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COUNTER DRAFT RESOLUTION ON ISRAEL AND THE ARAB REVOLUTION

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and Jon Rothschild, Upper West Side Branch, New York Local

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1. Preamble

Nowhere in the world do the various components of imperialism, and especially United States, interest converge more sharply than in the Arab East. More than half the petroleum -- the primary energy source of modern industry and military power -- consumed by the imperialist powers other than the United States is produced in this region, and the world's largest proven oil reserves are there. This current production and these reserves are today controlled by an international capitalist cartel in which a handful of giant U.S. corporations are dominant. These corporations have more than a billion dollars invested in oil production in the region, from which they draw more than half a billion dollars a year in profits. They have several billion dollars more invested in petroleum refining, transport and distribution facilities around the world, the profitability of which is largely dependent on continued control over crude-oil production in the Arab East. Moreover, the region is an important area for selective investment other than oil production. It is also an important center of international trade, linking southern Europe, North Africa, Black Africa and southern and western Asia.

Militarily, the Arab East is of great importance to imperialism. Turkey, one pillar of the "northern tier" of U.S. imperialism's military encirclement of the Soviet Union, is sandwiched between the workers state and Syria and Iraq. Iran, the other pillar of the "northern tier," has a long border in common with Iraq. Preventing the establishment of naval or air bases by any workers state anywhere along the eastern Mediterranean or Arab-Persian Gulf shores is a key aspect of imperialist military policy. Such bases would greatly enhance that workers state's defensive capability throughout the immense area that includes southern Europe, northern Africa, Black Africa, western and southern Asia. The military-strategic stakes are high, and they confer on any confrontation between imperialism and the Soviet Union in the region the potential of escalating into a nuclear war.

The Arab East also possesses a crucial political-strategic importance. Developments there have an immediate and powerful impact on the rest of the Arab world and influence political developments in Turkey, Iran and part

of Black Africa. A decisive defeat for imperialism in the Arab East would be a powerful stimulus to the revolutionary forces in these and all the other colonial and semi-colonial areas of the globe.

The deepening radicalization of important sections of the population in the imperialist countries themselves is partly both a consequence and a cause of increasing solidarity with the anticolonial revolution. The Palestinian movement is regarded by an ever increasing number of radicalizing youth as the most inspiring example, next to the Vietnamese revolution, of the worldwide upsurge of the colonial masses. A decisive revolutionary victory in the Arab East would contribute greatly to undermining capitalist ideological hegemony over the masses in the imperialist countries both because of its immediate political impact on the radicalizing population and because of the intensified class struggles attendant on the economic consequences to imperialism.

Victory for the revolution in the Arab East, in short, not only would make it possible for the masses of the region to begin to solve the immense economic, social, political and cultural problems imposed on them by a century of imperialist penetration and domination. It would also constitute a major advance of the worldwide socialist revolution that is liberating the exploited and oppressed masses everywhere from capitalist tyranny.

Because the Arab East possesses such great economic and political importance, the ruling classes of the imperialist powers, and especially of the United States, are trying and will continue to try, to mobilize all the military, political and financial resources at their disposal to defeat that revolution. In this effort, they have received and will continue to receive the aid of powerful indigenous social forces tied by class interest to the world imperialist system. Foremost among these is the ruling class of the Zionist state of Israel. Second, are the traditional feudal and comprador classes which still rule, through a variety of political forms, in Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon and the principalities of the Arab-Persian Gulf. Finally, there are the Arab national bourgeoisies -- shading off into the second group and consisting of some

commercial, industrial and financial capitalist elements and of sections of the various state bureaucracies, especially the military establishment -- which hold power in several states, including Syria, Egypt and Iraq. These Arab national bourgeoisies have proven themselves capable of producing ideologies of considerable depth and power, as well as able leaders. These classes have been able to wage significant partial struggles against imperialism and sections of domestic capitalism in defense of "national interest" as they define it, often mobilizing mass movements on their own initiative, as well as by manipulating and containing spontaneous ones. Their class interest, however, requires maintenance of capitalist property relations and the region's integration into the world imperialist system.

There are deep antagonisms between these three groups, and the feudal-comprador and national-bourgeois groups are often united against the Zionist ruling classes. Within each group, there are important conflicts of particular interests which, in the case of the two Arab groups, largely parallel the existing state divisions of the Arab East. They share, however, a fundamental class interest in crushing and/or deflecting the forces tending toward complete national liberation and socialist revolution.

The bourgeois regimes in several Arab states have turned to the USSR for economic and military aid to help their economic development and to counter-balance imperialist pressure. As a result, in recent years the Soviet Union has become more deeply involved diplomatically and militarily in the region. But the Soviet bureaucracy sees the Arab liberation struggle as a pawn that can be sacrificed in its dealings with imperialism. Moscow's goal is a settlement based on the maintenance of the capitalist status quo in the Arab East and a division of this region into stable spheres of political influence between it and imperialism. The Soviet bureaucracy and the Stalinist parties in the region oppose all independent revolutionary developments, like the Palestinian liberation struggle, which fundamentally threaten the status quo.

Neither can the revolutionary forces rely on support from the ruling bureaucracy of the People's Republic of China. From Indonesia to Bangla Desh, the Chinese bureaucracy has demonstrated that its interests lie not in solidarity with oppressed peoples struggling to throw off the imperialist yoke, but with national bourgeois regimes that help to impose that yoke.

Its international policy, like that of the Soviet bureaucracy, is predicated on its conservative and narrowly conceived identification of the bureaucracy's own interests with the interests of the workers state.

Despite the enmity of Washington, the might of the counterrevolutionary forces in the region, and the double dealing of Moscow, the Arab revolutionary struggle will continue and deepen despite temporary setbacks and defeats until complete national liberation and social emancipation are attained. The magnitude and character of the power arrayed against the revolutionary forces in the Arab East determine the urgent task of revolutionary socialists there -- the building of mass Leninist parties that can lead the struggle to a successful conclusion. At the same time, the central role played by U.S. imperialism in continually attempting to contain and crush the Arab revolution imposes a special obligation on the Socialist Workers party to educate the American people and mobilize opposition to Washington's aims and actions in the Arab East.

The perilous situation there highlights the mutual interrelation and interdependence of the three main sectors of the world revolution: the socialist revolution in the advanced capitalist countries, the political revolution in the bureaucratically deformed or degenerated workers states, and the combined democratic and socialist revolution in the colonial countries.

At present, the revolutionary conflict in the Arab East is centered on Palestine. The Zionist state is the most immediate imperialist weapon against the Arab revolution. At the same time, the Palestinian national liberation movement is at present the vanguard of the revolution in the Arab East. Moreover, the Zionist state is deeply involved in the broader Jewish question, which remains of great political importance in the United States. Thus, this revolution considers the Arab revolution almost exclusively from the standpoint of Palestine.

## 2. Zionism

The Zionist state is the product and continuing instrument of the Zionist colonization of the Arab East. The character of the Israeli state therefore flows from the character and practice of the political movement which created it.

Zionism, as a national movement, originally had its mass base in the Yiddish-speaking Jewry of Eastern

Europe, especially of the Russian Empire. Towards the end of the 19th century, this group was rapidly losing its traditional social position in the decaying feudal society. Modern social classes -- a bourgeoisie and proletariat -- were beginning to develop out of it. A certain amount of territorial concentration was occurring through the mass migration of Jews from small villages to large towns and cities. An East European Jewish nationality, in short, was in the process of formation. At the same time, this incipient nation was subjected to the most bitter, systematic oppression, which greatly intensified the development of a national consciousness. But under the conditions of a generally weak development of capitalism in the Russian Empire, Jewish capitalism remained especially weak. Jewish capitalists, and the Jewish workers, were concentrated in the light consumer-goods industries. Capital accumulations were small; profits were marginal; the Jewish proletariat was scattered in a myriad of small establishments far from centers of economic power. Under these circumstances, no revolutionary Jewish nationalism -- one aimed at wresting state power from the national oppressor -- could develop.

One typical manifestation of Jewish nationalism was represented by the Bund, a basically reformist social-democratic party with a program of "cultural-national autonomy" within the existing Russian state. Zionism offered a different ideological resolution of the contradiction between the scope of national development and the social weakness of the incipient nation in the utopian vision of the establishment of a Jewish national state far from the overwhelming power, the misery, and the pogroms of Russia. By diverting its adherents from the real class struggles of the Jewish workers and encouraging "national solidarity" between Jewish workers and capitalists, Zionism from the outset played a thoroughly reactionary role.

Zionism would have remained a reactionary utopia, confined to tiny sects, if not for developments in Western Europe. There, many highly assimilated bourgeois and upper-middle-class Jews were becoming concerned about the danger of increasing anti-Semitism -- caused, they believed, by the mass influx of East European Jewish immigrants. Settlement of these East European immigrants in Palestine appeared to be a solution that was both humanitarian and in accord with their individual and group interests. Some, moreover, saw such settlement as a means of penetration of their imperialist countries into the territory

of the Ottoman Empire.

These elements could mobilize the capital necessary to make the Zionist colonization a reality. Above all, they could negotiate with the European states, stressing the advantages to their ruling classes of European colonial settlement in Palestine. An apparatus began to take shape -- an anticipation of the future state and the international Zionist apparatus of today: to raise funds, acquire land, organize immigration, and, especially after 1917, to unify the immigrants in a labor organization, political bodies and a military force.

Ideological leadership remained in the hands of East Europeans who, in response to the weakness of East European Jewry, formulated a second important tenet of Zionist ideology: "normalize" the nation, "productivize" the Jews; the Jewish national state must have a purely Jewish society as its base. This meant that the Jews must not become exploiters of Arab labor; rather, the Palestinian peasants had to be driven from their land and refused employment by Jewish capital, in order to make way for the creation of a Jewish peasantry and working class. Many of these leaders professed commitment to an ultimately socialist goal. But the primacy they accorded to "national" development over class struggle, the dependence of funds made available by Jewish capitalists and the encouragement of foreign investment, combined with the dependence of the whole enterprise on the political goodwill of imperialism assured that development would occur in an increasingly capitalist fashion, not only in the private sector but also in the state and cooperative sectors of the economy.

Loans and gifts from Jewish communities abroad to the "Jewish homeland" have in reality increasingly become capital to exploit Jewish workers. The "patrimony" of the "Land of Israel" has in reality increasingly become capital producing rent for Israeli banks. The "Ingathering of the Exiles" has in reality increasingly become the provision of labor-power for capitalist exploitation. The "sacred national trust" to reclaim the "Land of Israel" (from the Palestinians) has in reality increasingly become the need of capital to expand.

Like every movement of the nationally oppressed, Zionism originally possessed a deep democratic ideological content. In the reality of Palestine, however, every right won by the settler was a right lost by the Palestinian; every benefit gained by the colonist was a benefit lost by the Palestinian.

Since for the bourgeois-democratic consciousness, rights are "natural," the necessity to deny rights to another must also have a "natural," biological, basis -- namely race. The contradiction between the original democratic ideological content of Zionism and the reality of colonization was resolved by the virulent racism that today saturates Israeli-Jewish society.

At least until the 1930's, Zionism remained a minority trend within East European Jewry. It had even fewer adherents in the Jewish communities of Western Europe and the United States, and it was virtually unknown among the Jews of the Arab world. Probably the majority of Jews who immigrated to Palestine from Europe during and immediately after the years of the Nazi persecution were not ideological Zionists. They were simply fleeing persecution and had no place else to go. The same is true of Jews from the Arab countries who immigrated in the late 1940's, though they were also lured, in many cases, by the promise of a higher standard of living. These immigrants were quickly integrated into the Jewish economy; they were quickly assimilated into the new national culture. They considered the Zionist movement, the Zionist settlements, and later, the Zionist state as their salvation.

### 3. The Zionist State

In 1947-48 a series of factors converged to bring about the creation of the Israeli state and expulsion of the Arabs. From the outset the Zionist colonization had been characterized by the organized immigration of Jews, by the organized flow of capital under Zionist control into Palestine and by the organized, violent dispossession of the Palestinians. Unlike many other colonization movements, the Zionist colonization did not integrate the dispossessed indigenous population as exploited workers into the newly developing economy. Rather, nearly all functions in the developing economy were filled by colonists themselves.

By 1947 this process had created a significant-sized exclusively Jewish society in Palestine, with an economic, political and military structure. The organic development of this society pointed increasingly toward the creation of a nation-state.

The crushing of the revolt of 1936-38 had left the Palestinians leaderless, unarmed and politically atomized, unable to effectively resist either British domination or Zionist expansion.

Several hundred thousand displaced survivors of the Nazi holocaust had no place else to go besides Palestine. (The Zionist leadership opposed opening the borders of the United States to the d.p.'s on the probably correct assumption that, given the choice, most refugees would have preferred settling in North America to fighting to create a new nation-state in Palestine.)

The American imperialist ruling class, which was displacing British imperialism in the area, judged the existence of the Zionist state advantageous. The Soviet bureaucracy, looking for some power in the region it could influence, supported its formation. World public opinion, under the immediate impact of the revelation of the extent of the Nazi crime, was sympathetic.

The Zionist state fought a brief war -- which appeared to the Israeli-Jewish masses simply as a war of national independence -- against a feeble Great Britain acting through the armies of its Arab semi-colonies. But it was in reality also a war against the Arab people. When it was finished, nearly a million Palestinians had no home and no land.

The transformation was complete. What had begun as a movement of illusory national liberation had become a state of real national oppression. What had begun as a dream of national awakening in conditions of fraternal solidarity had become the reality of a rather ordinary bourgeois nation. What had begun as a utopia of Jewish independence had become the reality of Jewish dependence on imperialism, the very cause of Jewish oppression.

The Zionist state thus combines features of three types of capitalist states. As a capitalist national state, it is an instrument in the hands of the Israeli-Jewish ruling class for maintaining the direct economic exploitation of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat and the super-exploitation of that part of the Palestinian proletariat and peasantry under its dominion, as well as for carrying out the territorial and other forms of economic expansion determined, in the last analysis, by the requirements of capital accumulation. As a settler-colonial state it is an instrument for procuring and maintaining privileges for Israeli-Jews of all classes, as well as for Jews everywhere who choose to immigrate, at the direct expense of the Palestinian and, potentially, of the other Arab peoples. As a client state of imperialism, it is an imperialist beachhead in the Arab world that serves to spearhead imperialism's fight against the Arab

revolution.

Within Israel today, Zionism leads the Israeli-Jewish masses into the trap of opposing the national liberation struggle of the Arab people, a democratic struggle which will ultimately be victorious. The racism inevitably bred by the Zionist oppression of the Arabs is carried into the heart of Israeli-Jewish society itself, where it justifies and intensifies the oppression of Israeli-Jews of Oriental origin. Israeli capitalism exploits the Israeli-Jewish workers in addition to super-exploiting Arab workers in Israel and the territories occupied since 1967. Police and military repression of Arabs tends to extend increasingly to repression of Israeli-Jews who oppose Zionism or even only some Zionist policies. The prevailing chauvinism fosters the popular influence of reactionary religious leaders who are able to impose a variety of clerical restrictions on civil liberties.

The Zionist propaganda machine promulgates the lie that to be Jewish is to be a Zionist and therefore a supporter of Zionist and imperialist oppression of the Arab people. It thus makes it easier for racist and chauvinist demagogues in other countries to foster anti-Semitism among the masses. Zionism fosters the illusion among the Jewish masses outside Israel that the Zionist state can be a refuge for them in the event of a revival of violent persecution elsewhere, or that the existence of the Zionist state somehow decreases the likelihood of such persecutions occurring. It thus diverts them from the democratic and socialist struggles in the countries in which they live, struggles which alone can end the continuing danger of persecution. The Zionist movement and its imperialist allies, which were incapable or uninterested in fighting for the salvation of the masses of European Jews against Nazism, are today just as incapable or uninterested in defending the interests of the Jews wherever they are oppressed or persecuted.

From the moment of the establishment of the Zionist state, imperialist and Zionist propaganda has attempted to equate the Palestinian struggle for national liberation with the Nazi genocide. One of the factors enabling the imperialists and Zionists to make this false identity is the widespread racism against the Arab people that exists in Europe, North America and Israel. But the imperialists and the Zionists to the contrary, the basic interests of the Israeli-Jewish masses lie in alliance with the Palestinian liberation struggle for the most consistent democracy and for the workers state. Like-

wise, the real interests of the Jewish masses elsewhere in the world lie in a total break with Zionist illusions, in support to all the democratic struggles of oppressed groups and in revolutionary struggle to overthrow the capitalist ruling classes and bureaucratic ruling strata in the countries in which they live.

#### 4. Anti-Semitism

Revolutionary socialist opposition to Zionism has nothing in common with anti-Semitism. On the contrary, in the context of the real conditions of the world today struggle against Zionism, and therefore against the Israeli state, is a necessary aspect of the struggle against anti-Semitism.

Anti-Semitism justifies and reinforces the oppression and persecution of the Jews. It is anti-Jewish racism, the primary function of which is to obscure the non-Jewish masses' consciousness of the real causes of their oppression and exploitation and thus divert their struggles away from their real enemies -- the ruling classes or strata -- toward a mythical enemy -- the Jews. Marxists have been and remain the most militant and uncompromising fighters against anti-Semitism and all oppression and persecution of Jews.

The source of the oppression and persecution of the Jews in this era is the capitalist system, which, in its period of decay, produces the most virulent racist ideologies of all types and carries all kinds of ethnic and national oppression to the most barbarous extremes. The annihilation of 6,000,000 Jews by German imperialism under the Nazi regime is horrifying testimony to this truth. Today, anti-Semitism remains widespread in all of the Western imperialist countries. Until the capitalist system is abolished in these countries, there is the ever-present danger of a mass revival of virulent anti-Semitism and of a new systematic persecution or oppression of Jews.

In the Soviet Union and the workers states of Eastern Europe, the privileged Stalinist bureaucracies perpetuate and reinforce many forms of chauvinism and national oppression inherited from the previous capitalist era, including anti-Semitism and oppression of the Jews. The bureaucrats utilize anti-Semitism to contain and divert potentially antibureaucratic struggles of the non-Jewish masses. In these countries a political revolution is needed to sweep away the reactionary bureaucracies and institute the norms of proletarian democracy, equality and internationalism.

In the colonial and semicolonial countries, including those in the Arab world, bourgeois regimes perpetuate and foster national chauvinism and oppression of ethnic and national minorities, including indigenous Jews. The crimes perpetrated by the Zionist colonization and the Zionist success in falsely identifying "Jew" and "Zionist" have made the Jews in the Arab world especially vulnerable to this kind of oppression and persecution. Only when the colonial and semi-colonial countries win complete national liberation, through the process of permanent revolution culminating in socialist revolution, can the oppression and persecution of these national and ethnic minorities be ended.

The struggle against anti-Semitism, like the struggle against every form of racism and chauvinism, is part of the struggle for mass revolutionary consciousness. The struggle against oppression and persecution of the Jews is part of the democratic struggle to abolish all forms of national and ethnic oppression. This struggle can be fully and finally won only through the alliance of all the oppressed and exploited of the world.

#### 5. The Palestinian People

The principal victims of the Zionist colonization have until now been the Palestinian workers and peasants. They were driven from the land and denied employment opportunities by the Zionist colonization. At the moment of the establishment of the Zionist state, nearly a million of them were driven beyond the borders of the new state, and those that remained have been subject to systematic national oppression. Since 1967, several hundred thousand more have been forced to live under a barbarous Israeli military occupation.

The majority of the totally dispossessed Palestinian workers and peasants today live in miserable refugee camps and survive from the wages they earn as marginally employed workers, from remittances of relatives living and working elsewhere, and from United Nations relief pittances. At the same time, a sizable Palestinian industrial proletariat, composed principally of oil workers in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, has developed in the exile.

The traditional feudal-comprador classes have likewise suffered as a consequence of the Zionist colonization. Although many elements of these classes cooperated with the Zionist colonization, principally by selling land to the Jewish National Fund, many of them also found themselves suddenly totally expropriated at the time of the establishment of the Israeli state. And while the fundamental

social position of these groups on the West Bank has been generally maintained both under Jordanian rule -- when they tended to be assimilated into the Jordanian ruling class -- and under Israeli occupation, they face the constant possibility of expropriation by the Zionist state in the course of its further colonization.

An important feature of the Palestinian exile has been the development of a relatively large, wealthy, highly educated, energetic and well-connected national bourgeoisie concentrated in finance, industry, commerce and state administration, particularly in Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. Despite the important economic and administrative roles this class plays in these countries, and although it has close ties with their ruling classes, its degree of assimilation is slight. Rather, its Palestinian identity has tended to become more intense, especially since the June 1967 war.

Thus, while the Palestinians are a part of the Arab people, they also constitute a distinct national grouping shaped by the specific experiences of the Zionist colonization, their forced exile and by a specific history of struggle against imperialism. There were Palestinian uprisings in 1921, 1929, and throughout the 1930's directed in varying degrees against both the Zionist colonization and British colonial rule. At the climax of these struggles, in 1936, the Palestinians were able to conduct a six-month general strike despite a reactionary, pro-imperialist leadership that contributed to its eventual defeat.

Since the establishment of the state of Israel, the struggle of the Palestinian people against their national oppression and for self-determination has primarily assumed the form of a struggle to destroy the Zionist state. We give unconditional support to this struggle.

#### 6. The Permanent Revolution and Arab Unity

In the epoch of imperialism neither the Palestinians in particular nor the Arab people in general can fully attain national liberation, national unification, national economic development and other democratic goals except through the process of permanent revolution culminating in the establishment of the workers state. These objectives can only be fully realized and guaranteed by the victory of the working class at the head of the toiling masses, chiefly the peasantry, in a revolution against imperialism and its primary regional social forms -- the Zionist ruling classes, the Arab feudal and comprador classes, and the Arab national bourgeoisie. The program of this



revolution will combine democratic and transitional demands and slogans directed toward the creation of the workers state with perspectives on the norms that will guide the practice of the workers state. This proletarian strategy implies unconditional support for carrying out the democratic tasks. The national bourgeoisie, whether "progressive" or "conservative," cannot lead the struggle for national liberation and thorough democratization to victory over the imperialists, but instead limits, diverts and suppresses it.

One of the tasks of this permanent revolution in the Arab East is the achievement of the national unity of the Arab people. Just as the revolution will develop unevenly throughout the region, leaping ahead in one area and suffering setbacks in another, so too will the forging of the Arab nation in the Arab East proceed unevenly. The Arab nation will not issue from a simultaneous and uniform revolution throughout the area.

Achievement of Arab unity will be the work of the revolutionary masses themselves. The history of projects for Arab federation since 1958, and their failure, reflects both the objective tendency toward unity and the inability of the Arab feudal or bourgeois ruling classes to achieve it because of their narrow special interests.

The history of Palestine demonstrates the fact that the political and social conditions in the neighboring Arab countries play a decisive role in the determination of the fate of the Palestinian people. In large part this has been a negative history, from the acquiescence of the Arab ruling classes to the Zionist colonization to the current attempts by the Egyptian bourgeoisie to reach an accommodation with Israel and the United States at the expense of the Palestinians.

Partly because of this record some tendencies in the Palestinian movement have relegated the struggle for Arab unity, and therefore the struggle against the Arab bourgeois and feudal ruling classes to a secondary position of priority.

This has a progressive aspect to it, in that it has had the effect of splitting the Palestinian masses from reliance on the non-Palestinian ruling classes. In that sense it is a precondition of the development of unity between the oppressed classes. But, at the same time, the interference of the non-Palestinian Arab ruling classes in the affairs of the Palestinian people does reflect, in a distorted form, the objective tendency toward integration of the region. The reactionary character

of the past and present interference can be effectively opposed only through struggle against the Arab ruling classes. This entails the forging of revolutionary alliances among the Arab masses, directed against not only Zionism and imperialism, but against the Arab bourgeoisie as well.

Under the specific conditions of the Palestinian national liberation struggle, indications have appeared of how the unity of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples will be accomplished. Some Palestine liberation organizations have actively begun to support some of the social struggles of the Lebanese and Palestinian masses. Slogans like "For popular Lebanese-Palestinian and Jordanian-Palestinian councils" have been raised. Although the September 1970 genocidal attack on the Palestinian people in Jordan has temporarily arrested the tendencies towards unity of the Palestinian and Jordanian masses, these tendencies will deepen in the future because of the interpenetration of the social struggles of the Jordanian masses against their ruling class exploiters and the national struggle of the Palestinian masses against the Zionist oppressor and its Jordanian ruling class allies.

One side of this dialectical relationship between the Palestinian revolution and the Arab revolution as a whole was illustrated during the 1970 civil war in Jordan. The Palestinian resistance was directly pitted against the Hussein regime and a situation approximating dual power emerged, in which the slogan "All power to the resistance" was raised. Initially, the resistance had considerable support from the Jordanian masses, although the ties between the Jordanian and Palestinian masses had not deepened sufficiently to withstand the resolution of the dual-power situation to the advantage of the Hussein regime.

## 7. The Revolution in Israel

The first line of military defense for imperialism in the Arab East has been the Zionist state of Israel. The Zionist state commands the greatest military power in the Arab East. It possesses, proportional to its population, the largest industrial proletariat in the region. Its economy is the most productive in the area. For these reasons, internal developments in Israel are of great importance to the future of the national liberation struggles and the socialist revolution in the Arab East. Active struggle by the masses of Israeli-Jews against their own exploiters would immeasurably shorten the road the Arab revolution would have to take if it were forced to destroy

the Zionist state exclusively "from without."

As in every advanced capitalist country, the revolutionary program addressed to the Israeli-Jews will emphasize transitional demands and slogans that tend to transform the spontaneous struggles by the Israeli-Jewish workers aimed at limiting exploitation into the conscious political struggle for state power to end that exploitation altogether. Because, however, of the settler-colonial and imperialist-client character of the Zionist state, democratic demands aimed at abolishing the financial and military dependence of the Israeli-Jewish nation on imperialism and the position of privilege held by Israeli and other Jews against the Palestinians, assume a transitional character. Such democratic demands will therefore play an exceptionally important role in the revolutionary program addressed to the Israeli-Jews.

A general program of such democratic demands with a transitional character has been developed by the Israeli Socialist Organization under the call for the de-Zionization of Israel. These demands include the end of all laws and practices conferring privilege on Jews, beginning with the law of return; repatriation of all Palestinians who desire it to the present territory of Israel and compensation for their losses of all who do not want repatriation; and the rupture of all military and financial ties to the imperialist powers and all financial and political ties to the Jewish communities of the world. Tied to the de-Zionization program is the demand of immediate withdrawal from the territories occupied since the June 1967 war. This de-Zionization can only be accomplished through the overthrow of the Zionist state.

The objective basis for the eventual mobilization of masses of Israeli-Jews around such demands includes the democratic ideological elements present in Israeli-Jewish culture, the tendency towards the erosion of the democratic rights of the Israeli-Jews as a consequence of the measures necessary to maintain the system of Israeli-Jewish privilege, and the special group oppression suffered by the Oriental Israeli-Jews. It rests above all in the inexorable, long-term rise of the Arab revolution itself, which will continue to make the maintenance of this system of privilege ever more costly to the Israeli-Jews, especially to the Israeli-Jewish proletariat, both in terms of casualties and in terms of the increasing rate of exploitation of labor required by the capitalist military economy.

All struggles by Israeli-Jews that

tend to bring them into conflict with the Zionist state and are in no way directed against the interests of the Arab people tend to undermine the hegemony of Zionist ideology over the Israeli-Jewish masses by exposing the illusion that the Zionist state is the guardian of their interests. They prepare the massive class struggles of the future which will ally the Israeli-Jewish proletariat with the Arab masses. Examples of such struggles are the recurring strikes of Israeli-Jewish workers in the face of official cries of "treason" and systematic strike-breaking by the state; the growing movement of Israeli-Jewish youth protesting the brutal Israeli occupation policies and demanding immediate withdrawal from the territories occupied since 1967; and the struggles of growing numbers of Oriental Israeli-Jews for jobs, equal educational opportunities and better living conditions.

### 8. Towards the Leninist Party

To lead the struggle for national liberation and socialism to completion through the process of permanent revolution, the creation of mass revolutionary socialist parties is absolutely essential in both the Arab countries and Israel. These parties, based on clear programmatic principles and internally centralized so as to be able to act as fighting units, will be deeply rooted in the broader mass movements. They will conduct a persistent ideological struggle against bourgeois and feudal ideologies among the masses. They will propose transitional slogans and demands within these movements and will lead the mobilizations of the masses around these demands. They will develop the experience and tactical flexibility necessary to select and combine a variety of tactics in a complex, rapidly changing conjunctural situation -- united fronts, strikes, demonstrations, armed struggle, electoral action, boycott, and so forth.

Such parties do not yet exist either in the Arab countries or in Israel. At present, only a few Trotskyist cadres are active in those countries. In Israel, a small group of Trotskyists participate in the Israeli Socialist Organization, a heterogeneous grouping yet to be won to political support of the Fourth International and Leninist organizational concepts. In Europe and North America, a promising development has been the winning of a number of Arab and Israeli-Jewish cadres from different Mideast countries to Trotskyism.

None of the various Palestinian liberation organizations meets, or claims to meet, the criteria of such revolutionary socialist parties in theory,

program or organization. However, among these groupings numerous militants have appeared who can be recruited to the Trotskyist movement.

At present, we possess only limited information about the actual day-to-day practice of the various Palestinian organizations in translating their formal programs into action. We also lack detailed knowledge of the precise direction in which the various organizations are moving, of the social composition of their leading cadres, and of other ties connecting them to the various social classes in the Arab East. In the documents of the various organizations available to us, there is a frequent lack of clarity about the political issues behind their splits and organizational differences. Under these circumstances, it would be premature for us to give any one of them special support over the others. We should regard them as part of the objective unfolding of the Palestinian and Arab revolution and view their formal programs and the differences between these programs as reflections of objective tendencies within the revolution, while withholding judgment on the relative fitness of the various cadre formations to play the crucial subjective, leadership, role. We should maintain an attitude of general support to the Palestinian struggle, and in that sense to all the struggle organizations, while reserving full freedom to present our own views on program and other issues.

An important and hopeful sign in the development of the Palestinian revolution is that Stalinism has not succeeded in attracting, holding or shaping the major Palestinian groups. Nevertheless, some Stalinist doctrines, especially in Maoist form, have considerable influence among those Palestinian fighters who share a generally socialist perspective.

One of these false conceptions is the theory of "primary" and "secondary" contradictions. Instead of understanding the Arab revolution as a unitary but unevenly developing process in which no contradiction is finally resolved, no battle finally won, until all the contradictions have been resolved, all the battles won, and in which quickly shifting conjunctural alliances of antagonistic but fundamentally counterrevolutionary social forces require extreme tactical flexibility on the part of the revolutionary movement, those influenced by this conception tend to regard the revolution as composed of a series of discrete contradictions, one of which is dominant for a certain period and the resolution of which prepares the emergence of a subsequent dominant contradiction. To the extent that they regarded the contradiction between the Arab people and Israel as "primary" and the contradiction

between the Palestinian masses and the rulers of the Arab states, for example, as "secondary," masses and leaders influenced by this conception were unprepared for the acceptance by Egypt of the U.S. "peace plan" and the genocidal attack on the Palestinian people in Jordan launched by the Hashemite ruler.

Closely related to the conception of "primary" and "secondary" contradictions is the theory of the "two-stage" revolution, according to which a "national-democratic" stage, based on an alliance of ultimately antagonistic classes under slogans of national unity and class peace, must be completed before the "socialist" stage, characterized by class conflict, can begin. According to this doctrine, a revolutionary party that struggles for political hegemony in the national liberation movement on a clear class-struggle program is not only superfluous but inimical to the struggle for national liberation because it is "divisive." The history of both the successes and failures of the revolutionary movements in the colonial and semicolonial countries in the 20th century, however, testifies to the exact opposite. Only a relentless struggle for proletarian hegemony against all bourgeois and feudal elements within the national liberation movement, with the perspective of establishing a workers state, can assure accomplishment of the national-democratic tasks.

Both of these false conceptions serve the interests of imperialism because they reflect the bourgeois interest in submerging real class antagonisms in an illusory national unity. They thus leave leaders and masses unprepared for the sharp turns in the real national struggle caused by the presence of antagonistic class interests within the nation. They increase the possibility that the workers and peasants will be robbed of their class victory at the moment of the seizure of power; the danger that the bourgeoisie and not the proletariat will win and consolidate the new power.

## 9. Nationality and Democracy

The national question has proved to be one of the most thorny problems for the revolutionary worker's movement since the founding of the First International. In Palestine especially the problem of nationalities may well be the touchstone of revolutionary activity. The elements of a revolutionary program on the national question which we recommend to the revolutionary socialists in the Arab East and which guide our educational activity here are derived from the Marxist theory of democracy and nationality, particularly as developed by Lenin.

Democratic rights, ranging from elementary personal rights (like inviolability of persons without due process of law) through political rights of individuals and voluntary associations (like those of suffrage and assembly) to the rights of social groups (like the right of nations to self-determination), are not eternal principles inherent in some "human nature." Rather, they are general norms governing the exercise of socially organized violence which have been produced in, and which reflect, a long history of struggles by masses of human beings against privilege -- the violently maintained inequality of access to the means of satisfying human needs. The democratic character of these rights derives from the fact that they are products of such struggles.

In the course of these struggles, possession of these rights has itself become a human need. A general democratic consciousness has developed for which these rights appear natural and violation of them intolerable. This consciousness is deeply imbedded in the popular culture of all nations and other groups which have a history of struggle against national or ethnic oppression, or of internal struggle by submerged or exploited classes against the privilege of other classes. Where there is widespread enjoyment of these rights, the masses of people tend to regard them as among their most precious possessions; winning them tends to become a goal of mass struggle wherever they do not exist.

The basic component of national or ethnic oppression is usually the material privilege of the oppressor group, a higher material standard of living deriving either from superexploitation of the productive classes of the oppressed group or from violent exclusion of the oppressed group from access to the prerequisites of a level of productivity as high as that of the oppressor group. Severe restrictions of the democratic rights of the oppressed group compared to those enjoyed by the oppressor group is usually a major component of national or ethnic oppression.

During the epoch of the rise of capitalism, the struggle against privilege was above all the struggle against feudal privilege. It was, of necessity, also a struggle for the secure establishment of large economic regions integrated by free commodity exchange against the fragmented economy on which feudal privilege depended. The boundaries of such regions tended to coincide with linguistic boundaries -- since initially a common language is a prerequisite for extensive commodity exchange -- which in turn usually more or less coincided with more general ethnic boundaries. Since this struggle generally assumed a violent character, a social

organization of violence was required to conduct it. The rise of capitalism thus showed a general tendency for the struggle against feudal privilege to coincide with the formation of national economies -- counterposed both to particularistic feudal economy and to other national economies -- and national states as instruments of struggle both against feudal privilege and against other national states.

The protagonists of this anti-feudal national struggle were social classes and strata -- the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie and plebeian elements out of which a proletariat was emerging in the cities, and the peasantry. The real and potentially divergent or antagonistic interests of these classes tended to be submerged in the national, anti-feudal struggle. Except for the moments when class conflicts broke through with exceptional sharpness, the process of the formation of the new, capitalist national economy tended to appear to the individuals involved not as what it primarily was -- the establishment of a new system of exploitation and privilege in which individuals are related to one another through the classes to which they belong -- but as the establishment of the conditions of free interaction between citizens endowed with equal rights. In particular, the national state appeared not as what it primarily was -- an instrument of coercion in the hands of the new, capitalist ruling class to create and maintain the new system of exploitation -- but as the guarantor of the rights of the citizens of the nation.

A national consciousness thus developed as an aspect of the general democratic consciousness, for which the existence of the individual was immediately and indissolubly bound up with the destiny of the nation. Parallel to and inextricably bound up with the democratic rights of individuals and voluntary associations, democratic rights of nations were also produced. Foremost among these was the right to form a national state itself. Refusal by one state to permit a nationality subject to it to secede and form an independent state became a central element of national oppression. The slogan of the right of national self-determination became one of the slogans of the general democratic struggle against privilege.

As a consequence of the history of the formation of national consciousness as an aspect of the general democratic consciousness, every oppressed ethnic group that is fighting its oppression and which is developing the objective prerequisites of the formation of a national economy -- at least a degree of territorial concentration and above all a social structure containing at least one eco-

nomically productive class, a proletariat or a peasantry -- tends to develop a distinctive national consciousness. Its struggle tends to assume the form of a struggle for the right to form a national state of its own. Denial of this right by the oppressing state is an added component of the oppression.

In the epoch of imperialism, the basic progressive character of the general democratic struggle -- including the national struggle of oppressed nationalities -- derives from the fact that it tends to become an attack on capital, the social relation which is the ultimate source of all privilege and, at the same time, the ultimate barrier to all further human progress. But the general democratic struggle may come into conflict with struggles to win or maintain specific democratic rights. The Leninist attitude in these cases is: Particular democratic rights and struggles are subordinate to the general democratic struggle against privilege and especially to the completely consistent form of that struggle, the proletarian struggle for socialism.

#### 10. The National Question in Palestine

No place in the world is the contradiction between the enjoyment of particular democratic rights by the oppressor nation and their denial to the oppressed nationality, along with all other aspects of national oppression, more sharply posed than in Palestine. The Palestinians in the refugee camps have the lowest material standard of living in the Arab East; even the most exploited layers of the Israeli-Jewish working class have a material standard of living higher than any other exploited group there. The Palestinians possess no national economy; the Israeli-Jews possess the most productive one in the region, and this high productivity depends in large part on an easy access to foreign capital granted in return for the Zionist state's function as an instrument of the imperialist oppression of the entire Arab people. The simple natural element itself -- the land -- on which this highly productive economy is built is land from which the Palestinians were driven -- with the result that they today have no national economy. Israel is, as yet, for the Israeli-Jews one of the more democratic countries in the world; as individuals, the Palestinians are denied even the elementary right to live in some particular place. The primary, immediate instrument of this total denial of democratic rights to the Palestinians is the present realization of the democratic right of the Israeli-Jews to national self-determination -- the Zionist state.

Taken together, the particular democratic rights of the Israeli-Jews constitute a massive privilege, an aspect of the national oppression of the Palestin-

ians. The democratic rights of the Israeli-Jews, and the struggles by the Israeli-Jewish masses to maintain or extend them, are thus subordinate to the general struggle of the Palestinians and other Arab people against privilege.

This is part of the meaning of our unconditional support to the Palestinian and other Arab struggles against the Zionist state. We support these struggles whatever the consequences, at one phase or another of the unfolding of these struggles, to the democratic rights of the Israeli-Jews. At the same time, we support the struggles of the Israeli-Jewish masses to maintain and extend their democratic rights so far, and only so far, as these struggles are directed in reality against the Zionist ruling classes and in no way against the Palestinian or other Arab workers and peasants. We also support all struggles by the Israeli-Jewish masses for the democratic rights of the Palestinian people, struggles objectively directed against Israeli-Jewish privilege.

From the moment of the formation of the Zionist state, the Palestine national liberation struggle has assumed, and has had to assume, the form of a struggle to destroy that state. Because the Zionist colonization for the most part expelled the oppressed people from the country (instead of integrating them into the national economy as superexploited workers) the Palestinian struggle could not have assumed the form either of a struggle for equality within the state or of a struggle for the right to form an independent state through secession.

Since the Israeli military occupation of eastern Palestine in 1967, there has appeared the possibility of an illusory Palestinian "self-determination" in an "independent" West Bank puppet state. Feudal-comprador elements in the West Bank have recently begun extensive agitation for such a "solution." In the event that the Israeli government should find such a proposal acceptable, it is possible that some sections of the Palestinian resistance might acquiesce to it. The retreat would only be temporary, however. It is safe to anticipate that the combination of the once attained level of mass consciousness and the predatory character of the Zionist state would soon bring to the fore once again the revolutionary effort to crush the Zionist state.

The immensity of the task is clear. It is an effort to smash the state that commands by far the most powerful military machine in the region, by far the most productive economy, and to the existence of which the mightiest imperialist power is at present committed. Nevertheless, the perspective is a realistic one. For the Palestinian movement is only the van-

guard of an inexorable movement of seventy million human beings towards national liberation, national unification and national economic development -- people who are physically in possession of most of the territory of the region, who are linked to each other through a myriad of social and economic relations, and who share a long and rich cultural tradition. Whatever temporary defeats await this objective movement, it will eventually prevail. This certainty determines the great self-confidence of the Palestinian people in its struggle to destroy the Zionist state.

But the Zionist state that must be destroyed is not some disembodied force. It is the national state of another people. When the Zionist state is destroyed, the Israeli-Jews will remain, a small national minority in the Arab East. The will and the power to destroy the Zionist state is at the same time the will and, within broad limits, the power to produce the new social relations and the norms governing the exercise of the new power that will exist in a liberated Palestine.

Thus, the Palestinian national liberation movement has had to confront in an especially sharp way the necessity of developing perspectives on these relations and norms. In their developments, these perspectives on the solution to the national question have shown a tendency to become increasingly concrete and consistent expressions of the general democratic character of the Palestinian struggle. At the same time, this development reflects qualitatively different types of consciousness both of what the Palestinian people is and of what the Israeli-Jewish people is. These differences in turn reflect the consciousness of different classes.

### 11. The Feudal Perspective

The first of these perspectives anticipates the physical expulsion from Palestine of the Israeli-Jewish people as a whole. Underlying this perspective is a feudal consciousness to which the national territory appears as the sum of specific parcels of land, each of which is the material base for traditional social relations of privilege and exploitation between a specific landholding family and its peasantry. To this consciousness, the Israeli-Jews constitute simply an invading force occupying -- contrary to all traditional rights -- these parcels of land. Thus, any question of democratic rights, to say nothing of national rights, including even the most elementary right to residence, is automatically excluded for the Israeli-Jews. To this consciousness, the Palestinian people appears as the totality of these landholding families and their peasants, together with the array of religious communities, occupa-

tional associations and other social groupings, each of which possesses specific traditional privileges and obligations. As a consequence, this perspective does recognize the right of residence of those Jews who lived in Palestine prior to the Zionist colonization; that is, to the members of the old Palestinian Jewish community which had a clearly defined place in the traditional society. To this consciousness, the appropriate state power for a liberated Palestine appears as one that will restore and maintain that traditional society that, for most of the Palestinians, was so traumatically destroyed by the success of the Zionist colonization.

As long as the traditional social relations remained relatively intact -- during the 1920's and 1930's especially -- programs and leaders that articulated this consciousness could and did mobilize -- though they also led to defeat -- masses of Palestinians in objectively anti-imperialist struggle, struggles objectively directed against the foundation of all privilege, national and otherwise. Yet this consciousness subjectively aims at what in fact would be absolute national privilege -- denial even of the right of residence to the Israeli-Jews -- and at the restoration of social privileges that every democratic movement has fought since the beginning of class society. Thus, it constitutes a contradictory form of the general democratic content of the Palestinian national liberation movement.

The attempt by propagandists for the Zionist enterprise -- which has expelled a substantial part of the Palestinian people from the country -- and for the ruling classes of the imperialist democracies -- who lifted not a finger to save any Jews from Nazi German imperialism -- to identify this perspective on the national question in Palestine with the Nazi genocide is not only abysmal hypocrisy. It is also a basic distortion of reality. The Nazi genocide was a consistent form of the utterly anti-democratic struggle to sustain decaying imperialism. The call for the expulsion of the Israeli-Jews from Palestine is a totally contradictory and ineffective form of the democratic struggle to destroy that same decaying imperialism.

In 1948, when the majority of the Palestinian people were violently ripped out of the traditional feudal relationships, the real social basis for the hegemony of this consciousness over the Palestinian masses was largely destroyed. But it was able to retain its hold over them for years afterward. Powerfully encouraged by the demagoguery emanating from the rulers of both the bourgeois and feudal Arab states, who had every interest in preserving the passivity and dependence of the Palestinian masses, feudal consciousness

fed on the exhaustion and demoralization of the refugee camps. The contradiction between dependence on traditional exploiters fostered by such consciousness and the initiative and independence of thought and action on the part of the masses that mass struggle both requires and produces, was attenuated.

## 12. The Bourgeois-Democratic Perspective

The June 1967 war decisively demonstrated to the Palestinian masses that the armies of the Arab states were incapable of liberating Palestine. Following the war, the liberation movement, which had begun to reassert itself in the middle 60's, began growing rapidly and developing increasing independence from these states. Under these conditions, the hegemony of feudal consciousness over the masses rapidly succumbed to the contradictions between the consciousness itself and the social base, between the passivity it inculcated and the new self-activity of masses represented by the revived resistance, and between the specific dependence on the Arab states and the failure of these states to perform.

A number of factors determined the way these contradictions were resolved and thus shaped a new consciousness and a new perspective on the solution of the national question. The Palestinian national bourgeoisie had been growing rapidly in size, wealth, influence in other Arab countries and self-confidence. An ever increasing number of Palestinians, including many living in the refugee camps, were economically active under generally bourgeois conditions, whether as industrial or agricultural workers, government administrators, independent professionals, or businessmen. Vigorous and frequently successful struggles against feudal relations were underway in a number of Arab countries. The experience of national awakening and independent struggle strengthened the spontaneous democratic and internationalist sentiments deeply imbedded in the culture of all oppressed or exploited people. The ignominious defeat of the Arab armies, the new independence of thought, and the increasingly rationalistic attitudes engendered by the disruption of the old, traditional social relations all impelled the Palestinians to look more closely at Israeli-Jewish society, to understand its strengths, to discover its weaknesses and, above all, to look for elements in it which could be neutralized, at least, and possibly won over to the liberation struggle.

This second perspective has been most clearly articulated in the call for the establishment of a secular, democratic state in Palestine. The consciousness underlying this perspective is a bourgeois democratic one, for which the national territory does not appear as constituted

by particular parcels of land bound up with particular persons, but rather of land as such, land which can be exchanged and is thus indifferent to particular persons; land which can thereby become capital or can pass into the possession of the nation as a whole. The Israeli-Jews no longer appear merely as an invading army illicitly occupying particular tracts of land, but rather as the extreme form of a traditional feudal group -- the religious community -- possessing privileges. To this consciousness, the Palestinian people is a nation-in-formation through struggle against feudal relations, through struggle to destroy all group privilege and establish conditions of complete equality, completely free interaction and completely voluntary association among individual citizens.

To this consciousness, imperialism -- understood as essentially a political phenomenon, as the political domination of strong nations over weak nations -- acting for its own purposes through the Zionist movement artificially swelled the numbers of this religious community, procured immense privileges for it, and, in the form of the Zionist state, imposed a reactionary communal leadership on it. Thus, in the struggle against the Zionist state, the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal struggles converge as the focus of the national liberation struggle.

To this consciousness, then, the central aspect of the sweeping democratization it aims at (the abolition of all privilege and all violent interference with free interaction) is a sweeping secularization, the abolition of religious privilege and of the Zionist-enforced isolation of religious communities from each other. As individuals, the Israeli-Jews, like the individual members of any traditional feudal group, have a right to remain in the land and to enjoy fully all individual rights of the citizen as long as they are prepared to fulfill all the individual obligations of the citizen. For the Israeli-Jews, this will mean the end of their privileges, but it will also mean the end of their ghetto-like isolation from their Palestinian potential compatriots.

For this consciousness, the existence of a democratic, universalist Jewish tradition assures that some Israeli-Jews, as individuals, will be won to active support of the democratic revolution and that others will at least be neutralized. Moreover, because of the artificial swelling of the Jewish religious community by Zionist-inspired immigration, there are heterogeneities, especially national ones, that cut across the religious homogeneity. The Jews of some of these nationalities, especially Arab Jews, are themselves oppressed by their coreligionists of Western origin. These heterogeneities

seem to assure further defections of individual Jews. But the role of the Jews appears to be essentially passive. The revolutionary dynamic comes exclusively from the struggle of the oppressed nation-in-formation; there appears no comparable dynamic within the Jewish religious community that could lead groups into active struggle against the theocratic establishment. The Palestinian revolution will liberate the Jews of Palestine from Zionism.

For this consciousness, the appropriate state power for a liberated Palestine is one that will establish and guarantee absolute equality and access to free interaction among the individuals who will be the citizens of the new Palestinian nation.

This perspective on the national question in Palestine and the consciousness that underlies it appear at present to have a majority but by no means hegemonic position among politically aware Palestinians today. They have been articulated with one degree of clarity or another in most of the programmatic statements to emerge from most of the Palestinian liberation organizations since 1968. They represent a qualitative step forward from the earlier feudal consciousness and perspective. They cut across the dependence of the masses on traditional leaders and raise the concept of the self-liberation of the nation. They eliminate the Jew-baiting which flowed logically from the old consciousness and thus help make the masses less susceptible to demagogic manipulation. They reinforce the spontaneous tendencies towards mass struggle which establish the conditions for the future intervention of the revolutionary party as the bearer of revolutionary socialist consciousness.

### 13. The Revolutionary Socialist Perspective

Nevertheless, this consciousness is a false consciousness. Practically, it does not provide the necessary political weapons for the conduct of the national liberation struggle. By hiding the reality of antagonistic classes within the Palestinian people, it leaves the Palestinian workers and peasants unprepared for the alliances with imperialism into which the national bourgeoisie will inevitably enter in the course of the national liberation struggle, and it prepares the way for the seizure and consolidation of power by the national bourgeoisie in Palestine once the Zionist state has been crushed. Programmatically formulated, its theoretical denial of the reality of Israeli-Jewish nationality and the consequent perspective on the national question rejecting any Israeli-Jewish right to national self-determination in a liberated Palestine makes the Arab revolution appear to the Israeli-Jewish masses as an attack on

their democratic rights themselves rather than on the system of social relations in which these rights are privileges maintained at the expense of the Palestinians. It thus reinforces the illusion that the Zionist state is the guarantor of Israeli-Jewish democratic rights and helps bind the Israeli-Jewish masses to that state.

This perspective on the national question reflects the real interests of the Palestinian and other Arab national bourgeoisies, and not at all those of the Palestinian workers and peasants. In the first place, the bourgeoisie has a class interest in bringing as much land, and as many other material objects, which can be capitalized, and as many human beings whose labor can be capitalistically exploited, as possible under its sovereignty. Secondly, the bourgeoisie has a class interest in having the liberation of Palestine occur under conditions of the greatest possible passivity of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat. For revolutionary struggle by the Israeli-Jewish proletariat against the Zionist state will inevitably possess not merely a democratic character -- it will not be solely a struggle against the privileges of the Israeli-Jews -- but also a revolutionary socialist character -- it will be a struggle against capital of whatever nationality. Vigorous class struggle by the Israeli-Jewish proletariat against the Zionist state, however much it will hasten the victory of the Palestinian revolution, will thus also tend to challenge directly the power of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie in a liberated Palestine.

Nonrecognition that the Israeli-Jews constitute a modern capitalist nation with an economically based integration far more profound than any feudal religious community, and at the same time with an economically based heterogeneity in the form of antagonistic social classes potentially far more disruptive than the heterogeneities of any such community, and nonrecognition of the existence of antagonistic classes within the Palestinian people are aspects of a single bourgeois consciousness. Theoretical denial of both these realities, or their relegation to the sphere of "secondary contradictions," and the programmatic, practical expression of that denial in the perspective of a secular, democratic state -- the illusory perspective of a "classless" and internally "nationless" state -- constitute in reality a program for a capitalist Palestine which can neither end the national oppression of the Palestinian people by imperialism nor the exploitation of the Palestinian workers and peasants by local capital, and which would, in contradiction to the general democratic content of the Palestinian national struggle, tend to institute a system of national oppression of the



Israeli-Jews.

A third perspective on the national question in Palestine and the consciousness underlying it are revolutionary socialist in character. They provide the basis of a program which the future Leninist party of the Palestinian revolution will present to the Palestinian masses. As yet, this perspective has been articulated only by a few individuals in the Arab East and in an inconsistent way -- one still bearing the marks of the bourgeois-democratic consciousness -- in those programmatic statements of the Palestinian resistance that recognize the Israeli-Jews as constituting a national group with a claim to national rights -- though not to the right of national self-determination -- and that proclaims the necessity of anticapitalist struggles in the Arab East.

This Leninist perspective on the solution to the national question in Palestine can be formulated as follows: A workers state in Palestine governed by the norms of proletarian democracy, including the right of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat to secede and form a politically independent workers state. This perspective is fully consistent with the general democratic content of the Palestinian national liberation movement, for it explicitly envisages not only the abolition of the existing system of national privilege and the struggle against capital, the foundation of all privilege in the epoch of imperialism, but also the struggle against the emergence of any new national privilege in a liberated Palestine.

Since the Israeli-Jews constitute a capitalist nation of social classes divided by the gulf of antagonistic class interests, despite the reality of Israeli-Jewish privilege, this consciousness anticipates an active revolutionary struggle by the Israeli-Jewish proletariat against the Zionist state.

This perspective on the solution of the national question reflects the real interests of the Palestinian workers and peasants. For this consciousness, the national territory does not consist of capitalizable land and things; the human beings living on it do not consist of exploitable labor power. Rather, the national territory is a work place for the production of use-values, and the population is a cooperating group of producers and consumers. Thus, while the workers and peasants have every interest in the broadest possible voluntary economic and social assimilation of nations, they have no class interest in forcibly retaining the Israeli-Jews within their state. Rather, they have a class interest in opposing any such forcible retention of the Israeli-Jews within the new state in Palestine, for such forcible retention would inevitably strengthen the hold of

reactionary, Zionist ideology on the Israeli-Jewish proletariat and thus weaken the international solidarity of the toiling classes against capitalist exploitation and oppression. At the same time, the Palestinian workers and peasants have a real interest in the development of the most intense possible class struggles of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat against the Zionist state, for in such struggles they not only find allies against their specific national oppression but also allies against capital of whatever nationality.

#### 14. The Revolutionary Socialist Perspective and the Revolutionary Movement

By including this perspective in its program, the revolutionary Leninist party fighting for leadership of the Palestinian national movement will be carrying out two of its most important tasks. First of all, by educating its cadres and conducting propaganda according to this perspective -- while agitating around appropriate transitional slogans and uniting with other national forces in the struggle against the Zionist state, whatever the perspectives of these other forces may be, and against other conjunctural enemies of the national cause -- it will be intensifying the revolutionary consciousness of the Palestinian workers and peasants. This class consciousness is consciousness of opposition to the national exploiting classes, and thus winning it is an important part of the fight to make the Palestinian national movement independent not only of the established state powers in the Arab world, but also independent of the Palestinian national bourgeoisie. This class consciousness is also consciousness of potential solidarity with the Israeli-Jewish proletariat, and thus an important element in immunizing the Palestinian masses against the chauvinist demagoguery the counterrevolutionary forces have so often used in the past to cover their own retreat from or hostility to the national struggle.

Secondly, by educating and propagandizing on this perspective, the Leninist party, to the extent that it gains influence within the mass Palestinian national movement, will be demonstrating to the Israeli-Jewish proletariat that this movement aims at crushing not the Israeli-Jewish nationality, not the national and other democratic rights of the Israeli-Jews as such, but at crushing the system of relationships which today make these rights a privilege maintained against the Palestinians. To the extent that the Palestinian national movement recognizes the reality of Israeli-Jewish nationality and thus, consistently with its general democratic content, raises the perspective of the right of this nationality to self-determination within

the framework of the future workers power in Palestine, to this extent it will contribute to undermining the hold of Zionist ideology over the Israeli-Jewish masses, and consequently their support of the Zionist state. For, to the masses of Israeli-Jews, under the domination of Zionist ideology, the Zionist state appears not as an instrument of sustaining the economic exploitation of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat, but as the material expression of their nationality and the protector of their democratic rights and material well-being. Moreover, under the sway of Zionist ideology, these democratic rights and this material well-being are not recognized as what they are -- a massive privilege violently maintained against the Palestinians -- but purely as democratic rights and material well-being.

One of the main sources of the constant reproduction of Zionist ideology among the Israeli masses lies in certain facts of recent and contemporary history. The immediate prehistory of the development of the Israeli-Jewish nation was determined by the bitter national oppression of the East European Jewish nationality in the Russian and, to a lesser extent, in the Austro-Hungarian Empires. The emergence of the Israeli-Jewish nation was marked by the annihilation of six million European Jews. Since the 1940's, Jews living in most Arab countries have been subject to considerable ethnic persecution, persecution that has been aided and abetted by the fact of Zionist colonization, and in some cases directly inspired by Zionist provocation, but which is nonetheless a reality.

In many countries of the colonial and semi-colonial world -- including the Arab world -- where the struggle for national liberation has temporarily been arrested at the consolidation of political power by an indigenous bourgeoisie, non-European minorities -- that is, minorities not bound by ties of nationality to some imperialist power -- which enjoyed a relatively privileged position during the period of more direct imperialist domination, and which were frequently an important indigenous support to imperialism, have been subjected to systematic ethnic or national oppression.

Zionist ideology feeds on these facts and distorts their meaning into the myth of "eternal anti-Semitism." To the extent that the Palestine national liberation movement in its perspective for a liberated Palestine rejects on principle any single democratic right for the Israeli-Jews, and especially the right of national self-determination -- that is, the right to an instrument to defend all other democratic rights -- it reinforces the Zionist distortion and thus deepens the illusions of the Israeli-Jewish masses

that the Zionist state, and not international revolutionary class struggle, is their defense against oppression. To the extent, on the other hand, that the Palestinian liberation movement adopts the perspective of the right of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat to form its independent workers state, it contributes to the undermining of the hold of Zionist ideology over the Israeli-Jewish masses and thereby to the unfolding of mass, eventually revolutionary class, struggle within the Zionist state.

The development of mass influence of the Leninist party with this revolutionary socialist perspective on the solution of the national question among the Palestinian masses and the development of mass influence of the Leninist party among the Israeli-Jewish masses will be interrelated aspects of the same process. To the extent that the Palestinian masses can actually see Israeli-Jewish workers fighting the Zionist state, to that extent will the struggle for revolutionary-socialist hegemony in the Palestinian national movement be advanced. To the extent that the Israeli-Jewish masses actually see the Palestinian and other Arab workers and peasants mobilizing for national and social struggle on a program that raises the perspective of the workers state governed by the norms of proletarian democracy, including the broadest possible democracy in the national question, to that extent will the struggle for revolutionary-socialist hegemony over the Israeli-Jewish proletariat be advanced.

The general tasks of the future Leninist party in Israel flow from the same principled considerations. It must be in the forefront of all the struggles by the Israeli-Jewish masses that bring them into conflict with the Zionist state and are in no way objectively directed against the Palestinian or other Arab people. It must explain the class meaning of these struggles so as to undermine the illusion that the Zionist state is the protector of the democratic rights and material well-being of the Israeli-Jewish masses. It must hold up the perspective of the joint struggle of the Israeli-Jewish and Arab masses against imperialism in all its manifestations. It must appeal to the democratic sentiments and consciousness of the Israeli-Jewish masses, explaining that it is their elementary democratic obligation as members of the oppressor nation to take the initiative in establishing the conditions of this joint struggle by fighting against the Zionist state's oppression of the Palestinian people. It must constantly explain that, to a considerable extent, the future of the Israeli-Jewish nation in the Arab East will, as a matter of fact, be determined by the extent to which the Israeli-Jewish masses show them-

selves capable of breaking with Zionism and conducting a struggle for socialism in alliance with the Arab workers and peasants.

#### 15. The Revolutionary Socialist Perspective and the Workers State

Raising the revolutionary socialist perspective on the solution to the national question in Palestine will in no way involve any curtailment of the struggle against Zionism by the Arab people. In the event, for example, that the Israeli-Jewish proletariat should fail to be drawn into massive class struggle against the Zionist state prior to the crushing of that state by the Arab revolution, a temporary dictatorship over the Israeli-Jewish nation by an Arab workers state -- and all the infringements of the democratic rights of Israeli-Jews that would involve -- would be perfectly consistent with this perspective, according to the Leninist principle that every particular democratic right is subordinate to the general democratic struggle against privilege. This perspective would, however, dictate that a major goal of such a dictatorship would be to awaken and rally the Israeli-Jewish proletariat so that it would organize itself to assume the burden of the continuing struggle against Zionism and imperialism within the nation by any means necessary. It would imply that as soon as the class-conscious Israeli-Jewish proletariat had sufficiently consolidated its authority and power as to be able itself to lead the struggle against Zionism and imperialism, the dictatorship of the Arab workers state over the Israeli-Jews could end, and the Israeli-Jewish proletariat would freely decide whether to merge politically into the Arab workers state or to form its own politically independent workers state within mutually agreed boundaries.

Nor will raising this perspective in any way contradict the Leninist policy of preferential treatment to the formerly oppressed nationality. The purpose of this policy is to prevent the spontaneous reproduction of privileges inherited from the past. The Arab workers and peasants will, for example, demand of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat -- whether it is politically organized in an independent workers state or not -- a share of the higher productivity of the Israeli economy so that the difference in productivity and the higher material standard of living this entails for the Israeli-Jews will be overcome as rapidly as possible. This perspective does imply, however, that the Arab workers and peasants will demand that the class-conscious Israeli-Jewish proletariat assume the primary responsibility for carrying out this policy, that it conduct the struggle against the reactionary elements in its own nation on this question, that it apply

whatever coercion is necessary, and, above all, that it offer the necessary political leadership to the more backward elements of the Israeli-Jewish masses by constantly explaining to them not only that, from a purely democratic standpoint, this policy is an elementary obligation of the Israeli-Jews, but also and above all how the most rapid possible economic development of the region, the establishment of a new division of labor devoid of all privilege, and economic integration into this new Arab East will materially, culturally and in every other respect benefit the Israeli-Jewish workers themselves.

In short, to the extent that the Palestinian national liberation movement raises the perspective of the right of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat to form an independent workers state in a liberated Arab East, it will not only be undermining one of the main sources of the constant reproduction of Zionist ideology among the Israeli-Jewish masses and thus neutralize an important element of mass support to the Zionist state. It will also be challenging the Israeli-Jewish proletariat to assume its class obligation to become a partner in the struggle against every manifestation of imperialism in the Arab East and to become an active participant in shaping the new, non-oppressive and nonexploitative relations in a liberated Arab East.

#### 16. Two Zionist Arguments

Two arguments frequently used by "left" Zionists in defending the state of Israel are:

1) The Jewish people, an oppressed nationality throughout the world, have a right to self-determination. The existence of the state of Israel is the realization of that right. The Palestinian people likewise have a right to national self-determination. But the Palestinian leaders have heretofore refused to recognize the Jewish right to national self-determination. Until they are prepared to do so, the Palestinian struggle cannot be regarded as a legitimate national struggle, for it is aimed against another people's right to national self-determination;

2) However one may disagree with the present policies of the Israeli government, or the manner of the creation of the state, the state must be defended against the Arab people because a victory for the Arab revolution and the destruction of the state would result in genocide, mass expulsion or the oppression of the Jews presently living in Israel.

Both arguments are false to the core.

#### 17. "Jewish Nationality" and the Right of Self-Determination

The first argument begins from a wholly false premise -- that the Jews of the world constitute a single nationality. In reality, the various sectors of world Jewry are developing under drastically different conditions in divergent directions. Capitalism, both in its pre-imperialist and imperialist phases has undermined, not strengthened, the economic ties that connected the precapitalist Jewish communities of the world. The economic relations between Jews of different countries is practically as much mediated by the national economies of the countries in which they live as the economic relations of any other residents of these countries.

The majority of the Jews today live in the United States, the Soviet Union or Palestine. In the United States, the Jews live in an imperialist democracy. Since the end of the great wave of Jewish migration of the late 19th century and early 20th century from Eastern Europe that produced a substantial Jewish proletariat, concentrated in a few large cities, the general tendency in the United States has been towards geographical dispersion, deproletarianization, and assimilation of the American Jews. This assimilation and this general rise into the upper reaches of the working class and the middle classes is precarious. It has been accompanied by the persistence and in some cases intensification of anti-Semitic discrimination; it is always threatened by the possibility that decadent capitalism will institute a systematic persecution of the Jews. But it is, at present, the dominant tendency. In general, despite the precariousness of their position, American Jews participate in the privileges of the dominant white American nation at the expense of the oppressed national minorities here and the semi-colonial countries abroad.

The Jews of the Soviet Union live in a degenerated workers state. They constitute the most direct surviving historical descendant of the oppressed, East European, Yiddish-speaking nation-in-formation that was developing in the old Russian Empire. The establishment of the workers state hastened enormously the process of the formation of a Jewish proletariat. Moreover, it opened the way towards a completely democratic solution of the Jewish question; Jews were offered the choice of living in complete equality everywhere in the workers state or of concentrating in a specific region with the right of national self-determination.

The bureaucratic degeneration of the workers state brought with it the reversal of this trend. Many aspects of the old, prerevolutionary oppression of the Jews have been revived. Under these circumstances, it is possible that the struggle against the general bureaucratic oppression

may assume a strongly national character among the Russian Jewish workers. The Bolsheviks in the Soviet Union, who will lead the struggle to overthrow the bureaucracy and institute proletarian democracy, may thus find it appropriate to raise the slogan of national self-determination for the Russian Jews, for this slogan may aid in mobilizing the real, oppressed Russian Jewish nationality in struggle against its real, specific oppressor -- the Soviet bureaucracy. Such a demand would have nothing to do with the Zionist mythical "Jewish nationality" in general nor with any purported right to national self-determination in Palestine. On the contrary, one reason for raising the demand would be precisely to undermine the influence of Zionist and every other sort of bourgeois Jewish nationalism.

In Palestine, the Jews have constituted a new, capitalist nation, deriving from a national movement of East European Jewry and incorporating into the new nation human material from other Jewish communities, especially West European -- in many cases highly assimilated -- Jews fleeing persecution, and the greater part of the Sephardic communities of the Arab world. This nation developed under the specific conditions of an unending battle to dispossess the Palestinians, the proletarianization of the majority of the immigrants, and alliance with imperialism.

The real foundation of the constant reproduction of the false idea of Jewish nationality has no connection with any objective tendency towards national development encompassing all the Jewish communities of the world. It lies rather in a past ethnic identity -- which had an economic foundation in precapitalist society -- in past and present persecution and oppression based on that identity, and in a possible similar future persecution and oppression. The Zionist Jewish nationality idea distorts the meaning of and at the same time explains these realities by misapplying the idea of nationality which has derived from and corresponds to the history of real national development.

Through the inverting lens of the Jewish nationality idea, the real absence of any tendency towards Jewish national development appears as a token of some deeper destiny, some ultimate nationality that transcends mere reality. The absence of each particular prerequisite of real national development -- the dispersion of the Jews, for example, or the concentration of Jews in economically non-productive classes -- appears as an instance of national oppression, of violence done to the transcendent nation. The dispersion of the Jews thus appears as evidence that the Jews are the universally

oppressed -- being everywhere, they are oppressed everywhere. And corresponding to the concept of the Jews as the universally oppressed is the concept of the non-Jew as the universal oppressor. To end the oppression of the Jews appears identical to the full realization of Jewish nationality in a Jewish state which can produce the missing prerequisites of real national development, which can, above all, bring the territorial concentration of the Jews. Whatever injury may be done to whatever non-Jews in the process appears justified from the standpoint of democracy since that injury is merely an aspect, if an unfortunate one, of the struggle against the universal, non-Jewish oppressor.

Because the idea of Jewish nationality is a false idea, no struggle can in reality be a struggle for the right of general Jewish national self-determination. But the illusion that it is possible to struggle for Jewish national self-determination can and does deflect from real struggles against persecution or oppression of Jews, including the real national struggles that specific Jewish nationalities may have to fight against real oppressors, by encouraging, for example, immigration to Israel rather than participation in struggles in the countries where Jews live. It can and does lead to alliances with the most dangerous enemies of the Jews -- the imperialist ruling classes -- and to alienation from the oppressed and exploited of the world whose real interests are identical to those of the Jewish masses.

Thus, the question of a Jewish right to national self-determination in Palestine can only really be posed as a question of the Israeli-Jewish right to national self-determination in Palestine. But that right, along with all the other democratic rights and material benefits enjoyed by the Israeli-Jews, is in reality today an aspect of an immense privilege over against the Palestinians who are violently excluded from the enjoyment of them, including the right of self-determination. And the principal, immediate means of this violent exclusion is the Zionist state -- the realization of the Israeli-Jewish right to national self-determination. Thus, the Palestinian and Arab struggle against the existing Israeli-Jewish right to national self-determination is simply a necessary aspect, if a central aspect, of the struggle against national oppression. But from a strictly democratic point of view, the legitimacy of a national movement can depend on nothing other than the fact that it is really fighting against the existing system of domination, privilege and oppression. From a democratic standpoint, to speak of "recognizing" a Palestinian right to national self-determination while opposing the real Palestinian struggle to realize that

right on the grounds that the fight is not being properly conducted, that the programs are unsatisfactory, and so forth, is simple hypocrisy.

It is true that the failure of the Palestine liberation organizations to include the right to Israeli-Jewish national self-determination in their perspectives on the new relations that will prevail in a liberated Palestine stands in contradiction to the general democratic character of the Palestinian and Arab national struggles. This contradiction, moreover, gives considerable ammunition to Zionist propagandists. It is also true that violent retention of the Israeli-Jewish nation within an Arab state, under conditions in which political independence of the Israeli-Jewish nation would be consistent with the elimination of Israeli-Jewish privilege, would constitute an element of national oppression of the Israeli-Jews. But from a strict democratic point of view, no contradictions in the political program of a real democratic movement and no merely possible future oppression can justify a real present oppression against which that movement is fighting.

#### 18. The Arab Revolution and the Future of the Israeli-Jews

The second argument is equally false.

There can be no question but that the Israeli-Jews are in great peril. The question is how the Israeli-Jews can end that peril.

The fundamental fact is that the Zionist state will be destroyed. In reality, it can offer no defense of the Israeli-Jews.

If the Arab people should have to conduct a mass, protracted armed struggle to bring their revolution to victory, and if the Israeli-Jewish masses should permit themselves to be used by imperialism as a counterrevolutionary army, then the loss of life could be immense. It is conceivable that, on the Israeli-Jewish side, it could be so great as to amount to a virtual annihilation of the nation. In this respect, alternatives before the Israeli-Jewish masses are stark: either die with a dying imperialism or live in the struggle against that imperialism. That is, either support the Zionist state and thereby become an instrument in the destruction of the Israeli-Jewish nation, or fight to overthrow the Zionist state in alliance with the Arab masses and preserve the Israeli-Jewish nation.

Other possible sources of danger to the Israeli-Jewish nation pertain to the vicissitudes of the Arab revolution itself. In the unlikely event of a massive defeat

of the Arab revolution, a defeat that would leave the Arab masses exhausted and demoralized for a whole epoch, the most reactionary forces in the Arab world would emerge as the dominant political force in the region. Under these circumstances, the Zionist state would lose its value to imperialism; indeed, its continued existence would be detrimental to imperialist interests because it would serve as a continual irritant tending to revive mass consciousness and mass activity among the Arab people. It is certain, under these circumstances, that the U.S. ruling class would dump its client state, and be quite prepared to see it crushed. At the same time, the demoralization and exhaustion of the Arab masses would make them vulnerable to the pogromist demagoguery of their imperialist-puppet rulers who would indulge in it freely in an effort to pervert every stirring of independent national or class consciousness into hostility to the Israeli-Jews. The accumulated national wealth of the Israeli-Jews would become an object of plunder by rulers acting, of course, in the name of the Arab or Palestinian nation. Under these circumstances, the Israeli-Jews would share the general misery of the Arab masses, a misery intensified in their case by special national oppression. In reality, it is the rise of the Arab revolution, not the utterly dependent Zionist state, that today stands between the Israeli-Jewish masses and oppression at the hands of the reactionary Arab forces acting in the interest of imperialism.

Another, far more likely potential source of danger to the Israeli-Jewish nation flows from a possible partial defeat of the Arab revolution in Palestine. At the moment of the revolutionary destruction of the Zionist state, it is possible that the consistently revolutionary forces, that is, the revolutionary socialist forces, will not be strong enough to lead the revolution to victory through the formation of the workers state. It is possible that the Arab national bourgeoisie will be able to seize and consolidate power. Under these circumstances, it is likely that the Israeli-Jews would be subject to some degree of special national oppression -- as is usual in such cases, with the cooperation, granted in return for privileges, of sections of the present Zionist ruling classes -- in addition to the general national oppression by imperialism to which the Palestinians would remain subject. For, as pointed out before, the national bourgeoisie has a class interest in retaining under its political dominion as much territory and as many human beings as possible, and thus, at the very least, in denying the Israeli-Jews the democratic right to national self-determination. Moreover, the national bourgeoisie will have a class interest in utilizing the measures that will, in any case, be neces-

sary to end Israeli-Jewish privilege, as means of converting the accumulated capital of the Israeli-Jewish nation into its capital; it will have a class interest in expropriating Israeli-Jewish capital while not only, of course, preserving its own capital under whatever form, but augmenting its capital through these expropriations. That is, it would inevitably introduce an element of national privilege and hence national oppression into its own partial struggle against Israeli-Jewish capitalism. Most important of all, an Arab national bourgeoisie ruling in Palestine would have a class interest in maintaining national antagonisms between the exploited Israeli-Jewish workers and the exploited Palestinian workers and peasants. It would have, that is, a class interest both in maintaining a chauvinist agitation among the Palestinian masses and in instituting a system of economic privilege for them, a system of superexploitation of the Israeli-Jewish workers.

But whether or not in a liberated Palestine the Arab national bourgeoisie wins and consolidates power depends to some extent on the activity of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat. To the extent that the Israeli-Jewish workers demonstrate their independence of the Zionist ruling classes and conduct a struggle against the Zionist state, to that extent will the proletarian, internationalist tendencies be intensified among the Palestinian workers and peasants. To the extent that the Arab masses see the Israeli-Jewish masses fighting the Zionist state while they are forced to fight the objective allies of that Zionist state in the Arab world -- the sell-out feudal-comprador elements and the compromising national-bourgeois elements -- to that extent will the conscious, revolutionary-socialist forces be strengthened in their struggle for hegemony in the Arab and Palestinian national movements, which alone can prevent the seizure and consolidation of power by the national bourgeoisie. To the extent, on the other hand, that the Israeli-Jewish proletariat remains bound to the Zionist ruling classes, incapable of conducting an independent struggle for its class interests, to that extent will the class antagonisms within the Arab and Palestinian people tend to remain submerged within the purely national struggle, to that extent will the difficulties of the revolutionary-socialist forces in winning hegemony within the Arab and Palestinian national movements be increased, to that extent will the danger that the Arab revolution in Palestine will be arrested through seizure and consolidation of power by the national bourgeoisie be increased. Furthermore, to the extent that the Israeli-Jewish proletariat is already awakened and fighting its Zionist ruling classes at the moment of the crushing of

the Zionist state, to that extent will the revolutionary socialist forces within the Arab and Palestinian national movements find real social forces, already in motion, prepared to join them in the struggle against capital of whatever nationality. To that extent will the Israeli-Jewish proletariat be not merely an object of the Arab revolution, but the subject as well, cooperating in shaping the new relationships in the common class interests of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat and the Arab workers and peasants, interests that exclude any kind of national privilege.

The third possible source of national oppression of the Israeli-Jews derives from a possible degeneration of a workers state in a liberated Palestine, a degeneration which would produce a privileged ruling stratum acting contrary to the class interests of the masses of the people and systematically infringing upon their democratic rights. Experience has shown that the ruling bureaucracies of degenerated workers states utilize chauvinist agitation to keep the working class divided along national lines in order to deflect potentially antibureaucratic struggles, and allow some privileges to the dominant-nation working class in an effort to win its support. Thus it is likely that in a degenerated workers state that could emerge following the crushing by the Arab revolution of the Zionist state, Israeli-Jews would be subject to some degree of special national oppression in addition to the general oppression of all workers and peasants by the privileged bureaucracy.

Whether or not such a partial defeat of the Arab revolution occurs will likewise depend to a considerable extent on the behavior of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat. To the extent that the workers state power in Palestine can base itself on an Israeli-Jewish proletariat that has become highly conscious of its class interests and steeled in class struggle against the Zionist state, as well as on the Arab workers and peasants, then all pressures tending toward bureaucratic deformation will be greatly weakened. The size of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat will help offset the numerical weakness of the Arab proletariat. An awakened Israeli-Jewish proletariat that, acting out of consciousness of its class interest, will assume primary responsibility for carrying out the democratic measures necessary to end Israeli-Jewish privilege and to defeat the inevitable Zionist-imperialist efforts to mobilize Israeli-Jews in various counterrevolutionary plots, will thereby weaken the tendencies towards bureaucratic degeneration and national oppression that would inevitably appear if these measures should have to be carried through by an Arab workers state in the form of a dictatorship over

the Israeli-Jewish nation. Voluntary, active cooperation of the Israeli-Jewish proletariat, acting out of consciousness of its class interest, in hastening the economic development and unification of the region and establishing a new division of labor devoid of all privilege, will greatly weaken the tendencies towards bureaucratic domination that will inevitably flow from the extreme economic underdevelopment of the area, an underdevelopment which is itself a consequence of imperialist and Zionist domination.

All the really possible dangers of a future Israeli-Jewish national oppression, in short, flow not from the victory of the Arab revolution but from the possibility of its partial or total defeat. It is not the Zionist state, which is, in any case doomed, that will stand between the Israeli-Jews and national disaster. It is the revolution itself. Revolutionary socialists have always insisted that only the complete victory of the socialist revolution can end the danger of the oppression and persecution of the Jews. This position retains its full validity in the current situation in which an Israeli-Jewish nation has developed -- as an oppressor nation of the Arab people.

Thus, every action by those, anywhere in the world, who are concerned with the fate of the Israeli-Jews, that strengthens the Zionist state -- the primary, immediate instrument of counterrevolution in the Arab East -- and that strengthens the hegemony of Zionist ideology over the Israeli-Jewish masses, is in reality increasing the danger of a future oppression of the Israeli-Jews. Every action, on the other hand, that weakens the Zionist state while combating the hold of Zionist ideology over the Israeli-Jewish masses correspondingly lessens the danger of such oppression.

#### 19. The Tasks of the SWP

The revolutionary struggle in the Arab East is one of the major focal points of the world revolution. Despite the serious defeat suffered by the Palestinian resistance in the September 1970 war in Jordan, the struggle organizations remain intact and they retain their strong ties to the Palestinian masses. New mass upsurges can be expected in the relatively near future.

Ultimately, because of the crucial importance of the region to U.S. imperialism, the American ruling class will attempt direct military intervention. Thus far, the policy of using the regional counterrevolutionary armed forces -- such as the Israeli and Jordanian -- has been able to contain the Arab revolution. But in the face of the inevitable upsurge of

the revolution, and as the contradictions within Israeli society sharpen, such a policy will begin to fail. At that point, the U.S. ruling class will send American combat troops into the region unless the masses of the American people can be mobilized to block that move.

This, combined with the fact that neither the Zionist state nor the feudal or bourgeois Arab regimes can successfully carry out their counterrevolutionary mission at present without U.S. aid and support, imposes a special obligation on the Socialist Workers party.

The SWP was the only major organization on the left that rallied to an unconditional, internationalist defense of the Arab revolution during the 1967 war. Since then, that defense has been an increasing part of the SWP's political activity.

The form of this activity has been thorough press coverage of developments in the area, expanded publication of literature on the Arab revolution and on the Jewish question, participation in debates and teach-ins, organization of speaking tours, and other methods of educating newly radicalizing forces about the question of the Arab revolution and Zionism.

Support to the Arab revolution in the U.S. is still limited to a small vanguard, but this support has steadily grown since 1967 as the reactionary features of the Zionist state have become more evident. The SWP's primary responsibility on the Arab-Israeli question is to intensify its propaganda work in defense of the Arab revolution, to prepare the political groundwork

for future mass mobilizations against U.S. intervention.

An important side of the SWP's work in defense of the Arab revolution is the opportunity it provides to gain a hearing for our ideas among Arab, Israeli, and other Middle Eastern students in the U.S. It is our obligation to try to convince as many Arab and Middle Eastern students in the U.S. as possible of the ideas of Trotskyism. Consistent work along this line can make a major contribution to building the Leninist parties that will be essential to the triumph of the socialist revolution in the area.

Another important side of the SWP's work in defense of the Arab revolution is the increased opportunities it provides to explain our position on the Jewish question. We must make it clear that revolutionary internationalists are the best and most consistent fighters for the rights of Jews wherever they suffer oppression and that the oppressed and exploited people everywhere are the only reliable allies of the Jews. This is important in countering the appeal of reactionary hooligan groups, like the Jewish Defense League, which pretend to be fighters for the rights of Jews, while trying to draw the Jewish masses into support for their enemies and opposition to their potential allies.

The Zionist establishment is disturbed because so many radical Jewish youth in the United States have turned away from Zionism and toward the Arab revolution. Many of them are in the Trotskyist movement, and a firm and clear policy on the Arab revolution, Israel, and the Jewish question will win over many more.

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