

Jerusalem, National Independence and Peace

by Alexander Bittelman

THERE STILL EXISTS a good deal of misunderstanding in progressive and anti-imperialist circles on the true meaning of the struggle around Jerusalem. But while the situation is complicated, the issues are relatively simple. For the anti-imperialist and peace camp everywhere, the camp headed by the Soviet Union, the fight around Jerusalem is a fight for peace and national independence. It is part of the worldwide struggle against the aggressive, expansionist drive of American imperialism and its junior partner and rival, British imperialism.

It is no secret that the Truman Administration, fulfilling the will of the Wall Street monopolies, is driving for control and domination of the oil resources and strategic positions of the Near East. And it is also no secret that American imperialism and its government are now making a determined effort to secure control of Jerusalem as a major position in that drive. The Truman Administration is planning to use control of Jerusalem, together with Wall Street's steady economic and political penetration of Israel, for two main purposes: 1) to facilitate and speed up the turning of Israel into a semi-

colony or outright colony of Wall Street; and 2) to promote further the preparations for unleashing world War III by turning Jerusalem and Israel into a military base.

Naturally, American imperialism comes here into conflict with British imperialism. While both pursue the same objective of suppressing the national freedom and liberation movements of the Jewish and Arab peoples, the Anglo-American imperialist rivalries in the Near East, as elsewhere, are growing sharper. This is due to the further deepening of the general crisis of capitalism—the shrinking of the imperialist spheres of influence, etc.—and to the further development of the oncoming economic crisis.

The general sharpening of these Anglo-American rivalries shows itself also in the fight around Jerusalem as it develops in the United Nations. U.S. and British imperialism are both seeking a larger share of control in that area, especially oil and strategic positions. At the same time both pursue the objective of completely nullifying the United Nations decision of November 1947 regarding Palestine. Both seek now to do away totally and formally with that deci-

sion, just as they have right along sabotaged and prevented its full realization. Why? What is the explanation for this policy of American and British imperialism?

The November 1947 decision of the United Nations on Palestine provided for: (a) the establishment of an independent Jewish state in one part of Palestine; (b) the establishment of an independent Arab state in the other part of Palestine; (c) the establishment of economic unity between the two states; and (d) the setting up of Jerusalem as a separate entity under the administration and control of the U.N. Trusteeship Council.

When this decision was made, it was generally recognized in all progressive and anti-imperialist circles that under the existing conditions and relation of forces this was the best, most democratic and just solution of the Palestine problem. It was in accord with the principle of national self-determination and in the best interests of both the Jewish and Arab peoples of Palestine. It also provided certain opportunities for combating Anglo-American imperialism in that area and for advancing the fight for peace.

That is why British imperialism fought against that decision to the very end, has never accepted it and has never ceased sabotaging it. That is why American imperialism also maneuvered against the adoption of the partition decision by

the United Nations and has sabotaged its realization ever since. The fact that the American delegation voted in favor of the partition decision in 1947 was generally understood by most informed people as a maneuver to pacify public opinion in the United States and to prevent the Soviet Union from being the only great power supporting the partition decision. It was very clear that while the Soviet Union was waging a sincere and consistent fight for the national independence and freedom of the Jewish and Arab peoples of Palestine and supported the partition proposal as the best solution under the given circumstances, American imperialism—the Truman administration—was opposing the national liberation of Palestine, was seeking to foist Wall Street domination over that country, and was only maneuvering with the issue of partition in order to hide its imperialist ambitions.

These are the reasons that American and British imperialism are now seeking to do away with the U.N. partition decision altogether and formally. Consequently, a new menace now confronts the state of Israel, the Arab peoples and the cause of world peace. Unfortunately, this new menace is not yet understood by certain progressive and anti-imperialist circles in the United States.

What is this new menace arising from American and British imperialist conspiracies in the Near East? It

is to be found first, in the fact that American imperialism will get into a position to use Jerusalem, and the whole of Israel, transformed into a semi-colony, for further conquests in the Near East and for preparing a new world war. It is to be found, secondly, in the fact that British imperialism will secure domination of the Arab part of Palestine by its control of Transjordan (Abdullah) which has seized that territory in violation of the United Nations partition decision. It is to be found, thirdly, in the fact that both American and British imperialism will thus be able to establish political and military centers in the heart of old Palestine, continually threatening the frontiers of Israel and of several Arab states, tightening their domination and oppression of the Jewish and Arab peoples and preparing to unleash a new world war.

These are the issues involved in the struggle around Jerusalem. It is a major international struggle affecting the national freedom and independence of Israel, of the Arab states and peoples, and affecting intimately the peace of the world. Therefore, in the United States this is a major issue in the struggle for peace, against Wall Street's drive for world domination and against its policy of preparing to unleash a new world war. It is a struggle of the whole of the American people, not only the Jewish masses, against the imperialist warmaking policies of

both major parties of the monopolies, the policies promoted and pursued by the Truman Administration with the support of the Murrays, Greens, Dubinskys, Careys, Reuthers, and the whole gang of Wall Street agents in the labor movement.

These are also the issues for the people of Israel, as well as for the Arab peoples. It is a terrible and dangerous delusion, cultivated by the reformist and bourgeois nationalist agents of Wall Street among the Jewish masses in the United States, that for the people of Israel the issue is the retention or loss of Jerusalem. The real issue is: shall Israel be enabled to grow and develop as a free and independent state, or shall it be turned into a colony of American imperialism; shall Israel be enabled to live in friendship and cooperation with an independent Arab state in the Arab part of Palestine, or shall British imperialism once more get control of that part of Palestine; shall Jerusalem be kept out of the hands of American and British imperialism or shall it become a military and political center of American and British imperialism for keeping down the Near East—including Israel—and for preparing a new world war? These are the issues that are much bigger than the fate of Jerusalem itself. They are the issues of saving the national freedom and independence of Israel from Anglo-American imperialist conspir-

acies, of protecting the cause of world peace in the Near East. *In the present world situation, there is no other way of fighting successfully for these objectives than by fighting for the realization of the United Nations partition decision of November 1947.*

THE STRUGGLE IN THE UNITED NATIONS

In the course of the U.N. discussion on the Jerusalem question, several proposals were brought forward. These proposals and discussions reflected the rivalries between American and British imperialism, between England and France, etc. They reflected the contradictions between the Arab states and Anglo-American imperialism, between Israel and Anglo-American imperialism, between the ruling groups of the Arab states and of Israel, and between and among the rulers of the Arab states themselves. They also reflected the influence of the Vatican and of the checkered and contradictory ambitions of the ruling groups in the Latin-American countries.

This was the rather complicated situation in the United Nations which confronted the Soviet Union in its attempt to seek a just solution to the Jerusalem problem, a solution in accord with its anti-imperialist line of national independence and peace, which would serve the best interests of the Jewish and Arab peo-

ples. The first thing that had to be done was to meet the most immediate and greatest danger, namely, the plan of the Conciliation Commission of the U.N., consisting of the United States, France and Turkey and dominated by Wall Street, to put Jerusalem under virtual domination of American imperialism in the guise of a fake "internationalization" scheme.

The Soviet delegation sought to solve that problem by trying to anchor the deliberations on Jerusalem in the Palestine partition decision of the United Nations of November, 1947. By seeking to rally around this decision the anti-imperialist and peace forces in the U.N., as well as all those who for one reason or another were ready to oppose American imperialist domination of Jerusalem and the re-establishment of British imperialist control in the Arab part of Palestine (through Abdullah), the Soviet delegation opened an opportunity for the defeat of the fake "internationalization" plan of the Conciliation Commission (read: Anglo-American imperialism), for the defeat of the scheme to put Anglo-American imperialism in control of Jerusalem. And this was how the Soviet delegation came to amend the proposal of the Australian delegation for the internationalization of Jerusalem.

The Soviet policy, as expressed in its amendments to the Australian resolution, is as follows: to solve the

Jerusalem problem on the basis of the U.N. partition decision of November 1947—a decision which Israel has accepted and by which Israel came into existence; to solve the problem on the basis of realizing fully that decision, especially the formation of the independent Arab state in the Arab part of Palestine and taking it away from British imperialism; and to realize that decision fully by establishing the control and administration of Jerusalem under the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations. The Soviet amendments to the Australian proposal called for *the further democratization* of the U.N. statutes that will govern the administration of Jerusalem and for the abolition of the so-called Conciliation Commission which was used by Wall Street to prevent conciliation between the Jewish and Arab peoples and to promote its imperialist expansion.*

In the face of the situation existing in the United Nations and outside, the choice confronting the anti-imperialist and peace forces in the United States, including the masses of the Jewish people, is the following: either Wall Street control of Jerusalem, in whatever form, or democratized Trusteeship Council control in which the Soviet Union must have a voice under all conditions; either the turning of Israel into a semi-

* The amendment calling for the abolition of the Conciliation Commission failed of adoption.

colony of Wall Street, or the opportunity for the people of Israel to resist and successfully combat this drive of American imperialism; either the re-establishment of British imperialist domination of the Arab parts of Palestine (through control of Transjordan), or the establishment of an independent Arab state, a friend of Israel and ally against foreign imperialism; either new political and military positions for American imperialism to unleash a new world war, or new opportunities to resist these conspiracies and to fight for peace.

These are the alternatives in the present world situation. There are no others.

We know, of course, that there are many people among the Jewish masses in the United States who find it difficult to recognize and who refuse to accept the fact that these are the only alternatives. These people want Jerusalem so much to be part of Israel that they tend to accept easily the fraud and delusion spread among the Jewish masses by the *Forward-Dubinsky* clique and the reactionary Zionist leaders that the only question is for Israel to keep Jerusalem, thus failing to see and meet the *real* issue and the *real* danger—the danger of Israel becoming a *Wall Street colony and a bridgehead for World War III*. They thus fail to see that if American and British imperialism succeed in their present effort to annul, completely and for-

mally, the U.N. partition decision, which also provides for U.N. control of Jerusalem, *Jerusalem will not be in the hands of the Jewish people and the whole of Israel will be turned into a Wall Street colony.*

We must help the American Jewish masses to understand that at the present time, in the world situation as it exists, the question before us now is not whether we “should want” or “should not want” Jerusalem to be part of Israel. As we have shown before, this is not the issue facing us. And to make this fact more easily understandable, the following example might prove helpful.

In a different world situation, there would be different issues and different answers. For example, if the national independence of Israel were fully won and firmly secured and if alongside Israel, in the Arab part of Palestine, there existed an independent Arab state whose independence also was firmly secured; and if these two independent states were cooperating with the rest of the peace-loving world to defeat the Anglo-American drive toward a new world war—then there would certainly be no Jerusalem problem of the kind now facing us. The nations and states directly involved, Israel and the Arab state, would undoubtedly settle the Jerusalem problem without much difficulty. Conceivably, such

a settlement would provide for the new city of Jerusalem being part of Israel.

Furthermore, as the struggle against Anglo-American imperialism proceeds, in the Near East and in the rest of the world, the people of Israel could develop the ability to resist effectively Wall Street's penetration and expansion, the ability to fight effectively against Israel's becoming a colony of Wall Street and a base for its war preparations. In that kind of situation, Jerusalem would be a part of a truly independent Israel, willing and able to collaborate with all peace-loving states and peoples to defeat the Anglo-American imperialist attacks upon the national independence of other peoples and upon the peace of the world.

And what is the way to this kind of situation? It is the way of struggle against American and British imperialism. It is the way of struggle for peace. It is the way of collaboration with the camp of peace and democracy headed by the Soviet Union against the camp of imperialism, reaction and war headed by Wall Street, by American imperialism. It is the way of struggle for the realization of the U.N. partition decision of November 1947 and for settling the present Jerusalem issue on the basis of that decision, as advocated by the Soviet delegation in the United Nations.

ISRAEL GOVERNMENT IS CAPITULATING TO WALL STREET

The Israel government, headed by Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, is exploiting to the full the feelings of the Jewish masses for Jerusalem, to maintain the appearance of being a champion of Israel's independence. In reality, this government, which is Right-wing Social-Democratic and bourgeois nationalist, is seeking "an understanding" with American imperialism—an understanding which spells in practice capitulation to Wall Street.

The Ben-Gurion government is steadily allowing American finance capital to penetrate and conquer Israel's national economy. Under the command of Anglo-American imperialism, this government is participating in the sabotage of the U.N. partition decision of 1947, going as far as declaring (Ben-Gurion, Dec. 5 declaration) that for Israel the partition decision was "null and void." And at this very moment the Israel government, under Wall Street sponsorship and "guidance," is seeking to reach an agreement with Abdullah on Transjordan (read British imperialism) by which Israel accepts the latter's control of the Arab part of Palestine and in return gets Abdullah's acceptance of Israel's control (read Wall Street control) of Jerusalem. (See Jewish Telegraphic Agency dispatches in Yiddish daily press, Dec. 12.)

Reporting these negotiations in the *New York Times* on December 11, Gene Currivan writes:

Another obstacle in the way of immediate peace is Jordan's insistence upon a corridor across the Negeb from Hebron to the sea. This has obvious ramifications. The most important is that it would give a foothold in Israel to Britain by virtue of Britain's treaty with Jordan. But with Israel and Jordan united in their opposition to internationalization, there is a chance that many of what now seem obstacles may vanish in the light of the common goal.

Reporting an agreement between Israel and Jordan on their respective frontiers in mid-Jerusalem, the U.P. writes:

The agreements, on issues which had been hanging fire for months, were viewed by observers as a prelude to more important joint action by the two states as a result of the U.N. resolution, which Hashemite Jordan also has opposed (*New York Herald Tribune*, December 12).

All these reports reveal one of the most serious immediate dangers threatening Israel and the Arab peoples. It is the danger of British imperialism re-entering Palestine, politically and militarily, and of American imperialism, as part of the "bargain," settling down, also politically and militarily, in Israel and especially in Jerusalem. *And the Ben*

Gurion government, according to all reports, is going in the direction of accepting this "bargain." The imperialist press of the United States, notably the *New York Times* and the *New York Herald Tribune*, is guiding and encouraging Ben-Gurion to do precisely this—to betray Israel's national independence and to capitulate to Wall Street.

Echoing the *Jewish Daily Forward*, Ben-Gurion has the unspeakable audacity to attack the Soviet Union for its loyalty to the partition decision of the U.N. and its proposal to settle the Jerusalem problem on that basis. Speaking in Jerusalem on December 14, Ben Gurion makes the grand gesture of saying that "We are on the threshold of a political struggle without precedent" (*New York Times*, December 15.) And against whom is he fighting? Is it American and British imperialism, which are menacing Israel's very existence as a state? Is he going to fight Britain's attempt to get a "corridor" through Israel? No. With these, the enemies of Israel, he negotiates "peace" and capitulation. But he will fight what he calls the "three powerful forces." He says: "Three powerful forces have joined hands against us—the Arab world, the Catholic world and the Communist world" (*New York Times*, December 15.)

It is nothing less than a Hitler lie to say that the "Communist world" has joined hands with the "Arab world and Catholic world" against

Israel, and Ben Gurion knows it. He also knows that Abdullah, with whom he is about to agree to betray both Israel's independence and the U.N. partition decision, is part of the Arab world. And he also knows that in "cooperating with" American imperialism, he is also cooperating with the reactionary hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. These are facts. And it is also well known that the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church is the worst enemy of the "Communist world" and of the Soviet Union and that there is little sympathy for the Soviet Union among the feudal and reactionary rulers of the Arab states. What then, becomes of Ben Gurion's grand gesture? Nothing but a smoke-screen to hide his policy of capitulation to Wall Street which endangers the freedom and independence of Israel.

The policy of the Soviet delegation in the U.N., as discussed above, is directed precisely toward helping Israel—the people of Israel—to meet that danger. That is the meaning of its amendments to the Australian proposals. That is the meaning of its fight for the realization of the U.N. partition decision by which Israel came into existence. The fact that certain Latin-American countries and Arab states voted for the same proposals as the Soviet delegation on the question of Jerusalem means this: (1) that there exist various contradictions between certain

Arab states and Anglo-American imperialism as well as between the ruling groups of the Arab states themselves; (2) that there exist contradictions between the ruling groups (feudal, bourgeois-nationalist, etc.) of the Arab states and of Israel; (3) that the Vatican is pursuing here some of its special reactionary policies using for this purpose certain Latin-American and other states; (4) that each of these groups, for its own reasons, voted for the same proposal on Jerusalem; and (5) *that the Soviet delegation was successful in making use of all these contradictions to help bring about a majority to defeat the scheme of fake "internationalization" proposed by the Conciliation Commission and to create the basis for settling the Jerusalem issue along the lines of the partition decision of 1947.*

In the face of these known facts, how can one speak of "three forces" having joined hands against Israel as Ben Gurion does, or of the "unholy alliance" as do the *Forward-Dubinsky* clique and the Jewish bourgeois press? The answer is that this is a Hitler lie manufactured for the special purpose (1) of hiding the treachery and betrayal of Israel by the Right Social-Democrats and bourgeois nationalists—in Israel and in the United States; and (2) of helping Wall Street carry forward the incitements against the Soviet Union as part of its preparations to unleash a new world war.

The official Zionist leadership in the United States supports Wall Street's drive against the independence of Israel. It also supports and "encourages" the capitulation policies of the Israel government. Led by Daniel Frisch, president of the Zionist Organization of America, its Executive Committee cabled this sort of "encouragement" to the Israel government. It also said that it was "heartened by the stand of our American government" on the Jerusalem question and is looking to Truman "to lead the movement for the reopening of the Jerusalem issue" in the U.N. (*New York Times*, December 12.) Similar positions were taken by the official leaders of the American Jewish Congress, headed by Rabbi Irving Miller (*Ibid.*).

In taking these reactionary attitudes, the official Zionist leaders express the pro-imperialist, pro-Wall Street orientation of the dominant circles of the Jewish bourgeoisie in the United States. While certain Jewish bourgeois groups in Israel find themselves in conflict with Wall Street's economic and political penetration of Israel, and thus tend to develop certain forms of opposition, the dominant groups of the Jewish bourgeois circles in the United States find themselves in no such conflict. Only the national minded Jewish middle-class groups in the United States come into such conflicts and therefore may develop capacities for supporting in one form or another

certain united-front actions against particular phases of U.S. imperialist policy in Israel.

The main base for such united actions among the American Jews lies in the Jewish workers, and poor middle classes, professional people and intellectuals. And the main approach to the development of such actions must be through the struggle for Israel's freedom and independence, for winning allies and supporters for the people of Israel in their fight for independence, for linking these struggles with the general fight of the American people for peace and against Wall Street's preparations of a new world war.

The development of united actions against American imperialist policy in Israel demands the systematic exposure of the treacheries of the official Zionist leaders and of the reactionary Social-Democrats.

The reactionary Social-Democrats, the *Forward-Dubinsky*-Jewish Labor Committee group—and also the Potofsky group, are actively supporting U.S. imperialist and war-making policy and are pressing the trade-union movement in Israel to move faster in the same direction. It is they who are pressing the Histadruth (Israel's trade union center) to break formally with the World Federation of Trade Unions and to join the union-splitting labor agents of Anglo-American imperialism who have just formed the so-called "International Confederation of Free

Trade Unions." The main role of this outfit is to split further the ranks of the working class and to help Wall Street destroy the independence of other peoples and to unleash a new world war. The *Forward-Dubinsky* group is now especially active in helping Wall Street turn Israel into a semi-colony of American imperialism.

CONCLUSION

We said before that the acceptance by the U.N. of the Australian proposal as amended by the Soviet delegation accomplished two things. It prevented the adoption of fake "internationalization," *i.e.*, American imperialist control of Jerusalem. *It created the basis* for settling the Jerusalem problem along the lines of the partition decision of 1947, with *further democratization*. The point to stress here is that only *a basis* was established. The solution itself has yet to come. And here we face great difficulties and dangers, chief among them, the open sabotage by Anglo-American imperialism and its collaborators, the governments of Israel and Jordan.

The danger is imminent of a so-called agreement between Israel and Jordan which will re-establish British imperialism in Palestine and will expand Wall Street domination over Israel so as to turn the new state into a virtual colony. And there is also the danger of Anglo-American

imperialism succeeding in creating such a situation in the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations as will make impossible the carrying out of the last decision of the General Assembly. Reports are circulating that an attempt is already being made to exclude the Soviet delegation from participating in the solution of the Jerusalem problem. Should this happen, it would be only a first step toward subverting the Jerusalem decision of the General Assembly in order to enable Anglo-American imperialism to carry through its conspiracy against Israel and against the Arab part of Palestine.

Consequently, we must concentrate on exposing the full menace of the latest moves of American imperialism to secure control of Jerusalem and to turn Israel into a semi-colony; we must demonstrate the full menace of British imperialist domination of an enlarged Transjordan, and of the virtual nullification of the U.N. partition decision of November 1947. We must seek to bring about united-front actions and movements under the following slogans:

Combat and defeat all plans for putting the control of Jerusalem in the hands of American imperialism and its allies.

Save Jerusalem from becoming a military and political center for American and British imperialism to prepare and unleash a new world war.

Save Israel from becoming a Wall Street semi-colony; help the masses of Israel to defend the national independence and freedom of their country.

Prevent British imperialism from coming back to Palestine through an agreement between Israel and Jordan giving Abdullah the Arab part of Palestine.

Support the line of the Soviet delegation to the United Nations which calls for the realization of the U.N. partition decision of 1947, the establishment of an independent Arab state in the Arab part of Palestine with economic unity with Israel, the control of Jerusalem by the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations on a democratic basis, and the abolition of the "Conciliation Commission," which is an instrument of American imperialism.

We should be ready to join in and support all united-front mass struggles directed against U.S. imperialist schemes for control of Jerusalem in whatever form, and against all British schemes, especially the Transjordan-Palestine grab. At the same time the Party and its press should proceed to win support of the masses for the line of policy proposed by the Soviet delegation—the solution of the Jerusalem issue on the basis of realizing the U.N. partition decision of 1947. We will expose systematically the compromising, capitulating and pro-imperialist line of the official Zionist leadership

and of the Ben-Gurion government. We shall especially concentrate on exposing and combatting the treacherous and pro-war position of the Social-Democratic leaders.

The situation demands mass actions directed to Truman, Acheson and to the forthcoming new session of Congress condemning present U.S. policy in Israel and in the Near East as dictated by the oil monopolies and the strategists of a new world war. These actions should demand of Truman and the State Department to work for the implementation of the U.N. partition de-

cision, voted for also by the American delegation, and to collaborate with the Soviet delegation to that end. These actions should also demand that the President and the State Department seek a Jerusalem solution on the basis of the U.N. partition decision and in cooperation with the Soviet government.

The struggle around the Jerusalem issue is a major fight for peace and national independence in the Near East. It must therefore be waged as an organic part of the general struggle for peace by the masses of the American people.