

# Urges Palestine Partition

Dear Editor:

We should be for the partition of Palestine for these reasons:

(1) The two basic concepts of internationalism are these: (a) the right of self-determination, including the right of each nation to form a state of its own. Only a hypocrite or a fool will any longer deny that the Jews wish to form a state of their own.

To counterpose to this the solution advocated by LABOR ACTION, the convocation of a Constituent Assembly based on majority rule, could only ensure unending violence and bloodshed. For such a solution would permit the Arabs to form their own state (this right they already have through partition), but would also leave the question as to whether a Jewish state should be set up or not, not to a decision of the Jews themselves, but to a decision made by the Arabs. Where nations other than the Jews are involved, this is known as imperialism and national oppression. (In Europe one of the chief instruments of national oppression was precisely this concept of majority rule—in the Kaiser's Reich, in the Hungarian Empire, in the Polish state, etc.)

(2) There has been a great deal of hysteria caused by the violence in Palestine. It must be pointed out that:

(a) Only exceptionally fortunate nations have won their independence without violence.

(b) The publicity given the 1,000 persons killed in Palestine stands in sharp contrast to the silence maintained by all papers while six million Jews were being slaughtered (until the end of the war, when the issue was used as propaganda against Germany). The organizer of this silence was the British Foreign Office (abetted by the State Department, the anti-Semites and the Jewish assimilationists), which sought to prevent the Jews' escape from Hitler's Europe, so as not to be forced to deal with their pressure to enter Palestine after the war. The present disproportionate publicity given to the violence has the same forces behind it, with the same objective: to prevent the Jews' escape to Palestine.

(c) The possible tens of thousands of dead in Palestine must be weighed against the certainty of destruction of the million remaining Jews in Europe if partition fails. To be against partition is to be for the annihilation of the remaining Jews.

(3) The content of the two nationalisms are different. The Jews occupy the status of inferiors in the Middle East. In Yemen they must get off the sidewalks when meeting Arabs and are locked up in ghettos at night. In other countries they are segregated and terrorized—more Jews have been killed in Arab countries since 1940 than in the recent fighting in Palestine (but without publicity). The reason for this growth of anti-Semitism is the same as in Germany, Poland, etc.—i.e., growth of nationalism. (The idea that it stems from "Zionist imperialism" may be dismissed as the chatter of emptyheads, unless these people wish to argue that there is something racially inherent in the Arabs that makes them different from all other nations.)

At the head of Arab nationalism stands the Mufti. During the war, when the Bulgarian government wished to ship 4,000 Jewish children to safety, he personally interposed—and had them killed. He repeated this exploit at Bratislava and in general spearheaded the drive to exterminate the Jews. To the shame of the movement, some comrades justify this activity as being based on patriotic motives—as though Hitler had different motives!

But, indignant souls emphasize, there are Jewish fascists too! This generally refers to Jabotinsky. To this there are two replies: (a) Jabotinsky and his followers never be-

came leaders of the Jews. (b) Here are some examples of Jabotinsky's program for the Arabs: "In every cabinet where the Prime Minister is a Jew, the Vice-Premiership shall be offered to an Arab, and vice-versa. . . . No state law, no coin, no bank-note shall be valid unless executed in both Hebrew and Arabic. . . . Complete cultural autonomy. . . . Allotments of land shall be distributed. . . . to Jewish and Arab applicants indiscriminately," etc.

Recently the Arab leadership has announced its intention to suppress or exterminate all Jewish communities in Palestine. There's something of a difference between the two "fascisms," no?

(4) The British are trying desperately to block partition. They helped in the extermination of the Jews during the war by blockading their escape; they permitted the Mufti to escape; they have given official status to the Mufti's National Guard while

hindering the Haganah; they are blinking at English laws to permit ex-servicemen to volunteer against the Jews; they have sold \$25,000,000 worth of arms to the Arabs. The U. S., also with an eye on oil, refuses to sell arms to the Jews.

For the Jewish nation this is a last desperate struggle to survive. For the Arabs it is a fight to prevent the Jews from obtaining equality with themselves (the question of an Arab minority in the Jewish state is not involved, for the Arabs are fighting against any Jewish state in principle, with or without an Arab minority). The Arabs are stronger in numbers, in equipment and above all in wealth and imperialist backing. But because of the nature of the aims of the two nations, the Jews can still win.

But they must have arms! It is our duty to start a ceaseless agitation in every organization and with every individual, both Jewish and non-Jewish, about this question.

Break the arms blockade against the Jews!

Leon Shields.

## Criticizes Paper's Editorial

Dear Editor:

Allow me to join in the lament on your "editorial tragedy" entitled "Palestine Tragedy."

The slogan of "Cease Fire" is an excellent one and one that fits the situation. It is, however, overshadowed by the mass of the editorial that is contradictory, contains errors in theory and above all is full of abstractions and does not give us a guiding line for action to meet the PRESENT situation.

How achieve a "Cease Fire"? The editorial states (by the Jews making) "elaborate and scrupulous assurances to the Arab people and to make the greatest number of reasonable concessions." I don't ask for a blueprint but pray, comrade editors, please give us a hint as to what kind of "assurances" and "concessions." Should not a demand for "cease fire" appeal to the Arab workers as well?

After allowing any ordinary reader to study the editorial, I am sure that nine out of ten wouldn't answer the question "Does or does not LABOR ACTION and the Workers Party accept partition." By accepting partition, I mean not hailing it but accepting it in the same sense that LABOR ACTION accepted the partition of India.

Let's look at India. A religious group—the Moslems—demanded the right to separate from the nation or nationalities that exist in India. Nobody, not even Ali Jinnah, claimed the Moslems were a nation. Yet the Workers Party and LABOR ACTION, while deploring the situation, came out CLEARLY for their right to separation, and with no long sermons on majority rule.

### RIGHT OF SEPARATION

Palestine, on the other hand, it is universally conceded, IS inhabited by TWO NATIONS. No matter what should have been or is the better course of action, socialists who believe in the right of self-determination must allow the smaller nationality the right to separate itself from the larger (majority) nationality and constitute its own unit.

Lenin never tired of repeating that the essence, the very heart of the right of self-determination is the right of a nationality not to be counted as part of a larger unit but to separate, secede and form its own unit within which majority rule will operate. The editorial counterposing majority rule to partition was an error in principle. Whatever can be said against partition, majority rule has no place in the discussion.

Where a smaller nationality wants to separate itself, Lenin point out that the first responsibility of upholding this right fell on the revolutionists of the majority nationality;

in this case, the Arab labor movement. The editorial should have mentioned that fact.

In case of open warfare to prevent a minority nationality from separating, from seceding, the position of a revolutionary is obvious, unless the defensive struggle of this nation is subordinated to a larger imperialist war. At present open warfare can be avoided by the proper political steps. Emphasis should be put on the "Cease Fire" and the political attempt of isolating the elements both amongst the Jews and the Arabs who feed the flames of war and irredentism. This means above all the Mufti.

In my opinion, the most effective way, POLITICALLY, to minimize bloodshed is by **immediate independence for both the Arab and Jewish states**. As long as the possibility exists of destroying the two states, so long will there be a premium on violence. Immediate independence will not eliminate bloodshed but in the long run will keep it to a minimum. The probable pattern that the violence will take is continued guerrilla fighting until independence, a flare-up of large-scale fighting, tapering off to zero as the two states establish themselves finally.

In addition we must call for the reunion of the country into a voluntary federation of the two sovereign states. The braided geographical borders, the close interconnection of the economy of the two countries makes federation a practical slogan, appealing to the need of both the Jews and Arabs. Only federation can guarantee the maintenance of the present living standards of the Arabs and Jews or provide for the economic basis for large-scale immigration. Justified Arab labor opposition to partition, should be directed away from "irredentism" to re-unification by voluntary federation.

With national feelings at their height, federation of two sovereign states is the only form that re-unification can take. Even where national feelings are normal, as in post-revolutionary Russia, a federation was established by the Bolsheviks, until destroyed by the Stalin dictatorship. To speak of re-unification in general and of a single Constituent Assembly is philosophy and not politics.

Slogans of the day are: Immediate Independence—Abolish British and UN Transitional Rule—Re-Unite Palestine by Voluntary Federation.

Yours truly,

Al Findley.