cultural development. It does not take part, however, in the Zionist congress. Its general standpoint is that of the Comintern to which it does not adhere because of the difference on the Jewish question.

The illegal communist party of Palestine (PCP) consists of about 100 Jewish members who in part are disappointed former members of the Hashomer Hazair. Since it conceives its main goal to be the weakening of English imperialism, it combats the Jewish immigration, by which it finds that imperialism strengthened. On the other hand, it supports every Arab national movement. It esteems the pogroms of the past few years as national-revolutionary uprisings; and with respect to the Italian-Abyssinian conflict it advocates the People's Front of the Arab people with its leaders, the Effendis, and recommends the forming of Arab legions to go to Abyssinia and there combat Italian fascism. The PCP is taking great pains to Arabize its organization. It is the only organization which has come out for the payment of unemployment relief.

The Anti-fascist Action ("Antifa"), adhering to the world committee in Paris, has about 500 members and is under the leadership of the LPZ. It is supposed to be the foundation of the united-front movement for struggle against fascism, imperialism and anti-Semitism. Anyone can become a member, excepting members of the PCP; these latter being excluded because they combat Jewish immigration, while the Antifa and the LPZ take the view that the creation of a Jewish proletariat in Palestine will represent a force which cannot fail to operate against imperialism and that the combatting of the right of free immigration and taking root of the Jewish workers in Palestine is chauvinistic. The Antifa as well as the LPZ want to combat the Jewish chauvinism of the Mepai, Histadruth and Revisionists together with the Arab chauvinism of the PCP. They champion freedom of the mother tongues and form Circles in which Yiddish, German, etc., are spoken.

[Recent changes]

The situation in Palestine has recently changed. The "prosperity" described above has receded almost simultaneously with the outbreak of the abyssinian-italian conflict. Unemployment has grown and with it the uncertainty and the discontent within the working class. Since the PCP was the only organization to come out for the payment of unemployment relief, it succeeded in improving its standing among the unemployed. The other labour parties and the Histadruth were unable to come out for unemployment relief, mainly because they feared that the english government would in that case greatly restrict jewish immigration.

The Histadruth intensified its struggle for weeding out arab workers from jewish production; and the LPZ which for a time had sought to find a common basis with the PCP on the unemployment question, saw itself compelled, in order to reestablish its zionist renown, to conduct a sharp struggle against the PCP. The Histadruth, which hitherto had simply denied the existence of unemployment, is now trying to appease its members with so-called constructive means. That is, it calls upon the workers to pay a contribution into an unemployment fund. From this fund, money will be turned over to the cooperatives and also to private enterprisers for the purpose of "extra work-making". And from the same fund, workers who work in return for arab wages will be paid the difference between these latter and the jewish wage rate.

[Conclusions]

The sharpening of the arab-jewish relations, beginning in April 1936, which led to guerilla warfare and to an arab strike, covered over the social unrest of the working class with a lively and warlike national sentiment. On both sides the masses were organized for "self-protection and defence". This self-protection was participated in, on the jewish side, by the members of *all* the organizations. The various parties in their appeals laid the blame for the clashes either upon the Arabs or else on the competing parties. It is only to be observed that in this situation not a single organization sought to conduct the struggle against its own bourgeoisie. The nationalism of the jewish workers, like that of the russian, german, french and other proletariat, is an indication of the drawing back before revolutionary, international tasks. The creation of the "jewish homeland" can only be brought about chauvinistically. The zionist solution of the jewish question can be accomplished only in combat against the Arabs. And, for that matter, the jewish fascists come out openly for this struggle, while the others accept it by keeping their mouths shut or giving utterance to hypocritical phrases. The Jews themselves cannot fulfil the zionist desires, but are compelled to become allies of english imperialism. English imperialism makes use of the arab-jewish oppositions for its own purposes. Zionism becomes an instrument of the english struggle against the strivings for national independence on the part of the Arabs. Under the conditions of Palestine, Zionism can only come forth in capitalistic garb. The Jews are obliged to be capitalistic in order to be nationalistic, and they have to be nationalistic in order to be Zionists. They are obliged to be not only capitalistic, but capitalistic in an extremely reactionary form. As a minority, they cannot be democratic without damage to their own interests; and being land-hungry, they have to take a position against agrarian reform, binding themselves with the arab feudalists against the fellahs. They are not only reactionary themselves, but they lend force to the arab reaction. The fellahs are driven from

the soil which the effendis sell to the Jews. That part of the soil remaining to the effendi is turned into plantations, the fellahs become wage laborers. The furthering of capitalism in Palestine and the sharpening of capitalist oppositions by way of Zionism are revolutionizing, but only in the same sense as the whole of capitalism is revolutionizing; it is no concern of the working population. The working class can only take note of the matter and thru its own intrusions into the process, thru the representation of its direct economic interests as wage workers, help to drive it forward. The sharpening of capitalist oppositions lies in the interest of the proletariat, but it cannot side either with the Arabs or with the Jews; it can take up neither for the division of the soil nor for its control thru the feudal masters or Jewish societies. It can only be completely internationalistic and thus completely immune to all Palestinian conflicts. It has to attack the most immediate direct exploiter without regard for the consequences on the national plane. As soon as it does more than that, it represents these or those capitalist interests. Anyone who is a Zionist must, especially now with the setting in of the crisis and with the growth of unemployment in Palestine, go along the whole way to Fascism. On the basis of Zionism, the increasingly impoverished "poor whites" become more and more race-conscious, and copy against the Arabs what Hitler has undertaken against the Jews in Germany. The Arabs can answer only in the same fashion. Any other kind of Zionism than this fascist one cannot exist. From the conditions in Palestine today the Jews must learn to comprehend that they are yielding to illusions when they think to be able in Palestine to evade the class struggles of capitalism. They must learn to comprehend that it is very much a matter of indifference where they put up, that everywhere, and inclusive of Palestine, they have only one task: that of setting aside the capitalist relations. All other problems are imaginary ones; they are of no concern to the working class.

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Transcription, correcting into US-English, paragraph headings added between square brackets.

“The Land of Promise” was published first in Dutch language as “Berichten uit Palestina” (some concluding remarks are missing) in [Persdienst van de Groep van Internationale Communisten, september 1936, no. 1](#), and appeared in abridged form in German language as “Das gelobte Land (Bericht aus Palästina)” in [Rätekorrespondenz, 1936, nr. 20, Dezember](#).

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Its programmatical statement was as follows:

“The period of progressive capitalist development is historically closed. The decline period of capital, a permanent condition of crisis, compels to ever greater convulsions of economy,

to new imperialistic and military conflicts, to ever increasing unemployment and to general and absolute impoverishment of the workers. Thus is given the objective situation for the communist revolution in the capitalist countries. For the working class, there is only the revolutionary way out, which leads to the communist society. No one can deprive the workers of this task which must be carried out by the class itself.

The publishers of Council Correspondence see in the acting self-initiative of the workers and in the growth of their self-consciousness the essential advance of the labour movement. We therefore combat the leadership policy of the old labour movement, and call upon the workers to take their fate in their own hands, to set aside the capitalist mode of production and themselves to administer and direct production and distribution in accordance with social rules having universal validity. As a fighting slogan and statement of goal we propose:

All power to the workers' councils! The means of production in the hands of the Workers!"