

**ORIENTAL STUDIES
IN THE USSR**

**THE PALESTINE
PROBLEM:
AGGRESSION,
RESISTANCE,
WAYS
OF SETTLEMENT**

**"SOCIAL SCIENCES TODAY" EDITORIAL BOARD
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PREFACE

For more than 25 years the Middle East conflict has been and continues to be a most acute and topical world problem. The crux of the problem is the struggle against the Israeli aggression and the liberation of the Arab lands occupied since 1967 and the establishment of an independent Arab Palestine state. The entire history of the Middle East conflict confirms that there can be no peace in that region of the world unless the Palestinian problem is settled.

In spite of all attempts by imperialist and Zionist circles to relegate the Palestinian problem to the background of other aspects of the Middle East settlement, it is increasingly making itself felt. This is due to the rapidly expanding scale of the national liberation struggle of the Arab people of Palestine and the consolidation of the Palestinians as a people with their own specific culture and a common language, which is a dialect of the Arab language. Through the fault of Israel the Palestinian people have been deprived of their own territory, of their own statehood. Their interests are represented by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Israeli official circles persist in their attempts to slander the Palestine national movement, to distort the history of its origin, and to call in question the very fact of the existence of the Palestinian people and thus justify their anti-Palestinian policy. They deliberately say nothing about the fact that the Palestine liberation movement arose in retaliation to the Zionist colonisation of Palestine when, after the formation of the World Zionist Organisation, the first attempts were made to establish a "Jewish homeland".

The Palestine national movement has passed through several stages in its development. One of the most difficult was that in the period between 1948 and the mid-1960s, when the movement was fragmented and part of the Palestinians staked on Arab regimes as potential liberators of Palestine. At that critical period preservation of the vitality of the movement was facilitated in large measure by the common desire of all Palestinians to secure the restoration of their national rights. After the Israeli aggression of 1967 the Palestinian people, headed by the PLO, took to arms to defend and restore their lawful national rights. From the mid-1970s onwards the PLO embarked on a course of forming a national state on the territories which would be liberated either as a result of military operations, or as a result of a political settlement. Recognition of political forms of struggle opened up before the PLO possibilities for establishing close contacts with the population of the occupied territories, enhancing its prestige and for developing resistance in a number of areas occupied by Israel. The Palestine Liberation Organisation's international prestige grew, its ties with the socialist countries, developing states and with other national liberation movements extended.

The USA and Israel categorically refuse to take into consideration the fundamental changes in the PLO's programme, for they would then have to agree to its participation in a Middle East settlement which, in turn, would offer a real possibility of reaching a constructive solution of the problem as a whole. As regards the Soviet Union its position was clearly stated by Andrei Gromyko, First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR in his report to the Eighth Session of the USSR Supreme Soviet on June 16, 1983: "The role of the Soviet Union in that region... is not merely the role of a passive onlooker. Our country has put forward just principles of a political settlement, including the proposal to convene an international conference on the Middle East.... Peace can be brought to the Middle East by a settlement which, instead of imperialist arbitramen-

ness and Israel's actions with impunity, backed by expansionist ambitions, will lead to the liberation of all the occupied Arab lands and ensure the establishment of an independent Arab Palestine state. Much depends on the Arab countries themselves, on their unity in the struggle against the forces of aggression."

In the Soviet Union study of the Middle East crisis, of the Palestinian problem is given much attention. In the last few years alone the Institute of Oriental Studies, USSR Academy of Sciences, has brought out a number of works, including: Anatomy of the Middle East Conflict, by Academician E. Primakov, the collections The State of Israel: Economics and Politics, International Zionism: History and Politics, and the monograph Foreign Capital in Israel's Economy by B. Yamilinets.

This collection is a small part of the works by Soviet researchers dealing with the history, development and perspectives of the Palestinian problem. It carries material on the history of the Zionist colonisation of Palestine, on how the Palestinian problem was posed at UN General Assembly and Security Council sessions, it proves irrefutably that Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination--witness Israel's actions on the occupied Arab territories. The articles treating of the international legal aspects of the Palestinian problem, the genesis of the Palestine Liberation Organisation in 1964 make interesting reading. And, finally, a large section of the collection is devoted to questions concerning the attitude to the Palestinian problem of the Arab countries, and the socialist community headed by the Soviet Union and their solidarity with the PLO's course at the current stage. The collection draws on UN documents on the Palestinian problem, on resolutions of the non-aligned movement, of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation and on other documents of importance for understanding the problem here reviewed.

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THE PROBLEM OF PALESTINE IN THE 20th CENTURY:
ORIGINS, EVOLUTION, PROSPECTS

Academician Evgeni PRIMAKOV

The global importance of the Palestinian problem has increased sharply in the 20th century, and especially since the 1940s. It today affects not only the situation in the Middle East but also the events in other parts of the world. In short, the Palestinian problem has assumed a qualitatively new character.

Its content is now to a great extent determined by 1) the evolution of the Middle East conflict, i.e., the conflict between Zionism and, beginning with the late 1940s, also with the State of Israel, on the one hand, and the Arab countries and peoples, on the other; 2) the process of the Palestinian people becoming a national entity; 3) the policy of the Great Powers towards the Palestinian problem.

How the Palestinian Problem Arose

Both historically and logically the initial cause of the Arab-Israeli conflict was the conflict between Zionism and the Arab people of Palestine. The desire of the Zionist movement to establish a Jewish national home in Palestine which at that time was populated almost exclusively by Arabs was first voiced at the Basle Congress of 1897. Later Zionist leaders described the essence of their movement as the desire "to bring a people without a land to a land without a people". Both parts of this formula are fallacious. There were Jews living in many countries of the world, and most of them regarded those countries, where also their parents, grandparents and great-grandparents had lived, as their own.

And Palestine was not at all a "land without a people". Many generations of Arabs had been living there. In 1919, there were 57,000 Jews living in Palestine, or 9.7 per cent of the total population and 533,000 Arabs (or 90.3 per cent). The real influx of Jewish immigration began only in the 1930s and reached its apex in the first years after the State of Israel had been formed.

The immigration changed the ratio between the Jews and Arabs in Palestine. This was not only because of the absolute increase of the number of Jewish immigrants, but also (and this should be particularly noted) because the indigent Palestinian Arab population was forced out.

Long before the State of Israel was established, colonising funds—the Jewish National Fund (set up in 1901) and the Palestine Foundation Fund (set up in 1920)—were used to buy land from Arab owners, mainly from big feudal landlords. As a result leaseholders were forced off the land and thousands of farm labourers were left without work. Very few of them managed to find work with the new settlers. Here it is pertinent to mention the charter of the Jewish Agency signed in Zürich on August 14, 1925. Article 3(d) states that "land is to be acquired as Jewish property and is to be taken in the name of the Jewish National Fund" and Article 3(e) adds that "In all works or undertakings carried out by the Agency, it shall be deemed to be a matter of principle that Jewish labour shall be employed."

In the agreement between the Fund and the settlers who received credit from it we find the following clause: "The settler hereby undertakes that ... he will reside upon the said agricultural holding and do all his farm work by himself or with the aid of his family, and that, if and whenever he may be obliged to hire help, he will hire Jewish workmen only."¹ Sir John Hope Simpson, the author of the Palestine Report on Immigration, Land Settlement and Development, wrote that the substitution of Jewish labour for Arab was "the policy which the Zionist Organisation deliberately adopted."² Forced off the land, the Palestinian Arabs could not find jobs in the towns either.

Those are aspects of the colonisation of Palestine that Zionist leaders prefer not to discuss. But that, however, does not alter the gist of the matter. Suffice it to quote MAPAI leader David Hakohen who for many years headed one of the most important committees of the Israeli Knesset--the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee. Recalling his debates with his "socialist colleagues" (students from England, Ireland, China, India and Africa) in the 1920s in London, Hakohen said with bitterness 40 years later, in November 1968: "In our debates I had to find a way to justify the fact that I would not allow any Arabs to join my trade union, Histadrut; to justify the exhortations to housewives not to shop in Arab stores; to justify our stationing of guards at orchards in case the Arabs could find work there, ... to justify our pouring of kerosene over Arab tomatoes and our harassment of Jewish housewives in the market when we smashed the eggs they had bought from Arabs; to laud to the high heavens the Jewish Fund which sent Hankin to Beirut to buy up the land from the absentee effendis and throw the fellahs off that land--to buy a great number of dunums³ from Arabs was allowed, but to sell even a single dunum to an Arab was categorically forbidden; to say that Rothschild, the embodiment of capitalism, was a socialist and to call him a benefactor--all that was anything but easy."⁴

On November 29, 1947, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution dividing Palestine which had been a British mandate territory into two states--a Jewish and an Arab, with an area of 14,100 and 11,100 square kilometres each, respectively. The resolution, however, was not implemented. In December 1947 armed clashes started in many regions of Palestine. British General John Bagot Glubb, the founder of the Arab Legion in Transjordan and subsequently its commander, in his memoirs recalls a conversation between a high-ranking British officer of the Arab Legion and an officer of the Haganah.⁵ The British officer remarked that the population of Israel would, as soon as it was formed, divide almost evenly into Jews and Arabs, and that this would most likely create a lot of difficulties. The difficulties could be overcome,

the Haganah officer replied, and added that a few planned massacres would eventually help to get rid of the Palestinians.⁶

The terrorist acts of December 1947, which were repeated in 1948, serve to illustrate these words. In January 1948 the Zionists organised an explosion in Jaffa killing 22 Palestinian Arabs and injuring many more. On the next day the Zionists blew up the Semiramis Hotel in Jerusalem. Another 22 Palestinian Arabs were killed. Similar acts of terror were carried out in January, February, and March 1948. The gravest crime was committed in the Arab Village of Deir Yassin, near Jerusalem, during the night of April 9 when the extremists from two Zionist terrorist organisations--Stern and Irgun Zve Leumi--killed 254 people, including women and children. That same month the Zionist armed forces occupied Haifa, Jaffa, and Jerusalem's Arab quarter of Katamon. In May they captured Safad, Beisan and other towns and settlements. By May 1948, when Israel was proclaimed a state, some 400,000 Arabs had already been driven out from its future territory.

The ousting of Palestinian Arabs continued intensively also after the State of Israel had been established, and especially during the armed clashes between Zionist units and the armed forces of the Arab states in the first Palestinian war of 1948-1949 which added 340,000 refugees to the 400,000 Palestinians who had been driven out of their homes.

Why the mass emigration of Palestinian Arabs? What were the underlying causes?

Later, Israeli leaders would claim that hundreds of thousands of Palestinians had left their homes "voluntarily", having become "the victims of the propaganda of Arab governments" which had allegedly appealed to the Arabs to leave Palestine. British journalist Erskine Childers who made a study of the BBC archives of monitored broadcasts of Arab stations beamed to Palestine said, and he was subsequently widely quoted, including by liberal-minded Israelis, that he failed to find a single statement by any of the Arab leaders

which could be interpreted as a call to the Palestinians to leave their homes.⁷

But there is ample evidence proving that the emigration of Palestinians was caused by the policy pursued by the Zionist leadership. It was not only that the mass exodus of Palestinian Arabs suited the Zionists. They had planned it. Addressing a scientific conference in 1957 General Yigal Alon, commander of operations in the northern sector of the Palestinian war, said that when the Zionist leadership had planned the seizure of the Arab part of Safad, it had no intention of preventing the Arab population from leaving it. Naturally, those who did not belong to the leadership of the Zionist movement were more frank. Former Knesset member Uri Avnery, for instance, writes in his book Israel Without Zionism: "I believe that during this phase, the eviction of Arab civilians had become an aim of David Ben Gurion and his government."⁸ And here is another opinion expressed by the well-known British historian Arnold Toynbee: "The Palestinian Arabs did not leave their homes voluntarily or in obedience to instructions from the governments of the adjoining Arab states. They fled from fear of death."⁹ This conclusion is confirmed by the British military historian Edgar O'Ballance who defined the content of Zionist policy as follows: "It was the Jewish policy to encourage the Arabs to quit their homes, and they used psychological warfare extensively in urging them to do so."¹⁰

Zionist propaganda utilised the massacre at Deir Yassin and other similar crimes to force the Arabs to flee their homes. Radio broadcasts in Arabic were full of threats: "If you do not leave your homes you will share the lot of Deir Yassin", "The road to Jericho is still open, quit Jerusalem while you're still alive".

The Palestinian Arabs resisted the expansionist policy of Zionism which at that time was spearheaded against them. There were also excesses, Jewish settlers being the victims. While not justifying such actions against civilians, it must be emphasised that they were almost always a spontaneous ma-

nifestation of the Palestinian Arabs' opposition to a state established by another people on a land in which they had lived since time immemorial.

As regards the terrorism against the Arab population, it was not spontaneous. It was a policy of the Zionist leadership which wanted to establish a single national state in Palestine. The Irgun leader Menachem Begin unequivocally, and cynically, stated that there would not have been a State of Israel without the "victory" at Deir Yassin.¹¹

Most of the Palestinian refugees settled in Transjordan and in the Gaza Strip which was placed under Egyptian administration, several hundred thousand settled in Lebanon and Syria, while some found refuge in Iraq. The struggle for the right of Palestinian refugees to return to the territory they had been forced to leave began in 1948 already. Between 1948 and 1967 the UN General Assembly adopted 19 resolutions confirming their right to repatriation, or if they did not want to return, to compensation for the loss of property, but Israel never complied with these resolutions.

And so, prior to the war of 1967 the Palestinian Arabs were divided in two parts. One part--300,000-400,000 people--lived in Israel. The other--about a million people--lived mainly in the refugee camps in the Arab countries bordering on Israel.

The Six-Day War of 1967 aggravated the situation. Hundreds of thousands of people had again to abandon their homes and become refugees, this time from the West Bank of the Jordan, from Jerusalem, from the Gaza Strip, from the Golan Heights, and from the Sinai Peninsula, occupied by the Israeli troops. Many were twice refugees: they had to leave the camps they set up after 1948 and to move to the East Bank of the Jordan, to Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq. The mass expulsion of Palestinian Arabs continued till 1968, when King Hussein of Jordan closed the bridges across the Jordan River.

And after that, too, hundreds and thousands of people were forced to leave their homes. This time "selectively"--they were mostly intellectuals, influential people, members

of the former administration, etc. "The authorities come to a man's house in the middle of the night. They give him a half-hour or an hour to pack up a few things, while making sure that neither he nor his family get in touch with the outside. A group of such people is taken to the Jordan Valley, and with the help of blows, shots ... they are forced to cross into Jordan. The majority of the expelled belong to the leadership of the Palestinian nation: mayors of towns, lawyers, engineers and intellectuals. Of course, they are not officially charged with anything, so that they have no possibility to defend themselves."¹² That is how the "individual eviction" of people from occupied territories is described by Israel Shahak, a prominent researcher in organic chemistry, Professor at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and Chairman of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights.

According to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), there were 1,800,000 Palestinian refugees in 1980.

People Without a Home

So there was no home for the Palestinians, for the entire Palestinian people: for the Palestinian Arabs who remained in Israel, for those who live in the occupied lands, and for the hundreds of thousands of refugees in various Arab countries.

The Arab national minority in Israel actually has no civil rights: it is discriminated against in the field of employment and education, and for a long time Palestinian Arabs had no freedom of movement. It is indicative that Arabs who account for 13 per cent of the total population have practically no representation in higher state bodies. In 1976, only six out of the 120 seats in the Knesset were held by Arabs. Only three per cent of the student body in Israel are Arabs.

Discrimination against the Arab minority in Israel is a routine matter. Professor Noam Chomsky of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology who can hardly be suspected of an

anti-Israeli bias (he is the author of several articles praising the Israeli way of life) wrote the following in the Paris magazine Jeune Afrique in April 1976: "Besides the discrimination codified by the letter and spirit of the law, quasi-official organisations like the Jewish Agency and the Jewish National Fund are responsible for development programmes obviously intended to create a tremendous disparity between the Jewish and Arab communities. This explains why 90,000 Arab villagers in Galilee receive the same amount of water to which one single Jewish village has the right, and why 60 per cent of the Arab villages are still without electricity. These are the natural consequences of the fact that electrification and water supply are controlled by organisations which in principle are expected to concern themselves with the well-being of only Jewish citizens."¹³ Arabs are also discriminated against in housing, education (not only higher education) and the municipal services.

Many progressive and liberal-minded Israelis have repeatedly expressed their indignation at the way the Arab national minority is treated in their country. Israeli Communists are waging a consistent struggle for improving the condition of life of the Arabs, for their equality. Some changes have been achieved under the impact of the struggle waged by the progressive forces in Israel and of the international solidarity movement. But they are insignificant and the obvious fact remains that the Palestinian Arabs in Israel continue to be an oppressed minority which does not enjoy equal rights with the Jewish population.

The Israeli leaders have no intention of solving the national question, the question of the status of the Arab minority. On the contrary, their policy is to perpetuate Israel's uni-national structure, and accordingly is aimed at a gradual ousting of the Arab population or at a gradual eradication of their national character.

Typical in this respect is the land policy of the Israeli leaders. Even before the State of Israel was established, a definite policy was pursued of depriving Palestinian

Arabs of their land in order to force them outside the boundaries of the State of Israel as delineated in 1948.

The policy of depriving the Palestinian Arabs of their land continued after the establishment of the State of Israel. In the first years of the state's existence the Israeli government used Article 125 of the legislation introduced during the period of the mandate (1945) to set up "closed zones" to combat ... the terrorism of Zionist organisations against the British authorities. Arab landowners in those zones were not allowed to return to their homes after the 1948 war. A Knesset decision of May 1951 advising the legal commission to draft within two weeks a law annulling previous ordinances "contradicting democratic principles" was there and then buried in oblivion. Meanwhile the Israelis began to develop these lands--"vacant" as specified by Article 125.

In October 1948, a law was passed authorising the Ministry of Agriculture to confiscate plots which had not been tilled and sown for a year and "to turn them over to third persons". Another law on "absentee owners" soon followed. Included in this category were not only people who had left Israel but also about 20,000 Palestinian Arabs living in Israel with Israeli identification cards. They were included among the "absentees" because between November 29, 1947 (the date of UN decision to divide Palestine), and September 1, 1948 they were not in Israel or were in the districts under Arab control.

In 1949, "security zones" were established by legislation giving the Ministry of Defence the power to evict Arabs living in settlements within a ten-kilometre-wide frontier zone. At first it seemed that the "security zone" law did not necessarily deprive the Arabs who had been living in those zones of the right to own that land--it only meant that they lost access to it. But in 1953 the Knesset passed another law allowing the government to take possession of all land which was not in the hands of its owners as of April 1, 1952.

A whole series of laws and ordinances facilitated the expropriation of Arab landowners: "On Forests", under which

many forests and groves belonging to Arab villages were confiscated; "On Prescription"; "On Acquisition of Land in the Interests of the Population" (used to establish towns and other settlements with a Jewish population or to expand them); etc.

As a result, by the mid-1970s Arab villages possessed only about 50,000 hectares of land, excluding the Negev desert where the sedentary Bedouins were, according to Le Monde, actually deprived by the Israeli authorities of their rights to 190,000 hectares.¹⁴

According to a survey of Arab villages by the Israeli Ministry of Agriculture, the plot of an Arab family decreased more than three times--from 1.5 hectares prior to the establishment of the State of Israel to 0.46 hectare in 1963. A. Kapelouk, a Le Monde correspondent in Jerusalem, writes that since then the average plot of an Arab peasant family has been considerably reduced. He cites as an example Israel's largest Arab community, Umm-al-Fahem. In 1976, its inhabitants possessed only 1,200 of the 14,000 hectares that had belonged to them before the State of Israel was formed, though there had been a considerable population increase--an average of 700 newborn children a year.

The goal-oriented policy of redistributing land according to national origin was buttressed by discrimination against Arabs in lease relations. Arab farmers were not allowed to rent land from Jewish communities. As the newspaper Haaretz wrote on February 27, 1976, the Minister of Agriculture threatened to cut off the water supply and confiscate the land of those Jewish owners who would lease land to Arabs. Neither could Arabs become members of kibbutzim (agricultural cooperative) or even be employed there.

After the establishment of the State of Israel, the state and Jewish communities gradually acquired most of the land. In the mid-1960s, when the status of military governors was abolished in Arab districts, Israeli officials declared that "the epoch of the confiscation of Arab land has ended". In the mid-1970s, however, the confiscation of land belonging to Israel's Arab minority began anew.

The newspaper Davar wrote on March 2, 1976, that the new decisions to go ahead with the expropriation of Arab land were designed to "halt the decline in the proportion of the Jewish population in Galilee", in other words, it made no secret of the direct link between the official land policy and the official policy of consolidating the uni-national character of the state and the discrimination against the Arab minority. But whereas before and immediately after Israel became a state the Jewish acquisition of land resulted, as planned, in the exodus of small Arab landowners whose land had been expropriated and Arab tenants who no longer could rent land. Now the Israeli leaders had other aims as well, including the "redistribution of the population" in order to prevent the Arab minority from consolidating itself in any part of Israel, and to "dilute" it with Jewish settlers. All that was clearly spearheaded against any forms of Arab self-determination in Israel.

The political measures taken by the Israeli authorities prohibiting the establishment of Arab political parties, trade unions, sport and culture clubs, etc., served the same purpose.

Such were the conditions of the Arab minority. They were even worse for the Palestinian Arabs in the territories Israel occupied in June 1967. They experienced the full brunt of the occupation regime: arrests, terror, persecution, searches, forced evictions, suppression of demonstrations and strikes by force, the destruction of the homes of not only the members of the resistance movement, but of sympathisers as well. Between 1967 and 1976 Israeli military authorities razed to the ground about 20,000 Arab homes on the West Bank of the Jordan and in the Gaza Strip. Thousands of people were thrown into prison. The conditions in which they are kept has evoked strong protest on the part of many international democratic organisations.

Israel Shahak, Chairman of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, writes in an article which was published in a foreign journal after the Haaretz had turned it down: "The Israeli occupation regime in the conquered

territories is not only not a liberal one; it is in fact one of the most cruel and repressive regimes in modern times.... Let us take as an example the blowing up of houses and other collective punishments. The facts are well known: when the occupation authorities arrest a suspect, even before he is put on trial, sometimes even before he is 'officially' indicted, an order is issued to destroy the house in which the suspect lived. Sometimes it is the house of his family, sometimes not. All the inhabitants of the village are forcibly concentrated on a nearby hill, so as to watch the 'educative show'. It must be stressed that such an act is fundamentally barbaric. Children, old people, women, sick, cripples, and all of them together are thrown into the street, regardless of weather."

Speaking about other forms of "collective punishment", which the Israeli authorities resort to, Shahak writes: "Does one want to punish the area of Hebron? Grapes are not allowed to be transported on the roads during harvest time, until the 'notables' finally fall on their knees before the military governor. Does one want to punish the city of Ramallah? The sale of mutton is forbidden in that town for two months, or the municipality is not allowed to receive contributions coming from natives of Ramallah abroad and sent for the purposes of municipal development."¹⁵

The policy of establishing Israeli settlements in the occupied territories is of special importance. Its objectives are: consolidation of territorial expansion; establishment of advanced posts to control the Palestinian Arab resistance; prevention of real self-determination for the Palestinians and attempts to establish forms of pseudo-autonomy which for all practical purposes rob the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights; the preservation of "control positions" in Israel's hands in the event it will have to concede on the question of granting the Palestinians the right to establish a state.

In spite of the protests of the Arabs living in the area and the world public, and completely ignoring the UN resolution and the Geneva Convention, between the 1967 war

and mid-1976 Israel built 68 settlements in the occupied territories.¹⁶

This policy was continued by the ultra-right Likud government, and by 1980 the number of such settlements had reached 122. "The function of those settlements, clear to anyone who consents to look at the map, is territorial expansion, it is the enslavement of the Palestinian population on the occupied territories,"¹⁷ Professor Shahak writes.

All Israeli leaders before and after 1973—Golda Meir, Itzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres, Menachem Begin—said "never" to the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to establish their own national state. This policy is rooted in the desire to annex or at least retain "direct ties" with the occupied territories in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip even after the crisis is settled. Interesting in this respect are the Allon Plan and the Dayan Plan whose authors proposed to fix Israel's "military frontier" along the Jordan River, to set up "security belt" on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, to give the Israelis the right to retain military and security control functions on the territories without definite, fixed frontiers between those territories and the State of Israel.

Begin's "Palestinian autonomy" plan reflects an even more pronounced annexationist policy. Its basic ideas are recorded in both the Camp David documents and in the Annex to the Egyptian-Israeli agreement. The plan was approved in all its details by the Knesset on May 21, 1979. It envisages Israeli political control over the activity of "Palestinian self-administration" bodies and over the economic life of the "autonomy" area, the stationing of Israeli troops on the West Bank and in Gaza, and the continued building of Israeli settlements.

The continuity of the anti-Palestinian policy of all Israeli governments can also be seen in the measures to integrate the occupied West Bank and Gaza into the Israeli economic structure. The Israeli tax system is used there. Local farm production is oriented to the Israeli market. In their search for cheap labour, especially in the condi-

tions of mass conscription, Israeli employers began to import Arab workers from the occupied West Bank and Gaza. As distances are relatively short, tens of thousands of Arab workers are brought to work in the morning in trucks which take them back at night.

Such practices which have absolutely nothing in common with philanthropy provide jobs for a certain number of Arabs and grounds for Israeli and pro-Israeli journalists to proclaim that an "era of prosperity" has set in for the people living in the occupied territories and an "idyllic peace" between them and Israel. The Israeli administration presents municipal elections on the West Bank as the "introduction of democratic principles" in the occupied territory. But the elections of 1972 and 1976 to a number of urban and rural municipal councils had the specific aim of depriving the Palestinian Arabs of their real right to self-determination. Those elections were linked with the idea of Palestinian self-administration on the occupied territory, which was later embodied in the proposal underlying the Israeli stand concerning the West Bank at Camp David in September 1978.

A multi-stage plan for the introduction of a "Civil Administration" on the West Bank had been worked out long before Camp David and even before the Begin government was in office--another manifestation of the Zionist policy to deprive the Palestinian people of the right to self-determination. It was planned to set up an Arab civilian apparatus with limited functions and in a very restricted sphere--agriculture, education, and health--alongside the Israeli military administration responsible for all affairs in the occupied territory. The next phase was to grant greater powers, including power over neighbouring villages, to the mayors of towns, to be followed by the final stage of establishing a more complex system extending to mayors of towns and Arab civil servants in the Israeli military administration. This system was to be presented as Arab "self-administration" on the West Bank and in the Gaza

Strip, which was in fact done in Begin's proposals accepted by Sadat at Camp David.

The idea of a "Civil Administration" always included the setting up of an antipode to the Palestine Liberation Organisation which is not only recognised by all Arab countries as the sole representative of the Palestinian Arabs but also enjoys broad support in the occupied territories.

In August 1977, the mayors of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip sent a memorandum to the US Secretary of State emphasising that the Palestinians took a common stand and could not be divided geographically and that the PLO, headed by Yasser Arafat, was the only organisation authorised to represent them.

From the very beginning, the "self-administration" plan for the Palestinians in the occupied territory was a component of the plans for further expulsion of Palestinian Arabs from a part of or even from all the Arab lands occupied in 1967.

The Israeli "hawks" press for a third mass expulsion of Arabs. The interview given to the Hebrew University newspaper by A. Davidi, former Israeli Paratroop Commander and now an instructor at the University, calls for no comment:

Q. How do you propose to solve the Palestinian problem?

A. In the most simple and human way: a transfer of all Palestinians from their present places to the Arab countries.

Q. Will they want it?

A. ...They will accept it if they don't have an alternative."¹⁸

The calls for the "resettlement" of Arabs outside Israel and the territories it now occupies come not only from retired generals but also from high-ranking officials.

The supporters of a new expulsion of Arabs give the following arguments: the natural growth of Israel's Arab population proceeds at a much faster rate than that of the Jewish population, with the result that the state's Zionist essence is being eroded. The solution is more immigration, and for this "additional land" is needed—"at least" the Arab territories captured in 1967. So they must be annexed. And the people living there must be expelled. This frankly racist theory is backed not only by individuals but also by influential political parties in Israel.

This "theory" underlies the movement for more settlements in the occupied territories led by the extreme nationalist religious group Gush Emunim (The Alliance of the Faithful). Without formal government permission members of the group establish settlements on the West Bank with a view to expanding the area for subsequent settlements. The Jerusalem correspondent of US News & World Report quotes his conversation with members of the group: "Israel as outlined in the Bible stretches from Iraq to the Nile River. We are not a bunch of fanatics.... We are guarding Tel Aviv from here," one of them said, and his wife added, "This is our land, and nothing will change that."¹⁹

Although the Israel Labour Party governments formally disavowed the Gush Emunim actions, they in fact covertly supported it. The measures that were allegedly to prevent illegal settlement of the occupied territories were dictated by the desire to neutralise the storm of Arab protests and were nothing but window dressing. These governments secretly followed the practices of the Gush Emunim and concentrated the Arab lands occupied in 1967 in the hands of the Israeli state.

The above-mentioned US News & World Report correspondent also wrote that Israel's state possessions on the West Bank were steadily growing. According to information available, the Israeli authorities have already annexed more than 30 per cent of the entire West Bank. The extremists were encouraged also by frank statements by members of the government like the one by former Minister of Defence Shimon

Peres: "The establishment of every new Jewish farm community, whether in Israel or in the occupied areas, strengthens the defence of Israel." While disagreeing with the methods used by Gush Emunim, Peres stressed that he "likes" its members "as individuals" and added: "I am much more concerned about the youth joining the Communist Party of Israel", noting that he had "discussed the question with US leaders who showed understanding".²⁰

The right-wing extremists are even more encouraged by the attitude of the Begin government, one of whose initial acts was to "legalise" three Gush Emunim settlements in the occupied territory.

All of Begin's subsequent actions have been aimed at establishing an unlimited number of settlements there.

It is indicative that Gush Emunim is itself trying to "fill in" the government policy in the occupied territory. "How can we expect the world to accept the idea that our army has the right to be present in an area that we say doesn't belong to us?"²¹ In these words one of Gush Emunim's main financial backers, the Israeli industrialist Vodak, not only put his finger on the "half truths" of Israel's government programmes, but also pointed to the place which the extremist groups could occupy and are occupying in implementing the government's policy on the Palestinian question.

This policy, which seeks to "reconcile" territorial expansion at the expense of the occupied territories with the preservation of a uni-national composition of the Israeli state, is left "open" for extremist Israeli groups, and they are aligning themselves with it.

After the war of 1973, however, a new group appeared involving not only Communists or people close to the Communist Party, who have always supported the right of the Palestinians to self-determination, but also liberal bourgeois intellectuals who began to realise that the Arab-Israeli conflict would never be settled and Israel would never be secure unless the Palestinians were granted the right

to establish their own state. The appearance of this group is significant, though it by no means sets the tone of the Palestinian question in Israel. The very appearance of such views and a certain increase in their popularity, however, are a direct result of the failure of the Zionist hopes that the occupation regime on the West Bank of the Jordan and in the Gaza Strip would be a "long and peaceful one".

As proof of the allegedly idyllic situation in the occupied territories Zionist propaganda often points to the fact that thousands of Arabs have been allowed to make so-called summer visits to their relatives but should families want to be reunited, they can do so only by the relatives leaving Israel, and not otherwise.

The apologists of the Israeli policy in the occupied territories also point to the fact that there is no mass armed actions by the Palestinian Arabs on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. True, there has been no significantly strong armed resistance to the occupation authorities in the territories captured by Israel in 1967. One of the reasons is the policy of intimidation, arrests, deportation and brutal treatment of the Arabs who have joined the resistance or who only sympathise with it. The natural conditions also explain why there is no guerrilla war against the invaders in the said territories: high population density, barren land, no forests, mountainous areas difficult of access. Leaders of the Palestinian Resistance Movement more than once admitted that the movement, especially in the first years after the Six-Day War, had not sufficiently concerned itself with the population in the occupied territories, concentrating entirely on consolidating its positions in the neighbouring Arab countries.

All that, however, by no means proves that the population in the occupied territories is "satisfied" with its lot. There has always been a wave of popular actions against the occupation authorities whenever any measures, internal or international, linked with the Palestinian question were taken, as was the case in November 1974 during the UN General Assembly debate or in January 1976 when the Middle East

situation was discussed with the participation of PLO representatives at the Security Council. The magazine Jeune Afrique writes: "The awakening of the national awareness of the people on the West Bank has enriched the Palestinian Resistance Movement with a second front which will eventually become the principal front."²²

Thus, the Israeli policy failed to solve the question of the self-determination of Palestinian Arabs living in Israel and in the occupied territories. It was this policy that prevented Palestinian refugees from returning home and rendered impossible the solution of this question for the Palestinians who were forced to leave their homes and settle in different Arab countries.

Ever since they were expelled, many Palestinians have lived in refugee camps. After 1967 the number of such camps increased, reaching 61 by the end of the 1970s according to UNRWA. Overcrowding, lack of sanitation, winter cold, children's diseases, and lack of elementary conveniences have become a way of life for hundreds of thousands of Palestinians. Only a few have managed to get an education and gone to work in the oil-rich Persian Gulf emirates. The Palestinian bourgeoisie in Transjordan, and later in Jordan, enjoy a special status, but nearly 40 per cent of Palestinian refugees continue to live in the camps.

Israeli politicians like to say that Palestinians have been forcibly detained in those "reservations". Another explanation is that the stable number of refugees in the camp is maintained through the monthly grants paid by UNRWA. What they never say, naturally, is that the grants are negligible, insufficient for normal living.

"Why haven't the Arab states absorbed these several hundred thousand people?", Israeli leaders often ask.

And this brings us to the question of fundamental importance in defining the nature of the confrontation between Israel and the Arab people of Palestine. Whom is Israel opposing? Is the conflict determined by and confined to the relations between that state and hundreds of thousands

of refugees? Or is it a conflict between the Zionist movement and the Palestinian people--a definite historical entity?

Palestinian refugees or the Palestinian people deprived of their national rights?

Israeli leaders are trying to reduce the matter to a question of Palestinian refugees.²³ But life shows the opposite: it is a matter concerning a historical entity of people called the Arab people of Palestine, or Palestinian Arabs.

This conclusion is shared by a number of Western analysts of the Middle East. As the American Middle East Journal wrote, "Palestinians Become Refugees" was followed by "Refugees Become Palestinians".²⁴ And the Paris Notre republique noted that observers returning to the Middle East today are struck by two relatively new facts. The first is the appearance in the arena of the Palestinians themselves. By this is meant not only the activity of well-armed guerrillas, but the birth of a nation.²⁵ Such statements are many.

Even some Israeli public figures have come to the conclusion that Palestinians form a national entity. Former Israeli General Yehoshafat Harkabi in a lecture delivered at Tel Aviv University on May 18, 1968, said: "Their self-definition as Palestinians gives them a strong sense of common identity. The overwhelming majority have preserved their identity and attachment to Palestine despite the passage of time, hardships, and dispersion, and this was also true before the Six-Day War. Children who were born to Palestinian parents in other countries have not identified themselves to foreigners in terms of the country where they were born; rather, they have said, 'I am from Haifa', or 'I am from Jaffa', thus demonstrating their Palestinianism in a specific, concrete way."²⁶

"The Palestinian nation is identifiable as a national entity by a national consciousness, by continuous territory where most of the Palestinians live, by a history of several

decades replete with battles and wars, and a diaspora which maintains a link with the Palestinian homeland. At the same time it is conscious of a common national catastrophe, sacrifice, suffering, and heroes. It has dreams and the start of a national literature and poetry,"²⁷ wrote A. Eliav.

Nahum Goldmann, President of the World Jewish Congress, has stated: "The salient fact is: the existence of a Palestinian people is recognised by the entire world, and now, even by the majority of Israelis."²⁸

It follows that the existence of Palestinians as a historical entity, as a people, and not as individuals scattered in various Arab countries, is now widely recognised. As a result of the active Soviet policy, the joint Soviet-American documents signed in 1973 and 1974 mention the interests of the Palestinian people. That was the first American official recognition.

A clause on securing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people was also mentioned in the joint Soviet-American Middle East Statement of October 1, 1977. This Statement, which opened the doors of the Geneva Conference, was violently attacked by American Zionist circles, by all anti-Soviet forces and elements in the USA and in the Israeli government. The White House yielding to the pressure exerted on it signed a joint US-Israeli "working document" actually repudiating the Middle East Statement drawn up jointly with the Soviet Union.

By the mid-1970s the Israeli Zionist leadership, which on this issue could influence a certain part of Israel's population, was the only one that refused to recognise the existence of the Palestinian people. In that they had the political support of the United States which, during its talks with Israel on the second disengagement in Sinai, pledged not to recognise the PLO or have any official contacts with it. The USA stubbornly opposed PLO representation at the Middle East Peace Conference in Geneva.

Here it should be noted that tactical considerations sometimes compelled US officials to establish contacts with

PLO representatives so that the United States could strengthen its positions in the Middle East. These and some cases of American flirtation with the Palestinians are well known. But Washington's real policy on the Palestinian question in the late 1970s was dictated neither by the US President's thanks to the Palestinians for their assistance in evacuating US Embassy personnel from Lebanon in 1976, nor by the contacts with the Palestinians to ensure the safety of Dean Brown, the US representative in Lebanon, that same year, nor by the "Sanders Memorandum" (former Assistant Secretary of State) urging the settlement of the Palestinian problem, nor even by President Carter's vague statement in 1977 about the need of a "Palestinian homeland".

The US policy of that period retained all features of the policy geared to depriving the Palestinians of their inalienable rights. And that created the situation when, contrary to life, logic and the objectives of the peace settlement, and even contrary to the interests of the people of Israel, its leadership refused to accept, and refuses to accept today, the existence of the Palestinian people and their legitimate rights.

The consolidation of Palestinian Arabs into a national entity has an objective basis: living in one area for thousands of years, a common Arabic dialect, a common culture of its own, and a mentality characteristic of Palestinians as a historically established people. At the same time the subjective factor--the national liberation struggle which the Palestinians have been waging--too plays a great part in the life of the Arab people of Palestine. The movement of resistance to the Israeli policy of depriving them of the right to self-determination has also played a tremendous role in the consolidation of the Palestinians.

This movement developed in different forms both before and after the State of Israel was established. There were anti-Zionist groups, organisations, and spontaneous actions. However, some of the groups were known not for their national liberation aspirations but for their contacts with reactionary Arab elements and, to a certain extent, with Britain.

The active stage of the liberation struggle began in the late 1950s and fully developed after the Israeli aggression of June 1967.

One of the strongest and most authoritative of the Palestinian organisations--Al-Fatah--was founded in 1958, and carried out its first military operation on December 31, 1964. The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) officially announced its existence after June 1967. The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) became an independent organisation in 1968. Saiqa was formed in 1967. The late 1960s also saw the formation of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (General Command), the Arab Liberation Front, etc.

These organisations, or at any rate most of them, arose on the basis of various political parties in various Arab countries. The PFLP, for instance, has its roots in the Arab Nationalist Movement Party which had operated prior to 1968 in some Arab countries, primarily Syria. Saiqa was formed by a decision of the 9th Congress of the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party in Syria, and the establishment of the Arab Liberation Front is linked with a decision of the Iraqi Baath Party. All that has left its imprint on the activity of the said organisations. Of no small importance is the fact that the Palestinian organisations have been financed by various Arab countries.

And nevertheless the Western experts are absolutely wrong, who depict the Palestinian Resistance Movement as a whole even before 1967 as a direct continuation of the policy of various Arab countries (there are absolutely no grounds for such a conclusion after the Six-Day War). The movement began developing under a certain influence of the policies pursued by those countries but far from only in the direction of those policies. This conclusion is not disproved by the fact that the PLO, uniting most of the Palestinian organisations, was formed in 1964 by a decision of the Alexandria Conference of Arab States, and the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) was not only formed of Palestinian officers and men who served in the armies of Egypt, Syria, and Iraq,

but the brigades of which it consisted were integrated in the armed forces of the three Arab countries.

At the same time a purely Palestinian orientation, the Palestine revolution, matured within the Palestinian Resistance Movement, and that logically led to a change in the nature of the PLO after the Six-Day War. In December 1967, the PLO leader Ahmed Shukeiri known for his political intrigues, rash extremist slogans, and irresponsible statements was removed from his post. Under him the organisation was weakened by red tape and corruption which included "contributions" by various Arab countries. After Shukeiri's dismissal Al-Fatah became the main force inside the PLO and its leader Yasser Arafat was elected Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, and the Palestinian Resistance Movement began an active struggle against Israel operating mostly from its bases in the Arab countries bordering on Israel.

The picture of the evolution of the PRM would be incomplete if we did not dwell on the question of its changed attitude to the Israeli left forces: from complete negation of any groups or organisations set up in Israel regardless of their character--to the March 1977 Resolution of the Palestine National Council on establishing contacts with left forces in Israel and the first official meeting of a PLO delegation with a delegation of the Communist Party of Israel in the spring of 1977. That reflected the strengthening of the class element in the PRM and also emphasised its independent character.

The report about the first meeting between the PLO and the Communist Party of Israel in Prague was sharply criticised by the reactionaries. Replying to this criticism Naif Hawatmeh, General Secretary of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, said that the decisions of the 13th Session of the Palestine National Council, which paved the way for the meeting, was a big victory of the democratic forces in the PRM over all kinds of reactionary chauvinistic ideas.

Naif Hawatmeh noted that the meeting in Prague showed that the PLO was ready to maintain broad contacts with anti-

Zionist forces in Israel to promote a genuinely democratic solution of the Palestinian problem. He refuted the allegations of the Western press and of some Arab publications that the Communist Party of Israel and the PLO could not have anything in common, stressed that the two organisations had a firm common foundation for joint struggle, and added that the decisions of the 13th Session of the PNC showed that its policy and ideology had been correct.

One of the PLO's objectives was to disengage itself from the sphere of the direct influence of the contradictions within the Arab world and to consolidate the PRM around purely Palestinian interests. This objective has so far not been achieved by all organisations and in all aspects, as the events in Lebanon in particular demonstrated. On the whole, however, the PRM, which defends the interests of the Palestinian people, has become an independent factor in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

What is the relationship between the formation of the Palestinian people and the tendency towards the establishment of a united Arab nation? The aspiration for unity and consolidation on one national foundation has been evident in the Arab world for many decades. This tendency will grow, as there are several objective conditions for that. Its development will undoubtedly be facilitated by the general shift to the left in the Arab world and by the establishment of new revolutionary-democratic regimes and consolidation of the existing ones, and, in the final analysis, by the victory of socialism in Arab countries.

In the Arab world, alongside the tendency towards the formation of a single Arab nation, individual Arab nations are evolving or have already taken shape. That was largely facilitated, often decisively, by the establishment of different Arab states. Arab statehood, which to a considerable extent is a result of the imperialist policy of dividing the Arab world after the First World War, artificially hindered the unification of the Arabs and their consolidation on a common national basis. At the same time, statehood objectively stimulated the formation of individual nations,

sometimes quite different from one another. In the new conditions of the sovereign development of individual Arab countries statehood continues to operate in this way. As the Palestinian people have no statehood, the Palestinian resistance to Israel's expansionist policy has assumed the function of an accelerator of their formation as a nation.

And so, the conclusion can be drawn that the consolidation of the Palestinian Arabs into the Palestinian people is a historical reality. Hence another conclusion: the Palestinian people have the right to self-determination including the establishment of their own state. Marxist-Leninist theory holds that not only a people which has already evolved into a nation has this right. Historically, as a rule, a national state is established at one of the early stages of the formation of a nation, and does not necessarily complete this process.

It should be emphasised that the right of the Palestinian people to have its own state is not only a theoretical problem. In the conditions of the Middle East crisis it is essentially a political problem. All unbiased observers acknowledge that the general settlement of the Arab-Israeli crisis depends on its solution.

The Middle East Settlement and the Palestinian Problem

The achievement of a genuine peace in the Middle East became much more difficult in the course of the Egyptian-Israeli separate talks with the USA as a go-between. The talks resulted in Israel taking a tougher position on all issues, including the Palestinian problem.

Right after the "Sadat mission" had begun (November 1977), the Israeli leadership dotted the i's when they publicly declared that they did not recognise the right of the Palestinians to a state of their own and the return of the Palestinian refugees to the West Bank and to the Gaza Strip, and at the same time proclaimed Israel's "right" to build new settlements in those territories under the protection of the Israeli troops. And of course, the declared

"Palestinian autonomy" was a form of Israel's annexation of the Arab lands captured during the 1967 war.

This Israeli approach is fully supported by the United States whose "balanced" policy is designed to side-step the Palestinian question which is pivotal to the Middle East settlement.

When, as a result of the separate talks with Sadat, the Israeli leaders took a harder line, as was to be expected, and Sadat's position became weaker, Washington announced its intention to directly participate in the negotiations, and in September 1978 the Egyptian-Israeli-American summit meeting took place at Camp David.

Either under direct pressure by his partners or according to a prefabricated scenario, at Camp David already Sadat agreed to sign a separate treaty completely ignoring the interests of both the Palestinian people and the Arab countries. Its essence was contained in the document, "Framework for Peace in the Middle East", while another document, "Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty Between Egypt and Israel"--was just a screen to cover the separate Egyptian-Israeli deal.

Evidently this screen proved insufficient, which became particularly clear after all the Arab states, except Egypt, unanimously condemned the separate deal at a summit conference in Baghdad in November 1978. It was immediately after that that Sadat, the Israeli leaders, and the American press began a new round of camouflaging its separatist nature.

Wide publicity was given to Sadat's "demand" to "better coordinate" the two documents adopted at Camp David. Sadat insisted that the Preamble of the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty should specify the deadline for the beginning of "Palestinian self-administration" on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, thus creating the impression that Sadat was concerned with the interests of all Arabs and that he did not confine himself to his bilateral relations with Israel. Israel and the USA joined the game and began discussing the

question of the possibility of mentioning the connection between the two documents not in the text of the treaty itself but in the letters between the two sides. However, all those discussions and sometimes even high words were designed to conceal the essence of the problem: what and with what Sadat wants to coordinate, if only formally.

It is quite evident that the Camp David deal on the "Palestinian self-administration" is nothing but an attempt to artificially eliminate the Palestinian problem, to create conditions for Israel's annexation of the territories where the Palestinian people live.

What is meant by "self-administration"?

First, this formula is meant to legalise Israel's occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Sadat agreed to Israeli troops remaining in strategically important areas in those territories "in the interests of Israel's security".

Second, this formula excludes the formation of a Palestinian national state, and consequently, denies the Palestinians the right to self-determination. No man of common sense would interpret the status of a rightless national minority of Israel, being imposed upon the Palestinian people against their will, as self-determination.

Third, the colonisation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is perpetuated because neither today nor in the future does "self-administration" envisage the liquidation of the illegal Israeli settlements or at least the prohibition of building new settlements in those territories. And more than that. Also envisaged is the economic integration of those territories with Israel with the status of Israel's agricultural appendage and manpower reserve.

Fourth, this is an attempt to separate the Palestinian people from the PLO, their generally recognised leader, and to counterpose the Palestinian people living on the West Bank and in Gaza to the PLO. When (and if) two years after the "election" of the Administrative Council the future of those territories will be discussed the PLO will not par-

ticipate and the question of a national Palestinian state will not be on the agenda.

The Egyptian-Israeli Treaty signed on March 26, 1979 shows that Sadat had betrayed the interests of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples and countries. Article 1 says that the state of war between the sides [Egypt and Israel--E.P.] shall stop, and peace will be established between them immediately after the exchange of the instruments of ratification. And so, the treaty withdraws an economically and militarily developed Arab country from the confrontation with Israel in the conditions when Israel, in defiance of UN resolutions and the appeals by the world public, continues to occupy the Arab lands captured in 1967 and to deprive the Arab people of Palestine of their legitimate rights.

Under the terms of the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty, Israel gains possession of Gaza, which prior to the Israeli occupation in 1967 had been under Egyptian administration. The Treaty specifies that the permanent frontier between Egypt and Israel is not the boundary line as of June 4, 1967, but the frontier between Egypt and the former mandated territory of Palestine without predetermining the status of the Gaza Strip. Having achieved that in the conditions of a flat refusal to withdraw its troops from all Arab territory except the Sinai, and to recognise the rights of the Arab people of Palestine and the PLO as a partner in negotiations, Israel is not likely to become more amenable in settling the important issues left by the Treaty "for the future".

That is bound to further complicate a universal settlement in the interests of all peoples of the Middle East. Israel's bloody aggression against Lebanon is graphic proof of that.

In the face of the dangerous plot the Palestine Liberation Organisation has closed its ranks. It has intensified its activity in the occupied territories. The political forms of that activity are assuming ever greater importance.

What are the ways of solving the Palestinian problem?

The PRM demands the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank of the Jordan and in the Gaza Strip, and in this it has the support of a considerable part of the PLO and of some Arab states. There are also plans to create a Jordanian-Palestinian or a Syrian-Jordanian-Palestinian federation (confederation) and the idea is being considered of returning to the 1947 UN General Assembly Resolution which defined the frontiers of two states on the territory of Palestine—Israel and the Arab state of Palestine. It should be stated here that Israel's tough and uncompromising stand concerning the rights of the Palestinians to their own state has increased the number of those who favour a return to the map UN proposed nearly forty years ago. There are also groups of Palestinians who want to see the establishment of a bi-national Palestinian state not alongside but instead of Israel. These ideas and their certain popularity are a direct result of the many years of Israel's suppression of the national rights of the Arab people of Palestine.

Israeli leaders simply ignore all these proposed solutions. Trying to buttress their negative attitude they reduce all ideas of establishing a Palestinian state, which are popular among the Palestinians, including the PRM, to the desire to liquidate Israel. Reality, however, tears the veil covering Israel's imperialist stand on the Palestinian question. Without analysing in detail models of the future Palestinian state it can be said that:

--the Palestinians are a distinctive people;

--they have a legitimate and inalienable right to self-determination;

--a national state can be a form of this self-determination, and no one has the right to prevent that;

--the solution of the Palestinian problem lies in granting the Palestinian people the right to have their own state and is not confined to settling the question of Palestinian refugees, however important it might be;

--the solution of the Palestinian question demands that also the problem of Palestinian refugees be considered, since many of them, like their compact group living in Lebanon, have come from the territory which became the State of Israel in 1948;

--the PLO is the generally recognised representative of the Palestinian people, and Israel's refusal to accept this fact and the participation of the PLO in the political settlement of the Middle East conflict blocks the quest for a just and durable peace in the Middle East.

Life itself has put the Palestinian question on the agenda, and unless it is solved there can be no settlement of the Middle East conflict caused mainly by Israel's policy in respect to the Arab people of Palestine.

NOTES

- 1 Palestine Report on Immigration, Land Settlement and Development, London, 1930, p. 52.
- 2 Ibid., p. 56.
- 3 1 dunum = 1,000 sq. m.
- 4 Haaretz, November 17, 1969.
- 5 Haganah--an irregular military Zionist organisation on the basis of which the Israeli army has been created.
- 6 Sir John Glubb, A Soldier with the Arabs, London, 1957, p. 99.
- 7 Uri Avnery, Israel Without Zionism, New York, 1971, p. 225.
- 8 Ibid., p. 133.
- 9 The Transformation of Palestine. Essays on the Origin and Development of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, Ed. by Ibrahim Abu-Lughed, Evanston, 1971, p. IX.
- 10 The Arab-Israeli War, 1948, London, 1956, p. 63.
- 11 The Jewish Newsletter, October 3, 1960.

- 12 Journal of Palestine Studies (Beirut and Kuwait), Vol IV, No. 3, Spring 1975, p. 163.
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- 14 Le Monde, June 1, 1976.
- 15 Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. IV, No. 3, Spring 1975, pp. 162-163.
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- 17 Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. IV, No. 3, Spring 1975, p. 164.
- 18 Ibid., p. 7.
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- 21 The Jerusalem Post, August 2, 1976.
- 22 Jeune Afrique, June 1976, p. 39.
- 23 The New York Times, January 14, 1976.
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- 25 Notre republique, January 10, 1969.
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THE PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE IN THE 1920s-1930s

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One of the nodal points of the violent Arab-Israeli conflict is the Palestinian problem. Its core is the question of the Palestinian people being deprived of their legitimate national rights and their overwhelming majority driven from Palestine during the formation of Israel in 1948, and Israeli aggression against the Arab countries in 1967. However, the prerequisites for the rise of the Palestinian problem were created long before the State of Israel came into existence—back in the period which followed the First World War, when Zionists, vigorously backed by British imperialism, were conducting the mass colonisation of Palestine. In his book Philosophy of the Revolution the late President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, universally acknowledged leader of the Arab anti-imperialist liberation movement, noted the fact that Zionism would never have been able to develop the potential for creating a national home had not Palestine found itself under British mandate. The idea itself would have remained a hopeless mad dream.¹

The emergence of national liberation movement was the Palestinian Arabs' response to the Zionist invasion and the enslavement of their homeland by the British colonialists. The Zionist ideologists always did and continue to do their utmost to slander this movement, distort its character, or, not infrequently, even try to ignore its very existence. Such falsification of history has deep roots. The Zionists resort to it to try and prove that the Palestinian Arabs never had a national community in the past nor do they have one in the present. Using this false thesis they attempt

to cast doubts on the legitimacy of the Palestinians' claim for national rights. Allegations of this kind are disproved by the entire history of the Palestinian liberation movement with which the national consciousness of the Palestinian Arabs developed and grew stronger and the foundation of their national community was laid.

The tragedy of the Palestinians was largely due to the disastrous consequences of the Balfour Declaration, which announced that, "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object...".² By publishing this document, in November 1917, and establishing its rule in Palestine, Britain overtly infringed on the interests of the Arab population, and acted contrary to its pledge of assistance in obtaining independence made to the Arab leaders during the First World War. In allowing the Zionists to organise the mass entry of Jews into, and their economic and political settlement on, this territory Britain disregarded the fact that during the First World War the overwhelming majority (up to 93 per cent) of the Palestinian population had been comprised of Arabs, the total of Jews being only 50-60 thousand (i.e., 6-8 per cent) of which roughly 50 per cent had settled there at the turn of the century.³

Due to its strategically important position in the very heart of the Middle East, Palestine had long attracted the attention of the British colonialists. After the seizure of Egypt in 1882 Britain's interest in this area mounted since Palestine was situated close to the Suez Canal--the central link in the British imperial communications system. Palestine being part of the Ottoman Empire before the First World War, Britain was able to realise its intentions only after the defeat of Turkey. At the end of the 19th century heightened interest in Palestine was displayed by Zionism, which was then forming into an ideological-political trend expressing the interests of the most chauvinistic circles of the upper bourgeoisie of Jewish origin. Born of impe-

rialism, Zionism was aimed primarily at preventing the development of class consciousness among the Jewish working masses, at diverting them from the revolutionary struggle. Striving to implement their schemes the founders of Zionism fabricated the theory of a "single Jewish nation" that had to be drawn together in some "spiritual and national Jewish centre", which, in their opinion, would solve the so-called Jewish question. As such a centre they chose Palestine, renaming it "Eretz Israel" ("Land of Israel") in accordance with the biblical interpretation of history.

From the very outset the Zionist plans were aimed at creating their own state on Palestinian territory. However, at the first stage the leaders avoided publicising this aim. This was due exclusively to their desire to avoid premature friction with the imperialist powers, which claimed Palestine. Without the latter's support the prospects for penetration there appeared totally unrealistic. The borders of their future state as charted by the Zionists were widely extended and included not only Palestinian but also neighbouring Arab territories.

The racist essence of Zionism manifested itself beginning with its inception. Its leaders emphasised in their writings that the formation of a Jewish state aimed at preserving the "racial purity of the Jewish people", and therefore the colonisation of Palestine must be accompanied by the ousting of the local inhabitants. Theodore Herzl, the founder of Zionism, ignored the very existence of the Palestinian Arabs, often referring to Palestine as a land without a people.

During the First World War the mutual concern of the imperialist powers and Zionism in colonial expansion in Palestine determined the formation of an alliance between the British colonialists and the Zionists, accelerating Britain's issuance of the notorious Balfour Declaration. A significant part in the rapprochement of the two sides was played by the pressure put on the British Government by the adherents of Zionism in Britain, who occupied stable positions in British political and economic spheres.

Britain's decision to form a "Jewish home" in Palestine was far from being philanthropically motivated. The British colonialists hoped to make allies of the pro-Zionist-minded Jewish immigrants in the struggle against the national liberation effort of the Arabs—both of Palestine and neighbouring countries.

Britain also believed that Zionist colonisation would inevitably breed Arab-Jewish conflicts making it possible, by acting as arbiter between the two conflicting sides, to strengthen Britain's own positions and pursue a divide-and-rule policy, tried and tested in its African and Asian colonies.

As regards Zionism, it needed a powerful protector in order to gain an official foothold in Palestine and implement its seizure. Its leaders gave Britain firm assurances of readiness to support its Middle Eastern policy in exchange for collaboration in realising the Zionist plans for the colonisation of Palestine. Thus, in July 1921 Chaim Weizmann in a message to Winston Churchill, the then British Colonial Secretary, pointed out that in his opinion had Palestine not existed it should have been created, for it was a bastion on the way to Egypt and the existence of a Jewish Palestine would give Britain complete freedom to pursue the policy it thought best.⁴ In this period the Zionists regarded a stable alliance with the British colonialists above all as a sine qua non for quelling the national liberation tendencies among the Arab population as the chief obstacle to their plans.

Having occupied Palestine in late 1917 and early 1918 and proclaimed it mandated territory in June 1920, the British colonialists opened the doors wide to Zionist penetration. The text of the mandate endorsed by the League of Nations in July 1922 and put into effect as of September 1923, made it binding on the colonial authorities to establish "such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish national home".⁵ Britain was to render all possible assistance to Jewish immigration to Palestine. The disregard of Arab

rights and interests' was obvious: the text exhibited 12 cases of use of the words "Jewish" and "Zionist" whereas the Palestinian Arabs were not so much as mentioned in any of the 28 articles and there were but two stipulations with regard to ensuring the interests of "other population groups". Subsequently, even such a veteran of the British colonial service as General J. Glubb noted that in reading the text he received the impression that the mandate had been established with the exclusive purpose of carrying out the ideas of Zionism.⁶

To achieve the ultimate Zionist goal--the creation of a Jewish state--it was necessary to increase to the maximum the size of the Jewish community (yishuv). Addressing the 12th Zionist Congress held in 1921, one of the ideologists of Zionism, Ussishkin, defined the methods of colonisation of Palestine as follows: "If we keep on going to Palestine, in tens, in hundreds, in thousands, in hundreds of thousands, the Arab question will solve itself."⁷ Between the two world wars as a result of Zionist efforts the number of immigrants increased with every year, which was plainly at variance with the economic potential of the then Palestine and, consequently, entailed dire consequences for the indigenous Arab population. According to official British statistics, Palestine numbered about 60,000 Jews in 1920; something like 100,000 arrived from 1920 through 1929; 91,000 in the next five years, and 62,000 in the one year of 1935.⁸ Such intensive immigration led to substantial changes in the national composition of the population, in which Jews accounted for 12.9 per cent in 1922, with the figure rising to 18 in 1931, and reaching 30 in 1936.⁹

The Zionists battled for key positions in the Palestinian economy and strove to oust the Arabs from all branches of industry and agriculture. Accordingly, their leaders advanced the following chauvinist slogans: "Conquest of land", "Conquest of labour" and "Conquest of language". Literally from the very first days of British rule the Zionists had been hard at work to effect what they called dense Jewish settlement of the land--which actually was the purchase

of large properties from Palestinian landlords, and also seizure of the small owners' lands with the overt assistance of the colonial authorities.

The Zionist coloniser trusts met with no monetary difficulties in expanding their real estate since they were being financed by the Rothschild Bank and other West European and American banks owned exclusively by millionaires of Jewish origin. From 1920 through 1929 they bought up 51,000 hectares of land.¹⁰ In doing this the Zionists tended to form kibbutzim--communal agricultural settlements: by the end of 1929 on the seized Arab lands there were 96 settlements with a total population of 28,000--18.7 per cent of all the Jewish settlers in Palestine. The creation of agricultural settlements was accompanied by the wholesale expulsion of the fellaheen who had cultivated the lands prior to their purchase, the expulsion not infrequently being accompanied by armed force.

Whereas in early 1920 the yishuv had 65,000 hectares of land, in 1945--shortly before the proclamation of the State of Israel--the total area of the Zionist-seized lands was close to 160,000 hectares.¹¹ However intensive the Jewish immigration in the 1920s-1930s the yishuv's land reserves increased far more than was required by the number of immigrants. Consequently, there is every reason to believe that the Zionist seizure of Palestinian territories was not so much to facilitate "dense Jewish settlement of the land" as to oust the Arabs from the agricultural sphere.

Zionist entrenchment in Palestinian agriculture in the 1920s-1930s became possible due to the protection and direct assistance of the British colonialists. They introduced legislation which undermined the system of communal land-ownership widespread in the villages, thus removing the main obstacle to the implementation of the Zionist land programme.

One of the administration's first acts after the mandate proclamation was a Land Transfer Ordinance, which became effective as of October 1, 1920, permitting unrestricted land purchase and sale. The few limitations put on the

sale of big properties farmed by tenants were ignored in practice both by the Zionist trusts engaged in buying and by the Arab feudal landlords who were selling. During the first year of the Ordinance operation the Zionists became the owners of 23 big estates sold by Arab landlords.¹²

The main burden of British-levied taxes was borne by the Arab peasants. Landowners were taxed 15 per cent of their annual harvest regardless of its size.¹³ Naturally, only the big landlords could sustain such losses. The small-scale Arab landowners were ruined and forced to sell their lands to the Zionists. At the same time, the Zionist agricultural settlements did not feel the high taxes burden to the same degree because they had the financial backing of Zionist organisations, which had considerable resources due to the support of West European and US capitalists of Jewish extraction. The Arab peasants were driven from the lands they tilled by Zionist armed detachments directly aided by the British authorities. Colonial army units were frequently dispatched to quell scattered uprisings of peasants provoked by aggressive Zionist actions.

The British administration helped the Zionist trusts in seizing territories which for ages had belonged to the Bedouins. Through bribery or intimidation they forced the sheikhs to remove their tribes from the fertile pasture lands and oftentimes to withdraw from Palestine altogether. A comparison of the 1922 and 1931 population censuses shows that the number of Palestinian Bedouins was almost halved in this period. Out of 104,000 in 1922 just 66,000 were left in 1931, or 13.6 and 5.5 per cent of the total population respectively.¹⁴

The reinforcement of Zionist positions in other spheres also became possible due to British protectionism. The most advantageous concessions were given to companies held by capitalists of Jewish origin. The hydroelectric power project on the Jordan River, which supplied electricity to practically all of Palestine, was built by the Palestine Electric Corporation owned by Ruthenberg. Supported by the Zionist leaders, the capitalists strove to join the Pa-

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lesthine Potash Company, which extracted salt from the Dead Sea. Among the major Palestinian enterprises they owned was the Nesher Cement Factory in Haifa. From 1920 to 1935 the estimated total of Zionist investments in the Palestinian economy topped 80 million pounds sterling.¹⁵ If prior to the First World War Palestine, according to official data, had 1,236 factories and workshops, by the early 1930s the total had reached 5,300.¹⁶ Almost all the enterprises initiated in that period were the property of capitalists of Jewish descent. The Arab bourgeoisie, being unable to compete, were forced to sell their factories and workshops to Jewish manufacturers.

In industry, as in agriculture, the dominant principle was to employ only Jewish manpower in Jewish-owned enterprises. Heading a drive for the removal of Arab workers from such enterprises, the leadership of the Zionist trade union organisation often brought pressure to bear on manufacturers who preferred to employ cheaper Arab labour.

From the very first years of the British mandate the Zionists had no difficulty in creating a ramified system of their own political parties and institutions in Palestine, in this way preparing the infrastructure for the future Jewish state. In the 1920s-1930s they formed a number of parties in a bid to involve the entire Jewish population in implementing the Zionist schemes. Their political structure included Histadrut (the Federation of Jewish Workers), the trade union amalgamation created in December 1920, which controlled an ample number of industrial enterprises and many agricultural settlements and cooperatives. It speedily became one of the leading Zionist bodies to participate in framing the colonisation policy, seizure of key positions, and preparation for mass Arab expulsion from Palestine.

As early as the 1920s the yishuv's leading institutions began to function, subsequently forming the basis of Israel's supreme bodies of state authority. The yishuv's internal affairs were supervised by an elective assembly of deputies, whose executive body formed the National Committee,

whose functions were not restricted to handling the yishuv's current questions. The basic responsibilities of these institutions consisted, primarily, in implementing the policy of Palestine's colonisation framed by the leading Zionist bodies--the World Zionist Organisation and the Jewish Agency.

Aiming at the creation of a purely Jewish state in Palestine, the Zionists strove to seclude the Jewish community from the Arab population. A purely Jewish character was being imparted to agricultural settlements and certain urban areas. A symbol of Jewish seclusion was made of rapidly growing Tel Aviv: by 1934 its population had reached 60,000.¹⁷ Zionist organisations subjected immigrants to systematic brainwashing in order to induce a hostile, arrogant and chauvinistic attitude towards the Arabs.

The World Zionist Organisation leadership pointed out openly that the foundation of the future Jewish state should be laid from the very first years of Jewish settlement in Palestine and that therefore the settlers should pursue a stern policy towards the Arabs using every opportunity to demonstrate their moral and even military superiority. Deliberately cultivating hatred among Jews for the indigenous population, the Zionists greatly influenced the younger generation. In order to quell anti-Zionist and anti-colonial Arab actions, in 1920 they organised the Haganah--militarised Zionist detachments, later to become the backbone of the Israeli army and to be used by the colonial authorities to crush the Arab uprisings.

Staking on the Zionists to support their rule in Palestine, simultaneously the British imperialists strove to win over with the help of certain concessions and compromises the Arab feudal-religious leaders. They hoped that the feudal elite, having agreed to collaborate with the colonial authorities, would prevent the anti-colonial movement of the Arab masses under its influence, and turn their discontent against the Jews thus increasing the tension between the Arab and Jewish masses.

One of those who adhered to the policy of contacts with the feudal circles was Herbert Samuel, Britain's first High Commissioner of Palestine. Prior to his appointment in 1920 he had shown himself a staunch supporter of Zionism: as a Cabinet minister during the First World War, he had persistently advocated collaborating with Zionists. Having become High Commissioner he not only steadfastly pursued London's policy of close alliance with Zionism, but also rendered it far greater services than were called for by his office. At the same time, during his five-year term the colonial administration's affairs were conducted in such a way as to carefully conceal its pro-Zionist orientation.

In an effort to dispel the Arabs' concern regarding Zionist penetration the colonial administration alleged to denounce "unauthorised statements ... to the effect that the purpose in view is to create a wholly Jewish Palestine" and declared that there was no threat of expulsion of the Arab population and that not "Palestine as a whole should be converted into a Jewish National Home, but that such a Home should be founded in Palestine".¹⁸

One of High Commissioner Samuel's methods of drawing the Arab feudal lords into collaboration was by granting them privileges. It was with his help that Raghīb an-Nashshibi, a representative of a big feudal clan, became Mayor of Jerusalem. In the early 1920s Samuel promoted the advancement of Haj Amin el-Husaini into politics: at the insistence of the High Commissioner in the spring of 1921, he was elected Mufti of Jerusalem. In October 1922 he was appointed President of the Supreme Moslem Council, a post giving him the opportunity of controlling the finances and property of the Moslem community.

The Palestinian Arabs opposed the aggressive Zionist actions and British colonial rule. After the First World War the Arab protest against Zionist colonisation began to take the form of open defiance. Thus, in August 1919 disturbances were registered among the Bedouins of Galilee; in early February 1920 the fellaheen and Zionists clashed

in the northern areas; in April 1920 the Arab protest movement spread through the major cities of Palestine.

In early May 1921 the Arabs of Jaffa staged their first large-scale uprising in the mandated territory of Palestine, which swept through the central regions and lasted over two weeks. Even the special inquiry commission set up by the British authorities was forced to admit that the chief reason for the uprising was Arab indignation at the political and economic consequences of the Zionist colonisation.¹⁹

An active role in the liberation movement was played by the peasants, who protested against being dispossessed of their land and were known to engage in frequent clashes with the well-armed and numerically superior Haganah groups. Such events were reported in the vicinity of Afula in 1924; of Petah Tiqva in 1926-1927; of Caesaria, in 1927, etc. However, at the outset these uprisings were of a scattered and spontaneous character.

As a whole, the national liberation movement of the Palestinian Arabs between the First and Second World Wars could be divided conditionally into two stages--that of the 1920s and of the 1930s.

The first stage was characterised by the prevalence of the anti-Zionist orientation of the liberation movement, while the Arabs' struggle against British rule had not yet fully developed. It would be wrong to believe that during the Arab outbreaks which repeatedly took place from 1919 through 1929 demands for abolishing the British mandate and proclaiming Palestinian independence were not put forward, yet at this stage anti-colonialism failed to become the prevalent tendency. This was predominantly due to the fact that the Arab liberation leaders, who came from a feudal landlordist background, tried to compromise with the British authorities.

In the 1920s a certain section of the feudal upper crust frankly expressed its readiness to collaborate with the British colonialists in exchange for the latter's refusal to support the "Jewish Home" programme in Palestine.²⁰

The feudal leadership of the national movement has determined by the structure of Palestine's traditional Arab society. Among the peasants and a considerable segment of the urban lower classes the clan-tribal and feudal-clerical institutions were respected. This section of the population preserved their firm loyalty to patriarchal traditions and the established feudal-hierarchical ties. In these conditions the class differentiation process among the Arab population moved at a slow pace, which in its turn resulted in political inertness, preventing them from realising their class interests, their role and potential in the national movement.

During this decade the Palestinian leaders--representatives of the biggest feudal clans of Husaini, Nashashibi, Tukhan, and Halidi--taking advantage of their dominant position, deliberately diverted popular discontent into nationalist actions. This gave them the sole right to chart the national policy as regards Britain.

The major Arab outbreak of the 1920s was the uprising of August 1929. What began as Zionist-instigated fierce Arab-Jewish clashes over Jerusalem's sacred places, swiftly turned into a countrywide uprising. The August events went beyond the bounds of Arab-Jewish nationalistic conflict and became a nationwide Arab uprising spearheaded against Zionism and colonialism. In rural areas the fellaheen and Bedouins rose up in arms against the Zionist militarised detachments formed in settlements built on lands taken away from the Arabs.

The Zionists took advantage of the situation to fan up anti-Arab sentiments among the Jews and repeatedly launched unprovoked terrorist actions against the Arabs. They received weapons straight from the colonial authorities, incited disorder and unrest in many other cities and, together with British troops, attacked Arab villages, where they killed innocent civilians, sparing neither women nor children. Although Britain maintained a substantial force in Palestine, in order to suppress the uprising it was forced

to send in reserves, including aviation, from other Middle East regions under its rule.

The 1929 uprising showed all too clearly that the "pacification" of Palestine had not taken place despite every measure the British administration had used throughout ten years. The British Government was forced to search for new policy steps which would make it possible to crush the national liberation movement. Late in 1929 and during the first half of 1930 two special Commissions of Inquiry from London were sent to Palestine: one, under Walter Shaw, was to investigate the reasons for the uprising and issue recommendations to prevent future unrest; the other, under John Hope Simpson, was to study the economic position of the Arab and Jewish population.

The investigation showed that neither Commission could avoid the conclusion that the source of the unrest was the pro-Zionist policy of the colonial administration, which caused the Arabs to fear for their political rights and economic independence. The materials the Shaw Commission submitted to the government emphasised that the Zionist-organised immigration clearly exceeded the country's economic possibilities and that the Zionist seizure of Arab lands had led to the formation of a social division of landless peasants--a potential reserve of fresh outbreaks. As a result, the Commission decided that "the eviction of peasant cultivators from the land should be checked".²¹

The Simpson Commission in its turn, considering the economic situation, noted that the overwhelming majority of the Arab peasants owned tiny plots which could not provide a subsistence minimum, while 30 per cent owned no land at all. In this connection the Commission recommended suspending all transactions which involved land purchase from the Arabs in order to set up new agricultural settlements for arriving immigrants. Regarding Jewish immigration, the Simpson Report said that in setting annual quotas the colonial administration proceeded primarily from the requirements of the "Jewish Home" being created in Palestine and that this infringed on Arab interests. The Commission also

noted that the Zionist principle of employing Jewish manpower in enterprises belonging to Jewish manufacturers confirmed the Arabs' opinion that the Jewish leaders intended to crowd them out of Palestine with all speed.²²

The two Commissions' conclusions and proposals were not dictated by pro-Arab sympathies by a long shot, but exclusively by the urgent necessity of correcting the Palestinian policy, making it possible for Britain to preserve its rule there. Thus, in particular, the Shaw Commission expressed its concern over Arab manifestations of anti-colonial sentiments during the 1929 uprising and the possibility of its being repeated by recommending that the pending reduction of British forces be rejected and measures be adopted to reinforce the police. In keeping with these recommendations, by the end of March 1930 the police force had been considerably increased and reorganised to ensure security of the Zionist settlements scattered throughout the country.

The Commissions' materials bore so acute a character that the British Government could not hush them up, being forced to define its official position in the light of these new facts pertaining to the situation in Palestine. In October 1930 it published an official statement regarding its Palestinian policy (White Paper), which confirmed the principles set forth in the mandate, such as the equivalence of the commitments both to Arabs and Jews and the correspondence of the scope of immigration to the country's potential. This document was subjected to scathing criticism by the Zionists and their supporters among Britain's high and mighty. Chaim Weizmann, Chairman of the World Zionist Organisation, threatened to break off any cooperation with the British. Stanley Baldwin, Neville Chamberlain and Leopold Amery, the then Conservative opposition leaders, in a letter published in The Times in October 1930, supported the Zionist demands put to the Labour Government. In February 1931 Prime-Minister Ramsay MacDonald in a special letter to Weizmann was compelled to announce what amounted to renunciation of the basic provisions of the

1930 White Paper and even remark that "the Jewish Agency have all along given willing cooperation in carrying out the policy of the mandate and ... the constructive work done by the Jewish people in Palestine has had beneficial effects on the development and well-being of the country as a whole".²³ For the Palestinian Arabs this letter furnished conclusive evidence of the cooperation between Britain's ruling circles and the Zionists.

In the early 1930s the Palestinian Arab national liberation movement entered its second stage. Although the leadership remained in the hands of the feudal landlords and bourgeois elite, the role of the peasantry and the young proletariat had considerably increased, which in its turn imparted an entirely new aspect--a class edge--to the movement.

The political activation of the masses in the 1930s was linked to the social changes in Palestinian Arab society caused by the class stratification which had intensified with the development of capitalist relations. The structural breakup of traditional society was furthered to a great extent by land dispossession of the peasants and the ruin of small-scale Arab artisans, unable to compete with the large-scale industrialised Jewish enterprises. These factors gave rise to a rapid numerical growth of wage-workers, who, finding themselves uprooted from the traditional social structure, formed the most politically dynamic part of the population. The abrupt change of their socio-economic condition was inevitably accompanied by the destruction of traditional ties with the feudal elite. In this situation the Arab aristocracy lost the possibility of keeping the masses in a state of political subordination by economic levers.

E. Touma, a prominent Palestine researcher, in emphasising the rapid social stratification of Arab society in the first half of the 1930s, remarked on the peasant outbreaks against those landlords who preferred either to sell their land or collaborate with the Zionist colonisation trusts--outbreaks which became ever more frequent in

that period. Major disturbances connected with the expulsion of Arab tenants from lands taken over by the Zionists occurred in the summer of 1933 (especially around Haifa). In his book The Roots of the Palestinian Problem he also emphasises the intensified working class struggle for its rights: from 1930 to 1935 more than 4,000 workers walked out in a total of 46 big strikes at enterprises owned by the Arab comprador bourgeoisie.²⁴

Sensing the danger of Zionist colonisation more and more acutely themselves, the peasants and the young proletariat, who had previously exhibited political inertness, now ever more actively joined the liberation movement, which showed up in particular contrast to the inability of the feudal elite to take effective measures to safeguard national interests. If the 1920s were characterised by the middle and lower sections' utter subordination to the feudal upper crust, as regards everything that was concerned with nationwide issues, in the subsequent decade they began to exercise a marked influence on the direction of the liberation efforts.

This new tendency was expressed in the setting up, beginning with the early 1930s of numerous societies and clubs (mostly for young people) the members of which held heated discussions on the situation in their country and persistently demanded an all-out struggle for independence. Frequent spontaneous demonstrations in urban centres and rural areas proceeded not only under anti-Zionist, but also under anti-colonialist slogans. The strengthening of the national movement's anti-colonial orientation resulted from factors which operated from below, directly initiated by the masses in response to the increasingly clear manifestations of pro-Zionist British policy.

During this period the grassroots activity of the Communist Party of Palestine was considerably intensified. Founded in October 1919 and working in extremely difficult conditions of the underground, it became the country's only political force which consistently upheld the interests of the working people of both nationalities, advocating joint

actions against colonialism and Zionism. Having overcome the petty-bourgeois leanings in its ranks, in the 1930s it campaigned actively for the establishment of a cohesive Arab-Jewish front and sweeping liberation efforts. Despite its scant ranks, the Communist Party's prestige gradually mounted among the masses, because the strategic and tactical tasks it advanced were consonant with the vital interests of both the Arab and Jewish working people.

Alongside the more clear-cut and vigorous formulation of the anti-Zionist programme slogans, the movement entered a phase of purposeful and persistent struggle against the British mandate system, setting full independence as its main target. This new tendency, beginning with the early 1930s, determined the essence of the Palestinian liberation movement, giving it greater scope and perspectives.

Radical changes in the character of the Arab struggle became conspicuously manifest during the uprising of October 1933. It was spearheaded against British rule, which the Arab masses had come to regard as the root cause of their tragic plight and the prime factor facilitating Zionist penetration. The uprising began following the shooting by police of peaceful Arab demonstrators in Jaffa and Jerusalem. This outrage led to mass strikes and armed clashes with troops and police, which lasted several days. The biggest and bloodiest battles took place in Haifa, Nablus, and Akko.

In connection with these events the Executive Committee of the Palestine-Arab Congress, the country's leading Arab organisation from 1920 through 1934, issued an appeal which stressed the necessity of "raising the Palestinian Arab nation's wrathful voice against the policy of the British Government, which tramples underfoot the rights of the indigenous population challenging their national sentiments".²⁵ This appeal and a number of other statements from leaders of the national movement showed that the feudal clique in an effort to salvage its prestige was inclined to make certain changes in its policy to correspond to the grassroot tendencies.

Having met with strong and clearly expressed anti-colonial sentiments in October 1933, the British administration, even after crushing the uprising, was forced to search for new methods of consolidating its presence. For this purpose it advanced a plan of constitutional reforms, in particular, the creation of self-government bodies with proportional representation of all national and religious groups. However, for three whole years no practical measures were taken to carry out this plan, chiefly because of Zionist opposition.

By the mid-1930s tension had reached the breaking point not so much due to the absence of the charted constitutional changes as to extensive immigration and Zionist infiltration of all spheres of the national economy. The Zionist leaders tried to explain the increased immigration by alleging that the bulk of the arriving immigrants were Jews forced to leave Germany, where the nazis had taken over in 1933 and started a reign of terror including persecution of Jews. Subsequently verified figures disprove such allegations. Of the 175,000 Jews who settled in Palestine during 1933 to 1936 only 25 per cent came out of Germany.²⁶

Actually, the sharp upward curve in immigration was part of the programme of accelerating the formation of a "Jewish Home" in Palestine adopted at the 18th Zionist Congress in Prague in 1933. Furthermore, the Zionists were preparing a drive for the mass expulsion by force of the Palestinian Arabs. To this end they smuggled large quantities of arms into Palestine and the British administration didn't lift a finger to prevent this flood of smuggling.

In October 1935 a big consignment of arms and ammunition was discovered in the port of Jaffa. The incident touched off a one-day country-wide protest strike of the Palestinian Arabs. Late in 1935 the British troops quashed an attempt by the prominent national leader Izzed Din al Qassam to organise a liberation uprising in the north. The funeral of Qassam, who was killed in Haifa, turned into a mighty national manifestation. Qassam's action not only enhanced the mass anti-colonial sentiments, but also challen-

ged the feudal leaders. His actions were in sharp contrast to the passiveness of the Arab political leaders, with their non-involvement in any form of active struggle for the liberation of Palestine, which in conditions of dire strain came to be regarded by the middle and lower sections as treachery, or at least indifference to the national movement. The press and mass meetings expressed their dissatisfaction at the lack of unity among national leaders, their inaction in the face of the mounting threat of a Zionist seizure of Palestine.

The situation had reached the boiling point, especially after the British parliament, under the pressure of Zionism backers, in March 1936 had rejected the draft project for a legislative council. An Arab-Jewish clash in Nablus and vicinity in mid-April 1936 triggered off a fresh, mightier than ever before rebellion. The end of April brought a general Arab strike. In May, guerrilla groups which fought against the militarised Zionist detachments and British army units sprang into being throughout the country.

The virtually unarmed rebels attacked the enemy, whereas the Haganah suffered no shortage of arms. Muhammed Ash-Sha'er, the noted historian and PLO leader, pointed out in his book Guerrilla Warfare in Palestine that the colonial authorities forbade the Arabs to possess fire-arms under threat of imprisonment while at the same time Jewish immigrants were being armed and each Zionist settlement in rural areas was in a state of combat readiness.²⁷

The struggle of the Palestinian people took on a truly nation-wide scope, so much so that the British authorities failed to stem the tide even by rushing in more troops from Malta and Egypt. Just as in 1933, from the very outset the struggle showed every sign of being anti-colonial and anti-Zionist. The high level of political activity and initiative among the middle and lower sections was displayed in the establishment in many cities and villages, as of mid-April 1936, of "national committees", which became genuine popular bodies heading the liberation movement.

Striving to preserve their leader positions, at the end of April the heads of all Arab parties urgently formed an Arab Higher Committee under the chairmanship of Amin el-Husaini and declared it the national movement centre. The most important of the AHC-advanced slogans were appeals to all Arabs to organise nation-wide resistance to Zionist colonisation and work towards Palestinian independence.²⁸

The British Government set up a Commission of Inquiry under Lord Peel. However, the general strike was ended only after pressure was brought to bear on the AHC by the rulers of neighbouring Arab countries, acting on British instructions. The Peel Commission reached the categorical conclusion that the administration's promises to the Arabs and to the Jews were utterly incompatible and, the situation being what it was, the mandate system in Palestine was now totally unacceptable. Hence, the Commission recommended partitioning Palestine into Arab and Jewish states, bound to Britain by a number of contractual commitments, leaving part of the territory (Jerusalem and the corridor to the port of Jaffa) under direct British rule. The partition plan was obviously an infringement of the Palestinian Arabs' national interests: the territory to be set aside for the Jewish state was then populated by 258,000 Jews and 225,000 Arabs.²⁹

The planned partitioning was consonant with the interests of Zionism and British colonialism and was categorically rejected by all the Palestinian Arabs. Declaring the Peel Commission's proposals to be totally unacceptable, the AHC put forward the following demands: recognition of the Arabs' right to independence in their own land, renunciation of attempts to create a "Jewish Home", termination of the British mandate, and a check on Jewish immigration as well as on the unlimited sale of lands to Zionist trusts. The British Government did not take a single one of their demands into consideration.

Directly after the publication of the Commission of Inquiry's findings in July 1937 national uprising spread with renewed vigour and continued unabated through the end

of 1938. The ruthless brutality of the 20,000-strong British army crushing the national liberation movement can be judged merely by checking the Arab losses published in The Times. In just 1938, 1,138 Arab rebels and almost 500 innocent civilians were killed.³⁰

At the end of September 1937 the authorities banned AHC activity, exiling some of its members from Palestine. However, repressions failed to crush Arab resistance; contrariwise, they provoked a fresh upsurge. The second phase of the rebellion began, which was even more powerful and widespread. What is still more important, when the authorities arrested a number of the AHC leaders new ones appeared from amidst the rebels and most of them came from the people. These changes in the liberation movement leadership reflected accordingly on its orientation. The chief slogan became an armed struggle for complete independence.

The Zionists took advantage of the situation in order to press for satisfaction of all their demands. Joining in the anti-guerrilla operations conducted by the British army, the Haganah legalised their activity. They were given British arms and were trained by British officers. At the very outset of the rebellion one of the Haganah leaders, Itzhak Sadeh, suggested the following slogan to the Zionist terrorists: "Don't wait for an Arab attack. Pursue and fall upon them."³¹

The courageous struggle of the Palestinian Arabs met with support throughout the Arab world. Forced to manoeuvre, the British Government in May 1939 issued another White Paper, whose basic provisions envisaged a curb on Jewish immigration, restricted Zionist land purchases and the gradual development of local self-government bodies. Its adoption was certainly not tantamount to a renunciation of pro-Zionist tendencies in the British policy on Palestine. All the mandate stipulations (including those for a "Jewish Home") remained and British rule over Palestine in itself guaranteed a continuation, albeit somewhat slower, of Zionist colonisation. The new shades of British policy registered in the White Paper were determined exclusively by its desire

to balance relations with the Arabs and the Jews, thus strengthening its position in the Middle East prior to a new world war.

In the spring of 1939 the Arab uprising gradually subsided--a consequence of the lack of centralised leadership, uncoordinated guerrilla activity and the splitter stand of the leaders of the-bourgeois National Defence party, who sided with the British. As a whole, the 1936-1939 uprising seriously shook the foundations of British colonial rule, triggered its collapse, and marked a turning point in the history of mandated Palestine. If prior to the mid-1930s Britain pursued its Palestinian policy with the aim of bolstering the colonial regime to last as long as possible, after the uprising it merely conducted political manoeuvres in order to postpone the inevitable giving up of the mandate.

At the same time it is perfectly obvious that the Arab anti-colonial and anti-Zionist actions between the two world wars left their imprint on the entire subsequent course of the Palestinian national liberation movement. The present-day resistance efforts led by the PLO have inherited and carry on the finest traditions of the struggle against British colonialism and Zionism which the Palestinian Arabs started at the beginning of the century.

NOTES

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PALESTINIAN PROBLEM IN THE UNITED NATIONS (1945-1947)

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After the Second World War the struggle of the Palestinians for independence gained fresh momentum. It seriously undermined the positions of British imperialism in that country. The inability of Great Britain to rule by the old methods became evident.

As is known, the attempts of the British Government on the eve of the Second World War to find a compromise settlement of the Palestinian problem were abortive, first of all because of the irreconcilable stand of the Jewish Zionist bourgeoisie and the Arab feudal elite. In this case, British diplomacy reaped the fruits of its divide-and-rule policy. The Arab-Jewish antagonism fanned by it became the main obstacle standing in the way to achieving peace essential for preserving British domination. Knowing in advance that the UN would hardly ignore the issue on liquidating the Mandate system of the League of Nations, the British Government in the autumn of 1945 made another attempt, this time with the assistance of the USA, to settle the critical situation in Palestine in its own interests.

In November 1945 Britain proposed to the US Government to set up an Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry.¹ The very fact of the establishment of this Committee was evidence of a serious concession by the British Labour Government to the USA, which was energetically penetrating into Palestine. But, as one of the members of that Committee, the American Bartley Crum, frankly wrote, the British diplomats, entering into an alliance with the USA, planned to use British-

American unity not so much for solving the problem facing them as for knocking together a bloc against the Soviets.²

The primary and real purpose of British-American co-operation within the framework of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry was to consolidate the imperialist positions in the Middle East. This is evidenced by the recommendations of the Committee, set forth in the Report, published on May 1, 1946. They envisaged "That Palestine shall be neither a Jewish state nor an Arab state", and "that Palestine should continue to be administered under the Mandate pending the execution of a Trusteeship Agreement".³ The recommendations also included the demand of President Truman on the immediate repatriation of 100,000 displaced persons of Jewish origin to Palestine from Europe. They also contained criticism of the internal situation in Palestine, highly undesirable for the British Government. On the whole, however, the conclusions drawn by the Committee suited Britain more than it did the USA, although the latter, in the person of President Truman, nevertheless approved the Committee's recommendations.

Taking advantage of the Arabs' discontent with these recommendations, the British Government, on the pretext of developing a plan for materialising the recommendations of the Committee, but, in effect, with a view to revising them in its favour, got the USA to agree in the summer of 1946 to convene in London a new Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry. The Committee approved the Grady-Morrison Plan of "communal autonomy".⁴ According to this plan an Arab and a Jewish province with certain autonomy, but under British control, were to be set up on the territory of Palestine, whereas Jerusalem and the whole of the Negev (the southern part of the country) were to be administered under the Mandate. Jewish immigration into Palestine in the future would be contingent on the consent of the Arabs. Having secured this concession from the USA, the British Government on July 31, 1946 published (unilaterally, without the preliminary consent of the USA) the Grady-Morrison Plan, offering it to the Arab and the Zionist leaders as the basis for the

solution of the Palestinian problem. The coordinated activity of the two imperialist partners on the future of Palestine ended with the termination of the Committee's work.

At the London conferences, held in September 1946 and January-February 1947, the British Government tried to foist the Grady-Morrison Plan upon the Arab states, but the latter completely rejected it, insisting on independence being granted to Palestine, providing it was governed by the Arab majority. The new British plan of "the cantonisation of Palestine", the so-called Bevin Plan, which envisaged the establishment of a number of Arab and Jewish areas with a considerable level of autonomy within the framework of a single state, dependent on Britain⁵ was also rejected by the Arab Higher Committee and the Zionists.

Having finally realised the impossibility of foisting its solution of the Palestinian problem which was of advantage to itself, on the conflicting sides, and having all grounds to fear America's increasing influence in Palestine, the British Government decided in February 1947 to refer the matter to the United Nations. But it declared through its Secretary of State for the Colonies Creech Jones that it was going to the United Nations, not to surrender the Mandate, but to solicit its advice on how it should use the Mandate.⁶

On April 2, 1947, Alexander Cadogan, the Ambassador of the United Kingdom to the United Nations, handed in to an assistant to the UN Secretary-General a message in which, "His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom request the Secretary-General of the United Nations to place the question of Palestine on the agenda of the General Assembly at its next regular annual session...." They therefore request the Secretary-General to "summon, as soon as possible, a special session of the General Assembly for the purpose of constituting and instructing a special committee to prepare for the consideration ... of the question referred to in the preceding paragraph."⁷

Highly significant was the fact that Britain submitted this question to the General Assembly for consideration and not to the Security Council. And this is not accidental.

It is generally known that according to Chapter VII of the UN Charter the decisions passed by the Security Council are binding on all members of the United Nations, whereas the resolutions of the General Assembly have the force only of a recommendation. And irrespective of how this recommendation is formulated (as a resolution, statement, or a declaration), it shall always remain a recommendation, optional (from the legal point of view) for implementation. In this way, the British Government, by submitting the question of Palestine for consideration to the General Assembly, left itself a loop-hole for ignoring its decision, if it did not dovetail with the interests of the United Kingdom. However, the final say on the future legal status of Palestine rested with the United Nations, as the territories which were earlier the Mandates of the League of Nations were, according to the UN Charter, juridically subordinated to its specialised agencies.

When, as required by the Charter, the majority of members of the United Nations (28 states) declared for meeting the request of the United Kingdom, Trygve Lie, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, announced the decision of the Secretariat to convene the First Special Session of the General Assembly on April 28, 1947 in New York. The General Committee of the session recommended referring the question presented by the British Government for consideration to the First Committee, responsible for political security issues. The General Assembly approved the General Committee's recommendation as well as its decision not to place on the agenda of the Special Session the additional question on terminating the Mandate over Palestine and the proclamation of its independence, proposed by a number of Moslem, including Arab, states, and supported by the delegations of the Soviet Union, Ukraine, and Byelorussia. The rejection of this proposal, concerning the essence of the Palestinian problem, became possible only as a result of outright pressure, exerted by the Western powers.

After a prolonged discussion, the First Committee passed a decision to recommend the General Assembly to set up

a UN Special Committee on Palestine of the representatives of 11 UN member states. On May 15, 1947, the General Assembly approved the recommendation and invested the Special Committee with wide powers so that it would have the possibility to study all the aspects of the Palestinian problem.⁸ At the same time the General Assembly called upon all the governments and peoples, and in particular, the people of Palestine, to refrain from actions which could create an atmosphere impeding a speedy solution of the Palestinian problem.⁹

The UN Special Committee on Palestine began its work on May 26, 1947 in New York. It held four sittings there, at which it approved procedural matters and the plan of work. The members of the Committee then left for Palestine. They toured the country and received the necessary information from the British authorities. In Jerusalem the Committee heard the account of the representatives of the Jewish Agency and of a number of other Jewish Zionist organisations and religious groups.

The members of the UN Special Committee also heard the representatives of the Communist Party of Palestine who set forth their programme of solving the Palestinian problem. This programme envisaged the immediate cancellation of the British Mandate, the withdrawal of the British troops from the territory of Palestine and the granting of independence to its people, the Arabs, as well as the Jews.¹⁰ The Communist Party held the same position during the work of the Anglo-American Committee in 1946; it resolutely rejected the plans of preserving imperialist domination over Palestine (British as well as American), imposed by Britain and the USA with the help of their puppets--the Zionists and the Arab reactionaries. The Communist Party of Palestine proposed to establish a federative Palestinian state consisting of two independent federations--an Arab and a Jewish state. It also provided for another decision: the partition of Palestine into two independent and democratic states. In both cases the principle of self-determination was to be observed.¹¹

The Arab Higher Committee, representing the Palestinian Arabs, refused to have any contacts with the Committee. The Committee therefore found it necessary to familiarise itself with the views of other Arab states on the Palestinian problem and, at their request, left for Beirut for several days.

In all the Committee held 36 sittings in the Middle East. The final stage of its work was held in Geneva from August 8 to August 31. During this time members of the Committee visited selected representative assembly centres for Jewish refugees and displaced persons in Germany and Austria, "with a view to ascertaining and reporting to the Committee on the attitude of the inmates of the assembly centres regarding resettlement, repatriation or immigration into Palestine".¹² Twelve sittings were held in Geneva. At the last sitting, held on August 31, the Committee approved the report compiled by it containing recommendations to the General Assembly on the Palestinian problem.

Among the recommendations, approved by all the Committee's members were termination of the Mandate and the granting of independence to Palestine in the shortest possible period, preceded by a transitional period. The authorities, who would be entrusted with the administration of Palestine during the period of preparation for independence, would be responsible to the United Nations. All the members also came out in favour of the preservation of the economic unity of Palestine, which they regarded as a necessary condition for the existence and progress of its peoples.¹³

Different opinions were voiced, however, on the question of the future political system in Palestine. Seven members of the Committee (Guatemala, Canada, the Netherlands, Peru, Uruguay, Czechoslovakia, Sweden) favoured the plan of the partition of Palestine into two independent states--an Arab and a Jewish state--providing their economic unity was preserved. Three members of the Committee (India, Iran, and Yugoslavia) voted for the establishment of a single federative state on the territory of Palestine. The eleventh member of the Special Committee, the representative of Austria, abstained from voicing his opinion.

The report of the UN Special Committee was discussed at the Second Session of the UN General Assembly which opened in New York on September 16, 1947. The General Committee of the Session recommended setting up an ad hoc committee for studying the recommendations of the Special Committee, with all UN members taking part in its work. At its first sitting this committee decided to invite to its subsequent sittings representatives of the Arab Higher Committee and of the Jewish Agency and to hear their opinion. Three Sub-Committees were constituted after two weeks of general debates: Sub-Committee No. 1 for studying the plans of the future state structure of Palestine submitted by the UN Special Committee on Palestine; Sub-Committee No. 2 for studying the proposals, advanced by the Arab states on the termination of the Mandate over Palestine and granting independence to it as a single state; and Sub-Committee No. 3 for the reconciliation of the two conflicting sides.

On November 25, 1947 the Committee at its sitting supported the proposal submitted by Sub-Committee No. 1 on the partition of Palestine into two independent states--an Arab and a Jewish state (with Jerusalem being made an independent administrative unit with a special international status, providing the economic unity of the whole of Palestine was preserved), that is, it accepted the recommendations of the majority of members of the UN Special Committee, with slight alterations concerning, in particular, the boundaries of the two future states.

According to the Committee's plan the territory of Palestine was to be partitioned into seven parts. Three of them--Western Galilee, the mountainous part of Samaria, and Judea (without Jerusalem), and also the littoral Mediterranean strip from Ashdod to the Egyptian border (43 per cent of the whole territory of Palestine) were to be given to the Arab state. Three other parts--Eastern Galilee with the Esdraelon Plain, the major part of the littoral plain and the area of Beersheba, including the major part of the Negev (56 per cent of the territory)--to the Jewish state. The seventh part (1 per cent of the territory) was included

into the zone of Jerusalem, into which the surrounding settlements were incorporated, including Bethlehem and En Ke-rem. The area in which not only the Jews but also the Arabs lived were integrated in the Jewish state. As for the Arab state it did not include any considerable number of the Jewish population and Jewish property. For instance, 725,000 Arabs and only 10,000 Jews resided on the territory allotted to the Arab state, whereas on the territory of the Jewish state--498,000 Jews and 407,000 Arabs, and in the zone of Jerusalem--105,000 Arabs and 100,000 Jews. In accordance with the partition plan the main part of the cultivated land was situated on the territory of the Arab state, and the major part of industry (mainly light industry)--on the territory of the Jewish state.

It was planned to implement the economic unity of both states and Jerusalem in transportation and communication, irrigation and land reclamation, currency and customs tariffs. These problems were to be handled by the Joint Economic Council consisting of three representatives from each state and three members appointed by the United Nations.

At the 128th Meeting of the UN General Assembly, held on November 29, 1947, the plan of the Committee was approved by 33 votes, with 13 against and 10 abstentions. At the same time the General Assembly approved the setting up of the Special Committee on Palestine and recommended the UN Security Council to take all the necessary measures to successfully implement the decision taken.

Although there were many shortcomings in the decision taken by the General Assembly, much could have been achieved nevertheless if it had been fully implemented. First, it envisaged the solution of the main problem--ending British rule in Palestine and granting independence to its population. Given the goodwill of the leaders of the two states, the Arab-Jewish antagonism and the economic and cultural backwardness could have been overcome. Second, there would be prospects for establishing mutual understanding between the Arabs and the Jews of Palestine and their merging in the future into one state.

Thanks to the efforts of the delegations of the Soviet Union, Resolution 181 was formulated in such a way that it completely rejected the Mandate system (i.e., colonial domination) as an illegal system of governing territories, established the right of the Palestinians to self-determination and the absolute equality of the Arabs and the Jews, categorically prohibited the future authorities to resort to discriminatory measures in respect to national minorities residing on the territories controlled by them, and, finally, formulated the fundamental principles of the constitutional system of the future Arab and Jewish states, which had to be of a democratic nature and committed the governments of these states to pursue a peaceful foreign policy.

The UN Special Committee on Palestine and the exact determination of its prerogatives could have ensured (if not for the artificial obstacles put in the way by Britain, the USA and their puppets--the Zionists and Arab reactionaries) the implementation of Resolution 181 and could have led to the establishment of two independent, democratic, and peace-loving states--an Arab and a Jewish one--on the territory of Palestine.¹⁴

Proceeding from these considerations and bearing in mind that the representatives of the Arab and the Jewish population of Palestine had rejected the proposal of the majority of the Committee to found a single independent Palestinian state on the British mandated territory, the USSR, the Byelorussian SSR and the Ukrainian SSR at the Second Session of the UN General Assembly voted for the partition of Palestine into two independent states. Here it is pertinent to note that it was the Soviet Union that was the first to advance the proposal at the Special Session of the UN General Assembly, as a positive solution of the Palestinian problem, to terminate the British Mandate over Palestine and to found a single independent democratic Palestinian state and if this proposal was unacceptable to the Arabs and the Jews of Palestine--the partition of the country into two independent states.

Representatives of the Arab states and the Arab Higher Committee rejected the UN General Assembly Resolution on the partition of Palestine into two states on the grounds that it, supposedly, contradicted the UN Charter.

It should be noted that the majority of the Arab states were under the influence of imperialist powers at that time. In particular, Egypt, Transjordan, and Iraq, which were most active in deciding the destiny of Palestine, were under British control. The Arab Higher Committee of Palestine, although claiming to be the representative of all the Palestinian Arabs, consisted mainly of the representatives of the feudal elite whose interests it protected, coming out for the independence of Palestine on the "Transjordan model". For instance, back in 1946, the Vice-Chairman of the Arab Higher Committee Jamal Husseini, setting forth the stand of the Committee on the future status of Palestine to members of the Anglo-American Committee, demanded the termination of the Mandate but did not insist on the immediate withdrawal of the British troops from the country. The same stand was taken at the London conferences (1946-1947) by the representatives of Egypt, Transjordan, and Iraq. More than that, they urged preserving the special powers of the British High Commissioner in Palestine during the transitional period.

The Zionist leaders tried to force through the United Nations their solution of the Palestinian problem, based on the programme adopted at the Zionist Congress in Basle in 1946.¹⁵ It favoured the provisional preservation of the Mandate over Palestine, including the concepts of the Balfour Declaration and the granting of the right to unrestricted immigration of the Jews into the country as a preliminary condition for "establishing on the territory of Palestine a Jewish commonwealth integrated in the structure of the new democratic [?!] world".¹⁶ From the point of view of the compilers of this programme, the repatriation to Palestine of 100,000 Jews from Europe (displaced persons) would mean only the beginning, as the Jewish Agency planned to settle millions of people there.¹⁷

The attempts of the Zionist leaders to link the problem of displaced persons with the Palestinian problem were justly rejected by the absolute majority of members of the UN Special Committee on Palestine. The decision of the Committee, making the United Nations responsible for the destiny of displaced persons, was approved by the UN General Assembly.

The representatives of the Jewish Agency, having agreed in principle with the decision of the Second Session of the UN General Assembly on the partition of Palestine into two independent states, at the same time made certain reservations, which proved that they had done so for tactical considerations. Thus, they lay claim to Western Galilee and to Jerusalem, insisted on the uncontrolled immigration of the Jews into the territory of the Jewish state without the consent of the Arabs, who constituted a little less than half of the whole population of that state.

As the present leaders of Zionism are trying to portray their predecessors as ardent and consistent champions of Palestine's independence, some excerpts from the statements made by the representatives of the Jewish Agency during the debates on the Palestinian problem in UN are in place. For instance, at the sittings of the First Committee, constituted at the First Special Session of the UN General Assembly, the representatives of this Agency advanced, as the main demands, not the granting of independence to Palestine, but a gradual increase of the number of Jewish immigrants and the establishment of a Jewish state on the territory of Palestine.¹⁸ Moshe Shertok stated at the 52nd sitting of the Committee that the formation of a Jewish national homeland was a process, whereas the establishment of a Jewish state was its completion.¹⁹ As conceived by the representatives of the Jewish Agency a Jewish majority in the country was to be secured through unrestricted immigration of the Jews and in the first place of the displaced persons for, according to them, only this could lead to the final and positive solution of the Palestinian problem.²⁰

The representatives of this Agency ignored the opinion of the Arabs regarding Palestine as their inherited estate.

To cite David Ben Gurion: we bring the Jews, persecuted and deprived of shelter, into our own country and resettle them in Jewish towns and settlements.²¹ The Zionists explained the crisis in Palestine by the policy of the mandatory country that ran counter to its commitments in respect to the Jewish people. But while levelling criticism at the Mandatory (i.e., Britain), they did not raise the question of terminating the Mandate, demanding only returning to the situation which existed before the publication of the White Paper in 1939.²² A similar stand was taken by other Zionist leaders (Chaim Weizmann, Nahum Goldmann, Golda Meir and others).

But, according to Rabbi Abb Silver, a representative of the Jewish Agency, the Palestine Commission, established by the Committee, should deal not with the problem of granting independence to Palestine, but with an analysis of the position of the Jews residing in Europe and of those left without a roof over their heads.²³ And so, first unrestricted immigration, and then independence for, as Moshe Shertok stated, the 600,000 Palestinian Jews did not wish to remain the minority under Arab domination.²⁴

The US Administration voted for the Resolution on the partition of Palestine into two independent states (Resolution 181 of November 29, 1947), counting on building up its influence in the country during the transitional period with the help of the UN police force, whose formation at that time would be carried out, naturally, under the aegis of the Americans. Britain too voted for this Resolution, but stipulated that its implementation should be preceded by its acceptance by the Arabs and the Jews. This was virtually impossible because of the stand taken by the Zionists and by the Arab Higher Committee of Palestine and the Arab states under British influence (Jordan, Iraq and Egypt).

The General Assembly set up the Palestine Commission (Bolivia, Denmark, Panama, the Philippines and Czechoslovakia as its members). The UN Security Council was empowered to take the necessary measures for putting into effect the plan of the partition of Palestine into two states.

As is generally known, Resolution 181 on the partition of Palestine into two independent states was not implemented. Responsibility for this wholly rests with the governments of the USA and Britain, the Zionists, the Arab reactionaries--the Arab Higher Committee of Palestine led by the mufti of Jerusalem Hajj Amin el-Husaini, the pro-British Kings of Transjordan and Egypt--Abdullah and Farouk, and the Prime Minister of Iraq Nuri as-Said. As subsequent developments showed, the UN decision did not suit either the USA, striving to establish its influence in Palestine, or Britain, which did not wish to give away this strategically important territory to its senior partner.

Soon after the end of the UN General Assembly Session, the USA openly sabotaged its decision on Palestine. At the beginning of 1949, the US statesmen began to claim that the partition plan was impracticable and demanded its revision. At the beginning of March of the same year President Truman stated at a press conference that the USA proposed to establish UN trusteeship over Palestine, which, at that time, meant US trusteeship. However, the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on the Palestinian problem convened at the insistence of the USA in April 1948 did not accept the US proposal. After the abortive attempt to establish its trusteeship over Palestine with the help of the UN, the USA embarked on a policy of moral and material support of the Zionists, encouraging their actions, aimed at occupying the territories allotted to the Arab Palestinian state by the UN plan.

In December 1947 already, well-armed detachments of the Zionist terrorist organizations Irgun and Stern (soon they were joined by Haganah detachments) launched a large-scale campaign of terrorism and intimidation against the peaceful Arab population residing on the territory allotted by the UN decision to the Jewish state, on the territories of the Arab Palestinian state, and the territories under international control (Jerusalem with adjacent areas)--forcing as many Arabs as possible to leave Palestine. The culmination

of this campaign was the carnage committed by the fascist cutthroats from Irgun and Stern in the village of Deir Yassin on the night of April 9, 1948 as a result of which 250 people were massacred.

By the time of the proclamation of the State of Israel (May 14, 1948), as a result of the terrorist activities of the Zionists 250,000 Palestinian Arabs had been forced to leave their homes and seek shelter in the neighbouring countries.

As Chaim Weizmann writes in his memoirs, "It was not in Mr. Bevin's plans that the UN should express itself in favour of the creation of a Jewish state, which it did ... in its historic decision of November 29, 1947."²⁵

The British authorities turned a blind eye on the atrocities of the Zionist extremists and used them for fanning anti-Jewish sentiments among the local Arabs and the Arabs from other states. Britain gradually prepared for the evacuation of its troops from Palestine on May 14, 1948 without preliminary notification to the Palestine Commission and the UN Security Council. The British emissaries in the Arab countries, in particular in Jordan and Egypt, urged on Arab leaders to occupy Palestine. Their plans were crystal clear —with the help of their puppets to preserve their influence at least over part of Palestine. The British Government therefore actively supported Transjordanian King Abdullah's importunate claims on the Palestinian lands.

In March 1948, during the London Anglo-Transjordanian talks on the conditions of a new treaty on friendship and alliance, British Foreign Secretary Bevin sanctioned the entry of the Transjordanian Arab Legion into the territory of Palestine and the establishment of the Transjordanian administration, providing Transjordan commits itself not to bring in its troops into the territory allotted by the UN to the Jewish state.²⁶ This condition, as rightly noted by Soviet researchers, furnished fresh evidence of the agreement reached by that time between Britain and the USA on the division of the spheres of influence in Palestine.²⁷

Thus, the conspiracy against Palestine--the conspiracy between the British Government and the King of Transjordan, on the one hand, and between the USA and the Zionists, on the other, was part and parcel of the Anglo-American agreement on keeping Palestine under the influence of imperialism. True, later neither the USA nor Britain stopped their attempts to completely oust its partner from the whole territory of Palestine. This is also evidenced by the American plan of UN trusteeship over Palestine and the first Arab-Israeli War of 1948-1949. It is clear that the Anglo-American imperialists with the help of their puppets--the Zionists and the Arab reactionaries--nurtured the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian problem, which have still not been solved and pose a threat to peace on our planet.

NOTES

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ZIONISM, INSTRUMENT OF AGGRESSIVE IMPERIALIST CIRCLES

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In its struggle against the forces of socialism and national liberation international imperialism makes use of every reactionary political regime and current. Zionism--the most reactionary force of Jewish bourgeois nationalism--holds a special place among them. Modern Zionism represents a chauvinistic ideology and pro-imperialist policy expressing the interests of the ruling upper circles of Israel and the big bourgeoisie of Jewish origin which merged with the governing circles of the United States and other leading capitalist powers. Zionist ideology is based on the false premise that the Jews of the world comprise a special extra-territorial nation with the State of Israel as its political and spiritual centre. Zionism maintains that enmity between the Jewish nation and other nations is eternal and inevitable, and accuses of anti-Semitism all peoples among whom Jews live.

In its essence Zionism is profoundly hostile to the working people's interests, including Jewish workers. Lenin emphasised that for the Jewish working people it was vitally essential "bringing them closer to the democratic and socialist movement of the Diaspora countries",¹ and that it was of extreme importance to achieve "complete unity between the Jewish and non-Jewish proletariat".² Denouncing "the Zionist fable about anti-Semitism being eternal",³ Lenin pointed out: "Anti-Semitism is striking ever deeper root among the propertied classes. The Jewish workers are suffering under

a double yoke, both as workers and as Jews."⁴ Unmasking the false concept of the Zionists and anti-Semites about the special world Jewish nation Lenin demanded that a clearcut class approach be applied to the so-called Jewish question. Lenin wrote: "Among the Jews there are working people, and they form the majority. They are our brothers, who, like us, are oppressed by capital; they are our comrades in the struggle for socialism. Among the Jews there are kulaks, exploiters and capitalists, just as there are among the Russians, and among people of all nations."⁵

The resolution "Struggle Against the Ideology and Practices of Zionism--Vital Need of the People of Israel and All Progressive Forces" adopted by the 17th Congress of the Communist Party of Israel notes: "The Marxist-Leninist premise about the reactionary nature of the ideology and practices of Zionism not only has not become obsolete, but, on the contrary, has acquired still greater importance in our day."⁶ Modern Zionism has many faces. It is a ramified international network of political organisations operating in about 60 capitalist and developing countries. It is the ruling ideology in Israel and the Jewish communities of the United States and other imperialist powers. It is the political regime which the Zionists have established in Israel. It is rabid anti-Soviet and anti-communist propaganda spread under the slogan of "defence of Jews in the USSR". It is the policy of aggression and genocide being pursued by the Zionist rulers of Israel.

In the Middle East Zionism is operating as the shock force of imperialism to suppress the Arab national liberation movement. The 24th Congress of the CPSU pointed out that the unseemly role of those who are instigating the Israeli extremists, the role of US imperialism and of international Zionism as an instrument of the aggressive militarist circles, is becoming ever more obvious.⁷ The 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties noted the timely character of the task to intensify the struggle "against racial and national discrimination, against Zionism and anti-Semitism, all of which are fanned by reactionary capital-

ist forces and which they use to mislead the masses politically".⁸ The world community condemns the criminal actions of the Zionists. This is shown by the General Assembly resolutions denouncing Zionism as a form of racism and racial discrimination and as a manifestation of hegemonism.

Zionism was shaped organisationally as an ideological-political current expressing the interests of the big bourgeoisie of Jewish origin at the 1st Congress of the World Zionist Organisation in Basle (Switzerland) in 1897. The Zionist platform is based on an idealistic approach to ethnic relations, which is in accord with the interests of the bourgeoisie and opposes those of the working people. The big bourgeoisie inevitably advances the thesis of the "exclusiveness" of its ethnic community and claims for itself a special historical mission and domination over other nations and peoples. In this respect Zionism is not an exception, but rather a typical example of reactionary bourgeois-nationalist ideology.

The class differentiation of the Jewish population and the disintegration of Jewish communities forced the bourgeoisie of Jewish origin to search for new ways to preserve its domination over the Jewish masses. Using the religious-separatist dogmas of Judaism about "God's chosen people", this bourgeoisie resorted to new means to combat the revolutionary movement among the Jewish working people. It endeavoured to win the support of the Jewish population in the competitive struggle for economic and political influence against the bourgeoisie of another origin.

Theodore Herzl, the founder of the World Zionist Organisation, wrote: "The passing over of the Jews to Socialism, I refuse to accept."⁹ Before publishing his pamphlet The Jewish State, in which he elaborated his programme of a territorial-political solution of the Jewish question, Herzl addressed confidential messages to the Rothschilds and other Jewish multimillionaires to secure their support: "Throughout the two thousand years of our dispersion, we have lacked unified political leadership. I consider this our greatest misfortune.... If we only had a unified political leadership

... we could initiate the solution of the Jewish question."¹⁰

Proposing to create a state in which the Jewish bourgeoisie would be the ruling class, Herzl and his followers advanced the slogan "To people without land--land without people". However, Palestine, where the Zionist leaders wanted to set up the Jewish state, was not a "land without people". As Herzl wrote in his diary which was not intended for publication, the implementation of the Zionist programme required the eviction of the Arab people of Palestine from their native land. "We shall try to spirit the penniless population across the border by procuring employment for it in the transit countries, while denying it employment in our own country.... Both the process of expropriation and the removal of the poor must be carried out discreetly and circumspectly."¹¹

The Zionist programme was indissolubly linked with the colonial aspirations of the imperialist powers in the Middle East. Speaking at the 3rd Congress of the World Zionist Organisation in 1899 Herzl said that the Asian question was becoming ever more serious and that he feared that some day it would become fraught with sanguinary events. Due to that, he went on, the cultured peoples were becoming more and more interested in the creation of a cultural station on the shortest route to Asia which would be of use to all civilised people. This station would be Palestine, and the Jews would be the proponents of culture, ready to give their life and wealth to create it.¹²

Playing up the assertion about their higher culture, the Zionists approved of the doctrine of colonial aggression against Arabs. "We were a company of conquistadores," David Ben Gurion said, comparing the Zionists with the Spanish conquerors who had exterminated millions of the indigenous population of Central and South America, as well as with "the American colonists who fought against 'wild nature and wilder redskins'."¹³ To justify this cult of violence the Zionists put forward the thesis about Jewish superiority over all peoples. Herzl's follower Max Nordau claimed that

the Jew was "more industrious and abler than the average European, not to mention the moribund Asiatic and African...".¹⁴ "I believe in our moral and intellectual superiority, in our capacity to serve as a model for the redemption of the human race," said Ben Gurion.¹⁵

The Zionists have borrowed from Judaism the dogma about the Jews being the "God's chosen people" and transformed its thesis about racial superiority. However, Judaism was but one (and not the only or principal) ideological source of Zionism. The theoretical premises of the latter were greatly influenced by various bourgeois and petty-bourgeois ideas widespread in capitalist society in the second half of the 19th century. First of all, the Zionists copied the reactionary racist theories of J.A. Gobineau, N. Chamberlain and other bourgeois ideologists. F. Nietzsche's ideas have had a special impact on Zionist theorists.

One of the leading Zionist ideologists, Ahad Haam, wrote in 1898: "If we agree, then, that the Superman is the goal of all things, we must agree also that an essential condition of the attainment of this goal is the Supernation; that is to say, there must be a single nation better adapted than other nations, by virtue of its inherent characteristics, to moral development, and ordering its whole life in accordance with a moral law which stands higher than the common type. This nation will then serve as the soil essentially and supremely fitted to produce the fairest of all fruits--the Superman."¹⁶

Asserting that the Jewish people as a whole always interpreted their mission simply as fulfilment of their obligations having no relation to the outer world and regarded their choice from time immemorial to our day as an end in itself, but not as a means to achieve happiness for the rest of the world, Haam proclaimed: "This idea of Israel as the Supernation might be expanded and amplified into a complete system. For the profound tragedy of our spiritual life in the present day is perhaps only a result of our failure to justify in practice the potentialities of our election."¹⁷

Ahad Haam tried to prove the "exclusiveness" of the Jews on the basis of their alleged inherent superiority over other peoples. That thesis, to all intents and purposes, keynotes the writings of all Zionist theorists.

In actual fact, however, the Jews have never comprised, and do not comprise now, any "supercommunity" invented by the Zionists. Moreover, in a strict sense the term "nation" cannot be applied to the Jewish ethnic groups living in various countries. Out of 14 million Jews only 3.3 million live in Israel. Jews in other states do not have the community of economic life, territory, language or culture. A majority of Jews has lost identification with Judaism.

The Zionists regard modern Jews as the direct continuation of the ancient Jewish nationality which has been preserved, in an unchanged form, throughout centuries. But they must be aware that the ancient Jewish nationality itself did not represent a race, but took shape as a result of the mixing of the ancient Jewish tribes that had come to Palestine from the Arabian Peninsula with the local tribes of the Canaanites, Philistines and others. Despite precepts of Jewish religion, mixed marriages were quite widespread among Jews at all times.

Anthropological investigations show the absence of common racial features among the Jews of various countries; at the same time Jews have common anthropological features with the local population. This disproves the Zionist assertions about the "purity of the origin" of Jews. Modern ethnic groups of Jews living in various countries have different origins and are a product of mixture of remnants of the ancient Jewish nationality with the peoples among whom they have been living in the course of the Jewish Diaspora's 2,000-year-long history.

Consequently, the claims of Zionist propaganda that all modern Jews are the descendants of the ancient Jewish population of Palestine do not hold water. A vivid confirmation of the fallacious character of the Zionist thesis about the national and racial purity of Jews is the modern population of Israel, with its striking difference between

the Jews-Ashkenazim and Jews-Sephardim. The racial barrier existing between these groups of the population of Israel is only too well known.

Zionist premises about the existence of a "special Jewish race" or some "world Jewish nation" have nothing in common with the facts. Lenin showed that "not only national, but even racial peculiarities are denied to the Jews by modern scientific investigators, who give prime prominence to the history of the Jews".¹⁸ In an article "On the Jewish Question" written in 1843, K. Marx castigated the Jewish bourgeois who preached the "exclusiveness" of the Jews, "by counterposing his imaginary nationality to the real nationality, by counterposing his illusory law to the real law, by deeming himself justified in separating himself from mankind, by abstaining on principle from taking part in the historical movement, by putting his trust in a future which has nothing in common with the future of mankind in general, and by seeing himself as a member of the Jewish people, and the Jewish people as the chosen people".¹⁹

Works by the classics of Marxism-Leninism thoroughly analysed the Jewish question, showed its class roots and defined ways to solve it. Having set the task to disprove the theological aspect of the question, Marx emphasised that it was "this secular conflict, to which the Jewish question ultimately reduces itself, the relation between the political state and its preconditions, whether these are material elements, such as private property, etc., or spiritual elements, such as culture or religion".²⁰ Lenin, in his work "Position of the Bund in the Party" wrote: "That is precisely what the Jewish problem amounts to: assimilation or isolation?-- and the idea of a Jewish 'nationality' is definitely reactionary not only when expounded by its consistent advocates (the Zionists), but likewise on the lips of those who try to combine it with the ideas of Social-Democracy (the Bundists). The idea of a Jewish nationality runs counter to the interests of the Jewish proletariat, for it fosters among them, directly or indirectly, a spirit hostile to assimilation, the spirit of the 'ghetto'".²¹

After the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia in 1917, the Jewish question has been solved on a democratic basis in our country--for the first ever time in its history. Citizens of Jewish origin enjoy equal rights and take an active part in communist construction. The class roots of anti-Semitism and Zionism have been eliminated in the USSR, whereas in capitalist countries the ruling classes continue, as before, to fan hatred for Jews, encouraging at the same time Zionism and setting working people of different origins against one another.

It should be emphasised in this connection that the policies of Zionist organisations in the capitalist world facilitate the activities of the racist and anti-Semitic forces. Zionism and anti-Semitism complement each other. Of interest in this respect is a characteristic of this connection given by the Chairman of the Central Control Commission of the Communist Party of Israel Wolf Erlich. He wrote: "Racist sentiments among part of the Jews evoke racist sentiments among part of non-Jews, and vice versa. Hence, under present conditions not only anti-Semitism but Zionism too can aggravate the Jewish question in one or another country. Zionism contributes to this in a dual way: it can provoke anti-Semitic sentiments among non-Jews and cause chauvinistic sentiments in Jewish circles. It follows from this that Zionism not only does not solve the Jewish question, but retards its solution, preaching 'dual loyalty' and isolation; it can create the Jewish question where it has not existed or where anti-Semitism has already been overcome."²²

In our day anti-Semitism continues to present a serious danger in many capitalist countries. In the United States, for example, a shameful forgery is being widespread, "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion", and the book International Jew by Henry Ford I, in which the founder of the biggest car monopoly claimed that American capitalists were not capitalists as such, because it was not they but Jews that were exploiting the workers.

Unwilling to determine the social nature of anti-Semitism, the apologists of Zionism declare that it is useless

and senseless to fight it. The leader of American Zionists during the war, A.H. Silver, said: "We will stop trying to find a solution for anti-Semitism and we will reconcile ourselves to a condition."²³ As the only way out Zionism suggests recognising and consolidating segregation of Jews and non-Jews by creating a special Jewish state and separating Jews from the rest of population in the countries of the Diaspora. Zionist ideology, while profiting from anti-Semitism which it considers to be the main obstacle in the way to assimilation of Jews, in actual fact approves of anti-Semitism as a natural attribute of Jews' relations with the peoples surrounding them. The modern Zionist theorist Yigal Eilam writes that Zionism does not regard anti-Semitism as an abnormal, absurd, wicked or side phenomenon. Zionism regards anti-Semitism as a natural phenomenon.²⁴

2397
1882

Zionism has not created, and could not have created any philosophical concept of its own, but builds its conceptual theories on the basis of a "synthesis" of various bourgeois racist and nationalist theories with dogmas of Judaism. In essence, the Zionists are prepared to accept any bourgeois theoretical conceptions which can be used for asserting the need to isolate the Jews from the peoples surrounding them. For this very reason the Zionists invariably turn to Judaism, trying to add bourgeois-nationalistic essence to its dogmas and turn it into an instrument serving Zionist aims.

Martin Buber, a Zionist mystic philosopher, formulated a religious-Messianic substantiation of the racist concept of the "special rights of the Jewish people in Palestine". Referring to the Bible, Buber said that God "had promised" Palestine to the Jewish people. On this ground Buber proclaimed the "right" to evict the indigenous population from Palestine so that it could not prevent the reunification of "Mount Zion and the Jewish people".²⁵

A resolution of the 17th Congress of the Communist Party of Israel notes that the reactionary ideology and practices of Zionism provide favourable ground for the emergence and growth of Zionist-fascist parties and groups.²⁶ Already

in the 1920s a movement came into being in international Zionism which resembled by its programme German national-socialism and Italian fascism. Judea perished in fire and blood, and in fire and blood will it be resurrected. "All great states were created by the sword,"²⁷ declared the founder of that movement Vladimir (Zeev) Jabotinsky, who had become known earlier as the organiser of the Jewish Legion incorporated in the British Expeditionary Corps sent to occupy Palestine.

According to Jabotinsky, the programme of this movement is simple. The aim of Zionism is a Jewish state. Territory--both banks of the Jordan. Principle--mass colonisation. Solution of the financial problem--national loan. These four principles can be tackled without any international sanction. From this follows the demand of the present hour--a new political campaign and militarisation of the Jewish young people on the land of Israel and in the Diaspora.²⁸

Following the ideologists of fascism Jabotinsky termed his supporters a "special psychological race" and called on them "to release the Jewish people in a revised edition". The programme of "Zionist-revisionists" combined racism with an undisguised hatred for socialism. All forms of class struggle should be regarded as high treason, Jabotinsky declared.²⁹ In the 1930s his followers in militarised units marched through streets chanting: "Germany--to Hitler! Italy--to Mussolini! Palestine--to Us!"

The terrorist organisation Irgun Zwei Leume (National Military Organisation) organised by "revisionists" and headed by Israel's Prime Minister M. Begin was noted for its appalling brutality in dealing with the peaceful Arab population of Palestine. It was bandits from the Irgun Zwei Leume that perpetrated bloody atrocities in the village of Deir Yassin, which became a symbol of Zionist genocide against Palestinians. After the creation of the State of Israel the "revisionists" organised the Herut (Freedom) party which adopted an extreme right-wing position in the country's political life. Israeli Communists characterise the Herut

as an extremist party which from the very beginning came out under the slogan of creating "great Israel", from the positions of unbridled militarism and chauvinism.³⁰

After Zionists have seized power in the newly established state of Israel, its political regime began to be based on the implementation of Zionist theoretical concepts. Zionism has become the dominating ideology in Israel, and Zionist dogmas underlie Israeli legislation.

The hopes of the world public for Israel's development along the road of progress and democracy have not materialised. The ruling Zionist clique has turned Israel into a seat of racism and aggression in the Middle East and made terror an element of government policy. As noted by Naim Ashhab, the class and racist essence of Zionism became especially vivid after the Zionist bourgeoisie succeeded in turning Israel into its territorial base and using Israel's state machinery and manpower resources in its selfish interests.³¹

The Zionist programme of the Jewish state consists of three main concepts. First, this is the concept of a "purely Jewish state". This is what the leader of the ultra-Zionist terrorist organisation, the Jewish Defence League, Meir Kahane (incidentally, in his youth he was a member of the Betar) writes: "Who, apart from absolutely blind and stupid people, has ever believed that Jews and Arabs can live in peace and recognition in the Jewish state where Arabs have previously comprised a majority. The Arabs in Israel are a national minority not only in terms of their number, but also, whether you like it or not, due to the fact that they are not first-rate citizens, and never will be able to become such, until there exists the genuine concept of the Jewish state and Zionism."³² Kahane has, in fact, disclosed what the Israeli rulers prefer to draw a veil on.

Secondly, the Zionists regard Israel as "the state of all Jews of the world". Zionist leaders declare that Israel is a state inhabited by only 80 per cent of its people. In 1972, Israel's Supreme Court, in violation of international law, made the following statement: "There is no Israeli na-

tion apart from the Jewish people and the Jewish people consists not only of the people residing in Israel but also of the Jews residing in the Diaspora."³³ Raphael Kotlowitz, Chairman of the Department of Immigration of the World Zionist Organisation and member of the Herut party, considers it necessary to regard all Jews living outside Israel as "potential citizens" of that state and grant them corresponding rights and obligations. The point is to force "dual loyalty" on the Jews of various countries, under some "legal" scheme of world Jewish citizenship. The main premises of this scheme are: a) "the duty" of Jews in all countries to render all possible assistance to Israel, right up to participation in military hostilities; b) the "right to protection" of Jews living outside Israel on the part of the Israeli government, and, consequently, the obligation to submit to it; c) the granting to Jews living outside Israel of the (demagogic) right to take part in shaping the policies of the Jewish state.³⁴

Thirdly, the Zionist concept of the Jewish state presupposes the formation of "Great Israel". The essence of this concept is easy to understand. Back on May 3, 1943, General Patrick Hurley, President Roosevelt's personal representative in the Middle East, reported to the White House that the Zionist organisation in Palestine adhered to the following programme: 1) Creation of a Jewish state which would include Palestine and, eventually, possibly, Transjordan. 2) Eventual transfer of the Arab population of Palestine to Iraq. 3) Jewish supervision throughout the entire Middle East in the spheres of economic development and control.³⁵

Israel's democratic forces have been waging a stubborn struggle against this reactionary concept, advocating a peaceful and democratic development of their country. This struggle is headed by the Communist Party of Israel, loyal to the principles of proletarian internationalism and uniting in its ranks both Jews and Arabs. Israeli Communists are opposing the occupation of the Arab territories seized in 1967 and advocating the right of the Arab people of Palestine to create their own independent state, the granting of equal rights to

the Arabs living in Israel, and the establishment of a just and stable peace in the Middle East in the interests of all peoples.

Israeli Communists firmly denounce the insolvent views of the Zionist ruling quarters on the character of the State of Israel. Meir Vilner, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel, wrote: "The State of Israel is indeed a Jewish state, as it expresses the right of the Jewish people in Israel to self-determination. This right was recognised, together with the right of the Palestine Arab people to self-determination and state independence, in the decision of the UN General Assembly of November 29, 1947. This has nothing to do with the reactionary and metaphysical Zionist concept of the alleged existence of a world Jewish nation. The reference is to the Jewish people who inhabit this country, Israel. However, Israel is not only a Jewish state, but a state with a substantial Arab national minority which is part of the Arab people of Palestine. The official Zionist positions, which deny national rights to the Arab population of Israel, are intolerable, and only prove the racist character of Zionist concepts."³⁶ Such is the stand of the genuine Israeli patriots who hold dear their country's future.

The Tel Aviv ruling clique has made racism the state policy of Israel. Long before the formation of Israel the eviction of the Arab population of Palestine has become a principal course of Zionist strategy. And it remains such to this day.

The late Prime Minister of Israel Golda Meir once cynically declared: "There is no such thing as a Palestinian!" However, the Palestinian people do exist. At the time of the beginning of mass Jewish migration the Palestinian Arabs accounted for over 90 per cent of Palestine's population. More than 1.7 million Palestinian Arabs live to this day on what used to be Palestine. Some 574,000 of them are third-rate citizens of Israel, the rest live miserable life on Israeli-occupied territories: 693,000--on the West Bank; 452,000--in the Gaza Strip. About two million Palestinians are exiles in

various countries: 1.1 million--in Jordan; 300,000--in Lebanon; 200,000--in Syria; 175,000--in Kuwait; 75,000--in the Arab Emirates; 50,000--in Saudi Arabia; scores of few dozen thousands--in other Arab states; 60,000--in the United States; 50,000--in Western Europe.

Eviction of Palestinian Arabs from their native land has been, and is now, conducted by various methods, both forcible and "legal", but the aim is one and the same: to "clear" Palestine of the local population for Jewish colonisation. Before the formation of Israel the main role in this was played by the Jewish National Fund, which had begun to buy up lands from Arabs back in 1905. Actually, this boiled down to forcible driving of Palestinian peasants away from the land, for the fields they tilled as a rule belonged to landlords who willingly entered into deals with Zionists. Having acquired land, the Jewish National Fund mercilessly evicted Palestinian tenants from the plots they cultivated. This process was accelerated after the formation of the state of Israel: in 1947 only six per cent of land in Palestine belonged to Jews, whereas now 90 per cent of all land in the country is in possession of the Jewish National Fund alone.

The Israeli parliament has adopted a whole number of racist laws aimed at ousting the Arabs. Among them the laws on emergency measures and security districts (1949), the property of the absent (1950), and centralisation of land (1965), as well as other acts which legalised the plundering of Arabs. For example, the law about the property of the absent has deprived the Palestinians who left the country during the first Arab-Israeli war of the right of property. If one takes into account the fact that the Israeli authorities have categorically refused, and are still refusing, to allow them to return home and claim their property, the meaning of that law becomes absolutely clear. Thanks to it, out of 370 first Jewish settlements set up after the formation of Israel, 350 were on the land belonging to Arabs.

Land of Israeli Arabs was being likewise confiscated on a large scale under the pretext of "military considerations" and other pretexts. As a result, 78 Arab villages that used

to possess 1,100,000 dunams of land, are now left with only 376,000 dunams. All in all, the Israeli authorities have deprived Arab peasants of more than 1,200,000 dunams of land. This policy pursued by Tel Aviv has been a cynical embodiment of Zionist racist dogmas and aimed at creating a "racially pure Jewish state".

This policy has been most actively pursued in Galilee, a northern region of Israel, which, according to a UN decision, should have become part of an Arab state in Palestine, but was occupied by Israeli troops in 1948. That region had virtually no Jewish population at the time, and this was why the Zionist leadership adopted the strategy of "Judaisation" of Galilee envisaged in a number of secret documents. The demand to "Judaize" Galilee was first put forward in a secret memorandum sent to Ben Gurion by the then head of the Jewish National Fund, Nahmani. That document was so outspoken as far as the aims of Zionist policy were concerned that we deem it expedient to quote from it. Nahmani wrote: "Though Western Galilee has now been occupied, it still has not been freed of its Arab population, as happened in other parts of the country.... The Arab minority centred here presents a continual threat to the security of the nation." For these reasons, Nahmani considered it "essential to break up this concentration of Arabs through Jewish settlements".³⁷ In 1976, a high-ranking official of the Ministry of the Interior, Koenig, presented another plan for a further "Judaisation" of that region.

"The Koenig Report" emphasised that the growing Arab population in Galilee endangered Israeli control over the region and contained a number of recommendations characteristic of Israel's racist policy, for one, to "expand and deepen Jewish settlement in areas where the contiguity of the Arab population is prominent, and where they number considerably more than the Jewish population; examine the possibility of diluting existing Arab population concentrations".³⁸ There was also a demand to pursue a policy of "capital investments" in order to reduce Arabs to no more than 20 per cent of all employed, to raise taxes and liquidate the "dependence" of Jews on the Arab sector of the economy. The

report made special mention of the need to pursue a racial course in education.³⁹

Koenig's measures have long been applied by the Zionist upper crust of Tel Aviv. It was not accidental that a week after this document appeared Koenig was appointed head of a permanent commission in northern areas (including Galilee) for preventing "unlawful construction" of Arab homes on lands "belonging" to the Israeli government.

The Arabs living in Israel are looked on as second-rate citizens, being subjected to discrimination in most diverse spheres. The Arab workers in Israel are victims of double exploitation, as it were: as working people in an exploiter society and as representatives of a discriminated national minority. Most of them are deprived of elementary social rights. Even according to official data, the average income of an Arab worker in Israel does not exceed 62 per cent of that of a Jewish worker. Over 50 per cent of Arab workers have no possibility of working near their place of residence. As for educational standards, 42.8 per cent of Arabs have no secondary schooling (the figure for Jews is 10.4); as far as higher education is concerned, 11.9 per cent of Jews have acquired it, and only 1.4 per cent of Arabs.

A considerable part of the Arab population of Israel is subjected to a strict control of government bodies under the emergency legislation introduced by the British administration in Palestine back in 1946. According to that legislation, many Israeli Arabs are forbidden to freely travel around the country.

The plight of the Palestinians living on lands occupied by Israel in 1967 is heavier still, for they are under a regime of the military administration. More than 40 per cent of all land has been confiscated from the Arab population there. Bulldozers demolishing Arabs' homes have become a symbol of Israeli racist policy. Tens of thousands of Palestinians have been thrown into prison. Thousands of people have been deported. Residents of the occupied areas are persecuted and maltreated by the occupation authorities.

Torture is applied during interrogations of Arab detainees in Israeli prisons. The Sunday Times conducted a five-month investigation in Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza and it wrote the following: "Often there is just prolonged beating.... Prisoners are often hooded or blindfolded or hung by their wrists for long periods. Many are given electric shocks. At least one detention centre has (or had) a specially constructed 'cupboard' about two feet square and five feet high, with concrete spikes set in the floor."⁴⁰

Zionist propaganda holds that the Arabs accused of "crimes against Israel's security" are tried and sentenced on the strength of their confessions. The investigation carried out by The Sunday Times show that many of these confessions were made under torture.

British journalists arrived at the following conclusions:

1) Israel's security service and intelligence treat cruelly the Arabs detained by them.

2) In some instances they resort to primitive cruel treatment, such as prolonged beatings. However, more refined methods are also used, including electric shocks and imprisonment in specially constructed cells. Such a system, plus its organisation and degree of its application, places Israel's practice, from a category of a simply harsh treatment, in the realm of torture.

3) Torture is applied in six centres: in prisons of four main occupied towns--Nablus, Ramallah, Hebron, on the West Bank and in Gaza, as well as in Jerusalem's prison in a special centre of military intelligence, whose whereabouts are not exactly known. But judging by witnesses' accounts, this centre is situated somewhere near a military base in Sarafand, not far away from the Lod Airport, on the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway. There are indications that a similar centre has been in existence for some time near Gaza.

4) All security services of Israel resort to torture: the Shin Bet which is directly subordinate to the Prime Minister chancellery; military intelligence under the Ministry of Defence; the boarder guard service, and the Latam--the Israeli Special Section subordinate to the Minister of Police.

5) Torture is organised in such a methodical manner that it cannot be regarded as actions of a handful of policemen who "violated orders" and exceeded their prerogatives. Tortures bear a systematic character and are, apparently, sanctioned at some level as a definite policy.

6) It can be assumed that torture is used for three purposes. First, to extract information. Secondly, to make people confess in "crimes against security" which they possibly did or did not commit. The confession thus received is then used as a principal proof of guilt at a trial. Israel recognises the fact that there are several political convicts in its prisons, but only those who have been sentenced according to law. Thirdly, an attempt is made to show Arabs in the occupied territories that passive behaviour is at least harmless.⁴¹

The "Butcher of Beirut", Ariel Sharon, became especially notorious for his atrocities against the Arab population. He began his career back in the 1950s as commander of Company 101, a special unit assigned the task of carrying on reprisals against inhabitants of Arab border villages. Later, this unit became the foundation for the organisation of Battalion 202 and a special paratrooper brigade fulfilling similar functions. At the end of the 1960s, Sharon, who was then in command of the southern military district, was given the assignment to "pacify" the Gaza Strip, where hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees had found themselves under Israeli occupation. Sharon's soldiers drove through the refugees' camps by jeeps and armoured vehicles round the clock, shooting at anyone whom they suspected of belonging to the Palestinian Resistance Movement.

Under the pretext of searching for "terrorists" Sharon ordered the setting up of special camps to "sort out" all Palestinians in Gaza. The newspaper Haaretz wrote on January 26, 1971, that thousands of people were being detained. Due to "lack of space" in ordinary prisons a huge concentration camp was opened right on the sea shore. Horrifying cries could be heard from there for long hours. In the centre of Sinai a concentration camp was made for families of men who

were being hunted. Women and children whose only crime was that they were relatives of those being searched for, were kept in prison in that secluded spot. In this criminal action against women and children the authorities had reached a new peak of barbarity. Male relatives of those searched for (brothers, nephews, cousins) had been sent to another concentration camp in the Sinai.⁴²

The essence of the policy pursued by the Israeli authorities on the occupied Arab lands is to turn them into Israel's colony. This aim is served primarily by the setting up of Jewish settlements on the occupied lands. They are Jewish, not just Israeli, settlements, for it is forbidden to Israeli Arab citizens to live in them. Yet, the right to live there is granted to all Jews from the Diaspora.

Jews began to settle on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip right after the occupation of these territories in 1967. Ten years later, at the time the Likud bloc government came to power in 1977, there were 48 settlements there. During the next five years the Begin government created 92 more settlements, having brought the total number of Jewish settlers to 25,000. In 1983, the Israeli government announced its plans to create another 47 settlements. By the mid-1980s it is planned to bring the total number of settlers to 100,000, and by 2010--to one million.

The 19th Congress of the Communist Party of Israel has noted that the Zionist ideological and political motives of occupation policy are connected with class-economic motives.⁴³ The occupation of Arab territories gives the Zionist bourgeoisie the Lebensraum for colonial exploitation. A resolution of the 19th Congress of the CPI points out that first, occupation provides Israeli capitalists with a market of more than a million people almost exclusively for their goods; secondly, occupation provides a source of cheap manpower exploited in Israel and at enterprises in the occupied territories where Israeli capital dominates; thirdly, occupation has supplied a cheap source of a number of raw materials for construction and industry in Israel; fourthly, the occupied West Bank has become, with the help of "open bridges" with Jordan,

an important channel of Israeli export to some Arab countries.⁴⁴

As a result of Zionist colonial policy, the economy of the occupied territories began to depend on Israel's economy. The Begin government's policy retarded economic development on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, thus forcing their inhabitants to emigrate in search of work and means of subsistence. The occupation authorities obstruct the opening of new jobs and construction on Arab lands. The class interests of the big bourgeoisie receiving superprofits as a result of continuing occupation, are a major factor that determines Zionist policy with regard to the West Bank and Gaza.

The number of the Palestinians from the occupied territories working in Israel reaches 100,000; very many are working in the Israeli building industry, where they constitute a majority of those employed. Palestinian workers are deprived of elementary rights. For instance, they are not allowed to spend the night on Israeli territory. This is why tens of thousands of people are daily transported by lorries to their place of work and in the evening--back home. Those who stay near their work place spend the night in the cellars of buildings under construction, in courtyards, or out in the open. Sometimes, workers are locked in where they work. The newspaper Yedioth Aharonoth reported on March 16, 1976, an accident at a mattress factory when three Palestinian workers locked in the factory premises died in a fire that broke out there. The newspaper Haaretz wrote that special companies were being set to hire only Palestinian workers, because Jews refuse to work for such low wages. It should be added that the Palestinians on the occupied territories are not allowed to form trade unions.⁴⁵

The ruling circles of Israel are conducting an unbridled racist propaganda. The Zionist magazine New Outlook admitted that "religious education given in state-religious schools ... is notably in the ... spirit which does not emphasise general humanist values but traditional ones. Not spiritual values of love of humanity, pursuit of justice and mercy, but

chauvinist values of segregation out of a false feeling of superiority over other peoples, accompanied by preaching hatred of strangers, conquest and dispossession. The phrase 'chosen people' is taught to students of these institutions not as demanding more from oneself, that he/she be deserving of God's mercy, but as privileges held by this people due to a godly promise. These ritualistic-tribal elements of Judaism are given a much more important place in this education than the ethical-spiritual elements."⁴⁶

An example of using religion to fan racism and chauvinism is provided by a pamphlet published by the headquarters and the Chief Rabbi's office of the Israeli army. Its author, Rabbi Abraham Avidan, an ardent Zionist, declares that in no circumstance can one trust an Arab, even if he gives the impression of being a civilised person.⁴⁷

Racist anti-Arab propaganda permeates the entire life of Israeli society. This is shown by public opinion polls conducted in Israel by the Louis Harris service. Forty-nine per cent of Israeli Jews do not want to live near Arabs, 74 per cent do not wish their children to make friends with Arab children and are against marriages with Arabs. Zionist propaganda succeeded in spreading among many Israelis distorted ideas about Arabs as "inferior beings". A majority of Israeli Jews accepts anti-Arab stereotypes hammered down on them.

Racism has so firmly entrenched itself in Israeli society that its impact is felt by individual groups of the Jewish population. Arabs in Israel are virtually "third-rate citizens", because the "second-rate position" is occupied by the Jews-Sephardim who come from the countries of the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe and who at present comprise more than half of the Jewish population of Israel and suffer from various types of social discrimination. The number of the poor among the Sephardim is twice as great as that among the Ashkenazim. In the late 1970s Sephardic Jews constituted 56 per cent of all Jewish pupils in primary schools, 39 per cent in secondary schools and only 17 per cent of students in higher educational establishments.

A resolution of the 19th Congress of the Communist Party of Israel points out that a majority of the employed from the so-called Eastern communities are low-paid workers. In "developing" settlements where, as a rule, poor people live, about a quarter of the inhabitants are those from Eastern communities. A considerable part lives in slum areas in various towns and settlements. A great portion of large Jewish families is from Eastern communities and they live in appalling conditions.⁴⁸ Israeli Communists note further that the capitalist system in Israel, under which Zionist ideology dominates, engenders a policy of national discrimination and oppression of the Arab population, as well as the communal discrimination of Jews from Arab and other Asian and African countries.⁴⁹

The Zionist regime widely encourages discriminatory practices against "impure" Jews, under the racist-clerical law "Who Is a Jew". According to this law, persons born of a mother of non-Jewish origin or those who have not accepted Judaism in line with the orders of orthodox rabbis should not be considered Jews.

Israeli families in which one member is not a Jew are in a specially difficult position. They are subjected to persecutions on the part of fanatical racists and clericals who supervise the bodies in charge of the family and civic status. Jews who changed their faith are deported.

Children of mixed marriages receive similar treatment from the Zionists. They come up against mistrust and suspicion. If they do not want to accept Judaism, they are not regarded as Jews, are insulted and discriminated against to such an extent that their life in Israel becomes simply unbearable.

In an attempt to retard the mounting ideological-political crisis of Zionism its theorists want to conceal its racist essence and pass it for being a "national liberation movement". But who do the Zionists wish to "liberate" the Jews from? Apparently, they are trying, first of all, to undermine class solidarity of the Jewish working people with working men and women of other origins, and also to "liberate" the Arab lands seized by Israel from the Arab population. In

doing so Zionist theorists are striving, as before, to propagate the idea about the "exclusiveness" of Jews.

The slanderous thesis that the struggle against Zionism is tantamount to anti-Semitism is needed by the Zionists to hinder the liberation of the Jewish working people in Israel and other capitalist countries from racist ideology forced on them and to weaken the international isolation in which Israel has found itself. However, these efforts will inevitably fail. Progressive-minded forces with the Communist Party at the head which unites in its ranks both Jewish and Arab working people, are growing stronger in Israel.

The world public denounces the racist ideology and practices of Zionism. The attempts of imperialism, Zionism, and reactionary forces in Arab countries to perpetuate, within the framework of the Camp David agreements, the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, were sharply criticised at the UN General Assembly. The plans of Israeli racists to create, under the guise of "Palestinian autonomy", a huge ghetto on the occupied territories, in Arab Bantustan, where Palestinians would be fully controlled by the Zionist authorities were unmasked. The international community of nations confirmed that it would be impossible to reach a just solution of the Middle East conflict without satisfying the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, and that the Palestinians have the right not only to return to their native land, but also to achieve self-determination and create their own national state. Thus, the Zionists and their foreign patrons have found themselves in complete isolation in the UNO.

The 26th Congress of the CPSU emphasised that, "The CPSU has fought and will always resolutely fight against such attitudes alien to the nature of socialism as chauvinism or nationalism, against any nationalistic aberration, be it, say, anti-Semitism or Zionism."⁵⁰ To denounce the reactionary essence of the ideology and policies of international Zionism-- a dangerous weapon of the aggressive imperialist circles--is a major task facing the democratic and progressive-minded forces.

In the spring of 1983 a group of Soviet citizens of Jewish and other nationalities wrote an open letter to the public

in this country. In it they pointed out that "Zionism essentially consists in extreme nationalism, chauvinism, racial intolerance, the justification of territorial seizures and annexations, armed adventurism, the cult of political permissiveness and impunity, demagogy and ideological subversion, underhand manoeuvring and perfidy".⁵¹ Disproving Zionist falsehoods about anti-Semitism in the USSR the authors wrote that "the Soviet Jews regard with contempt attempts made by the Zionist propagandists to interfere in their life, and condemn with indignation the lies and slander levelled against their socialist homeland. The Jewish citizens of the USSR are an inseparable part of the Soviet people".⁵² On April 21, 1983, an inauguration meeting of the Anti-Zionist Committee of the Soviet public was held. This organisation will contribute to a more energetic rebuff to international Zionism and wage an active struggle for social progress and peace on earth.

NOTES

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- 48 19th Congress of the Communist Party of Israel, p. 162.
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INTERNATIONAL LAW FACETS
OF THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM

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It is well known that the Palestinian problem has long outgrown its narrow regional framework and developed into an international problem while nonetheless preserving its full significance within the complex web of questions, which form the essence of the search for a Middle East settlement. Owing to its international character, this problem has acquired a number of new, insufficiently studied aspects.

2397 Even a cursory glance at the international law aspect of the problem in question shows that there is an only reason why it remains unsolved. The point is that the Israeli leaders, proceeding in their actions from the overtly reactionary postulates of militant Zionism, grossly violate generally adopted standards of international law, pursue a policy of annexation and development of the Arab territories occupied in 1967 and of their economic integration into Israel. The ideological, economic and religious arguments which are being used by the Israeli leaders and official propaganda are likewise limited to an attempt to justify aggressive Zionist concepts with regard to some of the concrete questions involved in a Middle Eastern settlement, including the Palestinian problem.

Therefore the decision of the 30th Session of the UN General Assembly (Resolution 3379/XXX) which described Zionism as a form of racism and race discrimination was not accidental. This resolution was an indictment not only of Zionism, but also of the policy of the Israeli leadership-- a policy of expansionism and war. The negation of the law-

ful national rights of the Arab people of Palestine, the virtual policy of genocide towards the Arab national minority in Israel itself, the forcible retention of occupied Arab lands, terrorism and mass repressions against their inhabitants, the failure to act upon UN Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on the Middle East--such is but a brief list of the "deeds" of the Israeli leaders, which are quite enough to declare its political credo, Zionism, to be an overt manifestation of racism.

The Western bourgeois and pro-Zionist press has made all manner of possible comments on Resolution 3379. The keynote of these comments, ably orchestrated by the Zionists, was the allegation that to declare Zionism to be a form of racism was an "encouragement of anti-Israeli terrorism" and a manifestation of anti-Semitism, and amounted to a denial of Israel's right to independent existence. It is easy to see the far-fetched, artificial character of this conception.

The existence of the State of Israel is one question. Meanwhile, Resolution 3379, as is justly pointed out in a decision of the League of Arab States, is concerned with an entirely different question--"a concrete phenomenon--a political ideology and the political apparatus created on its basis, and the policy of a certain government".¹ In other words, the denunciation of the international community is directed against the policy of the Israeli leaders, and not against the existence of the State of Israel.

Among the "shadowy" facets of the Palestinian problem until very recently remained the question of the position of the Arab national minority in Israel. The wide propaganda campaign which is being waged by Israel's ruling circles repeats in every possible way the thesis of "complete equality" of rights for Israelis and Arabs, of "cooperation" between these two ethnic groups in the "construction of the Israeli state", etc. However, concrete facts show that the Israeli Arabs are reduced to the position of "second-class citizens" being denied the rights enjoyed by its Jewish population.

Israeli citizenship is determined by a law of 1952, and is automatically granted to all Jews who were resident

in Israel on the day it came into force (July 4, 1952). Jews who arrived in Israel earlier, or those who were born before the creation of the Israeli state, are considered as having been citizens since its creation (May 14, 1948), Jews who arrived in Israel or were born after its creation are regarded as having been Israeli citizens since their arrival or from birth.

A fundamentally different approach is shown by Israeli legislation to Arabs who live in Israel. A non-Jew (i.e., in effect, an Arab) who was born on Israeli territory is given the status of a "hereditary stateless person". Up to now the Israeli Foreign Ministry has not published any official data as to the number of stateless Arabs to be found in Israel--one of the most closely guarded state secrets. In other words, the forms of anti-Arab discrimination are officially registered in Israeli legislation, whose central aim is to ensure the formation of a purely Jewish state in Palestine. This aim was achieved, first, by the creation "from nothing" of a Jewish national majority in a country with a predominantly Arab population. One of the ideologists of the Israeli colonisation of Palestine, David Ben Gurion, said in this connection that the Palestinian war of 1948-1949 "broke out primarily in our favour, giving rise to a dual miracle--territorial acquisition and the flight of the Arabs".²

Another way of achieving this aim was by ensuring the Jewish political rule of that area of Palestine which subsequently was to form the basis of the Israeli state.

Considering that the Zionist project of the creation of a purely Jewish state of Palestine would have stood little chance of success if these two conditions had not been met, one may conclude that the Israelis decided to ensure the success of this "Zionist enterprise" by discrimination against the Arab community of Palestine. With extreme clarity this point has been made by Moshe Dayan: "We have come here [i.e., to Palestine--E.V.] and settled here not on a vacant, empty land. This land was settled by Arabs and now we are settling Jews where once Arabs lived. We are changing an Arab country into a Jewish country."³ The same Dayan acknowledged that

the Arabs disapproved of the Israeli actions and therefore they had to be destroyed.⁴

Official discrimination against the Arabs of Palestine concerns, in particular, their rights to Israeli citizenship and the expropriation of their land.

The essence of the Israeli laws of citizenship consists in the fact that an Arab who lives in Israel can become an Israeli citizen if he can provide documentary proof of his Palestinian citizenship during the British Mandate. However, even this is not sufficient. An Arab who lives in Israel will never receive Israeli citizenship if, in the period between May 14, 1948 (the outbreak of the Palestinian war) and the signing of the armistice agreement, he left his former place of residence (which would be quite natural in a wartime situation).

The last chance for an Arab, a native inhabitant of Palestine, to obtain Israeli citizenship is by lodging an application to the Ministry of the Interior, which by no means always satisfies such applications.

This treatment of the Israeli Arabs naturally determines their living standards, their educational and medical care opportunities. Here are a few relevant examples. In Israel, higher education is attainable for 44.5 per cent of young Jews and 13.9 per cent of young Arabs. In the 1961-1971 period only 300 Arabs graduated from Israel's higher educational establishments. On average, there are 112 students per 10,000 Jews, but less than 10 for every 10,000 Arabs in Israel. For comparison, it may be mentioned that in 1963 there were 50 students per 10,000 of the population in Egypt, 60 in Syria, 74 in Lebanon and the number steadily increased.

In 1970 each Jewish family in Israel had a refrigerator whereas only 30 per cent of the Arab families could afford such a "luxury". Forty five per cent of the Jewish families (as against 15 per cent of the Arab) had washing machines, 18 per cent of the Jewish families (and only four per cent of the Arab) had TVs, 33 per cent of the Jewish families

(and 11 per cent of the Arab) owned motor cars, etc. Infant mortality in Israel's Arab families dropped from 40.8 per cent in 1951 to 40.3 per cent in 1969. In comparison, the drop in infant mortality in the Jewish families in the same period was from 39.2 to 19 per cent.

The Palestinian Arabs in Israel are in the position of refugees in their own country. Every facet of their existence is affected by Zionist race discrimination. According to Saul Friedländer, a professor of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the feeling of superiority of an Israeli Jew over an Israeli Arab "permeates official propaganda and at times even education, especially at the level of primary school".⁵

A poll conducted by the American L. Harris Institute has shown the real attitude of the Israelis to the Arabs, who are also inhabitants of Israel: 23 per cent of the respondents said that they would feel uncomfortable if they found themselves next to an Arab in a restaurant, 26 per cent said that they would find it unpleasant to work with Arabs, 49 per cent would not like to live next door to Arab families, 54 per cent would hate their children to have an Arab schoolmistress, 74 per cent are against friendship between their children and Arab children, 84 per cent are opposed to marriages between their relatives or friends and Arabs.⁶ Professor Johanan Peres of the University of Tel Aviv put only two questions to Israeli Jews. Asked if it would be better if the numbers of Arabs in Israel decreased, 88 per cent of the respondents answered in the affirmative. Asked if they would rent out their dwelling space to an Arab 85 per cent of the respondents answered in the negative.⁷

This attitude to the Israeli Arabs results in approximately 60,000-70,000 of them (approximately 20 per cent of Israel's entire Arab population) standing no chance of becoming full-fledged Israeli citizens and receiving the status of the so-called "permanent residents". This category of citizens, for instance, can leave Israel for the strictly limited period of one year and one day. If they come back

even one day late they lose even the rights of "permanent residents".⁸

The Israeli author A. Cohen writes: "From the point of view of the law, the Arab citizens are equal to all other citizens of the state; they participate in parliamentary elections and enjoy many of the rights of a democratic state. However, no such statement can obscure the fact that the Arab minority in Israel lives in conditions of painful national discrimination."⁹

The legal "substantiation" of Israeli discrimination are the Defence (Emergency) Regulations adopted by the British mandatory administration back in 1945. This document, which was repeatedly--during the British Mandate--described even by Zionist leaders in the most negative terms, says that the military governor can deprive any Israeli of his civil rights, including the right to defence in court, the right of residence and travel and even the right of property ownership. These Regulations can be used, in principle, both against Jews and against Arabs, but they have been applied to the former not more than five times throughout Israeli history whereas the entire existence of the Arab national minority is governed by the aforementioned Regulations. And there is no appealing against the decisions adopted by the administrative authorities on their basis because mythical security considerations are immediately invoked. Under Article 125 of the Regulations, and guided by "security considerations", the Israeli authorities can declare any section of Israeli territory to be a "closed area". Steps such as these are being taken in order to keep Arabs, the indigenous people of this particular area, now declared "closed", off their land. Such declarations are a prelude to the unlawful seizure of land (which belongs to Arabs), whose owners are debarred from returning on security grounds.¹⁰

A considerable amount of the arable land in Israel is declared to "belong to the Jewish people". State subsidies and aid are granted primarily to Jewish kibbutzim and not to the Arab peasants, who cultivate almost 20 per cent of all Israel's agricultural land (but only two per cent of the irri-

gated land). This attitude by the official authorities has led to a sharp drop in the productivity of the Arab farms. The average farm crop yield of the Arab fields is about one-quarter of that of the average Israeli field. In criticising the "carelessness" of the Arab peasants, Israeli authors "fail to notice" that the official authorities place the Israeli Arabs in the position of "second-rate citizens" encouraging in every way their "expulsion" from the land and transition to the state of landless persons forced to hunt for jobs in towns, where the demand for a cheap Arab workforce is on a whole, fairly stable.

A process which has come to be known in Israel as the "emergence of internal refugees" is under way. Many books and other publications brought out abroad in recent times, especially after 1967, prove by facts the unlawful character of the Israeli authorities' land operations, in the sense that they have the only aim that of dispossessing the Arabs of land.¹¹ The deprivation of the Palestinian Arabs of the land of their ancestors inevitably leads to the breakup of the Palestinians' political links with the territory they live on.

Approximately six weeks after the proclamation of the State of Israel an Abandoned Areas Ordinance was published. It declared that the authorities had the right to declare "abandoned" any part of the country "conquered by or surrendered to armed forces, or deserted by all or part of its inhabitants, and which has been declared by order to be an abandoned area", "... and the expropriation and confiscation of movable and immovable property, within any abandoned area"¹² could be practised.

The Israeli legislation offers an original interpretation of the "absentees" notion. The 1948 Emergency Regulations introduced the principle of the acquisition of the property of absentees, which was legalised by the Absentee's Property Law (1950) and the Land Acquisition Law (1953).

One of the first results of land expropriation, as has been pointed out by Sabri Jiryis, was the eviction of 20,000 Arabs from their villages, which made them refugees in every

sense of the word, although the majority of them continue to live in Israel, just a few kilometres from their native villages, which have been used for Jewish settlement. These Arabs are permitted to set foot on the soil which previously belonged to them only as hired hands working for new "landowners".¹³

However, the "originality" of the Israeli legislation goes further. The point is that a Palestinian Arab who permanently lives in Israel, is a member of the Israeli society, who pays taxes and has the right to vote, can nevertheless be declared an absentee, and thereby lose the right of property ownership. "Every Arab in Palestine who had left his town or village after November 29, 1947, was liable to be classified as an absentee under the regulations.... The thirty thousand Arabs who fled from one place to another within Israel, but who never left the country, were also liable to have their property declared absentee's property. Any individual who may have gone to Beirut or Bethlehem for a one-day visit, during the latter days of the Mandate, was automatically an absentee."¹⁴

Under the aforementioned Absentee's Property Law, a special trusteeship council was instituted. Article 30 of this Law granted the "trustee" (i.e., the official authorities) the following rights:

When the trustee declares in writing that an individual or a group of people is or are absent, they shall be qualified as absentees for as long as no proof to the contrary is produced.

When the trustee declares in writing that some property belongs to absentees, this property shall be regarded as that of the absentees for as long as no proof to the contrary is produced.

Evidence by the Defence Ministry according to which an area of Palestine was at some specific moment in the hands of armed forces attempting to prevent the formation of Israel or which attacked Israel after its creation forms definitive proof of the character and ownership of this part of the territory.

A copy pronounced valid by the trustee by virtue of its inclusion in documentation or an official dossier or any other official document at his disposal shall in any trial or in any legal proceedings represent prima facie evidence of the character of this part of the territory.

Any evaluation conducted by the trustee with regard to matters within his competence shall, at least until the court decides otherwise, in all trials or legal proceedings, be considered as prima facie evidence of the facts enumerated in this evaluation.

The trustee and his inspectors, mediators or officials shall not be obliged, in the course of a trial or any legal proceedings, to present their recordings, dossiers or any other documents whose content can be proved under the provisions of this article, or to testify to affairs which may be regarded as a manifestation of evaluation by the trustee, as provided for in the present article, until the court decides otherwise.

Testimony, evaluation, permission or any other document which must be signed, granted, directed or issued by the Defence Ministry, Finance Ministry or the trustee shall be viewed as stated in these documents until a decision to the contrary is adopted.

In the consideration of disputed cases account shall not be taken of the fact that an individual could not influence the circumstances which forced him to leave his place of residence and owing to which he acquired the status of an absentee.¹⁵

All these deliberately complicated provisions can be summed up by one word--arbitrariness. Precisely arbitrariness and the systematic plunder of the Arab population of Palestine are the methods the Israeli leadership practised both with regard to the Palestinian Arabs in Israel itself and on the territories held by the Israeli aggressors since 1967.

Israel's policy in the occupied territories deserves more detailed discussion. The Hague Convention of 1907 says that a state which has occupied any territory as a result of

military operations "shall be regarded only as administrator and usufructuary of public buildings, real estates belonging to the hostile State and situated in the occupied country. It must safeguard the capital of these properties, and administer them in accordance with the rules of usufruct".¹⁶ These rules were reconfirmed by the Geneva Convention of 1949, whose signatories included Israel.

Facts show that the Israeli leadership are resorting to active measures to colonise the occupied territories and have no intention of returning them. Addressing the Knesset on July 19, 1972, Israel Galili, then Minister without Portfolio, confirmed that the government had imposed no limitations on the settlement by Jews of the Arab lands occupied in 1967, which the occupationists refer to as "administered territories". This settlement is seen as one of the ways of handling first-priority tasks and national problems.¹⁷ These actions of the Israeli government won the support of all Zionist parties.

The differences between the ruling bloc and the oppositional bloc Maarakh, which was in power until 1977, concern only the rate of "development" of the occupied Arab lands. Under the "socialist" government settlements were established only in strategically important areas. According to Moshe Dayan, the Israelis and Arabs could exist in these areas only under the protection of the Israeli army and only under its administration will the Arabs find it possible to live.¹⁸

Directly after the 1967 aggression, the Israeli leadership began the intensive construction of military settlements on the Golan Heights, on the West Bank of the Jordan and in the Gaza Strip. By way of preparing conditions for such construction, the military authorities in the 1967-1973 period alone confiscated in the suburbs of Ramallah, Bethlehem, Jericho, Hebron and Nablus almost 30,000 hectares of fertile land which had belonged to the Palestinian Arabs. The seizure and appropriation of Palestinian lands have been pursued by the Israeli authorities up to the present time under a law of 1943 (the Mandate period) on the confiscation and forcible repurchase of land.

The "territorial programme" of the Mearakh bloc became known to the public before the parliamentary elections of 1969 as an "oral law". It announced that it was essential for Israel to retain Jerusalem, the Latrun promontory, the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip, Sharm el Sheikh and the stretch of the Gulf of Aqaba coast between Sharm el Sheikh and Elath.

The 1973 war somewhat reduced the rate of construction of Israeli settlements on the occupied territories, but after the formation of the Yitzhak Rabin government in June 1974, construction was noticeably accelerated: seven settlements sprang up between October 1973 and May 1975, and another 24 between June 1975 and May 1977.¹⁹ In Israel there is a special committee for "settlement affairs", which has developed a plan of Jewish settlement on the West Bank to run up to 1990.

The "development" of the Israeli-occupied territories increased in scope under the Begin government in the form of military settlements, strong points and "agricultural cooperatives".

In the 1977-1979 period there was no particular increase in the rate of settlement construction, although in his very first TV interview as head of government Begin announced his Cabinet's intention to further the creation of new settlements.

When the Begin government came to power in May 1977, two qualitatively new elements were introduced into the colonising policy of the Israeli leadership--firstly it legalised the activity of the Gush Emunim extremist bloc, which develops Jewish settlements without permission, outside official plans, in fact arbitrarily, claiming the West Bank as the Israeli "historical provinces" of Samaria and Judea, and secondly the West Bank began to be officially regarded not as an occupied territory, but as an organic part of Eretz Israel ("the land of Israel").

Therefore, in the early years of the Begin rule, as a result of newly initiated secret Egyptian-Israeli contacts,

the zigzags in the Mid-Eastern policy of the Carter Administration, and the reduction in immigration, the emphasis was laid on the "development" and settlement of the West Bank. Open use was made of the fait accompli tactic--with a dense network of Israeli settlements already in existence on the West Bank, the Israeli leaders hoped that the subsequent direct politico-economic "incorporation" of this indigenous Arab territory into Israel would arouse much less protest around the world.

Practically all Zionist parties support the government policy of colonising the occupied territories. Relevant evidence is furnished by the results of a public opinion poll conducted by the newspaper Jerusalem Post. In December 1979 the creation of Jewish settlements on the West Bank was opposed by 30.9 per cent of the polled Israelis. In September 1981 the percentage had shrunk to 18.9.

The arguments advanced by those who support continuing Israeli occupation of the territories seized in 1967 exhibit amazing straightforwardness, if not downright stupidity. They are roughly as follows. If the Arab lands under Israel's "administrative control" go back to their indigenous owners their economy will inevitably "suffer" because in the 16 years which have passed since the 1967 war they have "grown together" with Israel. "...A return to the 1949 armistice boundary line," says, for instance, Professor Elisha Efrat of Tel Aviv University, "would bring about a situation in which many existing elements would be cut off from their ties with Israel and from their continuing with the state."²⁰

The number of Israeli settlements on the occupied Arab lands is continually growing. In November 1982, Israel's Deputy Minister of agriculture, Dekel, said that, apart from the 103 settlements already existing on the West Bank (with a population of 25,000 Israelis), by 1985 an additional 37 settlements will have been built there, bringing the number of their Jewish inhabitants to 70,000. The total of Israeli settlers is to reach 400,000 by 1990 and 1.4 million by the year 2000.

The Israelis are hard at work developing the Gaza Strip, another indigenous Palestinian territory. A long-range plan

for its Judaisation has been drawn up. A seaport at Yamit, located in the southern part of the sector, is rapidly being built, the Nithat-Rafiakh area is being settled by Jews. Jewish settlements in and around the Gaza Strip are, under the official plan, to occupy an area of about 150,000 hectares. Approximately 200,000 Jews are to settle here by 2000.

Another "legal" way of usurping the Palestinians' rights to the occupied territories is the policy of adapting their agricultural production to Israel's requirements. The Jordan valley is being used for growing high-grade varieties of vegetables and fruit, which are for the most part exported to the European Economic Community countries.

Finally, the Israeli authorities are employing a large Arab labour force, pursuing, in the main, three aims:

--to reduce the discontent of the population of the occupied territories with the military occupation regime by ensuring employment and some guaranteed minimum income to the Palestinian Arab population;

--to increase output in those sectors which hold little attraction for the Jewish population (certain branches of agriculture, including stockbreeding, work in the car-maintenance service, road and construction jobs, etc.);

--taking advantage of the cheap and abundant Arab labour force to make its export commodities more competitive.

According to official data, more than 60 per cent of the labour force employed in construction in Israel and on the occupied territories is accounted for by Palestinian Arabs. Naturally, the Arab workers are paid much less. Whereas the daily earnings of a Jewish agricultural worker in 1974 were 15 Israeli pounds, the Palestinian Arab was paid only 10 pounds for the same job. In industry and construction the difference is still wider--26 and 11 and 26 and 13 pounds respectively.²¹

The aim of this policy is clear--to attach the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to Israel economically and to ensure (whatever future is determined for these territories) the preferential interests (even if only economic, from which it

is only one move to political) of Israel. Attempts to integrate the West Bank also involve the creation of a common (with Israel) water and energy supply system. Given the occupation, representatives of the Palestinian commercial bourgeoisie are forced to agree to economic cooperation with the Israelis. Annual investments by the Palestinian bourgeoisie in Israeli industrial and agricultural projects has reached three million dollars, and the volume of Arab industrial and agricultural production marketed in Israel has reached a total of five million dollars.

On the one hand, the Israeli authorities are using the economic potential of the occupied territories and cheap Arab manpower. However, the invaders' attempts to employ the skilled Palestinian labour force and the Palestinian intelligentsia are failing. On the other hand, because it is precisely these social strata that form the nutrient medium of the Palestinian Resistance Movement, the occupational authorities are artificially trying to touch off a wave of emigration (to Canada, Latin America, Australia).

This process has yet another aspect: by artificially creating a shortage of expert personnel on the West Bank, the Israeli leaders are attempting to impede the economic development of the future Palestinian state should the question of its creation assume a practical form. They expect that these difficulties, combined with the established "economic attachment" of the West Bank to Israel, will inevitably lead to some form of "economic unity" between Israel and the territories which are now under its occupation.

Finally, yet another important factor is at work. Sooner or later, Israel will find itself facing the question of having to compensate the Palestinian Arabs for the property lost by them since 1948. Some people in Israel maintain that in the future such compensation could take the form of the Israeli militarised settlements which are being established on the occupied Arab lands. However, this is the point of view of some research economists, and certainly not that of the military or the politicians, who tirelessly advocate the retention by Israel of all or some of the occupied territo-

ries as a "guarantee of security". For instance, Sh. Peres once said that the Israeli settlements on the occupied territories were to play an important role in the prevention of Palestinian "terrorist activity" there, and even following a possible peaceful solution, the greater part of these settlements would inevitably remain and maintain close political-economic ties with Israel.²²

In the opinion of the Israeli leaders, the general situation in the Middle East should favour the implementation of Israeli plans with regard to the seized Palestinian territories.

At the same time, one of the most significant trends in the activity of the Israeli occupational authorities on the Palestinian territories is their move to create an autonomous Arab administration. These attempts have as one of their principal aims to remove the PLO in future from participation in framing the status of the Palestinian lands--the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. Back in 1974 an extremely candid and relevant statement was made by the Israeli politician Yosef Tekoah, who said: "Israel will not permit the authority of the Palestine Liberation Organisation to be established in any part of Palestine. The PLO will remain what it is and where it is, i.e., outlawed and outside Palestine."²³

In the opinion of the Israeli leaders, the creation of an Arab administration from among individuals who collaborate with the occupationists will further consolidate the regime of occupation and enable it to play the leading role in framing (in the future) the status of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip for those Palestinians who have no contacts with the PLO and are interested in maintaining close economic ties between these areas and Israel. The Israeli authorities plan first to appoint representatives of the Palestinian bourgeoisie to positions of responsibility in those sections of the occupational administration which are in charge of social security, the health services and agriculture. The next step is to broaden the rights of the city mayors and set up

some supreme Palestinian administrative body capable of acting as the "lawful" representative of the Palestinian people.

However, these occupationist plans have been suffering one failure after another. The massive opposition in Gaza and the West Bank to the arbitrariness of the Israeli occupationists, together with mass Palestinian action have forced even the pro-Israeli quislings to withdraw their names as candidates in the municipal elections which were conducted by the occupationist authorities on April 12, 1976.

The first step in preparing for these elections were elections to "local councils" held in 57 Palestinian villages. Four hundred petty municipal officials were elected. Using the state of uncertainty in which many Palestinians find themselves, measures aimed at setting up Palestinian civilian administration were accompanied by repressive measures against those who refuse to collaborate with the occupationists, and discriminatory steps were taken on religious matters. At the end of January 1976 Jerusalem's judicial authorities permitted the Jews to hold religious services close to the Al-Aqsa mosque, the second most important Moslem shrine. The Palestinian Arabs retaliated with wide disturbances, which forced the occupationist authorities to rescind the decision of the Jerusalem court.

However, the election date, April 12, was left unchanged by the Israelis. The elections were conducted in accordance with their electoral law, which provides the right to vote only to men of 21 and upwards who regularly pay municipal taxes. In an effort to achieve the greatest possible "depoliticisation" of the elections, the occupationist authorities raised the age limit to 25 years and permitted women to vote.

The results of the elections on the West Bank were a surprise to the Israeli administration. First, many political observers were amazed by the high turn-out: 73 per cent of the registered electors voted in the elections. Of the 497 candidates to the municipal councils of 24 towns and settlements, a total of 188 were elected. Second, it was characteristic that neither the PLO nor the Jordanian autho-

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rities decided to boycott the elections, assuming that participation in them would make it possible to pull through their candidates more easily. This scheme worked only with respect to the candidates supported by the PLO: 75 per cent of the deputies to the urban municipal councils on the West Bank do not conceal their sympathy for the PLO. The results of the municipal elections of April 12 not only confirmed the failure of the pro-Israeli candidates, but, furthermore, candidates closely connected with the Jordanian regime also suffered considerable losses (they won only 20 per cent of the seats). The elections showed the growing influence of the Palestinian National Front on the West-Bank Palestinians.

Naturally, the election results disturbed the Israeli leadership. The then Defence Minister, Peres, said point-blank that the Israeli leaders would judge about the new city mayors not on the basis of their pre-election slogans, but on the basis of what they did next.

The Israeli occupationist authorities are not abandoning their plans to organise support for their actions among individuals prepared to collaborate with them either. One of the central aims of such plans is to remove the PLO from possible participation in discussions on matters pertaining to the Middle East settlement and on the solution of the Palestinian problem on the pretext that it has no right to act in the name of the Palestinians who live on the Israeli-occupied territories.

Parallel with the attempts to create an autonomous civil Palestinian administration in the occupied territories, the Israeli leaders are also trying to ensure for themselves "routes of retreat" in the event of the implementation of the Hussein Plan and the creation of a federative Jordanian-Palestinian state. Should this happen, the Israeli leaders still expect to maintain close economic ties with the West Bank and to ensure the final exclusion of the PLO from efforts to solve the Palestinian problem. Therefore they are not preventing the development of economic contacts between the west and east banks and are encouraging reciprocal

visits by the inhabitants of these areas. The Israeli authorities allow the Jordanians and Palestinians of the West Bank--employees of the health services, public education and municipal administration--to receive wages from the authorities in Amman, retain Jordanian citizenship and hold two identity cards--Israeli and Jordanian.

A sharp reminder to the Israeli authorities that the overwhelming majority of the Palestinians have not reconciled themselves to the occupation regime are the periodic outbreaks of disturbance on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. In their decisions, UN General Assembly and various UN committees have repeatedly pointed out and emphasised that clashes and disorders on the Israeli-occupied territories "furnish additional evidence of the danger inherent in the Middle East situation and of the pressing need to search for ways of establishing a just and stable peace in this area of the world".²⁴

Naturally, the Palestinian Arabs are opposed to the Israeli occupation and attempts to colonise their territories. It is their right and duty to oppose. However, Israeli propaganda immediately resorts to a set of ready-made inventions about "Arab violence". At the same time, it is silent about the brutal violent acts of suppression against Palestinians, detention without trial, and the introduction of curfews. The 30th Session of the UN General Assembly, in its special resolution on the violation by the Israeli authorities of human rights on the occupied Arab territories, has pointed to the following forms of these violations:

--annexation of part of the occupied territories;

--the creation of Israeli settlements on these territories and resettlement in them of an alien population;

--destruction of Arab homes;

--confiscation and expropriation of Arab property on the occupied territories, and all the other land-acquisition transactions concluded between the Israeli authorities, organisations or citizens, on the one hand, and the inhabitants or organisations of the occupied territories, on the other;

--evacuation, deportation, exile, displacement and banishment of the Arab population from the occupied territories and denial to them of their right to return;

--mass arrests, administrative detention and maltreatment of Arabs;

--plunder of archaeological and cultural values;

--interference in the freedom of worship and the performance of rites, as well as in the rights and customs of the family;

--unlawful exploitation of the natural resources and population of the occupied territories.

This list clearly shows that rabid anti-Arab chauvinism is a manifestation of the racism which the Israeli leaders are trying to deny.

The general situation on the Israeli-occupied Arab territories indicates that the Israeli colonisation and development of these territories is creating one of the most complex obstacles to peace in the Middle East. The policy of the Israeli authorities on the seized lands shows that Tel Aviv does not intend to restore them to their lawful owners.

The main and one of the central international law aspects of the Palestinian problem is the question of the future of Jerusalem. It is known that plans to internationalise this city were disrupted by the Palestinian war of 1948-1949.

On November 30, 1948 Jordan and Israel signed a ceasefire agreement in the area around Jerusalem. This was subsequently supplemented by the armistice agreement of April 3, 1949, which, like all Arab-Israeli agreements signed as a result of the Palestinian war, bore a temporary character.

Up until the Israeli aggression of June 1967, the situation in Jerusalem was as follows: its western part (the New City) was occupied by Israel, with more than 100,000 Jews living there. However, Israeli aims with regard to Jerusalem--the annexation of the entire city--were absolutely clear.

Once this was openly announced by Ben Gurion: "We should certainly try to ensure that Jerusalem and the road to the city remain in our hands.... We will be able immediately to transfer the Government of Jerusalem. If Latrun had been in our hands, I would have suggested such a transfer immediately after the truce, without a formal annexation of the city. There should be no declarations, there should be deeds! Facts should be created. If Jerusalem had already been in our hands, would we have transferred the Government here (Tel Aviv)?"²⁵

On January 23, 1950 Jerusalem was unilaterally proclaimed the capital of Israel. The majority of the government institutions and many embassies (except those of the great powers, who refused to acknowledge the lawfulness of this action) were transferred there from Tel Aviv. The eastern part of Jerusalem (the Old City) with a population of over 60,000 (Arabs) and nearly all "holy places", access to which was open only to Christians and Moslems, was left to Jordan. The city was divided by a double demarcation line, which created a strip of no man's land of varying width. In the southern part of this territory was located the UN headquarters set up to supervise the observation of the Arab-Israeli truce agreements. The north-eastern part of the city, around Mt. Skonus--the location of the Hebrew University, a military hospital and some official Israeli institutions--also included a demilitarised zone.

Israeli propaganda still contends that the Arab countries, including Jordan, obstructed access to the Jewish shrines located in Jerusalem. However, the truth demands that we recall the following quadripartite declaration by the governments of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria of November 15, 1949: "The governments of Egypt, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Lebanon and Syria commit themselves to guarantee freedom of access to the 'holy places', religious buildings and sites located on the territory under their administration, by virtue of the final settlement of the Palestinian problem or in the expectation of such settlement, on the territories at present occupied under the truce agreements, and in accord

with this commitment will guarantee the right of entry and transit to religious leaders, pilgrims and guests without distinction of nationality or faith, taking into account only national security, all of this in compliance with the status quo which existed until May 14, 1948."²⁶

In other words, no special limitations were in fact imposed on visits to the "holy places" located in the Arab (Jordanian) part of Jerusalem. Simultaneously, it is worth recalling that the Old City is the location of many more (over 30) "holy places" than the Jewish section of the city.

As a result of the June 1967 aggression, Israel occupied the whole of Jerusalem and began its intensive Judaisation. By June 28, less than three weeks after the Six-Day War, the Knesset decided to annex and absorb the Jordanian part of Jerusalem. Simultaneously, rabid Israeli religious leaders challenged the feelings of Moslem believers. As early as August 30, 1967 British newspapers announced that the Israeli authorities were seriously considering the restoration of the legendary "Solomon's temple"--a scheme which required the demolition of the Koubat as-Sahra mosque.

Therefore the acts of vandalism, which began to be committed more and more frequently against Moslem shrines on the occupied Arab territories, were not accidental. Wide notoriety was received by the arson of the Al-Aqsa mosque, on the site of which, in the opinion of the chief military rabbi of Israel, Shlomo Goren, a Jewish temple should long have been erected.²⁷

The Judaisation of Jerusalem affects not only the Moslems. Since 1967 there has been a noticeable decrease in the size of the Orthodox, Catholic and Armenian-Gregorian communities. The Israeli authorities have clearly been striving to limit as much as possible the influence of representatives of other religions in the city and the possibility of their interference in the future of Jerusalem.

Cornered by irrefutable evidence of their unlawful actions, the Israeli leaders have been trying to manoeuvre. For this purpose, the so-called International Jerusalem Committee

has been set up. However, its composition--chosen, incidentally, on a fairly arbitrary basis--is most telling. It includes, for instance, the rector of the Jewish theological seminary in New York, individuals obviously connected with the Zionist movement and a group of Israeli leaders. Therefore it is not accidental that in its decisions "the Committee acknowledges the energy, imagination and sensitivity which Mayor Kollek and his colleagues are applying to the problems" noting "with satisfaction that strong efforts have been undertaken for the purpose of historic preservation", etc.²⁸

The policy of turning Jerusalem into a purely Jewish city after the occupation of the Arab sector in 1967 has become one of the priorities of the Israeli government. Here is a relevant official comment by the Vatican: "The Israeli parliament has virtually made this occupation into an annexation under a unification formula. This decision to seize the Arab sector manifested itself also in the adoption of legislative and financial measures which left a still more specific mark on Jerusalem due to its non-Jewish population. The Moslems and Christians were forced, due to the expansion of the city, to live in a more and more shrinking area and, finally, to search for a place to live in in the future because they had none left at home. The measures of expropriation furnish a sufficient idea of the fact that radical measures left an imprint on the aspect of the city, whose historical and religious character and religious designation have largely changed.... A fairly serious violation of international law is taking place via the logic of an accomplished fact."²⁹

This statement was made back in 1971. Since then the expulsion of the non-Jews from Jerusalem and the redevelopment of the Old City with new blocks of flats where only Jews settle continues unabated. According to the Time magazine (December 27, 1971), by the end of 1971 Jerusalem was inhabited by 216,000 Jews and 70,000 Arabs. In 1974, according to the Jewish Yearbook, the total of Jews in Jerusalem rose to 232,000. In 1980, the number of Jews in Jerusalem reached

290,000 and that of non-Jews reached 112,000 (including 96,000 Moslems).

The new inhabitants of Jerusalem settled in Jewish districts which were being built in the Arab sector. By 1980 80,800 Jews were living in these new districts.³⁰ A correspondent of the France Presse reporting from Jerusalem back at the end of 1974 said that the Israeli government was determined to emphasise that Jerusalem was and would remain the permanent capital of the Jewish state. He also indicated that if the city were viewed from the direction of Mt. of Olives its tall new white blocks of flats surrounding the Old City (i.e., the Arab part of Jerusalem) appear to be a new wall put up around Jerusalem.

Official representatives of the United States, who support Israel's colonialist policy towards Jerusalem, apparently have memory troubles. Back in March 1968 a special statement made by an official representative of the US State Department in connection with measures taken by the Israeli government with regard to Jerusalem said: "It remains the US position that the part of Jerusalem which came under the control of Israel in the June war, like other areas occupied by Israel, is occupied territory and therefore subject to the provisions of international law governing the rights and obligations of an occupying power.

"Israel is a party to the Geneva Convention on the protection of civilian persons in time of war. We, therefore, consider the Government of Israel and its armed forces obligated to abide by the provisions of the convention in their actions in the occupied territories."³¹

The systematic distortion of the physical, cultural and demographic aspect of Jerusalem is the direct result of the Israeli annexationist policy. Back in July 1967 the 5th Extraordinary Session of the UN General Assembly adopted two resolutions (on July 4 and 14) which called on Israel to stop measures and actions directed at changing the character and status of this occupied city. The progressively deteriorating situation in Jerusalem was the subject of prolonged de-

bates in the UN Security Council and of special decisions issued by it (resolutions 252 of 1968, 267 of 1969 and 271 and 298 of 1971).

However, despite these clear and eloquent resolutions, Israel persisted in its systematic policy of altering the physical and demographic character of Jerusalem, making it a victim of Israel's aggressive religious chauvinism. The occupationist authorities continued to expropriate Arab land and property within and outside the city in order to set up new Israeli areas on the ruins of Arab ones razed by bulldozers. Early in 1975 the Knesset approved the implementation of a master plan for Jerusalem under which 30 per cent of the entire West Bank was to be incorporated into the city. The area includes nine towns and 60 villages with a total population of 250,000. New Israeli districts have been located all over Jerusalem. Shufat, Jebel al-Masharif, Haj al-Magarba, Sharaf, Beit Hanina, Khalandia, At-Tur, Nabih Samuel, Jebel al-Mukabir, Sur Bahir--all these ancient Arab names and districts are rapidly losing their Arab make-up and disappearing. Estimates say that when Israel's Jerusalem plan is carried out these new districts will include 35,000 residential units with 122,000 new Jewish Israeli inhabitants.

The ultimate aim of the Israeli plans of active construction in Jerusalem is not even to expand the city's Jewish districts (this lies, as it were, on the surface), but to detach the Jerusalem problem from that of the West Bank because this, in the opinion of the Israeli leaders, will subsequently "render lawful" the direct annexation of the entire city.

Various forms of pressure are being applied in order to carry out the systematic displacement of Arabs from Jerusalem. The hills around the city, which once belonged to the Arabs, have already been seized. Thus, the city's Arab population is cut off from fellow-Arabs who live on the occupied part of the West Bank. These forcible radical changes of Jerusalem's former aspect are intended to ensure that the Arab character of the Old City is gradually forgotten.

A new method of intimidating Jerusalem's Arabs are the military measures of the 'occupationist authorities. Thus, on May 2, 1968 the Israeli authorities, despite an official warning by the Security Council, which in its resolution of April 27 noted that the holding of a military march-past in Jerusalem would increase tension, and have a negative influence on the peaceful solution of the problem, organised a widely publicised military "show" in both parts of the city. Tanks, motorised infantry, artillery and missile units paraded through the city streets to mark the 20th anniversary of the creation of Israel. The preparations for, and the holding of, the march-past were accompanied by a bellicose propaganda ballyhoo. This overtly arrogant action by the troops of occupation provoked the indignation of the world public and a unanimous denunciation by the Security Council.

The policy of the Judaisation of Jerusalem by expropriation of Arab lands, by the setting up of new Jewish districts, by alienating people from their Arab history, civilisation and culture, by suppressing and desecrating Moslem and Christian places of worship and ignoring Moslem and Christian institutions is described in the official language of the Israeli authorities as a policy of "liberation and reunification" of the city. That was what it was called in the decisions of the 28th Zionist Congress held in January 1972.

The official representatives of Israel, who, in 1949, on the eve of its acceptance into the United Nations, agreed that Jerusalem's legal status was different from that of the territory in which Israel is sovereign, later spoke in another language. Here is a statement made by the Israeli representative in the United Nations: "I am not making apologies for our presence in Jerusalem. I do not have to make any. We are there by right--by the right proclaimed in our Bible; by the right which has been consecrated by our history, our sacrifices, our prayers and our aspirations; by the right which has been strengthened and justified by the creation by us of the only liberal administration which grants full freedom of religion to all faiths."³² The first part shows the

real value of the last part of this statement, making abundantly clear the consistently annexationist policy of the Israeli leaders towards Jerusalem.

Another aspect of the Palestinian problem also involves international law--the destiny of the Gaza Strip, also occupied by Israel as a result of the Six-Day War of 1967.

This small strip (43 kilometres long and up to eight kilometres wide) which stretches along the Mediterranean coast formed part of Palestine before the expiry of the British Mandate. Its total surface area is 253 square kilometres. However, before the June 1967 aggression approximately 450,000 Palestinians lived on this small patch of land. Under a decision of the UN General Assembly adopted on November 29, 1947, the cities of Gaza and Khan-Yunis, as well as the adjoining territory, formed part of the Arab state. During the Palestinian war the strip was occupied by the Egyptian troops under whose control it went after the conclusion of the Egyptian-Israeli armistice agreement of February 24, 1949.

In the opinion of the Egyptian leaders, which was repeatedly stated by the Egyptian representatives in the United Nations, Gaza was subject to the jurisdiction of the Egyptian authorities on the condition that the final solution of its destiny would be linked to a general solution of the Palestinian problem. Furthermore, up to 1956 the Gaza Strip was run by a special regime: it was administered by military governors subject to appointment by a decree of the Egyptian president. It also had a six-member executive council and a court. The functions of the chairman of these political institutions were exercised by the military governor.

After the tripartite aggression of 1956 the Gaza Strip was occupied by Israeli troops, Israel doing all in its power to prevent the return of the Egyptians. It contended, for instance (in a special bulletin issued by its Foreign Ministry and circulated among the foreign representations in the United Nations), that, geographically and economically, Gaza was connected with Israel and not with Egypt, from

which it was separated by dozens of miles of desert. By November 1956, Israel had already begun to set up organs of Israeli military and civilian administration in the strip. Branches of Israeli banks were opened in Gaza and Khan-Junis and the circulation of Egyptian currency was banned. By January 1957 a plan for the economic unification of the Gaza Strip with Israel had been hastily drawn up.

Israel's attempts to preserve the Gaza Strip as part of its territory were actively supported by US and British diplomacy. The US representative Henry Cabot Lodge advocated that UN troops be stationed in the Gaza Strip pending the conclusion of some agreement regarding the Gaza area. The idea of making Gaza a controlled territory under UN aegis was readily supported by Britain.

On February 2, 1957 the General Assembly adopted a decision on the immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Gaza Strip. However, the Israeli leadership did not rush to withdraw its troops, expecting that, with time, a Western proposal to internationalise Gaza would be adopted. Addressing the 11th UN General Assembly on March 1, 1957, Golda Meir (then Israel's Foreign Minister) said that Israel would leave Gaza if, after its withdrawal, UN armed forces were stationed there and if Israel's military and civilian control in Gaza was taken over exclusively by UN emergency armed forces.³³

Egypt justly pointed out that UN troops could be stationed in Gaza only with the agreement of the Egyptian government. The proposal of the then UN Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjold, that a mixed administration be set up in Gaza formed of representatives of the UN troop command and the Egyptian government did not meet with the support of the Egyptian leaders either. Egypt's agreement to the presence in Gaza of a limited contingent of UN troops on an exclusively short-term basis for observation of the ceasefire and the withdrawal of the aggressor troops, said the Egyptian government in a telegram to Hammarskjold, showed only the flexibility of Cairo's approach to the problem but by no means its agreement to any internationalisation of Gaza.

On May 18, 1967, on an order of the Un Secretary-General, U Thant, who resorted to this measure on the insistence of the Egyptian government, UN troops were withdrawn from the Gaza Strip.

As a result of the June 1967 Israeli aggression, the Gaza Strip was reoccupied by Israeli troops. In this period the Gaza population was 450,000, including more than 300,000 refugees from the Israeli-seized territories. In other words, 70 per cent of the Gaza population were Palestinian refugees.

One of the most important international law aspects of the Palestinian problem is the problem of the Palestinian refugees. At the hands of Israeli propoganda it has long become one of the hackneyed cover-ups for all complex and difficult aspects of the Palestinian problem and the Middle East situation as a whole. Indeed, for many years the entire multiformity of the Palestinian question has been reduced to the refugee problem. It is deplorable that the Arab countries, which, it would appear, should have been the first to show signs of anxiety about the destiny of their Palestinian fellow-Arabs, at times tacitly agreed to reduce this question to a purely humanitarian and in no way political level. Only the growth of the political consciousness of the Arab peoples, including those of Palestine, has enabled many individuals to appreciate the political character of the Palestinian problem, which is that an entire people has been deprived by its Zionist protectors of its national rights as recognised by the international community of nations.

The emergence of the Palestinian refugee problem is directly connected with the creation of the State of Israel and with the annexationist policy of its leaders, an integral part of which was the reduction of the Israeli Arabs to the position of second-class citizens, their expulsion from Palestine, the usurpation of their rights, etc.

The dire plight of the Palestinian refugees has never caused concern to the Israeli leaders. A memorandum of a representative of Israel's Foreign Ministry sent to the tech-

nical committee of the UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine on July 28, 1949, said: "Since the time when this problem arose, the Jewish population has increased by 50 per cent. The question of housing the new-comers was partly solved by placing them into habitable houses in abandoned Arab towns and villages. Immigration continues at an average rate of 800 per day. These figures alone give clear indication that the individual return of Arab refugees to their former places of residence is an impossible thing. Not only can the whole Arab economic system not be simply restored because its basis has practically disappeared, but also the physical return of the Arab middle-class such as shop-keepers, tradesmen, free professions, has become a physical and geographical impossibility. Their houses have gone, their jobs have gone. Their previous means of livelihood have vanished with the disintegration of their economic organisation. Instead, an entirely different kind of progressive agricultural as well as urban and industrial economy has made its appearance in the same area."³⁴ In other words, the Israeli leaders, by advancing "arguments" such as these, tried to lead the United Nations away from the root cause of the miserable plight of the Palestinian refugees--Israel's reckless drive to expand into Arab lands.

The living conditions of the Palestinian refugees are extremely harsh. Until 1955-1956 many of them lived in their adoptive countries in tents and mud-huts. The General Commissioner of the UNRWA said, back in 1965, before the Six-Day War and the October War of 1973: "The life of the refugees remains shadowed by economic insecurity and the majority of their families continue to live on the brink of poverty. They still cannot reconcile themselves to the privations which they have to endure ... and seek to go back to their former homes. Holding the United Nations responsible for their plight, they consider that it is obliged to help them."³⁵

The Agency divides all refugees into three categories according to degree of need: first, the bulk of the refugees --up to 50 per cent--is comprised of really needy families,

living in poverty; second, there is a group of well-off refugees (up to 20 per cent of the total number), who can exist without the Agency's help; third, there is an intermediate category (up to 30 per cent), which, while having acquired a certain economic independence, cannot as yet, due to the temporary or seasonal character of their jobs, fully provide for themselves.

The refugees' housing conditions, as was said earlier, are fairly poor. Some Palestinian camps have preserved primitive clay structures, but in the majority houses from concrete blocks have been built. As a rule, a family of 4-5 members receives one room of 10-15 square metres. Not infrequently, this floor space is used by up to 10 people--parents and adult children with their own families. Due to this overcrowding the UN is giving particular attention to medical treatment, prophylaxis, to combat possible outbreaks of infectious diseases. Naturally, as before, a very serious problem is that of providing the necessary education for the refugee children. This aspect of refugee life is a responsibility of UNESCO, which, working in close contact with the authorities of the Arab countries that harbour the refugees, is drawing up primary education programmes. However, both the educational, and the social services for the refugees are inadequate.

Furthermore, measures are being taken to integrate the refugees in the recipient countries and to find them employment. For this purpose a special fund has been set up.

A serious obstacle to the implementation of plans to aid the refugees in finding jobs, provide them with vocational training and grant them modest subsidies to open small enterprises, to build houses in urban and rural areas where there is a demand for their labour, and to develop agricultural production, etc., is the Palestinians' own reluctance to join in such schemes. They fear that agreement to accept jobs in their adoptive country will be taken as a refusal to go back home and the renunciation of the right to compensation for losses sustained. Considering the surplus of unskilled labour characteristic of Arab countries, these senti-

ments on the part of the refugees have been heightened by the guarded attitude shown towards them by the adoptive countries' indigenous population, which in a number of cases also suffers from unemployment.

The Gaza Strip, which long remained under Egyptian administration, is not an exception to this rule. Having created in Gaza a Palestine Government led by Ahmed Hilmi and the Palestine National Council led by al-Hadj Amin al-Husseini in October 1948, the Egyptian leaders, through the offices of the League of Arab States, intended, as far back as the reign of King Farouk, to make Gaza into a bridge-head of Egyptian influence on the Palestinians. During the tripartite aggression of 1956 the Israelis did all in their power to wrest Gaza from Egypt, maximally disrupting the former's economic ties with other areas of the Arab world. However, these attempts were and remain abortive.

On March 10, 1962, under a special decree of the president of Egypt (then the United Arab Republic) an interim constitution was proclaimed for the Gaza Strip as an organic part of Palestine. It said that "in the Gaza Strip the Palestinians form a national unity which brings together the Palestinians wherever they stay. Its supreme aim is to integrate the efforts for the restoration of the land wrested from Palestinians and take part in the mission of Arab nationalism".³⁶ During the lifetime of Gamal Abdel Nasser the Egyptian leaders repeatedly emphasised in their official statements that Gaza was a prototype of the future Palestine and had preserved a purely Palestinian tenor of life, including in its everyday life, and had even retained the Palestinian flag.

In 1948 Jordan virtually adopted a half of the Palestinian refugees--more than one-third of its own population. These refugees are regarded as subjects of the Jordanian kingdom, have equal responsibilities with the Jordanians and enjoy the same political rights. After 1948 a number of decrees were published which govern the Palestinians' position in Jordan. Among them are Decree No. 11 of 1949, which gives Palestinians the right to receive Jordanian pass-

ports, the Citizenship Law of 1948 and Supplementary Ordinance No. 56 of 1949, which, in particular, said: "All habitual residents on the date of promulgation of this Ordinance in Transjordan or on the West Bank which is administered by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, who hold Palestinian nationality, are considered to have acquired Jordanian nationality and thus enjoy all the rights of Jordanians and bear all the duties required from them as such."³⁷

In Lebanon the Palestinian refugees do not enjoy any political rights and are not citizens of that country. They pay all taxes established by Lebanese legislation except municipal taxes on dwelling houses. Those of them who are engaged in business (trade, industry, agriculture) must have special "work permits" issued by the Lebanese Ministry of the National Economy. All Palestinian refugees in Lebanon must have identity cards. Otherwise their stay is regarded as illegal and they can be expelled from the country. As a rule, the Lebanese authorities do not accept new refugees.

At the beginning of 1949 an Institute of Arab Palestinian Refugees was set up in Syria, which studied problems connected with their settlement and employment. Until May 1, 1967 the Palestinians in Syria were not subject to conscription. As a rule, they cannot receive Syrian citizenship although they enjoy civil rights on an equal footing with the local citizens. Travel outside Syria is fairly difficult for them.

A considerable number of Palestinian refugees have settled in Kuwait. At present that country, with a population exceeding a million, shelters almost 200,000 Palestinians. In terms of social composition the Kuwaiti Palestinians are divided into three groups: representatives of the Palestinian bourgeoisie closely connected with business and the country's economy; Palestinian intellectuals--doctors, legal experts, teachers; and, finally, workers, engineers, and various skilled workers. Aware that, in the specific conditions of Kuwait, the presence of a great number of Palestinian refugees is becoming a factor in internal poli-

tics, the Kuwaiti government, while giving economic aid to the Palestinian cause, is striving at the same time to bring the activity of the Palestinian organisations in its country under strict control. Thus, it is the Kuwaiti authorities, and not the PLO leaders, who determine the composition of the PLO bureau in Kuwait. The overwhelming majority of the Kuwaiti Palestinians support Al-Fatah. The activity of other Palestinian Resistance Movement organisations is obstructed and less noticeable.

It should be noted that the Palestinian refugees do not consider themselves as individuals who have broken with their past in search of a new life in a new country. In the opinion of the overwhelming majority, their plight is not the responsibility of Israel alone, but also of the international community of nations, which failed to come to their aid and must therefore maintain them until they are settled back in their homeland. One of the reports of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees said: "...there is no sign that the refugees are becoming any less embittered by their conviction that a grave injustice has been done to them."³⁸

The aforesaid makes it abundantly clear that the problem of the Palestinian refugees is part of the Palestinian problem as a whole and one of the facets of a general Middle East settlement. The solution of the refugee problem by the creation of a Palestinian state in some concrete form can and must remove one of the most acute problems involved in such a settlement.

* * *

A consideration of the international law aspects of the Palestinian problem not only reveals many difficulties and complexities but also, and very importantly, gives a clear idea of the number of issues involved, of the many different shades and aspects, and this, in its turn, clearly shows that it is inadmissible and incorrect, both politically and morally, to reduce the essence of the entire Palestinian problem to the question of the destiny of the refugees.

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ISRAEL'S POLICY ON OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

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As a result of the aggression of 1967 Israel occupied Palestinian lands--the West Bank of the Jordan River, including the eastern (Arab) part of Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. A ruthless occupation regime was established on these territories. In the first months, Israel's military administration, which took full control over the occupied territories directed its main efforts at "pacifying" the Arab population, at suppressing the discontent and resistance to the occupation regime, at preventing the establishment of political organisations of the Palestinian Arabs.

At the same time the Israeli government set about charting a long-term political course with a view to the military-strategic, political and economic consolidation of its positions on the occupied Arab lands. This course was based on the Zionist concept of founding Eretz Israel ("Land of Israel"), and was envisaging the expansion of its borders at the expense of the territories of the neighbouring Arab countries. The Zionist leaders consider the materialisation of this concept as the primary task of the State of Israel. The duty of the Israelis to colonise Eretz Israel, as stated former Vice Prime Minister of Israel, General Ytgal Allon, soon after the 1967 war, is no less important than was the duty on colonising the Jordan Valley and Beisan Valley in the days of the Mandate. He who doubts this truth, doubts the Zionist concept as a whole.¹

The Colonialist Policy Before the Likud Bloc Came to Power

The tactical differences that existed between the leaders of the main Zionist parties and trends were not over the question of continuing or discontinuing the Israeli occupation and colonisation of the occupied Arab lands but over what methods and forms should be used to that end. For instance, former Minister of Defense, General Moshe Dayan, urged "total colonisation" after 1967, i.e., permanent military presence of the Israeli Army in the Jordan Valley, the Gaza Strip (and also on the Syrian Golan Heights and in the Egyptian Sharm el-Sheikh), active colonisation by Jews of all the occupied Arab lands.² The group led by former Prime Minister Golda Meir and Minister of Finance Pinhas Sapir came out for partial annexation of the Arab lands, as, according to them, the inclusion in the structure of the Israeli state of all the occupied territories could undermine the "purity" of the Jewish nature of Israel.

Also widely known is the plan advanced by Ytgal Allon as a "solution of the Palestinian problem", which was taken as a basis for the so-called "territorial compromise", to which the Israel Labour Party inclined in 1967-1977. The main idea of that plan was to split and "divide" the West Bank and the Gaza Strip between Israel and Jordan. This would give Israel the areas important from the military-strategic point of view, whereas the remaining parts of the territory, most densely populated by the Arabs, would be "returned" to Jordan. The Allon Plan also secured Israel a "safety belt" along the Jordan River, from 15 to 25 km wide, and the proclamation of Israel's sovereignty over Jerusalem.³

Despite a slight difference in the above-mentioned plans of the Labour Party, their outright colonialist and annexationist essence is obvious. These plans left no room for an independent Palestinian state.

One of the first steps on the way to seizing the occupied territories was the direct annexation by Israel of the Arab part of Jerusalem under the law, unilaterally adopted by the Knesset on June 28, 1967, placing Eastern Jerusalem

under the jurisdiction of the Israeli state.⁴ The UN did not recognise the occupation and the changes arbitrarily introduced by Israel into the juridical status of Jerusalem.

The establishment of Israeli colonial settlements on the occupied territories occupied a most important place, within the framework of the policy of colonisation. Moshe Dayan, the then Minister of Defense, declared that he did not think that from the point of view of security the settlements on these lands were of any specific importance and that he viewed them as a most important and weighty factor, proceeding from the assumption that Israel would not leave the sites on which its settlements or military fortifications were built.⁵

According to the Jewish Agency, 76 Jewish colonial settlements with a population of more than six thousand people were built on the occupied territories between 1967 and 1977; in particular, 28 settlements were founded in the West Bank (mainly in the Jordan Valley and around Hebron) and 25 settlements on the Golan Heights. At the first stage many of these settlements were founded as militarised agricultural NAHAL settlements. The settlers, who were soldiers, built the necessary constructions, after which colonies of civilian settlers were organised on these territories (kibbutzim, cooperative villages or urban centres).⁶

New Jewish settlements on the occupied territories are formed on a racist basis. Israel Shahak, Chairman of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, notes that despite the fact that the settlements are considered Israeli, in effect, they are Jewish. Not a single Israeli citizen who is not a Jew has the right to live in these settlements and, on the contrary, a Jew, irrespective of where he was born (even if he is an immigrant) may settle there.⁷ The expropriation of land for Jewish settlements was carried out by the Israeli authorities despite the protests voiced by the Arab population and the world public and in violation of the UN decisions and provisions of the IV Geneva Convention.

The economic integration of the settlements with Israel's economy was carried out parallel with their constructi-

on on occupied territories. Its most characteristic features were the exploitation of cheap manpower directly at Israeli enterprises and on the farms and indirectly at the enterprises on the occupied territories; the re-orientation of agriculture, the main branch of the economy on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, to the production of raw materials necessary for Israel's industry; the establishment of Israel's domination on the markets of the occupied territories.

The Israeli authorities widely used the policy of "open bridges" for getting their goods into the Arab countries. In keeping with this policy they allowed the transportation of goods and people across the bridges on the Jordan River from the West Bank to the East Bank, i.e., to Jordan. According to official statistics, in 1974-1976 alone the total sum of imports of the West Bank increased from 199.5 mln dollars to 248 million, 89 per cent of which were made up of Israeli goods.⁸ During the same years the imports of the Gaza Strip increased from 138.4 mln dollars to 186.9 million.⁹ By 1977, West Bank imports from Israel accounted for 90 per cent of the total imports of that area, for 82 per cent of Israel's industrial and 18 per cent of its agricultural produce. In 1977 exports to Israel accounted for 62 per cent of the total exports of the West Bank.¹⁰ In effect, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip with a population of more than one million people were turned into a "monopolised" market for Israel's industrial goods and a source of agricultural supplies to Israel.

The Israeli occupation and the policy of "economic integration" became an insurmountable barrier in the path of industrialisation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The infrastructure of industry in these areas remained, in the main, unchanged: small workshops employing less than ten (90 per cent) or less than five (66 per cent) workers processed agricultural produce using intensive labour.¹¹ The occupation authorities allowed and stimulated the development of only those production facilities whose produce did not compete, but, on the contrary, complemented the produce of

Israel's industry, for instance, the production of certain types of construction materials, textiles and clothes, and furniture, and the production of non-metallic minerals.

After June 1967, meeting the requirements of Israeli employers, who were short of cheap manpower, the occupation authorities began to employ the Arabs from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in different sectors of the Israeli economy.

As statistics show, the total number of Arab workers from the occupied territories employed in Israel increased from 5,000 in 1968 to 68,700 in 1974. In 1975-1977 they accounted for about 35 per cent of all workers hired annually from these territories. They were used mainly in building, agriculture, in roadwork and in the urban service sphere, in other words, where non-skilled labour was needed. For equal amount of work, the Arab workers from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip get, on the average, half as much as the Jewish workers get.¹² This difference in payments enables the Israeli employers to increase their profits many times over.¹³

The course of Israeli government, aimed at consolidating its military-political positions on the occupied territories and "economic development" of these areas was accompanied by the further expulsion and oppression of the Arab Palestinians.¹⁴ According to the UN data, during and after the June aggression of 1967, 400,000 Palestinians were compelled to leave their homes or refugee camps in the West Bank of the Jordan River and in the Gaza Strip.¹⁵ Despite the Resolution of the UN General Assembly, the Israeli authorities stubbornly prevented the return of the Palestinians to their homeland. The Palestinian students who formerly lived on the occupied territories and had left the country for training before 1967, were also not allowed to rejoin their families.

The following Israeli statistics bear eloquent testimony to the purposeful policy of expelling the indigenous Arab population from the occupied territories and at preventing its growth: in September 1967 the population of the

West Bank totalled 566,000 people and that of the Gaza Strip, 389,000. By the end of 1976 these figures were, respectively, 671,000 and 429,000 people. However, taking into account the natural growth rate, the population of the West Bank should have reached by that time 743,000 people and 494,000 in the Gaza Strip.¹⁶

The purposeful policy of expulsion and political suppression of the indigenous Arab population, pursued by Israel's military administration, reflects the specific feature of Zionist colonialism. Such a policy, needless to say, has nothing in common with the "security" of Israel or "the protection of law and order" of which Israeli official circles try to convince world public opinion.

The real goal of Israel has always been to prevent at all costs the self-determination of the Arab people of Palestine and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. To achieve this goal the Israeli authorities not only resorted to repressive measures against the Palestinians, but repeatedly attempted to attract to their side certain groups of collaborationists so as with their help to set up puppet Palestinian representation and to oppose it to the PLO, the only lawful representative of the Palestinians.

A case in point is the Peres-Allon Plan on the "self-government" of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, proposed in 1975, or the project for so-called self-government of the towns of the West Bank. According to this project, the "Arab civilian administration" was to be formed of mayors of the occupied towns and of Arab officials in the service of the Israeli authorities, attached to Israel's military administration. Later it was planned to create on its basis an official organ of "Palestinian self-government" as the "lawful" representative of the Palestinians, and as the antipode to the PLO.

However, it proved anything but simple for Israel's occupation authorities to achieve this. Despite all the measures taken by them, 75 per cent of all the members of the municipal councils elected on April 12, 1976 were those who supported the PLO and opposed the occupation regime.

The Israeli government's positive unwillingness to recognise the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination and the establishment of their own independent state, met with disapproval throughout the world, led to the further isolation of Israel in the international arena, and had a destabilising influence on the domestic political situation.

The Occupation Policy of the First Government of the Likud Bloc

The advent to power in May 1977 of the ultra-nationalistic Likud bloc and the formation of a new government, headed by the leader of the Herut party Menachem Begin, resulted in a shift to the right in the whole political system. This affected all aspects of public and political life in the country as well as the policy of Israel's government in respect to the occupied Arab territories. Its political course acquired an even more aggressive and extremist nature. Two main, mutually connected tendencies surfaced already during the first months of Begin's government: one towards the complete annexation of the Palestinian lands, the other towards the "elimination" of the Palestinian problem.

Begin's government immediately stated that the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, to say nothing of Eastern Jerusalem, are not occupied, but "liberated" territories, which allegedly had always belonged to Eretz Israel.¹⁷

The hard-line policy pursued by the Begin government on the Palestinian issue was, to a great extent, conditioned by the capitulatory stand taken by the Egyptian President Anwar Sadat who, under the pressure exerted by the USA, entered into direct talks with Israel and concluded a so-called "peace agreement" with it on May 26, 1979, which led to the withdrawal of Egypt from the Arab front of the struggle against Israeli aggression, and to the deepening of the split in the Arab world.

One of the concrete manifestations of this course was the stepping up of the activities of the ruling Zionist leadership in Israel on expanding the old and building new

Israeli settlements in the West Bank, in the Gaza Strip, and around Jerusalem. From 1977 to 1978, i.e., in under two years of the new government, 28 new settlements were set up in the West Bank, three in the Gaza Strip, and five on the Syrian Golan Heights.¹⁸ The total number of Israeli settlements on the occupied territories by the beginning of the 1980s exceeded 100.¹⁹

The extreme right-wing religious organisations of Israel, in particular Gush Emunim (Alliance of Believers) take an active part in expanding the network of the Israeli settlements on the occupied Arab lands. The Likud bloc government has openly approved their provocative activities. The area of the land expropriated by the Israeli occupation authorities from the Arab population of the West Bank for Jewish settlements reached 30 per cent of the cultivated land of this territory by the 1980s.²⁰

Parallel with the implementation of the complex of socio-economic measures on the further "integration" of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip with Israel and the construction of new settlements on these territories, the Begin government put forward, on December 28, 1977, proposals of a political nature, the so-called plan of administrative autonomy for the residents of these territories. Later the principles of this plan became part and parcel of the Camp David accords.

The plan of "administrative autonomy" provided for the establishment of an Arab Administrative Council of eleven members in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. The Council would be responsible for education, religion, transport, health services and other functions of the local administration, but the Israeli authorities would be responsible for the maintenance of public order and security in these areas. It was specially emphasised that Israel insisted on its rights in respect to its "sovereignty" over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.²¹

The amendments, introduced by the government into the initial draft of plan during the separate talks with Sadat, emphasised that the autonomy in the West Bank and in the

Gaza Strip, introduced for a five-year "transitional period", would be applicable to the local population alone and not to the territory and that the presence of Israeli troops in control of the activities of the bodies of Palestinian self-government will be preserved in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. All the state-owned and uncultivated lands will also be under "Israeli sovereignty" and the Israeli settlements and the Jewish population in the West Bank and in Gaza will be under Israeli laws. The amendments also stipulated that all water resources will come directly under Israeli control. In addition, they confirmed the right of Israel to further colonisation, in particular, to the construction of new settlements and the purchase by the Jews of private plots of land.²²

The abortive talks on "autonomy" between Israel, Egypt, and the USA began on May 25, 1979. An analysis of the "autonomy plan" and the amendments to it, introduced later, show that it fully served the expansionist interests of Israel and, at the same time, totally ignored the elementary national rights of the Arab people of Palestine.

Autonomy, reiterated Menachem Begin, does not at all mean sovereignty. If ever the Administrative Council of the autonomous area proclaims the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, it will be its first and last proclamation. The government will bring the troops in and disperse it, he stated in an interview to the newspaper Haaretz. If the Administrative Council were to proclaim itself a government, its members would immediately be put behind bars.²³

More than that Menachem Begin does not leave any shadow of doubt as to the future of the autonomous area. According to him, no Palestinian state will be founded. The task of the Israeli army is to prevent it. It is not by accident that the elected Council will be called Administrative Council--its functions will be purely administrative. Begin stressed that the plan provided for autonomy and not sovereignty, and that difference between the one and the other is enormous.²⁴

The approval by the Knesset on May 21, 1979 of the final version of the Autonomy Plan conclusively proved that the Zionist parties and groups backed the hard-line strategic course of Begin, aimed at preserving the Israeli presence on occupied Arab territories and their further colonisation. The Knesset thus approved Begin's policy aimed at the annexation by Israel of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and at the depriving the people of Palestine of the right to an independent existence.

The Struggle of the Palestinians Against the Autonomy Plan

The overwhelming majority of the Arab population in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including the Palestinian public organisations and mayors of towns, resolutely came out against the policy of Begin's government on the occupied territories, and in support of the PLO. In this situation the Israeli authorities began to encourage the nomination of new Arab leaders with the purpose of setting up centres of power, which would undermine the status of mayors and of other public figures loyal to the PLO.²⁵ From among these very few collaborationists the Israeli authorities was able, at the end of 1977 and beginning of 1978, to knock together two small groups--the Hebron Village League and the Public Centre in Nablus, which they planned to use in materialising their Autonomy Plan.²⁶

Sadat rendered active assistance to the Israeli authorities in recruiting supporters of the separate deal and the Autonomy Plan. For instance, soon after Sadat's visit to Jerusalem on November 19, 1977, the Egyptian government invited several delegations of Palestinian Arabs from among the "moderates" from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank to Cairo with the object of convincing them to approve the separate talks between Egypt and Israel and the Israeli Autonomy Plan.²⁷

Representatives of the US Embassy in Tel Aviv and of the General Consulate in Jerusalem also vigorously looked for quislings among the Palestinians. In September 1978, Jerusalem was visited by the President James Carter's per-

sonal envoy A. Atherton. The main task of his mission was to "convince" the representatives of the Arab population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to support the ideas of the Camp David accords and, in particular, the Autonomy Plan.

However, all these attempts turned out to be abortive. The collaborationists failed to gain any solid positions and influence among the Arab population on the occupied territories.

Mass protest demonstrations followed the signing of the Camp David accords in Nablus, Ramallah, Hebron, Eastern Jerusalem and in other towns of the West Bank. The National Congress of the representatives of the occupied territories opened in Jerusalem on October 1, 1978. Its participants, as well as all the organisations without exception of the Palestinian Resistance Movement, led by the PLO, unconditionally rejected the Camp David accords, the Administrative Autonomy plan and demanded that the Palestinians be granted the right to self-determination under PLO leadership. The Congress Resolution was signed by more than a hundred Arab leaders--the majority of mayors and members of municipal councils, religious, trade union and other public figures, among whom were the names of the "moderates".²⁸

The growth of mass protest actions by the Arab population against the Autonomy Plan was greatly stimulated by the firm position taken by the PLO which, from the very beginning, looked upon the Camp David deal as a conspiracy of US imperialism, Zionism, and the Sadat regime against the Arab people of Palestine and the whole Arab nation, and the Autonomy Plan as a handout, "less than a Bantustan".²⁹ The PLO was among the initiators of the summit Arab conferences in Baghdad (November 1978 and March 1979), at which it insisted on the organisation of active opposition to the separatist course steered by Sadat. In face of the strongly pronounced negative reaction of the PLO and the majority of the Arab countries to the Camp David accords, and, what is important, the opposition to these accords on the part of Jordan, even the "moderates" in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip preferred to refrain from approving the idea of granting "auto-

onomy" to these areas and to reject cooperation with the Israeli authorities.

The statements of the Arab "moderates", as well as numerous demonstrations, strikes and meetings condemning the Autonomy Plan confirmed the mounting opposition of the Arab population on the occupied territories to the attempts of the Israeli authorities to implement this plan. In the long run, the opposition of the Palestinians to the Autonomy Plan promoted the growth of the prestige of the PLO and resulted in a massive protest movement against the Israeli colonial regime on the occupied territories—for the termination of the Israeli occupation and the establishment of a national Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Even the Israeli and Western correspondents noted the unprecedented scope of this movement. For instance, the Israeli correspondent A. Kapelouk wrote that never since the Six-Day War was there such unanimity between the different currents of public opinion in West Jordan and the Gaza Strip. Rallies in which thousands of people participated (unprecedented since 1967) were held in Eastern Jerusalem, Nablus, Bithluem, at the Bir-Zeit University and in the Gaza Strip, which condemned the Administrative Autonomy Plan. All mayors and notables of the occupied territories unanimously rejected the plan and insisted on the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, the goal proclaimed by the PLO.³⁰

Parallel with the Israeli-Egyptian-American talks on "autonomy", held behind the backs of the Palestinian people, the Israeli authorities continued their attempts to undermine the influence of the PLO by repressions and violence. An example of this was the arrest by the Israeli authorities of Bassam Chakaa, Mayor of Nablus, on November 10, 1979 and their intention to deport him from the West Bank on the charge of sympathising with the actions of the Palestinian guerrillas and the PLO. This act of violence aroused the indignation of the population of the West Bank. In protest against the arrest of Bassam Chakaa, the local population declared a general strike and the mayors of all the towns of

that area sent in their resignations; under the pressure of this protest the Israeli authorities were forced to cancel their decision.

The correctness of the assessment, made by the Israeli Communists in the documents of the 17th and 18th Congresses of the Communist Party of Israel to the effect that, "Slogans, like 'encouragement of the Palestinian entity', or 'granting the right of self-determination to the Palestine Arab people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip', when they are put out as long as the Israeli occupation continues, are but deceptive slogans on the part of those circles which are putting them out. There is no and cannot be self-determination of the Palestine Arab people under Israeli military occupation".³¹

The Situation on Occupied Territories on the Eve and After the Aggression Against Lebanon in 1982

The Likud bloc remained in power after the elections to the Knesset, held in June 1981. In the new Begin government, the post of Defense Minister, to whom Israel's occupation authorities were directly subordinated, was given to General Ariel Sharon, a notorious extremist. In an atmosphere of an insurmountable deadlock at the tripartite talks on "autonomy", Sharon in the autumn of 1981 tried to foist something like autonomy on a unilateral basis, on the population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, by establishing a so-called Israeli Civil Administration in the occupied areas, which would rely on cooperation with the Arab collaborationists. Professor M. Milson, Colonel in reserve, one of the architects of this scheme, became head of the Civil Administration of the West Bank in October 1981 (he took office on November 1). The scheme became known as the Sharon-Milson Plan.

The political goal of this plan was to silence the institutions expressing the national aspirations of the Palestinian Arabs, especially the city mayors and universities which provide mass support to the PLO on the occupied territories.³²

According to the theory as outlined by Milson in the Commentary magazine at the beginning of 1981, his purpose was to undermine the influence of the PLO and allow the "moderates" to come forward.³³

The magazine Jeune Afrique pointed out that recognition by the Palestinians of the civil administration would have meant acceptance of the fact that the occupation is no longer of an emergency and, hence, of a transitory character, but is permanent, that is, is to some extent legitimate.³⁴ However, the Israeli authorities failed to win over to their side the existing influential Palestinian forces in the West Bank (mayors, political and professional organisations), to "produce an alternative leadership able to supply the Israeli government with the camouflage necessary to foster an image of Palestinians' cooperation with the Likud's autonomy plan".³⁵ Milson admitted his failure and resigned in the autumn of 1982.

The Begin-Sharon government on the threshold of the Lebanese war tried to achieve two political goals on the occupied Palestinian territories: to undermine the positions of the organisations supporting the PLO by widely using repressive measures and, on the other hand, to accelerate the creation of a quisling base of its influence in the Village Leagues, by extending their powers.

The set of repressive measures, used by Israel's military administration on the occupied territories included collective punishments, removal of the elected Arab mayors of towns, the dispersal of the municipalities, the closing down of universities and schools, mass arrests, torture of prisoners, the shooting down of the demonstrations of the Palestinians, protection of the cut-throats from the fascist Gush Emunim and Rabbi Meir Kahane gangs.³⁶ After the municipalities of the West Bank refused to get into contact with the representatives of the Israeli Civil Administration in the first half of 1982 the mayors were removed and the municipalities of Nablus, Ramallah, El-Bira, and Anabita were dispersed. This triggered widespread protests and an extremely tense situation in the West Bank. March and April

1982 witnessed "the eruption of demonstrations and riots in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip to an extent unprecedented in fifteen years of Israeli occupation".³⁷ Israeli troops opened fire on the demonstrators, killing, according to different sources, from 15 to 30 people and wounding several hundreds of Palestinian Arabs.³⁸

General Sharon continued reprisals. The steering political organ of the Palestinian Arabs, the National Guidance Committee, was disbanded and its leader Ibrahim Dakkak, Chairman of the Engineer's Union, was placed under house arrest, as well as the Chairman of the Advocate's Union Jiryis Choury, the head of the Working Committee of the electrical company in Eastern Jerusalem Abd Abu Diab, and other leaders of the Palestinian Arabs. Reprisals were also launched against educational establishments, in particular, against the Bir-Zeit University--the PLO citadel.

Persecutions against the leaders of the national movement of the Palestinian Arabs were carried out with unprecedented brutality as the Zionist leaders of Israel were bent on the annexation of the West Bank, including Eastern Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip. The strength of the Israeli military contingent on the occupied territories was increased, the process of economic integration was stepped up (more than 80,000 Palestinians, i.e., half the hired labour force in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were forced to work in Israel for low wages),³⁹ ever new orders of the military occupation authorities were issued (by the beginning of 1983 there were more than 950) which changed the Jordanian legislation in force on the occupied territories since 1967.

The Village Leagues, formed by the Israeli political intelligence many years ago, dragged out a miserable existence, and were ostracised by the majority of the Palestinians. However, as a result of the blow struck the patriotic organisations in 1981-1982, the Israeli authorities managed to draw into the Village Leagues new members from among the most politically backward sections of the rural population and to set up a number of additional organisations. This was also facilitated by the fact that the authorities had expand-

ed the scope of functions of the Village Leagues in matters concerning the everyday life of the population. The leaders of the local branches received the opportunity to influence the issuing of permits to the Palestinians for visits to Jordan and other Arab countries, for the construction of houses, for receiving money remittances from abroad at the banks, as, according to the new order of the occupation authorities, money remittances of over 1,000 Jordanian dinars is automatically arrested by Israeli banks. Organisations of the Village League even received arms from the Israelis. Although the influence of the Village Leagues somewhat increased, their final destiny, as well as that of the Sharon-Milson Plan was pre-determined in the spring of 1982 when the Jordanian government announced that support of the Village Leagues by the Palestinians (who in their overwhelming majority have Jordanian citizenship) will be punished by the death penalty.

One of the main purposes which the Israeli leaders pursued in launching an aggression against Lebanon in June 1982 was to liquidate the military formations of the Palestinians, to destroy the civil infrastructure and camps of refugees in Lebanon, to undermine the faith of the Palestinians in the success of their just cause, to make the Palestinians of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip embark upon the path of conciliation and capitulation.⁴⁰ The Begin-Sharon government planned that the aggression in Lebanon and defeat of the PLO will result in a radical change in the political situation in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, and will make it possible to foist "autonomy", to prepare the ground for the annexation of these territories. Hussein, King of Jordan, stated in an interview to Soviet journalists that the Lebanese war was an operation preparing the annexation of all the Palestinian lands by Israel.⁴¹

But even American observers already at the first stage of the Lebanese war came to the conclusion that Israel was miscalculating in assuming that a blow against the PLO in Lebanon will make the Palestinians of the West Bank betray the PLO in favour of a more moderate course.⁴² Two weeks

after the beginning of the war in Lebanon, on June 20, twenty-four leaders of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip published a communique in the newspapers of Eastern Jerusalem in which they condemned the war in Lebanon and stated that the PLO would remain the only and lawful representative of the Palestinians.⁴³

The Lebanese venture was to have breathed new life into the so-called Sharon-Shamir Plan, outlined in a booklet published by the Israeli Ministry for Foreign Affairs in the Spring of 1982, under the title Jordan Is Palestine.⁴⁴ This plan envisaged the resettlement of the Palestinians in Jordan and the establishment of a Palestinian state there, and was based on the fact that already in 1982, the Palestinians constitute 60 per cent of the population in the East Bank (Jordan). The aggression in Lebanon is a qualitatively new step in the policy of the Zionist leadership of Israel towards preparing the annexation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, marked by the attempt to physically destroy the Palestinians with the help of the armed forces of the Israeli state, which was characterised as genocide by the world public.

After the ceasefire in Lebanon, the Israeli government, basing itself on the Camp David accords, a document on strategic "mutual understanding" with the USA in 1981, and also on the military, economic and political assistance rendered by the Reagan administration on a mounting scale, continued and even intensified measures on colonising occupied Palestine and on suppressing the resistance of the indigenous population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In the summer of 1982 the mayors of Jenin and Gaza were dismissed and six municipalities were dispersed. Furthermore the financial standing of all the municipalities was undermined and all the channels of financial assistance from abroad were closed since June 1982. It should be mentioned that in 1981 the bodies of local government had received 71 million dollars in financial assistance from the Arab states.⁴⁵ Terrorism was stepped up against the population in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, to which it is responding with demonstrations, rallies and strikes.

In an attempt to turn the occupation into an irreversible process, the Israeli authorities see as their main task in the West Bank to develop as rapidly as possible a dense network of Jewish settlements. The question of settlements has become the central one in solving the problem of Palestine. During the election campaign in 1981, Begin stated that it was necessary to set up another 10 settlements for completing this process, but since then 70 new settlements have been built.⁴⁶ At present there are 107 Jewish settlements in the West Bank.⁴⁷ The Israeli government and the World Zionist Organisation plan to set up another 42 settlements and to increase the number of Jewish colonists by 80,000 in the next four years. Such a scope of construction will require a huge capital investment of 2.33 billion dollars.⁴⁸ These figures, taken from Israeli sources, do not include the Jewish population of 65,000-70,000 people in occupied Eastern Jerusalem.

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Groups of the Gush Emunim religious fanatics were the most active political and ideological force in the West Bank during the first government of Begin (1977-1981). Their settlements, the first of which was built in 1974, were scattered along the entire area of the West Bank, densely populated by the Arabs; there were 30 settlements with a total population of 6,000 people.⁴⁹ However, this scanty organisation, supplying "ideologically motivated" settlers has of late exhausted the limit of its manpower resources and from 1982 the ruling circles of Israel began to reorient themselves to two other groups of potential colonists: they are, first, persons attracted by the extremely low rent in the West Bank in Jewish satellite towns situated close to Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Petah Tiquva, and Benei Beraq; secondly, the Zionist leaders count on attracting the petty and middle bourgeoisie to the settlements with all modern conveniences and modern villas. The buildings and land are granted at low prices with long-term payment by instalments to the construction companies, which are subsidised by the Israeli government and from Zionist funds.

The situation in the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip is becoming more and more aggravated because of the expansionist policy of Israel which has the full backing of the US administration. As was stated by the Mayor of Nablus Bassam Chakaa, removed from his post by the Israelis, the Palestinians fear the worst, including bloody provocations, to make them "accept the unacceptable".

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HISTORY OF THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANISATION

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For hundreds and hundreds of years, Arabs and Jews lived side by side in peace in Palestine, where many things brought them together--involvement in their local economy and culture, a common Semitic origin, religious principles which, on the whole, largely coincided, and finally, long years of foreign oppression equally hateful to both peoples. So one should not believe that the Jews had some specific, special rights for residing on the soil of Palestine. But it is this thesis, and also the absolutely unscientific claim of the existence of some eternal "world-wide Jewish nation", that is the basis for the entire architecture of Zionism--a bellicose, extremely nationalist doctrine and political practice of the bourgeoisie of Jewish origin. Furthermore, the Zionist postulates which have become the official doctrine and guidance for the actions of Israeli rulers are used by them to justify the policy of annexation, aggression and threats against their Arab neighbours.

The British-Zionist alliance was finally consolidated by the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917. This well-known document, which Arab authors quite correctly regard as the cornerstone of anti-Arab imperialist policy throughout the 20th century, stated: "His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine...."¹

The establishment of a national home for the Jewish people which the British undertook to facilitate made its achievement impossible without prejudice to the Arab population of Palestine. On the contrary, the idea was to achieve the objective at the expense of the Palestinian Arabs. In other words, when the Balfour Declaration was announced, Britain was deliberately hypocritical in stating her alleged desire not to prejudice the rights of non-Jewish communities in Palestine. The similarity of the aims of British imperialism and the Zionist movement therefore was a fact. It provided the nourishment for the growth of the malicious seed of Arab-Israeli strife and enmity. "The father of Zionism", Theodore Herzl, had no qualms of conscience when he pointed out to his Jewish compatriots the road to establishing a purely Jewish state in Palestine. "Supposing, for example, we were obliged to clear a country of wild beasts, we should not set about the task in the fashion of Europeans of the fifth century. We should not take spear and lance and go out singly in pursuit of bears; we would organise a large and active hunting party, drive the animals together, and throw a melinite bomb into their midst."² This statement offers a broad programme for the Zionist colonialists as how to oust the Palestinian Arabs from their own land.

Characteristic of the plans of expansionism and of the Zionists' designs and concrete actions towards Palestine was their disregard of the hard facts of life, namely that Palestine had never been "a land without a nation". Zionists, however, were never interested in what the indigenous people of Palestine thought about their ambitious plans, nor were they interested in the rich historical legacy of that land. Uri Avnery, a prominent Israeli public figure, wrote in this connection: "Arrivals like Ben Gurion neither knew nor cared what had happened in Palestine since the last Jewish rebellion under Bar-Kochba in the first century. The victory of Islam, the Crusades, the Mongol invasion, the battles of Ibrahim Pasha and various local chieftains fighting Ottoman rule--all these, with the ruins and edifices they left behind, seemed irrelevant, even illegal interruptions in the history of Eretz-Israel, the land of Israel."³

The British-Zionist plans were most lucidly described in the resolutions of the Second Congress of the Communist International on the national and colonial issues (1920) which stated: "As a striking example of the deception upon the working class of a subject country through the combined efforts of Allied imperialism and the bourgeoisie of the given nation, we may cite the Palestine affair of the Zionists where under the pretence of creating a Jewish state of Palestine, in which the Jews form only an insignificant part of the population, Zionism has delivered the native Arabian working population to the exploitation of England."⁴

Anti-Zionist sentiment among the Arab population of Palestine increased parallel to Zionist infiltration in this British mandated territory. This led to an abundance of combustible and explosive material. Flashes of anti-British action by the Palestinian Arabs in the 1920s and 1930s, even those provoked by the British to quell the dissatisfaction with the excessive activity of the Zionists, were often founded on clearly political slogans (termination of the British mandate, curtailment of Jewish immigration to Palestine, etc.).

The lack of coordination among different Palestinian organisations in the 1920s and 1930s, lack of political unity, and weak leadership determined the ultimate failure of all the actions by the Palestinian Arabs. Furthermore, the political disorientation of the Palestinian Arabs--a direct consequence of the overall situation in the Arab world at that period--also made itself felt later on when ending the British mandate on Palestine became a question of practice.

Right before the Second World War, when it became clear that Britain was no longer capable of controlling the developments in Palestine, and particularly during the war, international Zionist organisations began working zealously on a new, more powerful and more promising master--the rulers of the United States. The Zionists' bold alliance with the USA explains in many ways the heat of anti-British actions characteristic of Zionist organisations (international and those in Palestine) between 1939 and 1947.

All the underhanded activities connected with the schemes of settling the Palestinian issue, specifically following the Second World War, took place against the background of growing chaos in Palestine, where on top of the explosive Arab-Jewish relations came the Zionists' anti-British actions. This latter factor was viewed by some Western scholars almost like a manifestation of national liberation struggle which only played in the hand of Zionists. However, as was absolutely correctly pointed out by the Soviet scholar V. La-deikin, "to Zionists this was neither an anti-imperialist nor an anti-colonial war, albeit they did clash with imperialist colonialists. This was a mutiny of colons against their guardians, the struggle for the possibility of independent colonial action on a foreign land, against the people of that land, who were equally suffering from the British colonialists and their Zionist wards".⁵

Shortly before the British mandate ended, only a small group of political figures--Arab and Jewish--in Palestine itself were working for joint action of the two main ethnic Palestinian groups, for unity between them on a truly democratic basis.

The main political parties of the Jewish part of the population of Palestine--the General Zionists, headed by the future first President of Israel Chaim Weizmann; the Jewish Workers' Party of Israel (MAPAI), the New Zionist Organisation (a semi-fascist group whose members made no bones about calling themselves fascist "Zionists")--based their activities on Zionist postulates. The establishment of a democratic Arab-Jewish state was advocated (with a varying extent of consistency) by Ha-Chomer Ha-Tzair, the Left Poale Zion (Workers of Zion), the League of Arab-Jewish Rapprochement, New MAPAI, the Socialist League, and others. It is noteworthy that shortly before the proclamation of the state of Israel, Jews who were the victims of fascist terror and who took refuge in Palestine, and whose suffering was shamelessly exploited by Zionists of all stripes, formed a group known as the Alia Hadasha (New Immigration) which was active against the reactionary policy of Zionist parties and against their rabid anti-Arab chauvinism.

Parties like the Arab Palestinian Party, the Reform Party, the National Defence Party, Istikal (Independence), the Party of Arab Youth, and the National Bloc, whose leadership was held by landed and right-wing bourgeois elements, most of whom entertained not only anti-Zionist but anti-Jewish sentiments, were eager to control and monopolise the movement of Palestinian Arabs at the end of the 1940s. This sentiment, however, was not shared by ordinary Arabs who were accustomed to living side by side with Jews and did not see them as enemies.

Some Arab political groups in Palestine successfully opposed the chauvinist concepts of the Arab bourgeois parties. Among them were the League of National Liberation (the forerunner of the Jordan Communist Party) whose influence was strong in the Palestinian Arab trade unions. The League advocated the unity of all progressive forces of the Arab and Jewish population in the struggle for an independent Palestine.

Britain's inability to come up with a mutually acceptable settlement of the Palestinian problem forced its government to address the United Nations in February 1947 with a request to consider the destiny of Palestine.

Even before the official proclamation of independence on the strength of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, the Zionists using their paramilitary units began in the late 1930s to "cleanse" the land, which was later to form the Jewish state, and not only those areas, of Arabs. In fact, immediately upon the General Assembly's adoption of Resolution 181/P,⁶ the Zionists unleashed what was essentially an undeclared war in Palestine. There were numerous "mopping up" operations against the defenceless Arab population in communities like Kvazza (December 1947), Selama (March 1948), Biyar Abbas, Kastel (April 1948), and the siege of Jaffa and Acca.

The massacre that the members of Zionist terrorist organisations of the Irgun Zwei Leumi and Stern headed by Begin carried out on the night of April 9-10, 1948 in Deir

Yassin is well known. Haganah units had in fact occupied West Jerusalem, entered West Galilee and established control over the corridor between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. These actions were strongly publicised to foment panic among the Arabs, who were already aware of the drama of Deir Yassin, and to force them flee from their homes. "Pictures of the dead were taken, numerous copies printed, and were circulated in the villages (Arab) with the caption: 'This is what awaits you if you do not get out!'"⁷

The following is just a short list of Zionist military operations against the Palestinian Arabs between April 27 and May 15, 1948, i.e., shortly before the state of Israel was proclaimed and the Palestinian war broke out, which Zionist ideologists called a "war of liberation":

--April 27. Armed Zionist units captured villages close to Jaffa, ousting 5,000 Arabs from them. On the same day Zionists occupied the environs and several blocks in Jerusalem ousting 30,000 Arabs;

--April 28. Zionists captured several villages in Galilee and evicted all the residents;

--May 3, 5 and 6. Armed Zionist units again raided Arab villages in Galilee, in the Beisan district;

--May 7. Attack on Safad. 25,000 Arabs forcibly driven from the town and environs;

--May 11. Zionists captured Jaffa, part of Tel Aviv and Beisan and environs, evicting 67,000 and 15,000 Arabs respectively;

--May 12 and 13. Zionist units carried out a "mopping up operation" in Southern Palestine, ousting 25,000 Arabs;

--May 14. As a result of the Ben-Ami operation, the Zionists captured Acca and adjacent communities and evicted 30,000 Arabs. On the same day Zionists captured several more blocks in Jerusalem ousting 15,000 Arabs.

All this refutes the allegations of Zionist and pro-Zionist propaganda that the Palestinian war of 1948-1949

broke out as a result of the attack by Arab countries on Israel after the proclamation of its independence.

What was the response of the Arab people of Palestine to all these actions? It is hard to believe that the Arab people of Palestine, who had suffered for so many years from brutal oppression had accepted that there was no possibility of officially raising the question of the exercise of their rights to self-determination and the creation of their own state.

The difficulties that the Arab people of Palestine confronted after the proclamation of the state of Israel multiplied as a result of the war begun by the Zionists in which many thousands of Palestine refugees were forced to flee from their homes under the threat of being massacred. The ousting of Palestinians continued even after the Palestinian war ended. According to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)⁸ as of the beginning of the Six-Day War (June 1967), the number of registered Palestine refugees was 1,344,576.

As a result of the Palestinian war, when many thousands of Palestinians were cast out of their homes, and when the political parties of the Palestinian Arabs had disintegrated, the decisive aspect of the sentiment of Palestinian Arabs was confusion in the face of this flagrant violation of their legitimate rights and the total inability of the Arab leaders of the late 1940s to oppose Zionist aggression, not only through a united front of Arab countries but also through a serious and realistic programme of political action. Social (not to speak of economic) backwardness was a characteristic of practically all Arab states in the 1940s.

Essentially, this backwardness was the prime cause of the Arab failure in the Palestinian war. At the same time the war heightened the political awareness of the new generation of Arabs which on the next day of the history of Arab peoples will be called upon to decide its destiny.

The direct impact of drama of the Arab defeat in the Palestinian war for the Palestinians was that once it ended,

they were left without a state or any compact national entity. Thus the problem of Palestine refugees emerged--one of the reasons for today's extremely strained Arab-Israeli relations.

The first organisations of the Palestinian Resistance Movement emerged shortly before and during the Palestinian war. These were Al-Jihad al-Mukaddas (Sacred Struggle) and Abtal al-Auda (Heroes of Return). Initially, their members resisted the Zionist terrorist groups, but subsequently, after the Palestinian war ended, their objectives changed. The first, and at that period small groups of Palestine guerrillas, the fedayeen, emerged in the early 1950s. It is then that the backbone of the Palestine organisation al-Fatah (Victory) was established.⁹

The illegal Palestine organisation Al Ard (Earth) was founded in 1958 on a section of the former territory of the Arab state captured by Israel; its objective was the settling of the Palestinian problem on the basis of the will of the Arab people of Palestine, and the protection and guarantee of their legitimate rights, including the right to self-determination.

The weakness of the Palestinian movement in its initial stage, the divisions between its individual forces and their orientation towards different Arab countries, which often had strained relations among them, resulted in a situation that by the 1960s the Palestinians had obviously overestimated these countries' possibilities of providing them with considerable moral, political and financial support. In turn, this overestimation resulted in the real, albeit temporary, dilution of the Palestinian movement in the overall struggle of Arab countries and peoples.

This narrow approach by the Palestinians in the first stage of development of the Palestinian Resistance Movement to the objectives of their struggle led to a situation when even the Arabs had initially approached the Palestinian question not as that of the future of a nation deprived by the Zionists of its legitimate national rights, but as a refugee

problem. The United Nations General Assembly Resolution No. 194/3 of December 11, 1948 viewed the Palestinian problem exactly in this context.

Developments in the Arab world had brought the question of Palestine to the forefront in the system of inter-Arab relations. This met the interests of essentially all Arab countries. Given this situation, the leaders of Palestinian organisations began to feel the necessity of independent action for the cause of Palestine. Hence the abandonment of the idea that once united, the Arab states would also tackle the liberation of Palestine. Accordingly, there emerged the necessity of an independent, organisationally formalised Palestinian national liberation movement. The struggle of the people of Palestine centered on political appeals which, while reflecting the general struggle of Arab peoples against imperialism and internal reaction, bore a purely Palestinian challenge.

The desire of some Arab statesmen for united action by the Arab countries on an anti-imperialist basis proved to be an important factor facilitating the emergence of the Palestinian movement. In this, they quite correctly acted on the premise that the Palestine factor could be the pivot in the actions of the Arab countries. Nayef Hawatmeh pointed out in this connection: "We can consider Abd al-Nasir's attempt to form the PLO in 1964 not as a move to disassociate himself from the nationalist role and commitment [Hawatmeh is alluding to the pan-Arab role of Egypt and Nasser--E.D.], but rather as the embodiment of his concept of the dialectic and dynamic marriage between the special role of the Palestinian people in their struggle against Israel and their role within the nationalist [i.e., general Arab] framework...."¹⁰

In January 1964, the first meeting of the heads of Arab states in Cairo proclaimed that the Arab people of Palestine had the right and the duty to assume responsibility for their national cause and the liberation of Palestine. Concurrently, it was decided to form the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

On May 28, 1964, the First Session of the Palestine National Council, attended by 422 delegates (242 from Jordan, 146 from Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, the Persian Gulf Emirates and the Gaza Strip) elected by the Palestinian committees and associations, met in the Jordanian sector of Jerusalem. Even if these delegates did not represent all the classes and social groups of the Palestine establishment, their geographical representation was quite impressive.

The First National Palestine Congress established the Palestine National Charter which became the Covenant of the PLO. Article 4 of the Charter stated: "All Palestinians are natural members of the PLO... and the Palestinian people are the broad base for this organisation." Article 26 of the Palestine National Charter stated: "This organisation will be responsible for the movement of the Palestinian people in their possible for the movement of the Palestinian people in their struggle to liberate their country, in all fields of liberation--political, organisational, and financial--and in whatever the Palestinian cause requires on the Arab and international levels."¹¹

The First Congress also determined the PLO organisational structure. The legislative, i.e., the supreme, authority of the PLO is the Palestine National Council (PNC). Its members are elected for a term of three years. Exercise of the PNC decisions is entrusted to the Executive Committee of the PLO.

The "residual phenomena" related to the Palestinians' faith in the importance of a united effort by Arab leaders for the sake of the Palestinian cause made themselves felt already at the First Session of the Palestine National Council. This was seen in the creation of an "honorary executive committee" of the PLO consisting of the heads of all the then existing Arab states. Sabri Jiryis, the well-known expert on Palestine, evaluated the essence of the PLO as the general organisational framework within which all Palestinian organisations--combat detachments, trade unions, and prominent professional unions of national figures--meet to work for the achievement of Palestinian national goals.¹²

Among the important results of the congress were its decisions to establish information and propaganda organs of the PLO, as well as the Palestine National Fund. It was agreed that the PLO finances would be derived from a tax levied upon each Palestinian at the rate of 5 per cent of his or her income, allocations from the Arab League, and private donations. Considerable hopes were also placed on the assistance of individual Arab countries, primarily the oil-producing countries.

Official recognition of the PLO by the Arab states took place in September 1964 when the meeting of the Arab heads of state in Alexandria welcomed in a special statement the establishment of PLO as the basis of a Palestinian entity. The first Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee Ahmad Shukairy participated in the work of the Arab League. Palestinian representation in the Arab League was in many ways purely symbolic until 1964, since prior to the establishment of the PLO some Arab leaders tended to regard the Palestinians not as a historical ethnic entity, but a mass of dispersed groups of refugees.

The establishment of the PLO and official recognition of it by the Arab states attested to the onset of a period when the purely Palestinian dimensions of the general Arab struggle unavoidably began to influence this struggle as a whole, when the idea of the necessity of establishing a broad anti-imperialist front as the principal condition of the success of this struggle was put on a practical level.

In September 1964, formation of units of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) began concurrently in Egypt, Syria and Iraq. The Army was formed of Palestinians residing in those countries. The formation of the Palestine Liberation Army was important evidence of the gradual strengthening of the Palestinian Resistance Movement (PRM) as a whole, and of the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the immediate leader of the PLA, and as the full-fledged representative of the Arab people of Palestine.

With the establishment of the Palestine Liberation Organisation in 1964, the Palestinian Resistance Movement entered a qualitatively new stage of development and practice, which can be characterised by four basic aspects: the tendency for the unity within the PRM which began to prevail notwithstanding the daily objective and subjective obstacles; the painful development by the Palestinians of their own political concepts and the taking of several steps towards the settlement of the Palestine question in the framework of political and other efforts to normalise the situation in the Middle East, the nature of these concepts becoming ever more constructive and realistic; the desire of the leaders of most Arab countries to draw the Palestinian movement to their side and thus gain definite political advantages and enhance their own prestige; the gradual but steady increase in the role and importance of the Palestinian factor not only as a decisive aspect of the overall Middle East settlement, but as a revolutionising and radicalising element in the entire Arab national liberation movement.

The importance of this new stage for the Palestinian movement is emphasised by the fact that in the 1950s the young generation of Palestinians, i.e., the generation which today determines the image of the Palestinian movement, being without any clearcut political bearings in the framework of struggle for directly Palestinian objectives, proceeded, as was mentioned earlier, from the necessity of the broad unity of the Arab countries as the only possible method of ensuring the success of the Palestinian cause. Since the Palestinians are scattered throughout the Arab world, this facilitated the situation in which many of them, specifically representatives of the new generation, actively collaborated with parties and groups running the gamut of the political spectrum: with the Muslim Brotherhood, with the People's Party of Syria, with the Baath Party. Some Palestinians residing in Jordan cooperated with the Hashemite regime.

The party known as the Movement of Arab Nationalists emerged initially in Lebanon and then in other Arab countries

precisely during that period. Its primary political objective was struggle for the liberation of Palestine, thanks to which the party acquired an inter-Arab character. The relative independence of the Movement of Arab Nationalists from traditional Arab political parties and tendencies, and its overall radical programme on inter-Arab policy made this party quite popular rather quickly. Some of the party's programmatic theses (even after its breakup) were incorporated in the programmes of Palestinian organisations like the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine; this provides grounds to believe that the Movement of Arab Nationalists was a political precursor of these organisations. When the Palestinian Resistance Movement entered its new stage, the future core of Palestinian leaders emerging at the time had to largely revise some of the traditional stereotypes and ideas regarding the ways of settling the Palestine problem.

The first successful armed operation against the occupation forces of Israel took place on January 1, 1965. It was carried out by the military organisation of Al-Fatah--Al-Asyfa (Storm). Therefore January 1, 1965 is considered the birthday of the Palestinian Resistance Movement in its present form, although there had been acts of armed resistance against Israeli occupation during the Palestinian war and afterwards. January 1, 1965 may be regarded as the beginning of active anti-Israeli armed actions by the Palestinian people.

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Following the establishment of the PLO, the Executive Committee was headed by Ahmad Shukairy. It first included 15 people. The slogans which "were most readily" suggested by Shukairy ("driving the Jews into the sea", etc.) were clearly demagogic and totally detrimental to the Palestinian cause, since they provided the Israeli leadership the ammunition to speak about the "unwillingness" of the Arabs to live with Israel, and gave it an escape route from assum-

ing even the least responsibilities in relation to the Palestine issue. Shukairy's slogans were not followed up by anything, but they excited the politically immature Palestinians, giving them the wrong idea that terrorism was the only correct and effective way of influencing Israel, not to mention the fact that such slogans in general excluded political methods of struggle from the range of actions of Palestinians. Besides, Shukairy's intolerance of any other opinion, and his dependence on Cairo impelled many prominent Palestinian leaders to seek greater independence and freedom of action.

The differences within the PLO leadership caused by the "autocratic" ambitions and actions of Shukairy became particularly clear towards the end of 1966. His actions were directly opposed by the leader of the PLO Bureau in Beirut, Shawfik al-Hout, and the commander of the Palestine Liberation Army, General Wadjih al-Madani--both were once active members of the Abtal al-Auda (Heroes of Return). In reply, Shukairy personally dissolved the PLO Executive Committee and established a Revolutionary Council.

It became clear from the Lebanese press by mid-1967 that many Palestinian leaders were insisting on collective leadership in the PLO. Shukairy had to back down and reinstate the Executive Committee as it was formerly composed with the addition of the commander of the Palestine Liberation Army. In May 1967, Shukairy tried to send al-Hout as the PLO representative to Delhi, but al-Hout balked and accused Shukairy of wanting to make short work with his opponents in the PLO leadership. Al-Hout's position was supported by many prominent Palestinian leaders, and in December 1967 Shukairy was forced to offer his resignation. This was facilitated primarily by the circumstance that Shukairy's adventurist slogans proved to be impracticable, while his political concepts were completely divorced from the Middle East realities given the situation after the Arab-Israeli war of 1967. General criticism of Shukairy as PLO leader objectively meant that the extremist illusions and

non-realistic concepts of how to settle the Palestinian question had practically exhausted themselves.

The military and political failure of Egypt, Syria and Jordan in the Six-Day War of 1967 accelerated the development and establishment of Palestinian national consciousness independent of ideological and other forms of influence from Arab states. At the same time, the Israeli aggression of 1967 resulted in new trials for the much-suffering people of Palestine. The number of Palestinian refugees increased by practically half a million.

The 1967 war created in many ways a new situation in the context of the Palestine issue. As a result of the war, Israel occupied the entire territory of the former mandated Palestine, and Egyptian Sinai and the Syrian Golan Heights. Military actions against Israel (something that, essentially speaking, many Arab regimes had refrained from) were now viewed as the only possible way of restoring Arab rights and achieving the return of the territories captured by Israel.

Given this situation, many Arab leaders saw guerrilla war against Israel as something real and a possible alternative to broad military action by Arab armies against Israel for which they were not prepared owing to understandable reasons.

The noticeable increase in the authority of the Palestinian Resistance Movement and its organisation among broad sections of the Arab people right after the Israeli aggression of 1967 is explained in many ways by the fact that the Arab people at that time were painfully experiencing the aftermath of defeat, and when the West for the first time suggested falsely that the key to peace in the Middle East was practically in the pocket of the United States--at that complex and contradictory moment in modern-day Arab history, it was the Palestine Liberation Organisation that continued and invigorated political and armed struggle against Israeli occupation. As it was correctly noted by Meir Vilner, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel, the 1967 war and occupation which sharpened the

refugee problem led to the development of a mass Palestinian movement; Palestinian organisations acquired new features: they became a mass, national, anti-imperialist movement struggling against occupation, and for the national rights of the Arab people of Palestine.

In 1970 French journalist Jean-François Chauvel wrote about the noticeable increase in the prestige of the Palestinian Resistance Movement and of its organisation after the Israeli aggression: "When they [the Palestinian guerrillas--Ed.] emerged from the ruins of the defeat in June 1967, nobody knew their names or how many they were, but Arab people immediately developed a profound attachment to them.... Those men were restoring Arab honour. They were prepared to struggle, and not only via the radio, as Ahmad Shukairy once did; they were prepared to die."¹³

The Palestinian guerrillas, said Gamal Abdel Nasser, were a part of the Arab battle and one of the most positive aspects which emerged after the defeat [the defeat of 1967--Ed.].¹⁴

Nasser's words are key to understanding not only the Palestinian struggle in its pan-Arab aspect, but also to understanding the inevitable growth of the political importance of the Palestinian factor in the framework of a Middle East settlement. Nasser realised that the Arab national liberation movement needed not just one country to lead it (which in Nasser's life-time was just Egypt) but leading political groups which would be the "shock force" of the movement. Facts, plus statements of people close to Nasser, showed that he considered the Palestinian Resistance Movement to be that "shock force".

Explaining the reasons for the growth of PLO's prestige as the leading Palestine organisation, Yasser Arafat told the 29th Session of the UN General Assembly that the PLO acquired legitimacy because in its role of a pioneer it made sacrifices, and because it was dedicated to struggle. It acquired legitimacy among the Palestinian people who felt at one with it and chose it to lead their struggle as dicta-

ted by their needs. Another reason was that it represented all groups and all alliances, just as it represents every Palestinian in the National Council and in the popular institutions. This legitimacy was given further corroboration by the support of the entire Arab nation... as a result of the fraternal support provided by the liberation movements and the friendly countries supporting us, which have inspired the Palestinian people and assisted us in our struggle for our national rights.¹⁵

By the end of 1967 and beginning of 1968, the new PLO leadership (following Shukairy's exit the PLO Executive Committee was headed by its acting Chairman Yahya Hammouda until February 1969) sought out contacts with other Palestine organisations, primarily those which led the struggle of the Palestinians on the land occupied by Israel. On the initiative of Al-Fatah, the Fourth Session of the Palestine National Council in which the leading Palestinian organisations took part met in Cairo.

During the Session the Executive Committee tendered its resignation, ultimately again accepted the leadership of the PLO since no agreement on a new composition was achieved among the Palestinian groups attending the Session. It became clear that radical measures were necessary to renovate the PLO leadership, so that it could carry out the complex and important tasks facing the Palestinian movement.

The Fourth Session of the Palestine National Council made some very important changes in the Palestine National Charter of 1964. The main clauses now read:

"Article 1: Palestine is the homeland of the Arab people of Palestine; it is an inalienable part of the Arab homeland, and the Palestinian people are an integral part of the Arab nation.

"Article 2: Palestine, within the boundaries of the British mandate, is an indivisible territorial integrity.

"Article 3: The Arab people of Palestine possess the legitimate right to their homeland and will determine its

destiny after having liberating their country in accordance with their wishes and considerations and after their own will.

"Article 6: Jews who lived in Palestine until the beginning of the Zionist invasion will be regarded as Palestinians.

"Article 9: Armed struggle is the sole path leading to the liberation of Palestine. Consequently, it is a general strategy and not a simple tactical phase.

"Article 21: Declaring their stand for an armed Palestinian revolution, the Arab people of Palestine reject any solution other than the complete liberation of Palestine and any suggestions envisaging the liquidation of the problem of Palestine or its internationalisation."¹⁶

By putting these provisions in the programme of the Palestinian Resistance Movement, the Fourth Session of the Palestine National Council reaffirmed the pan-Arab nature of the struggle waged by the Palestinian people. At the same time, the influence of revanchist sentiments and the inevitability of another Arab-Israeli war arising in the Arab world after the 1967 Israeli aggression were definitely felt in the rigidity and lack of compromise in the formulations, which essentially excluded political means from the methods of struggle of Palestinian people for their rights.

At the beginning of January 1969, the PLO Executive Committee called the Fifth Session of the Palestine National Council for the next month. The 33 Al-Fatah delegates guaranteed its impact at the Session and in extending its representation in the leading bodies of the Palestinian Resistance Movement. The newly-elected Chairman of the Executive Committee of the PLO Yasser Arafat came from Al-Fatah. Of the 12-person Executive Committee, four were members of Al-Fatah. Instead of representatives of feudal-bourgeois elements who were isolated from the Palestinian people, the PLO leadership now consisted of radical intellectuals.

Some experts on Palestine¹⁷ tend to believe that the numerical superiority of Al-Fatah delegates at the Fifth Session of the Palestine National Council was responsible for its great impact at the Session and guaranteed its leadership of the PLO. This seems to be an oversimplification. The number of Al-Fatah delegates does not tell the whole story. First, Al-Fatah, albeit not politically unified, was an organisation whose members and leaders were directly engaged in armed actions against the Israeli occupationists. Second, its political platform was quite broad, and on the whole quite realistic, making it possible to bring under its umbrella considerable numbers of Palestinians who were ideologically influenced by various Arab countries and political movements.

Al-Fatah's attitude to the Jews of Israel was outlined in its official publications which appeared towards the end of 1969 and early 1970. Al-Fatah considered not only Arabs but Jews as well to be Palestinians. Al-Fatah saw as the ultimate objective of struggle the establishment of a secular and democratic Palestine where Christians, Jews and Moslems would live without any discrimination. An indicator of Al-Fatah's growing political maturity was the understanding that the Palestinian Arabs' hatred of the Jews engendered by Zionists benefitted only for Zionists.

This was clearly formulated in Al-Fatah documents: "Progressive liberation movement should not use vengeance as its motive force nor bear the stigma of racism practised by the enemy." The internationalist character of Al-Fatah's programme is seen from the following:

"Palestinians do not hate or love Jews as such, they regard them as people of other faiths, Christians or Moslems, and judge them by their behaviour. Palestinians are fighting today to create a free, tolerant democratic homeland for 'all of us' whether Jews, Christians or Moslems.... The Palestinian revolution must assume the responsibility of drawing Jews to the cause of revolution by action, and not only by words. It must not miss any occasion to prove to the

Jews of the world and the Jews of Palestine... that it is determined to survive and together with them create a new Palestine based not on racism and discrimination, but on cooperation and tolerance."¹⁸

Essentially, Al-Fatah assumed the initiative in mobilising different Palestinian organisations. In the hope of ending their divisions, Al-Fatah leadership took concrete political action with far-reaching objectives. In June 1969, the Arab Liberation Front joined the PLO. In August, another two small Palestine organisations with some influence also joined: the Palestine Popular Struggle Front and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine--United Command of the Palestine Revolution. Early in 1970 came two more organisations--the Popular Organisation for the Liberation of Palestine and the Organisation of Action for the Liberation of Palestine.

The September 1969 Session of the Palestine National Council was marked by the desire of different Palestine groups to surmount their differences. However, the representatives of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine did not attend, but agreed to delegate their people to the United Command of the Palestine Revolution. This happened in February 1970 when the first hints of complications in relations among the Palestinians and the Jordanian leadership appeared, complications which ultimately erupted in the tragic developments in September 1970.

The PLO as a whole, and Al-Fatah as its leading organisation faced an extremely important and complex task--to transform the Palestinian unity which seemed to have been achieved into genuine political action meeting the interests of all Palestinian organisations, and harmonising with the efforts of all Arab countries for a just and lasting Middle East peace. The declaration adopted at the Seventh Session of the Palestine National Council proclaimed the reinforcement of united action by all Palestinian organisations as the priority order of the day.

The Seventh Session of the Palestine National Council was attended by representatives of all the Palestinian organisations. The Session established a Central Committee of the Palestinian Resistance Movement, which later was named the PLO Central Committee. It had 27 members including 12 members of the PLO Executive Committee, one representative from each of the ten Palestinian groups in the PLO, three "independents", and the Chairman of the Palestine National Council. That June a six-person General Secretariat of the PLO was formed which in cooperation with the PLO Central Committee, undertook to solve concrete, practical tasks involving the functioning of this organisation. Finally, the Seventh Session of the Palestine National Council appointed Yasser Arafat Commander-in-Chief of the Palestine Liberation Army, replacing Colonel W. Haddad.

PLO's desire to achieve the utmost and effective unity during that period (summer of 1970) was explained by President Nasser's agreement that July with the American proposal of "a ceasefire and freezing the situation" outlined in the so-called Rogers' plan. Most Palestinian organisations regarded the Egyptian President's accord as bearing potentially new complications for the Palestinian cause.

This assessment of Nasser's important political step was definitely not far-sighted from the point of view of the perspective of struggle of the Palestinians themselves. However, in this specific instance, the emotional factor rather than sober weighted comprehension of the measure taken by Egyptian leadership had the greater impact on the Palestinians. Another aspect of Nasser's decision was the heightening anti-Palestine sentiment among the leaders of Jordan who regarded the situation as convenient (erroneously believing that Egypt was ready to "exit from the scene") for action against the Palestinian Resistance Movement inside Jordan.

The 1970-1971 developments in Jordan are tragic pages in the history of the PRM. Mid-1970 saw noticeably increased tensions in Jordanian-Palestinian relations--a direct con-

sequence of the strengthening of the PRM and of its influence on practically all aspects of the political situation in Jordan.

Shortly after the Israeli aggression of 1967 Jordan's leaders took measures to subjugate the work of the PRM and its organisation in Jordan to their control. These measures resulted in the initial armed clashes between Palestinian units and the Jordanian army in November 1968. Almost one year later, in October 1969, having seen that it was impossible to militarily crush the Palestinian units, the leadership of Jordan provoked an anti-government conspiracy by the right-wing Moslem party At-Tahrir in which Palestinian Resistance Movement representatives were supposed to have taken part. The rumours of the conspiracy which spread throughout Amman led to active military preparations on both sides.

In response, the Palestinian leadership presented an official protest to Jordan's Prime Minister Bahjat al-Talhouni exposing the anti-Palestinian nature of the instigated conspiracy. The Jordanian government was obliged to retreat and abandon its plans for the while.

One should not close one's eyes to the fact that in 1969-1970, the Palestinians and their political organisations in Jordan were increasingly becoming a "state within a state". The Western press began writing that King Hussein was a "prisoner" of the Palestinians. Palestinian strength is being consolidated, wrote Le Figaro in 1970, "and no one can ignore the fact any longer that the Palestinians 'control' Jordan".¹⁹

An indicator of real strength of the Palestinians in Jordan came when the government cancelled the official visit to Amman by US Undersecretary of State Joseph Sisco and the general strike erupted in Amman (April 17, 1970) in protest against the visit. It was called by the leadership of the PRM, even though in February, taking advantage of Arafat's absence on a PLO delegation abroad, the Jordanian government issued an order prohibiting Palestinians from carrying arms in Amman, and from building up arms caches in commu-

nities, etc. Special clauses prohibited unauthorised meetings, rallies, or marches regardless of their political orientation.

At the same time that the Jordanian authorities took measures to restrict the activity of Palestinians in the country, Israel attacked Palestinian camps in Jordan. These acts of piracy by the Israeli army were painted as retaliation against "Palestinian terrorism". The aim was quite clear--to instigate the civilian population against the Palestinians, to make their status in Jordan more difficult, to sow discord between the Jordanian leadership and Palestinians. The former chief of Israeli military intelligence Y. Harkabi wrote that the actions of Israeli army against the Palestinians in Jordan were aimed at putting pressure on the Jordanian authorities to force them to take measures against Al-Fatah and prevent the use of Jordan as bridgeheads [by the Palestinians--E.D.].²⁰ An American paper wrote that "the political purpose was to warn Amman that it was playing a dangerous game by harbouring and supporting the saboteurs".²¹

The political situation in Jordan was gradually deteriorating. The formation of the Jordanian people's army and of the Palestine people's militia in early summer of 1970 was objective evidence of the growing polarisation within Jordan and the unavoidable approach of a tough confrontation. The Seventh Session of the Palestine National Council (Cairo, May 30-June 4, 1970) established the Supreme Military Command of Palestine Revolution, and adopted a policy of preparing the necessary military and political forces for a "battle" (with Israel). In all this, the Palestinian leadership practically ignored consideration of the political situation in countries bordering on Israel; it still proceeded from the necessity of subordinating the objectives of foreign and inter-Arab policy of each Arab country to the interests of the struggle of the Palestinian Resistance Movement. "The Palestine resistance," Yasser Arafat told the Seventh Session of the Palestine National Council, "regards all Arab territories bordering on Israel to be a legitimate field

of struggle waged by Palestine, and any attempt to close any part of Arab territory to the Palestine resistance is a betrayal of the objectives of the people of Palestine and of the Arab nation."²²

June 1970 was the height of Palestinian domination in Jordan. N. Ashhab, one of the leaders of the Jordan Communist Party, stated that in June 1970 after an attempt on the life of King Hussein--which was ascribed to Palestinians by pro-government propaganda--that in Jordan "the PRM was the real authority existing parallel to the official state machinery... However, the leadership (PRM) did not pose the question of replacing the reactionary regime by a government of patriotic forces."²³

The indecision of the Palestinian leadership at this crucial moment in the destiny of the PRM led to new aspects arising in the situation. First, the extreme left--the most radical Palestine organisations which often gravely underestimated the possible influence of the overall situation in the Arab world and in individual Arab countries on the PRM's future and activity--became far more active. Second, greater support came from the United States to King Hussein, encouraging the Jordanian leadership to take concrete measures against the PRM.

Yielding to the pressure of the extreme left, the Central Committee of the PLO on July 25, 1970 turned down the Rogers plan and called a protest march in Amman to denounce it. About 100,000 joined the march on July 31, 1970, with openly anti-American and anti-Egyptian slogans. What was politically "dubious" about these developments was the fact that the majority of the Palestinian leadership did not believe it possible during that period to enter into an alliance with the UAR, although the Egyptian leadership and Nasser remained loyal to the Palestinian cause notwithstanding their acceptance of the Rogers plan. The attempts by Arafat and his closest associates to find suitable ground for reconciliation with the UAR and similar steps by the Egyptian leadership²⁴ were unfruitful.

The Emergency Session of the PNC (August 27-28) in Amman did not support Arafat or his policy of reconciliation with Egypt, which could have, under those conditions, strengthened the Palestinian Resistance Movement and consolidated its positions. The Session censured the acceptance of the Rogers plan by Egypt, and urged "the Arab and Palestinian masses" to frustrate possible Arab-Israeli talks on a political settlement. A special decision authorized the PLO Central Committee to do everything it could to turn the entire Jordanian-Palestinian arena into a bulwark of total popular revolution.²⁵

There was a clear change of emphasis in the political priorities of the Palestinian Resistance Movement: the main target was King Hussein and his regime. His overthrow, according to the leadership of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, became a "priority task for the Palestinians, without which the liberation of Palestine from Zionism was a hopeless dream".²⁶

The King responded by declaring a state of emergency; the Rifai government resigned, and was replaced by General Daoud's military Cabinet, and Marshal Khabis Majali, known for his openly anti-Palestinian sentiment, was appointed Governor of the country. Majali's first step was to order the disarming of the Palestinian people's militia and the withdrawal of armed PRM units outside the large towns. The escalation of tensions in Jordanian-Palestinian relations at that moment was essentially irreversible: the Central Committee of the PLO demanded the resignation of the Daoud military government as an absolute condition for the normalisation of the situation, which the King, naturally, rejected. In the morning of September 17, units of the regular Jordanian army surrounded Amman, cutting it off from the northern parts of the country, where as of the summer of 1970, the Palestinians not only had established their bases but in fact total political authority. The King's army struck in two directions--northwards, against the "liberated" (to use Palestinian terminology) areas, and against Amman.

On the following day, September 18, the Arab League appealed to the belligerents for a ceasefire. A similar appeal was made by Nasser. On his request, President Nimeiri of Sudan flew to Amman at the head of a special mission of Arab heads of state, while a Jordanian government delegation led by Premier Daoud went to Cairo.

At that time the Jordanian leadership played a double game. Army units loyal to the King and headed by Majali taking advantage of their tanks and aircraft, launched an all-out campaign against Palestinian units in Amman and the northern parts of the country. At the same time, Hussein was conducting talks with Nimeiri and twice (September 23 and 25) ordered a ceasefire, which in fact was a mere formality. The Jordanian government delegation in Cairo was not received by anyone; as a result, Prime Minister Daoud--a Palestinian by origin--tendered his resignation and asked for political asylum in Libya.

The strong protest throughout the Arab world against the anti-Palestinian massacre in Jordan forced the King to make concessions: a civilian government was established led by Jordan's most venerable political figure A. Toukane; the King flew to Cairo where on September 27 he and the PLO leadership and heads of several Arab states signed the so-called Cairo agreement. In keeping with its provisions, there was to be a withdrawal of armed units (both Jordanian and Palestinian) from the area of hostilities, POWs on both sides were exchanged, and a supreme Arab committee to control the observance of armistice terms was established with Tunisian Prime Minister Ladgham at its head.

The events of autumn of 1970 in Jordan were essentially a manifestation of certain crisis phenomena in the Palestinian Resistance Movement produced by the inconsistency of the old slogans and methods of action in the new situation. The lack of united action among the various groups in the Palestinian Resistance Movement, the unfounded and extensive use of openly nationalist and religious slogans, the isolation from the people, and bad military tactic (fighting against

the King's army in unfavourable conditions) the open anarchy which frightened away the representatives of the Palestinian bourgeoisie, rejection of political ways of settling the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the lack of ability to educate the people in those parts of Jordan which were long controlled by Palestinians are the principal reasons for the great military and political failure of the Palestinian Resistance Movement in the developments of autumn 1970 - summer 1971.

An important point is that the PRM leadership at the time failed to draw the correct conclusions. The Eighth Session of the Palestine National Council which met in Cairo in the spring of 1971 stated in a resolution that the PRM's main error in the Jordanian events was its extremist slogans ("Amman--the Hanoi of the Palestinian Liberation Movement", "We are going on the offensive--Kerensky's hour has struck!", etc.). The reasons for the defeat of the Palestinian forces were not formulated with adequate clarity in the Session's decisions. For instance, the broad involvement of young people in the events was mentioned as a fact which allegedly weakened the effectiveness of the PRM's military and political actions. Having stopped criticising Nasser for accepting the Rogers plan, Palestinian leadership of the PRM wrongly stated that only his death deprived the Palestinians of the possibility of victory in their struggle against the Hussein regime. As for the decisions of the Eighth Session, mention should be made of the continued politically unrealistic demand that the state of Israel would have to be liquidated as an indispensable condition of the triumph of the Palestinian cause. "The Palestinian revolution," stated one of the resolutions, "is resolutely opposed to the idea of creating a Palestinian state on only part of the territory of Palestine, and declares that the only solution of the Palestinian problem is the total liberation of the territory of Palestine."²⁷

The events which began in September 1970 continued even after the Cairo agreement. King Hussein's army gradually eliminated the seats of Palestinian resistance throughout Jordan. Once confident in its strength, the Jordanian leader-

ship undertook in the first half of 1971 a range of anti-Palestinian political actions. That January the Wasfi Tell government issued a special decree banning raids by Palestinian guerrillas on Israel from Jordan. On July 19, the Jordanian Minister of Information made an official statement that his country did not consider itself bound by the provisions of the Cairo agreement. Three days later, when Ajlun fell, the government officially declared that all Palestinian bases in Jordan had been liquidated.

* * *

Alongside the rapprochement and unification of various Palestinian groups in the late 1960s and early 1970s there continued the elaboration, specification and even a certain radicalisation of the ideology of the Palestinians both in essence and in practice. An important factor was the growing nationalist sentiment among the Palestinians, not only those in the refugee camps, but on West Bank of the Jordan (occupied by Israel) and the Gaza Strip.

Haled al-Hasan, a prominent figure in the Palestinian Resistance Movement, noted in this connection that the Palestinians, whether as refugees scattered throughout Arab world, or if they believe themselves part of the Arab nation, were certain to be influenced by their intellectual convictions and ideological beliefs, which vary extensively from narrow nationalism to full internationalism.²⁸

A clearer statement on this question was made by N. Hawatmeh, a leader of the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, who said that the resistance movement collides against the political, ideological and class contradictions within the Palestinian nation, which finds its logical expression in the large number of resistance organisations. Objectively, this involves inter-Arab contradictions and their spread to the resistance movement.²⁹ It is evident that the inter-Arab contradictions, as noted by N. Hawatmeh, and the existing and emerging difficulties in relations between Arab countries have been greatly influencing the ideological concepts of different groups in the PRM and the movement as a whole.

The clearer awareness by Palestinians of the current and future tasks of their struggle which emerged in the wake of the Israeli aggression of 1967 was a positive development. At the same time, shortly after the Six-Day War, certain Palestinian organisations proclaimed terror and reprisals as the sole means of struggle against the Israeli aggressors. One was the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, formed in October 1967, although alongside terrorist actions, it, like Al-Fatah, organised guerrilla raids in the territory occupied by Israel. Without making any noticeable dent on Israel's military strength, some of the ill-conceived actions of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine gave the Israeli leadership the pretext it wanted for accusing the Palestinians and all Arabs of rejecting peace with Israel.

It should also be remembered that this choice showed, on the one hand, that the lack of any real perspectives for settling the Palestinian question pushed the politically unstable elements towards terrorism. On the other hand, terrorism and other extremist phenomena, although very much "encouraged" by many Arab countries in the hope that the PRM would shoulder the brunt of the anti-Israeli struggle, were on the whole not accepted by Al-Fatah and other organisations close to it. Their armed methods were traditional, i.e., for all practical purposes, they were waging the same armed struggle against the Zionist colonialists as many other peoples in Asia and Africa were waging against the Western colonialists.

The re-evaluation of past experiences, attempts to soberly assess the errors and successes of the Palestinian Resistance Movement, and the weakening of the movement militarily as a result of the Jordan events in 1970-1971 took place against the background of the different character of the individual groups in the PRM, and of contradictions among them on a range of tactical issues. Following their defeat in Jordan in 1970-1971, abrupt shifts and wavering which are inherent in political movements, where petty-bour-

geois elements predominate, were particularly manifest in the Palestinian Resistance Movement.

Towards the end of 1970, a special Palestinian terrorist organisation known as Black September (in memory of the tragic events in Jordan in the autumn of 1970) made its existence known. Other sources say that Black September emerged in July 1971. One of its architects--M. Khalifa--said that this name was assumed by guerrillas in the group of Walid Nimr, a member of the Al-Fatah Central Committee who was killed in July 1971. The name was assumed by the survivors of this group after battles against Jordanian royal army units in the Ajlun area.

The first important action of Black September to shake the entire Arab world was the assassination of Jordanian Prime Minister Wasfi Tell. Here it was a case of revenge for the deaths of thousands of Palestinians for which Tell was responsible. One of the four Black September members who organised and carried out the assassination had lost three members of his family in the September events of 1970.

This was followed by acts of terror in Western Europe: the killing of five Jordanians in Brühl (close to Köln) suspected of collaborating with the secret services of Jordan and Israel; the wounding of the Jordanian Ambassador in London; the explosion and arson at a chemical plant in Ravenstein (the Netherlands); similar actions at enterprises in the FRG, the explosion on an aircraft causing death of several passengers at the Israeli airport of Lod; exploding of four oil tanks belonging to the FRG in Trieste; the burning of an Israeli ship in the Adriatic Sea; the killing of eleven members of the Israeli team at the 20th Olympic Games in Munich on September 5, 1972; attempts on the life of Israeli diplomats in West European capitals; the assassination of two American and one Belgian diplomat in Khartoum in March 1973, etc.

It should be made quite clear that Black September's acts brought no laurels to the Palestinian movement; on the contrary, they undermined its positions internationally,

and gave the Israeli annexationists and their patrons the pretexts they wanted. However, one should not discount the extent of the influence of Black September's actions on broad masses of Palestinian Arabs. Many of them still believe that only determined terrorist actions like those of Black September can have any influence on Israel, and force it to recognise in one way or another the "Palestinian factor" as a fundamental reality of the current Middle East situation.

At the same time Black September exercised, if it can be put in this way, the counterintelligence functions of the PLO. Its struggle against Israeli intelligence, against the attempts of the Israeli security service to infiltrate agents into the Palestinian Resistance Movement, is not very well known but it is of considerable importance. Let us recall only the assassination by Black September of Israeli intelligence agents Barukh Kokhen in Madrid in January 1973 and Gilazar in Cyprus in March of the same year.

Much has been written in the West about Black September. All of it usually boils down to accusations levelled at the Palestinian movement as a whole, to try and prove its illegitimacy from the point of view of international law and to convince the reader that all that the Palestinian Resistance Movement engaged in was "anti-Jewish terror", i.e., to try, following official Israeli propaganda, and minimise the importance of the Palestinian factor among all the aspects of the Middle East settlement problem.

Against this background of frequently false and clamorous accusations, the emergence of an Israeli terrorist organisation known as Mifzah Elohim (God's Wrath) went almost unnoticed. It was headed by General A. Yariv, and directly subordinate to the Prime Minister. The establishment of Mifzah Elohim was preceded by a long discussion in the Israeli ruling elite of the most effective methods of struggle against the Palestinian movement. Under the specific decision of the Israeli government, special attention was drawn to the necessity of showing that Palestinian demands had

no grounds, since Palestinian Arabs allegedly enjoyed full rights in Israel and in the Arab "countries of settlement". Some Israeli leaders made official statements about the "non-existence" of the Palestinians (as did Golda Meir), in the attempts to justify the anti-Palestinian genocide undertaken by the ruling quarters of Israel.

Mifzah Elohim, working closely with the Israeli special services (Mossad--intelligence; and Shin-Bet--the security service) and like organisations in many West European countries and the United States, began a campaign of terror against Palestinian representatives abroad. In June 1972, G. Kanafani, the editor of the Palestinian newspaper Al-Khadaf, was killed in Beirut; that October V. Zueiter, a PLO representative in Italy, was also killed. In January 1973, a bomb planted in a hotel room killed the PLO representative in Cyprus Bakhish al-Heir. In April 1973, the Israel agents mounted a night raid in Beirut and killed PLO leaders Yusef al-Nadjar and Kamal Adwan, and the PLO representative in Beirut Kamal Naser. In January 1973, in Paris, Hamud al-Hamshari, the PLO representative in France, died of wounds inflicted in December during an assassination attempt. That April in Paris, an Iranian by the name of Vasil al-Kubaisi was killed, and two months later an Algerian, Muhammed Budi'a. Both cooperated with the Palestinian Resistance Movement. A PLO representative in Madrid, Sartawy, was killed in 1982.

Alongside the terrorism of Mifzah Elohim, the Israeli armed forces repeatedly raided Jordan and (following September 1970) Lebanon under the pretext of combatting the "subversive" activity of the Palestinians. Most Israeli air raids had as their targets the Palestinian refugee camps, and many Palestinian civilians were killed.

The following is a brief list of the main resolutions of the UN Security Council adopted prior to the October war of 1973, resolutions censuring Israel's acts of aggression against neighbouring Arab countries:

--resolution No. 248 of March 24, 1968 accusing Israel of carrying a broad premeditated military operation against Jordan in Karameh;

--resolution No. 256 of August 16, 1968 accusing Israel of hostilities against Jordan in the Salt district with napalm being used, killing 23 and wounding more than 80 persons;

--resolution No. 262 of December 31, 1968 censuring Israel for a military operation against Beirut airport in which 13 planes belonging to Arab air companies were burnt;

--resolution No. 265 of April 1, 1969 accusing Israel of the premeditated artillery and air bombardment of Salt (Jordan) killing more than 20 civilians;

--resolution No. 270 of August 26, 1969, censuring Israel for the premeditated bombing of villages in southern Lebanon;

--resolution No. 279 of May 12, 1970 demanding the immediate withdrawal of Israeli troops from southern Lebanon;

--resolution No. 280 of May 18, 1970, accusing Israel of military operations against villages in southern Lebanon in which more than 50 homes were destroyed, and many civilians killed or wounded;

--resolution No. 285 of September 5, 1970 demanding the complete and immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanese territory;

--resolution No. 316 of June 26, 1972 accusing Israel of military operations in southern Lebanon in which approximately 30 civilians were killed, and demanding the immediate release of Syrian and Lebanese servicemen taken as hostages;

--resolution No. 332 of April 21, 1973 accusing Israel of mass armed raids against southern Lebanon;

--resolution No. 337 of August 15, 1973 accusing Israel of violating Lebanese sovereignty.

The practically unanimous censure of Israeli aggression by the world community evoked a sharply negative reaction from the Israeli government, which intensified attacks on the United Nations.

By the beginning of the October war of 1973, most Palestinian Resistance Movement leaders had clearly acquired a better understanding of the importance of political methods of struggle to win the legitimate demands of the Palestinian people. A direct result of this evolution was the censuring of terrorism as a method of struggle, as used, specifically, by Black September. This censuring was to be seen in a number of official statements of the PLO in which it was said that terrorism by nature was hostile to the cause of the Palestine revolution. It was extremely important that the leadership of the Palestinian Resistance Movement and its rank and file members gradually began to understand that the Palestinian Resistance Movement was part of the overall Arab national liberation movement and that the Palestinians' struggle for their legitimate rights was inseparable from the struggle of Arab people against imperialism and Israeli aggression.

Shortly before the October war of 1973, two important events marked the history of Palestinian struggle.

The Eleventh Session of the Palestine National Council meeting in Beirut in January 1973 decided it was necessary to have close contacts with the resistance movement in the occupied territories. This marked the beginning of the increase in the authority of the PLO in the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip. The existence of Palestinian resistance centres outside Israeli-occupied territory made guerrilla sorties more difficult, and led to a certain isolation of the leading Palestinian organisations from the masses of Palestinians living in those areas.

On August 15, on the Israeli-occupied West bank of the Jordan, and in pursuance of the resolutions of the Twelfth Session of the PNC, a mass political underground organisation was established: the Palestine National Front which proclaimed itself an integral part of the PLO. The Front programme stated: "The Palestine National Front is an inseparable part of the Palestinian national movement as represented by the Palestine Liberation Organisation--a composite section of the all-Arab liberation movement."³⁰

The programme of the Palestine National Front, worded with consideration of the situation in the Israeli-occupied territories, incorporated the following basic points:

1. Continuation of the national struggle up to the ending of the Israeli occupation of the territories it seized in 1967.

2. Guarantee of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

3. Opposition to political decisions denying the national rights of the Palestinian people, such as the creation of a Palestinian puppet regime under occupation, the Allon plan and the plan of establishing a United Arab Kingdom.

4. Resistance to plans for new Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, and to the "Zionisation" and capture of Arab lands.

5. Encouragement of a national economy in the occupied territories and opposition to all Israeli attempts at incorporating these territories into Israel's economic life.

6. Assistance for the development of Palestine national culture.

7. Support for mass organisations and trade unions in their struggle against the occupation authorities.

8. Assistance for improving the conditions of political prisoners in Israeli prisons, support for their demands, and aid to their families.³¹

Front organisations were established in most of the towns on the West Bank of the Jordan and in the Gaza Strip, and included representatives of different political parties including the Jordan Communist Party. One of the first actions of the Front shortly before the October (1973) Arab-Israeli war was to boycott the elections to the Histadrut and the calling of mass strikes. A noteworthy feature of the activities of the Front were its slogans that were generally realistic which took into consideration the concrete conditions of the daily struggle of the Palestinian people.

The active participation of Palestinians in the battles of the October war on the Syrian-Israeli front in the Golan Heights, and their effective actions behind Israeli lines in the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip showed that the enemies of the Palestinian movement were rather too hasty in believing that it was weak and also showed that the struggle of the Palestinian people had reached a new and qualitatively higher level.

The importance of the October war for further development of the struggle of Palestinians was quite considerable. Although some Western scholars believe that the October war of 1973 did not have any general Arab objectives, as, so they say, the leadership of Egypt and (to a lesser extent) of Syria had only strictly practical objectives--the freeing of historical Egyptian and Syrian territories captured by Israel in 1967--this point of view cannot be regarded as fully correct. The general Arab objectives of the 1973 war (one of which was and continues to be the winning of the legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine) are reaffirmed by the actual participation on the side of Egypt and Syria of military units from Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Kuwait and other Arab countries.

Many PRM leaders say openly that the October war of 1973 made people revise many concepts of the Palestinian movement. Thus, late Zuhayr Muhsin, who was a member of the PLO Executive Committee, believed that the events of October 1973 forced the Palestinian movement, for the first time, to specify what it wanted within realistic limits. He believed that "the October war changed the course of the Arab-Zionist conflict, perhaps not in a decisive, but nevertheless in a very important way. Because the war and its results must be taken into consideration, we must alter our pre-war plans, programs and means of action". "Since the war," Muhsin pointed out, "a new feeling has emerged [to the settlement of the Palestinian question--E.D.] characterised by a more realistic determination to continue the struggle and realise successive achievements."³²

From this the following legitimate question naturally arises: did the October war bring the solution of the Palestinian question any closer? In other words, did the Arab countries gain any political advantages from the October war, and to what extent did they capitalise on them to try and attain their legitimate objectives, including those concerning the settlement of the Palestinian question?

It can be stated on solid grounds that as a result of the October war, the Arab countries obtained important political "trumps"--the convocation of the Geneva Peace Conference; a noticeable strengthening of Arab solidarity expressed, specifically, in the oil embargo; a change in the balance of forces in the Middle East; serious upheavals among Israeli public opinion; the confusion of the Israel government and its preparedness to negotiate; the strengthening of Soviet-Arab friendship which found expression in the USSR's concrete and generally known actions in support of the just cause of the Arabs. However, these "trumps" were not played. Because of the position of reactionary Arab forces which feared the further growth of the anti-imperialist struggle, the Arab countries lost the political advantages which had been gained at the price of blood shed by thousands of their people in the October war. The leadership of Egypt is responsible for this, since it sought to limit the scope of hostilities and later embarked on separate deals with the Israeli aggressors via American mediation.

Following the October war, the Palestinian movement began to regain its strength. Western researchers are trying to speculate on what they call artificial, and externally imposed positive changes in the movement which ensured Palestinians several important political successes in 1973-1975. This point of view has nothing in common with reality. All the successes of the PRM are explained by the popular foundation of the Palestinian resistance, and it is impossible to defeat a people if they know what they are fighting for and have faith in their leaders. "All national oppression," Lenin stated, "calls forth the resistance of the broad masses of the people; and the resistance of a nationally oppressed

population always tends to national revolt."³³ The correctness of these words as applicable to the Palestinian movement needs no additional proof.

Following the October war, two main trends made themselves very clear in the Palestinian movement: on the one hand, the extremist groups in the PRM intended to continue their terrorism, primarily anti-Israeli acts, to prevent and end to the state of war between the Arab countries and Israel. This tendency was a variation of prior extremist sentiment, particularly so that the terrorist acts which shortly followed were of a short-sighted "fire cracker" nature. Among them were the burning and bombing of a Panam plane in the airport of Fiumicino in Rome, which claimed the lives of several dozen passengers, the seizure of the West German Lufthansa Boeing 737 with 12 hostages, and the seizure on April 11, 1974 in the Israeli village of Kyriat Schmonah close to the Lebanese-Israeli border of 15 hostages, mainly women and children.

Another tendency, which made itself felt in the activity and statements of Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, and of many other prominent leaders of the Palestinian movement was characterised by the search for realistic ways of settling the Palestinian question in a way that would fit the overall efforts for a general settlement of the conflict situation in the Middle East. The affirmation of this as the leading and decisive tendency required the united action of all PRM groups, with the indispensable elevation of one of the leading Palestinian organisations.

Towards the end of November 1973, the Arab summit in Algeria took the historic decision that the Palestine Liberation Organisation was the sole legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine. The decision to recognise the PLO as such was also endorsed by the conference of heads of state and government of Moslem countries which took place in February 1974 in Lahore (Pakistan).

The realism of the overwhelming majority of representatives of the Palestinian leadership was expressed in the

clearcut idea that it was impossible to pose in any real context the question that Israel must be destroyed, and, consequently, that ways of implementing Palestinian statehood had to be found proceeding from the fact of the existence of Israel. The initial and sufficiently concrete statements to this end were made by N. Hawatmeh, General Secretary of the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, to students of the Arab university in Beirut on December 6, 1973. He said that it was necessary to be realistic in the face of negative international circumstances, and to agree to the affirmation of our authority in all territories (Palestinian) which could be later wrested from Israel.³⁴

The recognition of the necessity of a realistic and constructive settlement of the Palestinian problem could also be seen in an interview which one of Al-Fatah leaders, Abou Ayad, gave to Le Monde. Abou Ayad said: "Rejection [the rejection of political means of settling the Palestinian question--E.D.] is not necessarily a revolutionary approach. Absolute no's are not automatically revolutionary. It is suggested that we say no to everything and leave, with our weapons and belongings, and find refuge in one Arab country or another.... No revolution in the world can be based on simple 'idealistic flight' under the pretext that this 'idealistic flight' corresponds more to the general principles of that revolution."³⁵

The predomination of realistic trends in the PRM were reflected in the political programme of the Palestinian Resistance Movement which was adopted at the Twelfth Session of the Palestine National Council in June 1974. It proclaimed the necessity of establishing Palestinian national authority in those territories of the former Palestine which would be liberated from Israeli occupation when the troops of the aggressor were withdrawn from the territories it had captured. The proclamation of this fundamental principle of Palestinian struggle was a reflection of the turn to realistic ways of settlement which became possible thanks to the reinforc-

ing of the positions of realistically thinking people in the PLO leadership. Furthermore, the introduction of this concept into the PRM programme was an unequivocal reply to the question of whether there was any point in creating a Palestinian state, the first concrete step in this direction.

The programme specifically indicated the importance of united action by the Arab people of Palestine and all progressive forces in the Arab countries, all peace-loving forces, and the countries of the socialist community.

The political programme of the PRM stated as a strategic objective the question of making a future Palestine a united, secular, democratic and multinational state as was envisaged in the Palestine National Charter. The retention of this provision in the PRM programme was first of all explained by the fact that masses of Palestinians were not prepared to consciously accept the realities of the Middle East situation, as they were still prisoners of outmoded concepts and stereotypes.

The principal merit of the new political programme of the PRM was its far clearer anti-Zionist orientation. Notable in this connection was what PLO representative Said Hammam told the Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain in February 1975: "Our struggle against Zionism and against Israel's expansionist policy is in no way directed against Israel or the people of the Judaic faith. We regard with dignity that progressive Israelis are fighting for a just peace that will satisfy the aspirations and rights of all peoples of the Middle East, will guarantee full withdrawal from occupied Arab lands, and will guarantee the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination."³⁶

The triumph of realistic tendencies at the Twelfth Session of the PNC had an unfavourable aspect as well. Shortly afterwards, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine withdrew from the Executive Committee of the PLO, while the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine--United Commando of the Palestine Revolution and the Arab Liberation Front began, in a sense, to boycott the efforts of the PLO

executive organs without leaving them officially. These leftist groups considered the programme adopted at the Twelfth Session of the PNC to be "capitulationist", and joined the Palestine Popular Struggle Front to form the so-called Front of Refuse (the front of Palestinian forces rejecting the capitulationist settlement schemes). The first signs of the formation of this new Palestinian organisation made themselves felt following the October 1973 Arab-Israeli war, when the clear desire of several Palestinian leaders to prevent any participation of the PLO in a political settlement of the Middle East conflict rose to the surface. The Front opposed the idea of establishing a Palestinian state in the West Bank of the Jordan and Gaza Strip, since the emergence of a Palestinian state entity would, according to its view, lead to "reconciliation" between the Arab countries and Israel and to political recognition of Israel by the Arabs. The Front of Refuse adopted some measures to formalise itself organisationally, establishing a central council and a current leadership, and began publishing the weekly paper As-Sumud (Staunchness).

The decisions of the Rabat (October 1974) meeting of heads of state and government of Arab countries was a success for the Palestinian cause. Essentially, the Rabat decisions reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Arab Palestinian people to their native land and to self-determination, their right to the establishment, with the support of other Arab countries, of an independent national authority under PLO aegis as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people on that part of the territory of Palestine that would be liberated from Israeli occupation. The Rabat meeting also decided to give the PLO all possible support, and recommended that all Arab countries facilitate the preservation of Palestinian unity and not intervene in the internal affairs of the Palestinian people. Also, the meeting suggested that Egypt, Syria, Jordan and the PLO work out the regularising of relations among them in the light of the Rabat decisions so they could be observed. These decisions

were adopted unanimously, and were supported by the delegation from Jordan led by King Hussein.

The steadily growing international prestige of the PRM and the decisions of the Algiers, Lahore and Rabat meetings created favourable conditions for a comprehensive discussion of the Palestinian question at the 29th Session of the UN General Assembly. Ninety-five UN member states voted to invite the PLO to the discussion of the Palestinian question as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The PLO leadership skillfully took advantage of the rostrum to expose the Zionist slanders and distortions of the organisation's real role, policy and objectives of its struggle.

Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, told the General Assembly that the difference between a revolutionary and terrorist is the objective they fight for. All who fight for a just cause and struggle for the freedom and liberation of their land from invaders, settlers and colonialists cannot be called terrorists. Otherwise, the Americans who fought against British colonialists could be categorised as terrorists; the resistance movement in Europe against the nazis would also be terrorist; the struggle waged by Asian, African and Latin American peoples would also be terrorism. This struggle, Arafat continued, is a truly fair and just cause, sanctified by the UN Charter and the universal declaration of human rights. As for those who oppose a just cause, who wage wars with the objective of the occupation, colonisation and suppression of other nations, it is they who are terrorists. The actions of these people should be censured, they should be called war criminals because the justness of a cause determines the right to struggle. He further pointed out that all the efforts of the Palestinian Arabs were made to prevent the horrible danger of destruction, to regain our right to self-determination and the indubitable right to return to our homes.... Thanks to our courageous Palestinian national liberation movement, the popular struggle has grown and is fully mature to wage not only an armed struggle, but a political and social struggle also.³⁷

The outcome of the discussion of the Palestinian problem at the United Nations was reflected in a resolution approved by an overwhelming majority, in which the people of Palestine are called one of the principal parties in establishing a fair and lasting Middle East peace. This peace presupposes respect and the genuine exercise of the inalienable national rights of the Arab people of Palestine to national independence, self-determination and the creation of their own state.

These key decisions have been reaffirmed and supplemented by resolutions of the 30th, 31st and subsequent General Assembly sessions, which specifically reaffirmed the right of the Palestinian Arab people to self-determination without external interference, and the right to national independence and sovereignty. Of the greatest importance is the clause inviting the Palestine Liberation Organisation to participate on an equal footing in all efforts, discussions and conferences on the Middle East conducted under the aegis of the United Nations.

Zionist and pro-Zionist propaganda did all it could to minimise the success achieved by the Palestinians on the international arena, to convince world public opinion that the Palestinians had no clear political programme, and that the objective of the Palestinian Resistance Movement is still the destruction of Israel. Replying, Yasser Arafat stated: "Zionist propagandists, maddened by the splendid success we have achieved, have deliberately distorted my statements and treated them in a very biased way. However, I was advocating fraternity and peaceful coexistence based on equality between Arabs and Jews and all nations without exception on the land of Palestine. I have once again addressed the Jews with a solemn appeal to abandon the road of war and the suicidal 'Mossad spirit'.³⁸ As far as I know, nobody has yet replied, nobody has made any proposal other than mine. What is still worse is that Zionist propagandists highlighted one sentence out of my speech which was taken out of context to spread once again the sordid thesis that we are allegedly seeking to drive the Jews into the sea."³⁹

Successes of the Palestinian movement on the international arena and recognition by the world community of the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine would have been impossible without the further unfolding of struggle against Israeli occupation, without the strengthening of the PLO's prestige among masses of Palestinians, and without the growth of realistic tendencies in the PLO. Every session of the Palestine National Council was another step by the Palestinians towards a constructive, realistic appraisal of the Middle East situation as a whole.

An important stage in the development of PRM were the decisions of the Thirteenth Session of the Palestine National Council held in Cairo on March 12-20, 1977. The importance of that Session was determined by the nature of questions discussed and the decisions on questions of a Middle East settlement, and the approach to the PRM's methods of achieving it.

The extensive preparatory work prior to the Session by the PLO leadership bore fruit. Notwithstanding the intensified pressure from Saudi Arabia, Egypt and several other Arab countries, the discussion and the nature of the decisions were a triumph for the left-of-centre bloc in the PLO leadership. The right-wing elements were not able to strengthen their positions as they had hoped, while the extreme left, essentially speaking, gained nothing.

The Session was attended by 293 delegates who represented basically all the political trends in the Palestinian movement, as well as Palestinians residing in different areas of the world (even the United States). The political report of the PLO Executive Committee was delivered by F. Kaddumi, who pointed that the PLO activity in the intervening period had travelled along the following avenues:

--strengthening the PLO's position in the general Arab and international context proceeding from the understanding that it was the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people;

--giving PLO full responsibility for the destiny of the Palestinian people and for the Palestinian land;

--singling out the problem of Palestine from the series of problems involved in the Middle East conflict at different international forums as the pivot of struggle in the area;

--utmost assistance to strengthening the international belief that the question of Palestine is the core of the Middle East problem, and that a just and lasting peace, as well as security in the Middle East, are impossible until this problem is resolved;

--invigoration of efforts at all international forums for the "isolation of the Zionist enemy";

--frustration of attempts to link up the Palestinian question with Security Council Resolution No. 242 (where it was treated as the refugee problem) as the main method of settlement;

--rejection of capitulationist settlement schemes by political collaboration, and the elaboration of acceptable alternatives to maintain the development of the Palestinian revolution.

Kaddumi's report singled out the question of the possibility of discussing the problem of Palestine at different international forums, including the Geneva Conference. It was noted specifically that the Palestine question should be an independent item on the agenda of the Geneva Conference, that no discussion of the question can take place without the participation of Palestinians, that the form of participation of the Palestinians in the Conference is an internal matter for the Arabs to decide.

Also stressed was the imperative need to strengthen the alliance and united action between the Palestinians and the countries of the socialist community. "The fundamental alliance with socialist countries," the report stated, "does not only remain the basis of our relations with these friendly countries; in addition, it is necessary to strengthen and

consolidate this alliance by continuing a constructive principled dialogue in order to overcome all differences in points of view."

The Political Declaration adopted at the Session by a majority vote was an important document--evidence of the further growth of realistic and constructive sentiment in the PRM leadership. The slogan of creating an "independent national state on its own land" (point 11 of the Declaration), the mentioning of the "importance and necessity of national unity, uniting military and political efforts of all units of the Palestine revolution within the PLO framework (point 5); rejection of all types of "American capitulationist settlement" (point 4); confirmation of the importance of "relations and coordination of actions with progressive and patriotic Jewish forces in the occupied homeland and beyond it" (point 14); reaffirmation of the right of the PLO to "independent and equal participation in all conferences and international forums on the problem of Palestine and the Arab-Zionist conflict" (point 15) were the central aspects of the Declaration.⁴⁰

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The trying history of the development of the Palestinian Resistance Movement, the elaboration of its ideological concepts, the drafting, clarification and strengthening of its positions in the general front of anti-imperialist forces of the Arab world make it possible to draw at least four fundamental conclusions:

--notwithstanding the objective and subjective difficulties, the Palestinian Resistance Movement is still the vanguard of the Arab national liberation movement;

--the differences existing in the Arab world between individual Arab countries, and the emergence of satellite conflicts such as the Lebanese, the Western Sahara, and the Ethiopia-Somalia which involve many Arab countries divert the attention of the Arab people from their priority national task--the struggle for the liberation of Arab territories occupied by Israel, the normalisation of the Middle East

situation on the basis of justice for all, which, naturally, to a considerable, if not to say decisive, extent hinder the Palestinians from attaining their own objectives;

--the Middle East settlement can be all-embracing and genuinely fair when its main aspect is the guarantee of the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine, including their right to self-determination and the establishment of their own state;

--attempts to undermine from within, to divide and to physically eliminate the Palestinian Resistance Movement, wherever undertaken, are a blow against the entire Arab national liberation movement.

NOTES

¹ Walter Laquer, The Israel-Arab Reader, New York, 1971, p. 18.

² Ibid., p. 10.

³ Uri Avnery, Israel Without Zionism, New York, 1971, p. 81.

⁴ Theses and Statutes of the II Communist International, Moscow, 1920, p. 69.

⁵ V.P. Ladeikin, A Source of Dangerous Crisis, Moscow, 1973, p. 91 (in Russian).

⁶ According to Resolution 181/P of November 29, 1947, a Jewish state was to be established in Palestine (territory: 14,100 sq.km--56 per cent of the territory of Palestine; population: 509,780 Arabs, including Bedouin tribes, and 499,020 Jews), an Arab state (area: 11,100 sq.km--43 per cent of the territory of Palestine; population: 549,000 Arabs and 9,520 Jews) and an international zone of Jerusalem and environs (one per cent of the territory of Palestine; population: 105,540 Arabs and 59,690 Jews). Resolution 181/P also envisaged an economic and customs union between the two future states, a common currency, united transport communications networks,

and joint use of the irrigation system. In keeping with Resolution 181/P, British troops were to be withdrawn from Palestine by August 1, 1948; the same date would be the date of the termination of the British mandate over Palestine. The declaration of independence of both states was to go into effect not later than October 1, 1948.

- 7 S. Jargy, Guerre et paix en Palestine ou l'Histoire du conflit israélo-arabe (1917-1967), Neuchâtel, 1968, pp. 94-95.
- 8 UNRWA was established in accordance with the decision of the 4th Session of the UN General Assembly in 1949. It had the following functions: implementing, in collaboration with local authorities, a programme of direct assistance to Palestinian refugees and the drawing up of an economic survey of their status; consultations with the governments of Middle East countries concerned regarding measures to be taken when the international assistance and the implementation of a programme of works ended.
- 9 In Arabic, the backward reading of the first letters of the Movement for the National Liberation of Palestine (Harakat at-Tahrir al-Filastini) is abbreviated as FATAH, as the organisation was subsequently named later on.
- 10 Palestinian Leaders Discuss the New Challenges for the Resistance, Beirut, 1974, p. 47.
- 11 The PLO--the Sole Representative of the Palestine People, Beirut, 1974, p. 8.
- 12 Sabri Jiryis, The Nature of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. Report at the Vienna Seminar sponsored by the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, August 1980.
- 13 Le Nouvel Observateur, July 20, 1970.
- 14 Quoted from Ania Francos, Les Palestiniens, Paris, 1968, p. 298.
- 15 See UN Document A/PY 2282, p. 39.

- 16 Daniel le Gac, Au nom de la Palestine, Paris, 1975, p. 289.
- 17 See, for instance, W.B. Quandt, F. Yabber, A.M. Lesch, The Politics of Palestinian Nationalism, University of California Press, 1973, p. 71.
- 18 Jeune Afrique, March 3, 1970.
- 19 Le Figaro, March 2, 1970.
- 20 Y. Harkabi, Fedayeen Action and Arab Strategy, The Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 1968, p. 24.
- 21 The New York Times, August 6, 1968.
- 22 Al-Ahram (Cairo), June 5, 1970.
- 23 World Marxist Review, No. 5, 1972, p. 22.
- 24 An article in Al-Ahram (August 23, 1970) which was published following a visit to Cairo by a delegation led by Arafat, and which had a noteworthy title "Differences in Points of View Do Not Alter Principled Positions" is an indicator of the attitude of the leadership of the United Arab Republic to the Palestinian Resistance Movement during that period.
- 25 Al-Fateh, September 17, 1970.
- 26 Quoted from Le Monde, December 1, 1970.
- 27 Al-Ahram (Cairo), March 6, 1971.
- 28 Palestine Books, No. 40, 1973, p. 29.
- 29 Ibid., p. 112.
- 30 World Marxist Review, 1974, No. 4, p. 28.
- 31 DPFLP Report, No. 3, 1974, pp. 5-6.
- 32 Palestinian Leaders Discuss the New Challenges for the Resistance, Beirut, 1974, pp. 13-15.
- 33 V.I. Lenin, Collected Works, Moscow, Vol. 23, p. 61.
- 34 Daniel le Gac, op. cit., p. 242.
- 35 Le Monde, January 20-21, 1974.

- 36 Al-Ittikhad, February 21, 1975.
- 37 UN Doc. A/RU 2282, pp. 32, 41-42.
- 38 Mossad is an ancient fortress whose defenders chose to die rather than surrender to Roman legions (A.D. 1st century). Nowadays, Israeli officers of tank brigades are commissioned there, which is to symbolise the "Spirit of Mossad".
- 39 Le Monde, January 7, 1975.
- 40 Al-Abram, March 21, 1977.

THE PLO'S STRUGGLE FOR PALESTINIAN NATIONAL
RIGHTS IN THE LATE 1970s AND EARLY 1980s

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The Middle East is the focus of the longest and most perilous international conflict of our time, and the Palestine question is one of the major causes of the Arab-Israeli confrontation. The unwillingness of the USA and Israel to come to grips with this pivotal issue and their attempts to detour the integral political settlement of the conflict onto the path of separate deals to the detriment of the Palestinians' interests have sharply aggravated the Middle East situation, blocking the way to a just and lasting peace in the region. As leader of the extensive national liberation movement of the Arab people of Palestine for restoration of their legitimate national rights, the PLO vigorously opposes this policy. In its just struggle, the PLO is supported by the majority of Arab countries, and by all progressive and democratic forces around the world, first of all, by the socialist countries.

With tensions in the Middle East constantly worsening, the PLO's struggle reached a crescendo in the late 1970s. This was the result of growing efforts by the USA and Israel to radically change the balance of forces in the Middle East in their favour, which found its concrete implementation in the Camp David accords, the Reagan Plan and particularly the Israeli aggression in Lebanon in the summer of 1982. The decisive steps taken by the PLO to oppose the US-Israeli manoeuvres in the late 1970s and beginning of the 1980s show

that this organisation has great revolutionary potential which, in its turn, allows us to say that the Palestinian movement as a whole possesses powerful capabilities.

* * *

The visit by President Sadat of Egypt to Jerusalem (November 1977), inspired by American policy in the Middle East, greatly reduced the possibility of a universal political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict which would take into account the interests of all parties involved, including the Palestinian people. Having chosen the path of separate deals with Israel, Sadat agreed to downgrade the Palestine problem, which underlies the entire Arab-Israeli confrontation, to secondary importance. Furthermore, in official statements Sadat still claimed that he had gone to Jerusalem to establish a peace which would satisfy all the Arab parties involved in the conflict, whereas in confidential talks with the Israeli political leaders, he quickly implied that he was ready to yield on issues of decisive impact for the Arab world. In reality, this meant that the Egyptian president was overtly betraying the just demands of the Palestinian people. The Israeli Defence Minister at that time Ezer Weizman wrote about Sadat's "compliance": "Like us, the Egyptian president was not interested in a Palestinian state; he was willing to leave our West Bank settlements in place; he would substitute for Hussein should the king refuse to take part in negotiations."¹

Assessing the Egyptian president's visit--and not without reason--as a "demonstration of weakness", the Israeli leadership became more rigid in respect to the occupied Palestinian lands. It began to openly declare that UN Resolution No. 242 did not cover the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, began stepping up the construction of settlements in those regions and proposed a plan of "autonomy" for the Palestinians, which was designed in the long run to result in the annexation of the Palestinian lands and to deny the Palestinian people their inherent right to self-determination. It was the Zionist leaders' claims to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and their desire to "bury" the Palestine problem which

in fact prepared the ground for their negotiations with Egypt, which they felt would eventually lead to the perpetuation of Israeli control over those lands.

For its own part, the United States, via its impulse for the beginning of the US-sponsored "peace process" was trying to make any reconvening of the Geneva Conference on the Middle East impossible, to oust the Soviet Union from playing any part in a Middle East settlement, and to weaken its prestige and influence in the region. The US wanted to use the Egypt-Israel contacts to bring pro-Western Arab regimes and Israel closer together and to melt them into a solid anti-Soviet alliance. The Camp David scheme to "settle" the conflict was worked out to achieve this strategic aim.

In September 1978, the Carter Administration arranged a meeting between Sadat and Begin in Camp David, with the US in the role of an intermediary. The meeting produced two documents--"Framework for peace in the Middle East" and "Framework for the conclusion of a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel". As the US planned things, the first document should have served to cover the separatist character of the Egyptian-Israeli deal that was being prepared, and was to be the pattern for similar agreements between Israel and other Arab states. Meanwhile the PLO, the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, was excluded automatically from the assumed participants in the "settlement".

The negative response from all the Arab countries to the Camp David accords made Washington give up, for the time being, the idea of including other Arab countries in the process, and forced it to focus efforts on an Egyptian-Israeli separate agreement. This agreement was signed on March 26, 1979.

Even in Camp David, Sadat had accepted the Israeli plan of "autonomy" which subsequently was formulated in an addendum to the Egyptian-Israeli agreement. The Israeli government worked out the details of the draft document for "autonomy" in May 1979. The annexationist aims of the Israeli proposals were so apparent that even certain Israeli leaders admitted

them. Weizman pointed out: "His (Begin's) unshakable adherence to the perpetuation of Israeli rule over the West Bank and Gaza Strip led him into the autonomy plan.... Rather than viewing autonomy as the beginning of Arab self-rule, Begin saw it as the way to prevent Israeli withdrawal."² Begin's position reflected both the programme of the Likud bloc he headed, which emphasised creating a "Great Israel", and furthered his own expansionist ambitions. One of Begin's associates said that Begin wanted to stay in power in order to fulfil the role he felt history had given him, i.e., to guarantee that the land of Israel [which the Israeli leaders also consider to include the Arab lands.-- Authors] would not be divided.³

All the main points of the plan, in which the West Bank is called by the biblical names of Judaea and Samaria, testify that the Israeli government is seeking to use "autonomy" as a cover-up to devour the Palestinian lands. The plan states that autonomy for the West Bank will be considered to be applicable to the population, but not to the territory, i.e., it clearly declares the terms for the annexation of those lands. Israeli troops will not be withdrawn, but will only be concentrated in special zones, although at the same numerical strength. The Israeli army will control the West Bank transportation routes, it will use 120,000 acres for military exercises, and it will claim the "right" to arrest and search any Arab inhabitant.

Meanwhile, the Jewish settlers are allowed their own police and to carry arms when outside the settlements. The Israeli authorities will be responsible for internal security, for the administration of the Jewish settlements, and for ensuring the rights of Israelis to settle in those lands, and will exercise control over state lands and water sources.⁴ Thus, the plan refers not only to Israel's political, but also its economic control over these regions.

As it becomes clear from the plan, the Administrative Council, which is to be elected as a Palestinian self-governing body, is seen by Israeli leaders as an appendage to the current system of Israeli military rule. The "advantages"

accruing to the Council are far outweighed by the limitations imposed by Israeli military rule.

In other words, the Arab Administrative Council will not be allowed to pass laws, collect taxes, operate radio or TV stations, issue currency or postage stamps, regulate imports or exports, supervise elections, or issue identification cards or passports. Its departments of education, health, and transportation will function under Israeli control.⁵

In May 1979, the Israeli Cabinet openly declared that Israel would never agree to the creation of a Palestinian state, and five years after autonomy was introduced, would declare its sovereignty over all the territory involved.⁶ It was quite significant that an interpretation of the kind made by Israel would be possible under the terms of the Camp David accords, although their architects claimed that they were a real approach to the solution of the Palestine problem. Yasser Arafat quite correctly called the "autonomy" project a handout "less than a Bantustan".

Egypt, once having signed the Camp David documents and the separate agreement, was in fact conspiring with Israel and the United States in the attempt to deprive the Palestinian people of the right to determine their own destiny by denying the Palestine Liberation Organisation any part in the political settlement process, and undermining its influence in the Arab world and internationally. However, the calculations of the conspirators that were designed to neutralise the PLO failed to materialise.

The PLO unanimously and immediately rejected Sadat's "peace initiative" (as Sadat called his pilgrimage to and talks with Begin in Jerusalem) as well as the Camp David accords, and especially the "autonomy" project which was anti-Palestinian in essence. On November 18, 1977--on the eve of Sadat's arrival in Israel--Ya. Arafat issued a special statement pointing out that the visit was a big victory for Zionism and imperialism which had turned the Palestinian people into refugees and usurped their homeland.⁷

On November 21, 1977, the Executive Committee of the PLO sharply criticised the Sadat "initiative", stating that "the

Palestinian movement firmly and decisively rejects this step whose aim is to undermine the struggle of the Palestinian people, and reiterates its firm decision to defend its cause".⁸ The PLO Executive Committee not only condemned Sadat's actions right from the outset, but also took concrete measures to oppose his policy. One of PLO's initiatives led to the meeting, early in December 1977, in Tripoli (Libya), a conference of the heads of several Arab states and of all the leading organisations of the Palestinian movement, where a concrete plan to isolate the Egyptian regime was discussed. The formation of the Front of Steadfastness and Confrontation, which declared its objective to frustrate any settlement forced upon the Arab people on US-Israeli conditions, was the most important result of the meeting.

The further consolidation of the Palestinian movement was another key result of the Tripoli conference. The leaders of the many Palestinian organisations attending the conference adopted a decision to work for broader political and military coordination among all the members of the Palestinian Resistance Movement, and drew up a concrete programme of action to this end. To try and discredit the PLO, the Egyptian propaganda machine began to falsify the document. Al-Akhram claimed that the PLO through its position at the Tripoli conference "had erased the realism of all preceding Palestinian decisions".⁹ The United States was quick to declare that it was not expedient to discuss the question of PLO participation in the settlement process because of certain "new moments" in its policy. On behalf of the Carter Administration Z. Brzezinski declared that American diplomacy could say without any hesitation "Now, bye-bye, PLO".¹⁰

The Egyptian regime not only launched an anti-Palestinian propaganda campaign but also took certain practical measures against the PRM. In the spring of 1978, the Sadat government banned political activities by Palestinians in Egypt, and imposed serious economic and political restrictions upon the local Palestinian community.

Because of the Egyptian regime's anti-Palestinian position, the Begin Cabinet thought the situation suitable for a large-scale operation against the PLO, seeking, if not to liquidate the Palestinian movement altogether, then at least to sap its military strength. On March 15, 1978, 30,000 Israeli troops crossed the Lebanese border and began advancing to the river Litani. The Israeli Command planned to complete the operation within 24 hours, but the invasion forces were fiercely resisted by the Palestinian fighters in the area, and were bogged down in prolonged skirmishes.¹¹ Most guerrilla detachments were successfully moved out of the area, and Israel, whose new act of aggression evoked vigorous international protests, was not able to attain its goals.

Many Western observers who assessed these events concluded that the solid resistance of the PLO in Southern Lebanon not only showed its considerable military strength, but also reinforced the positions of the PRM in the Arab world at a time when due to the separate deal concluded by Sadat some negative tendencies with regard to the Palestinians were developing.¹²

Meanwhile, certain reactionary Arab circles also made increasingly active attempts to influence the Palestinians. Calling on the Palestinian leaders to take a "moderate" position in respect to US Middle East policy, they said that the Carter Administration would exert pressure on Israel to breathe life into the settlement process. These claims were based on the old and oft-refuted thesis that only the United States could guarantee a Middle East peace on conditions acceptable to the Arabs. Members of the PLO Executive Committee called the "pro-Arab tendencies" which had supposedly appeared in US policy and possibilities of US pressure over Israel a "big bluff".¹³

The Middle East events showed convincingly how deeply mistaken American diplomacy was when Brzezinski waved "bye-bye, PLO". Despite all the efforts by the United States, Israel, and reactionary Arab circles, the PLO not only failed to disappear from the political arena, but on the contra-

ry, consolidated its international standing through a steady and principled policy of defending the legitimate national interests of the Arab people of Palestine. What is most important is that even in this complex situation, the PLO did not change its attitude to the realistic decisions for a solution to the Palestine problem and a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict which it adopted at the 12th and 13th sessions of the National Palestine Council.

As soon as the Camp David accords were publicised, the PLO strongly condemned the documents. In a general estimation, the PLO leadership pointed out that since it was the brainchild of US Middle East policy, Arab opposition to it should bear an anti-imperialist character. In this connection Arafat said that "by signing the agreement in Camp David President Carter threatened American interests in the Middle East".¹⁴

In its sharp criticism of the Camp David accords, the PLO leadership said that they were not basically acceptable to the Palestinians because of several factors, the most important being that they ignored the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people as confirmed by the 29th Session of the UN General Assembly in Resolution No. 3236 of November 22, 1974. The Camp David accords were accepted without any consultations with the Palestinian people, and obviously ignored their interests. Besides, they deny the PLO's right to act on behalf of the Palestinian people despite the fact that this right is recognised by most Palestinians, both in the occupied lands and beyond. This right has been confirmed by all Arab states, all the socialist countries, and many other countries.

The PLO leaders indicated that the Camp David scheme was designed to divide the Palestinian people. Its architects intended to create the impression that they wanted to solve the problem of the future of the population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

For Palestinians ousted by the Zionists from the historic land of Palestine, their issue was not even raised at the Camp David meeting. According to the PLO leaders,

behind this approach was the objective of undermining the unity of the Palestinian people.

The unacceptability of the Camp David accords was also based on the fact that they legalised the Israeli military presence on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. These agreements also "legalised" the Israeli settlements created on the occupied lands, and facilitated their unlimited future expansion. The entire Camp David scheme was designed to attain one goal: to create conditions for perpetuating Israeli control over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with the further aim of legalising Israel's sovereignty over these lands.

Palestinian criticism of the Camp David accords was most completely reflected in the documents and decisions of the 14th session of the Palestine National Council, which met in January 1979 in Damascus. This session showed convincingly that the PLO's strategy was fully supported by the Palestinians in the occupied lands as well as by the Arab population of Israel itself. All the basic principles of the 12th and 13th sessions were confirmed in the programme document. So the session showed that in spite of the extremely difficult external situation characterised by the growing pressure on the PLO from the United States and reactionary Arab forces, it still maintained its progressive orientation as indicated by the strategy elaborated at the two previous sessions of the Palestine National Council.

One of the positive results of the 14th session was that the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and other Palestinian organisations in the Front of Steadfastness and Confrontation recognised some of the political directives elaborated in the course of transformation of the PLO's strategy in the mid-1970s, which helped achieve greater cohesion within the Palestinian movement.

Right after the Camp David talks, the PLO began an extensive campaign in the Arab world in opposition to the American attempts to force its "peace" plan on the Arab world. The PLO Executive Committee was one of the initiators of the

October 1978 Damascus conference of the heads of state of the Front of Steadfastness and Confrontation and insisted on an elaboration of the decision of principle with regard to Sadat's separatist actions.

The PLO's realistic position strengthened the unity of the Arab world in its resistance to the US attempts to enlist other Arab countries, primarily the conservative regimes, for the US "settlement" scheme. An excessive polarisation of forces which could have led to a split of Arab countries would obviously have extremely negative consequences for the just course of the Palestinian people, and could lead to a situation where the US and Israel would be able to pick off the rest of the Arab countries one by one.

The Baghdad conference of Arab states and the PLO (November 1978 and March 1979) decided to reject the Camp David accords and the separate Egyptian-Israeli deal, and to impose certain political and economic sanctions on the Sadat regime. The Arab and some Islamic countries broke diplomatic relations with Egypt, and the headquarters of the Arab League was transferred from Cairo to Tunis.

The growing activities of the PLO on the occupied West Bank and the establishment of close ties with the local population was of particular significance in its struggle against the US and Israeli attempts to impose the infamous "autonomy" plan. The formation of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian committee in November 1978 to provide material aid to the people of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip ensured a growing resistance to the Israeli plans. At the end of February 1980, the mayors of Arab towns and other eminent political figures attended committee sessions where plans were discussed to strengthen the local municipal authorities and reducing their economic dependence on Israel.

The activities of the Palestine National Front had eased somewhat in the mid-1970s, because of Israel's repressive measures, but began moving again in autumn of 1979. The efficiency of the trade-union activity on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, which acquired a distinct political colouring, grew considerably.

The PLO's tactics in opposing the policy of separatist deals that were approved at the 15th session of the Palestine National Council (April 1981, Damascus) were of great importance. The political declaration of the session stated that the PLO should continue its political efforts to settle the conflict through negotiations. In accordance with the declaration, any proposal would be acceptable provided: first, there was common accord on the demand for an end to the Israeli occupation; second, if the PLO's status of legitimate representative of the Palestinians was recognised; and finally, if the rights of the Palestinian people were guaranteed. Following a discussion of the situation in the occupied territories, the session agreed to restructure the Palestine National Front so it could act efficiently for the PLO on the Palestinian lands occupied by Israel.

The drastic aggravation of the situation on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip was a topic of a special discussion of the 15th session of the Palestine National Council. In the late 1970s and early 1980s the Begin Cabinet openly began to clear the way to prepare the grounds for the annexation of these lands. To attain this objective, the government sought to sharply reduce the local Arab population and to increase the number of Israelis; to establish a structure for perpetuating Israeli rule of the occupied lands through Arab quislings; and to discredit the PLO and undermine its positions.

To implement these measures, the Begin Cabinet added some new accents to its policy on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. Any future spread of Israeli sovereignty over densely populated Arab regions had been criticised by certain Zionist parties, who felt that this would lead to further distressing changes in the demographic situation in Israel, which could lose its "one-nation" nature, signifying the failure of the Zionist idea of the creation of a Jewish state. Since it basically shared these "fears", the Begin Cabinet thought it best to force the Arab population out of these regions. About 30,000 would have to leave each year for their "real" homes. An indication of this is the idea of A. Sharon, former Defence Minister, who flatly stated

that the place of any Paléstinian state was the East Bank of the Jordan, and that Israel's job was to drive the West Bank Arab population to the other side of the river.

To consolidate its position on the West Bank, the Israeli government came up with a project for massive Israeli settlement on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, where the number of Israeli settlers is planned to be increased to 1.5 million by the year 2010.¹⁵

Repressive measures against local Arab authorities--city mayors, members of municipal councils and other political leaders--has characterised the Israeli occupation regime. This is one way the Israeli leaders intend to greatly weaken the Palestinian leadership and to pit their creatures against it. This aspect of Israeli policy gave birth to the "village leagues"--organisations headed by Arab quislings and subsidised by Israel.

The Israeli leaders declared the formation of a "Civil Administration" on the occupied Arab lands at the end of 1981. This step did not mislead anyone: in fact, the Israeli military authorities still run the show on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip, and a Brigadier General heads the "Civil Administration".

The Israeli attempts to undermine PLO influence and to isolate its supporters via repression, threats, the deportation of the most prominent Palestinian leaders, and the attempts to murder several Palestinian mayors have backfired. A commander of the central military district in Israel was compelled to admit that 70 per cent of the demonstrations on the occupied West Bank and in the Gaza Strip had been organised by the PLO.¹⁶

This "new" policy in regard to the occupied lands, which was so widely lauded in Israel, did not "pacify" the population, but on the contrary, led to the most violent resistance in the history of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territory, which developed into a real revolt in April 1982.

The steady growing of anti-Palestinian and anti-Arab current in Israeli politics in the late 1970s and early 1980s was primarily an offshoot of the increasingly aggressive American foreign policy, both global, and in the Middle East, particularly after the Republican Reagan Administration took over the White House. Even the Republican party's election platform rejected any possibility of the PLO taking part in the political settlement process of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It also stated that the creation of an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip would be a destabilising factor in the Middle East, and it made the specific point that Jerusalem should continue to be under Israeli rule.

The practical steps taken by the Reagan Administration in the Middle East quickly revealed that the President was not only sticking to his election campaign statements, but was also trying to make US support of Israel the cornerstone of the American Middle East policy. Reagan's statements that Israel would play a growing role as a US ally was a real stimulus for the Israeli extremists, and this was clearly shown in the spring of 1981 during the Israeli election campaign during which Begin and his supporters used the Reagan doctrine to bolster their positions.

A search for the kind of "peaceful" solution that would answer Israel's needs and would stipulate the obligatory exclusion of the PLO from participation in the settlement process became a feature of the Republican Administration's policy on the Middle East. A "Jordanian alternative" proposed by American diplomacy to attain this particular goal was designed to attach Jordan to the Camp David accords and to make it responsible (by-passing the PLO) for the solution of the Palestine problem.

The PLO's tireless efforts in the political life of the Arab world created serious obstacles for American diplomacy to make the "Jordanian alternative" a reality. The ruling Arab regimes (conservative as well) opposed the idea of "cornering the Palestinians", and confirmed that only the complete withdrawal of Israeli troops from the lands occupied

in 1967, East Jerusalem included, was the prime condition of settlement. Since Israel categorically rejects this condition, Jordan decided not to waste time even discussing the "Jordanian alternative" formula.

The PLO's realistic and constructive policy contributed to its growing international recognition and political standing. The late 1970s saw certain changes in West European attitudes to the Palestine problem and the PLO. The American magazine Newsweek had to admit that European leaders were trying to dissociate themselves from what many of them thought was a controversial and even dangerous US policy with regard to the Palestinian people's rights.¹⁷ West European officials went on fact-finding tours to the Middle East to work out their own position on a settlement to the conflict. The EEC summit in Venice in the summer of 1980 issued a declaration on the Middle East. But it backed the Camp David scheme on the main points, which caused certain Arab countries and the PLO to treat it negatively.

Meanwhile, the European countries were still very interested in the Middle East crisis settlement, as was revealed at the European summit conference in Luxembourg, in early December 1980, which adopted a document containing several settlement alternatives taking into account the rights of the Palestinian people.

The PLO's increasing activity in the Arab world and its growing international standing hobbled the US-Israeli manoeuvres aimed at burying the Palestine problem. The Israeli leaders began to consider the PLO to be a serious obstacle to their plans for annexation. To make the annexation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip easier, and to "close" the Palestine question forever, on June 6, 1982, the Israeli extremists, instigated by the United States, launched a huge invasion of Lebanon where the refugee camps and PLO's bases were located.

The Israeli General Staff had long been planning an assault against Lebanon. In the spring of 1982 the news media began publishing information on the preparations for the Israeli invasion—the Israeli leaders, backed by the US, did not make their plans a secret.

The time for the invasion was chosen by the Israeli Cabinet on the basis of certain new factors of the Middle East developments, particularly the Iraqi-Iranian war, which diverted Arab attention--as the Israeli strategists (primarily the conservative regimes) saw it--from the confrontation with Israel. Tel Aviv saw the return of the remaining part of Sinai to Egypt in April 1982 as a "payment" to the United States for the annexation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip with the destruction of the PLO as the necessary condition.

Washington was fully aware of the impending operation, since the United States had approved the Israeli plan that February during a visit to Washington by a top Israeli intelligence officer. "In retrospect," wrote Israeli observer Z. Schiff in the magazine Foreign Policy, "this visit was clearly a first Israeli attempt to engage the United States as a partner in its plans for Lebanon."¹⁸ During his visit to Washington in the middle of May 1982, A. Sharon told A. Haig that the military operation against the PLO could begin at any moment.¹⁹ The US agreed immediately to supply F-16 and F-15 war-planes to Israel, and to provide it with an additional aid.

Thus, there was clear evidence of the US-Israeli conspiracy, contrived primarily against the legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine.

There is no doubt that in general the Israeli plan answered the interests of US imperialism in the Middle East. It was designed to undermine a leading sector of the Arab national liberation movement, and to open, as the White House saw it, possibilities to expand the Camp David framework and bring Lebanon into it. Were the plan to work, it might undermine the front of Arab countries opposing Israel, which had already lost Egypt as a result of the Camp David accords and, besides, it could help entrench and expand the US military presence in the Middle East.

The invasion put into motion by the Israeli Cabinet, confident of the US support, however was courageously resisted by the PLO and Lebanese national-patriotic forces which defen-

ded West Beirut for more than two months, although Israeli troops used the most sophisticated and barbaric means of destruction--anti-personnel shells, phosphorous and vacuum bombs.

Israel was not able either to wipe out the PLO or to undermine its international credibility. The heroism of the Palestinian fighters created a wave of sympathy for the just cause of the Palestinian people. The Israeli invasion and the barbarous military tactics employed by the Israeli forces caused changes in the Western public opinion that were negative to Israel. Apart from this, the Zionist leaders were unable to gain nationalist consensus at home, as they had in all the previous wars unleashed by Israel. Protests in Israel against the war in Lebanon are now becoming massive demonstrations by thousands.

The Soviet Union played an important part in deterring the expansionist hopes of Israel and its patrons. The USSR's solid position on the Israeli invasion of Lebanon was sincerely appreciated by the Palestinian and Arab peoples. And its constructive and consistent policy in the UN did not allow the invaders to attain their desired goals.

Although in general the Israeli invasion of Lebanon is in step with the aggressive plans of American imperialism in the Middle East, the real scope of the military actions and genocide sanctioned by the Israeli rulers hampered American manoeuvres in the Arab world and created difficulties in US relations with conservative Arab regimes. This forced Washington to try and return back to the "settlement" idea, à la Americaine, and to lead the Camp David process out of deadlock.

On September 1, 1982, President Reagan formulated a plan for "establishing peace in the Middle East". The Reagan Plan brings some of the Camp David principles into line with new conditions in the region. Laying primary hopes on involving King Hussein in negotiations carried out under the American aegis, the US said that it would prefer to see an association of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip with Jordan

once the transition period would be over, and even claimed that Israel would build no more settlements in those territories. However, although Washington is flirting with conservative Arab regimes, it cannot conceal the fact that at bottom the US initiative obviously shows that it is still loyal to its most reliable ally in the region--Israel. Washington has repeated that it opposes the creation of an independent Palestinian state and the dismantling of the existing Israeli settlements. The plan does not contain any real alternative for a solution to the problem of Jerusalem which the United States would obviously rather not touch to avoid a negative reaction by Israel. This US "initiative" focuses attention on a mythical "Soviet threat".

It is significant that the Reagan Plan, which was timed for the Arab summit in Fez on September 6, 1982, did not affect the Arab position. The Fez summit was the first time ever that the representatives of the Arab states and the PLO worked out a common policy for a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict which stipulated the basic principles for dealing with the Palestine problem--the creation of an independent Palestinian state led by the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Those resolutions coincide with the position of the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community and which they have upheld for many years; they underlined the political credibility of the PLO in the Arab world and internationally. They clearly showed that given the present situation, a just settlement of the Palestine problem would be an indispensable condition for stabilising the situation in the region, and that the PLO has continued to pursue a realistic and constructive policy, constantly struggling for the realisation of the national rights of the Palestinian people.

Counteracting any attempts to conclude separate deals to the detriment of Palestinian interests is an important element of this struggle. The 16th session of the Palestine National Council held in Algiers in February 1983 was a new stage in the elaboration of the strategy and tactics of the PRM. Just before the session, many Western and Israeli pro-

propaganda agencies forecast a split in the PLO, basing their conjectures on the extremely difficult international situation which the Palestinian movement was then facing. However, the forecasts of a split did not materialise. The main result of the session was the preservation and consolidation of Palestinian national unity. The Palestine National Council lent support to the peace initiative adopted by the Arab summit in Fez in September 1982. The participants also expressed their high opinion of the September 16, 1982, Soviet proposals on a Middle East settlement. As far as the Reagan Plan is concerned, the final document refused to consider it as a legitimate foundation for a just solution of the Palestine problem. All the participants gave one and the same reason for their negative attitude to the US plan--it flouted the inalienable national right of the Palestinian people to an independent state, and did not recognise the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The session gave a particularly high estimation of the development and consolidation of the unity and friendship between the PLO and the socialist countries, especially the USSR. The final document also emphasised the importance of extending relations with democratic forces in Israel which was striking evidence of the fact that the PLO's approach to the Palestine problem was founded on the democratic principles for dealing with the national question, and firmly rejected narrow nationalist views.

The results of the 16th session of the Palestine National Council as well as the entire history of the Palestinian national liberation struggle provide solid reasons to believe that the PLO is firmly committed to a principled position on a Middle East settlement and the solution of the Palestine problem. This solid position guarantees future success for the just cause of the Palestinian people.

NOTES

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PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANISATION IN INTER-ARAB RELATIONS

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The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) was set up in the course of the First National Palestine Congress which took place in Jerusalem at the end of May 1964 after long debates among the Arab countries as to the expediency of forming such a body, and its aims and place in the system of inter-Arab relations. Naturally, the character of these debates was influenced by the specific features of the development of the Arab world and the differences in the socio-political structures of its states.

Back in the spring of 1959 the government of the United Arab Republic proposed recognising a Palestinian community which could play its own role in the struggle against Israel.¹ President Nasser characterised the community of Palestinian refugees as "the Palestine entity"² which needed a representative in the world and inter-Arab arenas. Responding to the UAR proposal, Iraq advanced the concept of creating a Palestinian republic on the Gaza Strip and on the West Bank of the Jordan removing these territories from the jurisdiction of Egypt and Jordan respectively.

Addressing a session of the Council of the League of Arab States (LAS), held in 1960, the representative of Jordan proposed establishing a Palestinian organisation with headquarters in Amman. This plan of organising the people of Palestine included items which provided for subordination of the new organisation to the Jordanian government. The Egyptian delegation in its turn proposed setting up in each Arab country where the Palestinian refugees had found shelter

their local organisations and integrating the latter into a cohesive Palestinian body within the framework of LAS. However, up until 1964 the Arab countries failed to adopt a constructive decision with regard to the formalisation of "the Palestine entity".

The Middle East situation in the early sixties forced the governments of the Arab states to give greater attention to the Palestinian problem. True, it cannot be said that they had neglected it before. Despite differences of approach to the ways of solving the Palestinian question, the Arab countries displayed unity with regard to the key question--observance of the rights and interests of the Palestinian Arabs and ensuring their protection, including from encroachments by individual Arab regimes. A case in point is the reaction provoked by the incorporation of the West Bank (including the eastern part of Jerusalem) into the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, formed in April 1950.

The LAS political committee, despite the assurances of King Amir Abdallah of Jordan that the "incorporation (of the West Bank) will not influence the final solution of the Palestinian problem", decided to recommend that the LAS Council suspend Jordan's membership in the League. The recommendation was supported by the representatives of Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon. On June 12, 1950, LAS declared the incorporation of the West Bank into Jordan invalid although the latter remained a League member. The decision said that the Council of the League proceeded from the assurances of the Jordanian government that the "Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan ... will retain this part (of Palestinian territory) under its control so that it would be subject to the final settlement of the Palestinian question when remaining parts are liberated within their pre-aggression borders",³ that is, before the establishment of the State of Israel.

At the end of 1963 the Arab world actively began to discuss what measures should be taken in connection with the Israeli project to build a dam on the Jordan and to dig a canal for the irrigation of the Negev Desert. The project provided for setting up 120 Israeli military settlements on

the Negev irrigated lands, which meant the continued colonisation of Palestinian territory.

In response to the Israeli actions, President Nasser proposed convening a conference of the heads of state and government of the Arab countries which would discuss the necessary counter-measures. The conference was held in Alexandria in January 1964.

Here it should be noted that at the 40th session of the Council of the League the Arab states made substantial progress in solving the question of "the Palestine entity". Egypt and Jordan, which for a long time had differed in their stands, reached a compromise. This cleared the way for establishing a body of "the Palestine entity". The session decided to appoint Ahmad al-Shukairi Palestinian representative at the Arab League. He was "entrusted with carrying out consultations with the representatives of the people of Palestine for the formation of a new general government for Palestine".⁴

The decision was approved by a conference of the heads of state and government of the Arab countries. Its final communique pointed out that the organisation of the people of Palestine will enable it "to liberate its homeland and determine its future".⁵ Thus, the inter-Arab meeting in Alexandria made a significant contribution to the organisation of the Palestinian people's efforts to ensure their inalienable national rights.

Most of the Arab countries approved the establishment of the PLO regarding it as an instrument of the Arab struggle against Israel and of coordination of the growing political activity of the Palestinian people. A conference of the ministers of the economy and foreign ministers of the Arab countries decided to allocate 2.3 million dollars to finance the PLO.⁶

At their Second Arab Summit Conference, held in Alexandria in September 1964, the Arab states officially recognised the PLO granting its leader the right to attend the LAS ses-

sions. They also approved the formation of the Palestine Liberation Army and allocations for it.

The vigorous support for the creation of the PLO and its armed units by the Arab countries proved that the Palestinian problem was of significance to all Arab countries. The attitude to this problem became the yardstick that determined the political stance and prestige of each leader of the Arab world. Support (true, not infrequently, purely verbal) of the Palestinian Arabs became a rule of the political activity of most of the Arab leaders, who demonstrated it in order to strengthen their positions both at home and in the Arab world as a whole.

Western studies on the initial stage of the Palestinian Resistance Movement usually present this period of its history as a collision of two trends. One, represented by the PLO leaders, headed by al-Shukairi, advocated orientation on the Arab states in the struggle for the liberation of Palestine. In this connection it urged considering the destiny of the Palestinian movement in the context of the socio-political processes in the Arab countries. The other trend, represented by what is known as independent Palestinian organisations, notably Al-Fatah, considered it necessary to search for independent ways of achieving the Palestinians' national aims, in other words, being less dependent on the Arab countries' foreign policy.

Such a view, we believe, is at variance with objective reality. The aforementioned two trends did not bear an antagonistic character but rather complemented each other. Their parallel development resulted in their mutual enrichment eventually growing into a single conception of reliance on the Arab masses of Palestine within the framework of the common Arab struggle against the aggressive policy of Israel.

The consolidation of the centrifugal trend in the Palestinian revolution, which promoted the emergence of a number of independent organisations, was an inevitable process reflecting the growth of the national awareness of the Palestinian people forced into exile. Without this no external support could have led to the Palestinian Resistance Move-

ment (PRM) becoming a vanguard contingent of the Arab national liberation movement.

However, the fundamental importance for the formation of the PRM is also the political support and material assistance rendered the Palestinians by the Arab world. Since the creation of the State of Israel the Arab states have been attaching paramount importance in their policy to questions related to the Arab-Israeli conflict. This conclusion is all the more justified if we take into account the approach of the Arab countries to various issues. Even in those cases when the PRM failed to achieve the desired relations with individual Arab countries it always had the support of the majority of Arab states. Running ahead, here it is pertinent to recall that the 11th Arab Summit Conference (Amman, 1980), confirmed, despite the absence of the PLO (due to the stand taken by its leaders) that it was the only legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine.

The June 1967 Israeli aggression against the neighbouring Arab states introduced new elements into the character of the Arab-Israeli conflict, which considerably affected the positions of the Arab countries with regard to the ways of settling the conflict. The aggression clearly showed that the expansionist plans of Israel's Zionist leaders were by no means limited to the territories of Palestine proper but were also targeted on the neighbouring sovereign Arab states. Now it was not only a question of the liberation of Palestine and of ensuring the rights of the Palestinian Arabs, but also of fighting for the liberation of the Israeli-occupied territories of Arab countries.

The 1967 Khartoum Conference of the Arab Heads of States advanced a slogan of struggle for the elimination of the consequences of Israeli aggression on the basis of a "three no" formula ("no" to peace with Israel, "no" to recognition of Israel, and "no" to direct negotiations with Israel). Simultaneously, the conference reaffirmed the Arab countries' commitment to defend "the right of the Palestinian people to their homeland".⁷ At the same time, there were differences of approach between the governments of Arab countries and

the PLO to the ways of settling the Arab-Israeli conflict. The PLO representative proposed his plan of actions of the Arab countries which contained a recommendation to refuse to conduct even indirect negotiations with Israel, recognise even the pre-June 5, 1967 status quo, or reach "any settlement that may affect the Palestinian cause".⁸

Subsequently, the contradictions between the PLO and a number of Arab countries concerning the political solution of the question of elimination of the consequences of Israeli aggression at times led to sharp controversies. This happened, for instance, when Egypt and Jordan, in August 1976, accepted the US proposal on resumption of the mission of the UN Secretary-General's special envoy in the Middle East, Gunnar Jarring, with the aim of working out a political settlement on the basis of the UN Security Council Resolution No. 242 adopted on November 22, 1967.

The socio-political changes observed in the Arab world after the Israeli aggression of 1967 drew the Palestinian refugees into active political life in the Arab countries accelerating the formation of Palestinian national self-awareness. The activation of the Palestinian organisations connected with this process made it essential that the Palestinian leaders maintain certain relations with the Arab countries from whose territories the Palestinian guerrilla units operated. The Palestinians' main task was to obtain these countries' recognition of the guerrillas' right of asylum after their anti-Israeli operations on occupied territories. Of no less importance was the Palestinian organisations' right to freely conduct political work among the refugees in the camps set up in the Arab countries after 1948.

The PRM made an invaluable contribution to dispelling the atmosphere of uncertainty and hopelessness which had set in in the Arab world after the defeat of June 1967. The battle of Karum fought by the Palestinian guerrillas in March 1968 convincingly showed that the Israeli army could be defeated and that its invincibility was a myth. The battle of Karum inspired the masses of the Arab countries evoking their growing sympathy for, and support of, the PLO and the PRM as a

whole, thus strengthening the Palestinians' positions in the entity of inter-Arab relations.

At the same time, it became clear that the only real way of consolidating the role of the PLO, recognised by all Arab countries, was by drawing into its leadership forces which waged an armed struggle against Israel. The election in February 1969 of Yasser Arafat, the head of the leading guerrilla organisation Al-Fatah, Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and the integration of most of the Palestinian guerrilla organisations within the PLO framework were a big step in the consolidation of its positions in the Arab world.

The establishment of constant conflict-free relations with most of the Arab countries became the guideline of the new Palestinian leadership, which was dictated not only by the necessity of ensuring material and political support. The growing influence of the PLO and guerrilla organisations and the expanding scale of their activities inevitably affected the PRM's relations with the government circles of the Arab countries where Palestinians lived. The resulting differences not infrequently took the form of armed clashes between the Palestinian units and those of, for instance, the Lebanese and Jordanian armies. Palestinian resistance could hold its ground in these conflicts only if it was supported by other Arab countries. Although the PLO leaders strove to stay out of the inter-Arab disputes the Palestinian movement inevitably became drawn into them since its development was not an isolated process but was closely related to the political situation in the Arab world.

Experience shows that the PLO's influence and political prestige in the Arab countries has certain limits. Overstepping these limits is fraught with a clash between the interests of the PRM and those of the Arab country concerned. The PRM must either check the broadening of its contacts with the progressive and patriotic forces of a country, especially those in opposition to its regime, or be prepared to enter into conflict with this regime. This basic dilemma facing the PLO in its relations with the Arab countries was not always successfully solved without an acutely conflicting phase.

Take the civil war in Jordan (September 1970). It resulted in a severe crisis within the PRM, which was overcome only years later.

Apart from there, all-Arab, factors, a major reason for this crisis was, in the authors' opinion, the unpromising approach taken at the time by the Palestinian Resistance Movement to the ways of settling the Palestinian problem, its staking exclusively on the armed struggle. Meanwhile, the objectively developing situation in the Middle East and around the Arab-Israeli conflict dictated the necessity of using all military and political methods of struggle for the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine. With the emergence of the PLO in the international arena as an independent political organisation which expressed the national rights of the Palestinian Arabs, the one-sided emphasis on the military aspect, conflicting with the realities of international life, immobilised the PRM's political initiative.

A turning point in the PRM approach to the ways of solving the Palestinian problem was the initiative taken by Nayif Hawatmah, Secretary-General of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine. In August 1973, he proposed the framing by the PRM of a stage-by-stage plan of achieving its strategic aim—the creation of a united democratic state in Palestine. As the first step in this direction he proposed the establishment of a Palestinian national authority in any part of the territories that had been liberated militarily or politically. The Hawatmah proposal showed a tendency towards strengthening the positions of the forces in the Palestinian movement which, realistically evaluating the existing balance of strength between the Arab countries and Israel, advocated introducing certain corrections in the PRM strategy and tactics.

The resumption of military operations in the Middle East in October 1973 showed the urgency of a political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. As regards the PRM, the October war confronted it with serious questions, primarily that of the attitude to, and participation in, a political settlement. These questions could be solved only in contact

with the Arab states. The basic problem was in what capacity and at what level the PLO could join in the political negotiations. It is precisely this problem, seemingly a simple one, that remains at the heart of the struggle for a just, comprehensive settlement.

In this period the recognition by the Arab countries of the PLO as the only representative of the Arab people of Palestine acquired paramount importance. A major role in the attainment of this aim was played by the conference of the Arab heads of state held in Algiers in November 1973. It occupies a prominent place in the history of inter-Arab relations; the decisions adopted by it, summing up, as it were, the efforts over the years of the realistically-minded political forces of the Arab world to reach a political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The conference's main achievements were undoubtedly the confirmation of the Arab character of the struggle against Israeli aggression and expansionism and the charting of a positive programme of action by the Arab countries aimed at establishing a just and stable peace in the Middle East. The conference listed as the main and indispensable conditions for achieving such a peace:

- 1) withdrawal of the Israeli troops from the occupied Arab territories, and first of all from Jerusalem;
- 2) restoration of all national rights of the Palestinian people.⁹

The Algiers Conference decided to consider the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.¹⁰ However, this decision, which at that time was not supported by Jordan, remained unpublished although its adoption was confirmed directly after the conference in declarations by a number of Arab leaders.¹¹

As is known, the participation of the Palestinian representatives in the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East was blocked by behind-the-scene negotiations between the United States and President Sadat of Egypt, who accepted the Israeli formulation that the question of other Middle East

participants would be discussed at the first stage of the conference.¹² The Sadat delegation to the conference, however, said not a word about Palestinian representation, just stating that the Palestinian people should be given the right to self-determination and the right to live in peace and dignity.¹³ The manoeuvres of the Egyptian diplomats lent particular importance to the clear and explicit position of the Soviet Union. Its Foreign Minister, Andrei Gromyko, stated that the Palestinians' participation in the settling process was essential, that the Palestinian problem could not be discussed and solved in the absence of representatives of the Arab people of Palestine.¹⁴

In view of the actions of the United States, Israel, and President Sadat of Egypt, the Geneva Conference never got down to discussing its main problem--the problem of a comprehensive Middle East settlement which would ensure the legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine and the withdrawal of the Israeli troops from all occupied Arab territories.

After the conference's first stage two interconnected tasks faced the PLO: first, that of obtaining its recognition by Jordan and, second, that of enlisting the support of the Arab countries by amending its political programme in keeping with the situation.

The 12th session of the Palestinian National Council, meeting in Cairo early in June 1974, advanced the official aim of establishing the national authority of the Palestinian people on any part of occupied Palestinian territory liberated in one way or another as a "stage in the implementation of the PLO strategy directed at creating a democratic state" in Palestine.¹⁵ This decision cleared the way for including the PLO in the efforts aimed at ensuring a political settlement and gave the "green light" to recognition of the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. The Arab summit conference held in Rabat in October 1974 (this time with the participation of Jordan), officially recognised the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine.

The decisions of the Rabat Conference are of great importance. They still determine to a considerable extent the character of relations between the FRM and the Arab countries and their approach to the Palestinian problem. The conference confirmed the "Palestinian people's right to return to their homeland and to self-determination",¹⁶ and supported the "Palestinian people's right to create an independent national authority led by the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people on any territory which will be liberated". The Arab countries committed themselves to support such an authority when established "in all areas and at all levels". They also announced their readiness to "preserve the national unity of the Palestinian people and not to interfere in its internal affairs", and to render all possible assistance and support to the PLO in accomplishing the tasks facing it "in the international and inter-Arab arenas".

Thus, at the Rabat Conference the Arab countries recognised the responsibility of the PLO for the Palestinian lands and for determining their future. At the end of 1974, on the initiative of the Arab countries the Palestinian question was included in the agenda of the coming session of the UN General Assembly. In accordance with the Rabat Conference decisions, the session was attended by the King of Morocco, the President of Algeria, the President of Lebanon, and by Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee.

Taking into account the stand of the Arab countries, supported by the socialist and by most of the non-aligned countries, the UN General Assembly decided to recognise the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine and grant it observer status.¹⁷ Broad opportunities opened up before the PLO for waging an intensive political struggle for the inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine, and above all, for the right to self-determination and the creation of its own independent state. However, the realisation of these possibilities was blocked by serious difficulties, especially those connected with the position of the United States and Israel. They want to impose on the

Arab countries a policy of separate deals, ignore the PRM as an independent factor of the Middle East situation and prevent its participation in the political settlement of the Middle East problem.

The American-Israeli plans laid special emphasis on Egypt. Two agreements on the disengagement of troops on the Egyptian front, concluded in January 1974 and September 1975, showed Sadat's readiness to make a separate deal with Israel, to agree to a settlement of the Palestinian problem which would suit the ruling circles of Tel Aviv.

2397 An example of Sadat's manoeuvring on the Palestinian issue was his stand on the question of Palestinian representation during the talks with the King of Jordan in June 1974. A joint Egyptian-Jordanian communique noted that "the PLO is the legitimate representative of the Palestinians with the exception of those who live in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan",¹⁸ i.e., not only of those Palestinians who live in Jordan proper, but also those who live on the Israeli-occupied territories since formally they had been annexed by Israel from Jordan.

The publication of this document sparked off a storm of protest in the PLO. Under the powerful pressure of the Palestinians, supported by the Arab world, the Sadat Government was forced to announce that it officially dissociated itself from the stand stated in the document. In effect, however, the Egyptian leaders continued to pursue a policy of separate agreements with Israel, sidetracking the PLO and acting contrary to their commitment vis-à-vis other Arab countries to block "all attempts to effect any partial political settlement bearing in mind that the problem is a common one".¹⁹

In these conditions the main line of the PLO's activity in the inter-Arab arena was to mobilise the public against the policy of separate deals pursued by the US in Middle East affairs. The special appeal of the PLO Executive Committee to the Arab nation of March 7, 1975 emphasised that "all US settlement projects in the form of a separate partial solution are geared to restoring (to the Arabs) part of the

occupied territories in exchange for (their) giving up the solution of the problem in its entirety so as to strike a blow at the Palestinian revolution and obstruct the implementation of the central aims of our struggle and then gradually to defeat the entire Arab national liberation movement".²⁰ The PLO called on the Arab peoples to wage a vigorous struggle against the US capitulationist variant of the settlement.

And yet--despite the strongly negative attitude of almost the entire Arab world to the separate actions--the Sadat regime made a deal with Israel, which was formalised in the Camp David accords. Sadat's agreement to the so-called "Palestinian autonomy" as a formula for the solution of the Palestinian problem aroused the particular indignation of the Arabs. This was not accidental. Such "autonomy" was aimed at preserving Israeli control of Palestinian territories--the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza sector excluding the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination and the creation of their own independent state.

A principled evaluation of the Camp David agreements was given by the Baghdad Conference of the Arab Heads of State held in November 1978. The conference denounced these agreements as conflicting with the decision of the previous all-Arab forums, the Arab League Charter and the UN resolutions on Palestine. It confirmed the "inadmissibility of a separate solution of the problem of Palestine or that of Arab-Zionist confrontation as a whole on the part of any individual Arab country".²¹ Its decisions pointed out the all-Arab character of the Palestinian problem, which made the "struggle for the restoration of the Arab rights in Palestine and on the occupied Arab territories a common national responsibility".

The conference made it binding on the Arab states to "grant all forms of assistance and support to the PRM struggle in its various manifestations through the PLO, the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people both on and outside the occupied territories, to the struggle (of the Palestinian people) for liberation and the restoration

of national rights, including the right to self-determination, to return to the homeland and the creation of its own independent state on its national territory. All Arab countries must press for the preservation of Palestinian national unity and refrain from interfering in the Palestinians' internal affairs". The conference called on Egypt to renounce the Camp David agreements and not to sign a separate peace treaty with Israel. Rejecting separate settlement, the conference urged a solution of the Middle East problems that would accord with the decisions of a conference of the Arab heads of state convened for this express purpose.

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The position of the Arab states as reflected in the Baghdad Conference decisions was largely the result of the PLO's intensive efforts to expose the anti-Arab and, specifically, anti-Palestinian orientation of the Camp David accords. Using its influence and prestige among the Arab masses, the PLO was able to convince the vacillating elements in the Arab world that the Camp David scheme of settlement had nothing in common with satisfaction of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, that, on the contrary, it pursued the aim of saddling the Palestinian Arabs with an Israeli protectorate.

The entire Arab world took the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli separate peace treaty on March 26, 1979 as an act of betrayal of the national interests of the Palestinian and other Arab peoples and of capitulation by Sadat to Israel and the United States. With the participation of the PLO, the conference of foreign and finance ministers of the Arab countries held in Baghdad in March 1979 framed all-Arab sanctions against Egypt, which remain effective to this day.

With the Palestinians and Jordan categorically refusing to take part in the negotiations on Palestinian autonomy the Camp David conspirators were forced to conduct the negotiations among themselves, a fact which ultimately led the talks into a blind alley.

After the completion of the "Sinai stage" of the anti-Arab Camp David collusion the United States and Israel did not abandon their actions directed at imposing their policy

of separate deals on the Arabs. Taking advantage of Israel's treacherous aggression in Lebanon, the United States in September 1982 advanced proposals for a Middle East settlement which have come to be known as the Reagan Plan. Complicating the Middle East situation to the utmost and encouraging the Israeli aggressors by word and deed, Washington hoped by military and political pressure to force the Arabs to accept its conception of the Middle East's political system which closes the door on the creation of an independent Palestinian state and the exercise, on this basis, of the national rights of the Arab people of Palestine. The US President proposed the notorious Camp David plan of curtailed "Palestinian autonomy" by "associating" the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza sector with Jordan. To this it should be added that the American plan completely ignored the question of the participation in settling the Palestinian problem of the principal party in the Arab-Israeli conflict--the Arab people of Palestine--as well as of the PLO, its universally recognised representative.

The Reagan Plan was put forward shortly before the Arab summit conference, which took place in Fez, Morocco, on September 6-9, 1982. It was clear that Washington expected to get support for its proposals in Fez, the assumption being that some Arab countries would agree to change their position with regard to the PLO as the only representative of the Palestinians, without which the Reagan Plan was doomed.

However, these calculations were pivoted on a completely erroneous premise. The heroic struggle of the Palestinian patriots during the Israeli assault on Western Beirut, known as the 88-day battle, further enhanced the PLO's prestige all over the world, let alone in the Arab world. The Israeli aggressors and their overseas protectors suffered a moral and political fiasco in Lebanon.

The Fez Conference, in putting forward a constructive platform for a comprehensive Middle East settlement, rejected, in effect, the Reagan Plan and confirmed the necessity of satisfying "the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the exercise of its inalienable national rights

under the leadership of the PLO, its only legitimate representative".²² The realisation of this right was seen by the conference in the "creation of an independent Palestinian state with the capital in the Arab part of Jerusalem".

The events that followed the Fez Conference showed that the United States continued to stake on a possible change of the Arab states' stand on the PLO's role and place in the Middle East settlement. And what is more, after the Jordanian Government's refusal to enter into any negotiations on behalf of the Palestinians the US Administration launched a broad propaganda campaign against the PLO alleging that the latter was creating obstacles to peace in the Middle East by refusing to empower Jordan to conduct negotiations with the United States and Israel on the basis of the Reagan Plan. The US Government thus attempts to bring pressure to bear on the Arab countries in order to force them not to recognise the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine.

The specific conditions of the PRM's activity predetermine its special place in the Arab national liberation movement. It is important to bear in mind the coincidence and at times interweaving of the interests and aims of the Palestinians' struggle for their inalienable rights with those of the anti-imperialist struggle of the Arab peoples. It is this community of interests that creates a stable basis for the PRM's close cooperation with all anti-imperialist forces of the Arab world. Traversing a difficult and complex path, the PRM, led by the PLO, has developed into one of the foremost contingents of the Arab national liberation movement.

In its practical activity aimed at ensuring the rights of the Palestinians the PLO maintains relations not only with the allied forces of the Arab world. Owing to its inherent differences of socio-economic development the Arab world is heterogeneous. Considering this world as one of the main supports in its struggle and entering into various relations with Arab countries, the PLO experiences the influence of different political orientations exerting, in turn, its own influence on them. Contradictions between individual Arab

countries and between individual contingents of the national liberation movement inevitably tell on both the political programme and the means of struggle of the Palestinian movement, on the one hand, and the character of the PLO's relations with individual Arab countries, on the other.

The anti-Arab and, specifically, anti-Palestinian collusion in Camp David and all subsequent events all too clearly confirmed the importance for the PLO of its close alliances in the Arab world, especially with the countries directly involved in confrontation with Israel. The problem of ensuring true and consistent allies in the Arab world is one of the problems given priority attention by the Palestinian leaders in their daily activity in the interests of achieving the PRM aims. The prospects for the Palestinian movement, as also for the cardinal solution of the Palestinian problem, largely depend on how successfully the PLO will solve this particular problem.

From the point of view of the PRM's interests, the relations between the PLO and the Arab regimes at the present stage constitute an important factor in the entire internal and external policy of the PLO. The main political strategy tasks it sets itself in the inter-Arab arena remain as follows:

1. Ensuring broad, consistent support by the Arab countries for the struggle of the Arab people of Palestine for their inalienable national rights, above all, the right to self-determination and the creation of its own independent state.

According to the Palestinian leaders, the PRM's central aim--the creation of an independent Palestinian state--cannot be achieved without the vigorous support of the Arab states, without the coordinated actions of the PRM and the national patriotic forces of the Arab world.

2. Undeviating observance by the Arab countries of the PLO's status as the only legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine and conductor of the Palestinians' effort for state independence. On the practical plane, this

means that no Arab country should be allowed to take unilateral actions with regard to the settlement of the Palestinian problem without the participation of the PLO. As long as the Arab countries recognise the PLO as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people the PRM can expect that the all-Arab stand on questions of the Middle East settlement will be favourable for it and take due account of its opinion. Furthermore, the observance by the Arab countries of the aforementioned PLO status is of fundamental importance for ensuring its international recognition.

3. Ensuring non-interference by the Arab regimes in the PRM's internal affairs and recognition of its leading role among the Palestinian communities in all Arab countries. At the present stage this primarily applies to the PRM's position in Lebanon.

Of no small importance is the strengthening of the PLO's positions in the Persian Gulf countries and in Saudi Arabia, where a considerable number of Palestinians are living. The strengthening of ties between the local Palestinian communities and the PLO will undoubtedly influence these countries' stand on questions of the Middle East settlement.

A serious problem in the PLO's inter-Arab policy is its position among the Palestinians who live in Jordan proper (i.e., on the Jordan's East Bank). After the civil war of 1970-1971 in Jordan the PLO had very limited possibilities of substantially influencing the Palestinian community on the East Bank.

Since the second half of the seventies the PLO has been strengthening its ties with the Palestinians who live on the occupied West Bank and in Gaza. Its increased activity on the occupied Palestinian lands and the strengthening of its cooperation with all national patriotic forces of Jordan, primarily with its Communist Party, is an essential factor in frustrating the US and Israeli attempts to impose a solution of the Palestinian problem which would rule out the creation of an independent Palestinian state.

The PLO's true allies in its efforts to restore the legitimate national rights of the Arab people of Palestine are members of the Front of Steadfastness and Confrontation, formed in December 1977 in response to Sadat's separate actions to achieve a Middle East settlement. The Front embraces Syria, Libya, Algeria, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, and the PLO. Increasing cooperation within the Front--the core of the all-Arab front of resistance to the policy of anti-Arab and, in particular, anti-Palestinian separate deals and capitulation--will help consolidate the PLO positions in the inter-Arab arena and counter the pressure on the PLO by the conservative and reactionary Arab regimes to get it compromise on fundamental questions pertaining to the Middle East settlement in general and the solution of the Palestinian problem in particular.

A wide range of interests and great mutual dependence link the PLO and Syria. They are the affinity of their stands on questions of the Middle East settlement and their joint involvement in the intra-Lebanese crisis and the normalisation of the situation in Lebanon.

Of fundamental importance for strengthening the PLO's inter-Arab positions is its cooperation with all patriotic forces of the Middle East, including the Communist Parties of the Arab countries and Israel, and with all peace-loving states--with the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community in the first place.

NOTES

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- 14 Ibid., p. 8.
- 15 Decisions of the National Council of Palestine, 1964-1974, Compiled by Rached Hamid, Beirut, 1975, p. 247 (in Arabic).
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INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY WITH THE PLO

Mir Pasha ZEINALOV,
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The liberation struggle waged by the Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO enjoys the active and constant support of broad circles of the Arab and world public.

After the Israeli aggression of 1967 the emergence of the Palestinian factor with its consistent anti-imperialist content has exerted a great moral and mobilising influence on the popular masses in Arab countries. The heroic struggle put up by the Palestinian Resistance Movement against Israel's aggressive, expansionist policy has demonstrated the enormous potentialities of the entire Arab national liberation movement. This struggle has met with profound sympathy and aid from all patriotically-minded forces of the Arab world.

Naturally, the Palestinian Resistance Movement, expressing as it does the just aspirations and national rights of its people, has, from the very beginning, found understanding and support on the part of the progressive and democratically-minded forces of the world, especially in the socialist community countries. This is shown, among other things, by the activities of the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee and the Soviet public as a whole supporting the struggle of the Palestinian Arabs.

The Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee was the first public organisation of the USSR to establish contacts with

the Palestinian Resistance Movement and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). These relations go back to 1967, when the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO), jointly with the World Peace Council and other non-governmental organisations developed a broad international campaign to denounce Israeli aggression. The first important actions that drew world public attention were international conferences of solidarity with the Arab peoples held in Cairo in July 1967 and in New Delhi in November 1967.

The next such conference, convened in January 1969 in Cairo, devoted special attention to the Palestinian question. Representatives of the public of more than 70 countries demanded that Israel unconditionally withdraw its troops from the occupied Arab territories and emphasised the just character of the Palestinian Resistance Movement which was in the process of formation at the time. It is indicative that at the Cairo Conference the well-known Palestinian scholar Nabil Shaate, for the first time advanced the concept of a unitary, multinational, democratic state in Palestine.

International solidarity conferences have made a great contribution to denunciation of false anti-Arab theses of Zionist propaganda and the spreading of truthful information about the Palestinian problem and the plight of the Arab people of Palestine who fell a victim to Israeli aggression.

In February 1970, on the invitation of the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, a delegation of the PLO headed by Yasser Arafat visited the USSR for the first time. Meetings of the PLO delegations with representatives of the Soviet public, party and government figures and a cordial welcome accorded it in Moscow, Leningrad, Tashkent and Volgograd vividly demonstrated the feelings of profound friendship and sympathy connecting Soviet people with the Arab people of Palestine. Successful cooperation began between Soviet and Palestinian public organisations--trade unions, youth, women's and creative associations. At that time relations between the PLO and the public of other socialist and non-aligned countries were also taking shape.

An important event for international recognition of the PLO as the vanguard of the Palestinian people's liberation struggle was the 5th Conference of the AAPSO in Cairo in January 1972. It decided to admit the PLO into its membership, thus becoming the first international non-governmental organisation that gave the PLO the status of a full-fledged member. Soon the PLO received similar status within the framework of the World Peace Council and a number of other non-governmental organisations.

The movement of solidarity with the Palestinian people in the Arab world itself has been growing in scope with every passing year. It embraces both official government circles and mass voluntary organisations. On their initiative a meeting was arranged in Beirut in November 1972 of authoritative representatives of the progressive-minded national-patriotic forces of the Arab countries at which an Arab front to support the Palestine revolution was formed. Participants pledged to render allround moral and political and other practical assistance to the PLO and come out together with it against the schemes of Zionism and imperialism in the Middle East. The Arab front supporting the Palestine revolution was headed, right up to his tragic death in March 1977, by the well-known Lebanese and Arab political and public figure Kamal Joublatt.

International and national democratic organisations actively supported the decisions of conferences of the Arab heads of state and government in Rabat and Algiers in 1974 to recognise the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. They carried on energetic activity aimed at securing recognition for the PLO in this capacity on the part of governments and official international organisations.

The peak of international political-diplomatic recognition of the PLO at that stage was reached when the 29th Session of the UN General Assembly adopted decisions on the Palestinian question which confirmed the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people, and the PLO was granted an observer status in the UNO. That was a definite political

victory for the just cause of the Arab people of Palestine. The decision of the highest forum of the world community defined the Palestinian problem as one of the most urgent political problems of the present epoch, requiring constant efforts on the part of governments and parliaments, political parties and public organisations.

However, Israel, with US support, rejected clearcut and substantiated decisions of the world community. It proceeded along the road of a further escalation of the dangerous crisis in the Middle East and the creation of more obstacles in the way of its just solution. The so-called shuttle diplomacy of the then US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger culminated in the signing, on September 1, 1975, of the first Egyptian-Israeli separate agreement known as the "Sinai" agreement. The Arab and world public rightly evaluated that act as one undermining the unity of the Arab countries opposing Israeli aggression, as a step running counter to the interests of a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East crisis and a just solution of the Palestinian problem.

The 12th session of the Council of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation held in Moscow on September 17-19, 1975, noted the dangerous character of the attempts of US imperialism to force partial and separate decisions designed to deal a blow at the Palestine revolution and the Arab liberation movement, undermine the front of Arab solidarity and weaken its struggle against imperialism and Zionism. In a unanimously adopted General Declaration the participants in the session voiced their opposition to any partial or separate solution or agreement, for it would lead to a strengthening of the political and military presence of American imperialism in the region.

At the time no one could foresee that in two years' time President Sadat of Egypt would undertake a trip to Jerusalem, and three years later would sign anti-Arab agreements at Camp David. However, the participants in the Afro-Asian solidarity movement have correctly evaluated the dangerous consequences of the US Administration's policy in the Middle East.

The present situation in the region that has taken shape after Israel's aggression in Lebanon, perpetrated with direct connivance of US ruling circles, has fully confirmed the American expansionist plans in the Middle East--something the AAPSO warned about back in 1975.

The latter half of the 1970s brought hard trials to the PLO and the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples. Zionist agents provoked the civil war in the Lebanon aimed, mainly, at suppressing the forces of the Palestine revolution and liquidating the PLO. When the collapse of that treacherous plot became imminent, its sponsors undertook a new anti-Palestine and anti-Arab scheme: they inspired the so-called peaceful process in the Middle East which culminated in the Camp David deal aimed, primarily, against the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people. The Camp David agreements deeply contradict, from beginning to end, international law and the UN resolutions on Middle East settlement and solution of the Palestinian problem. It should be noted that despite pressure brought to bear on the UNO by the participants in the tripartite separate agreements, they failed to secure the organisation's support or approval.

A mass popular movement has developed in the Arab world against the Camp David deal and the capitulatory course of the Egyptian leadership. In December 1977, the Arab People's Congress was set up in Tripoli and united in its ranks the patriotic forces of the Arab world--more than 150 political parties, liberation movements, trade union and other mass organisations. The participants in the congress set themselves the task of organising joint national actions against Sadat's capitulatory course and the US and Israeli policies in the Middle East and to actively support the PLO. The Permanent Secretariat of the Arab People's Congress has organised a number of large forums and demonstrated the growing cohesion of the democratic and patriotically-minded forces of the region in their struggle against the Camp David policy.

The Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee and other public organisations of the USSR have considerably intensifi-

ed their moral and political support to the Palestinian Resistance Movement and the Palestine Liberation Organisation. They regularly hold anniversary celebrations devoted to the beginning of the Palestine revolution (January 1, 1965), the Land Day (March 30), the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (November 29), which is observed annually in accordance with a decision of the UN General Assembly. Soviet organisations invite Palestinian delegations to attend these functions.

On the eve of the first International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People in 1978 a Soviet Committee of Friendship and Solidarity with the Arab People of Palestine was set up. It included representatives of science, culture and the arts, and public and government figures. The Committee has organised several large exhibitions of Palestinian fine and applied arts, performances of dance ensembles and folklore groups, shown documentary films about Palestine and prepared numerous publications dealing with the Palestinian problem.

A weighty contribution to denunciation of the anti-Arab Camp David deal and the defence of the national rights of the Palestinian people has been made during the period under review by the World Peace Council, the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation, by international trade union, youth and student, women's, religious and other organisations. They arranged conferences, congresses, seminars, etc., in many countries, whose participants resolutely opposed the Camp David policy and declared their support of the PLO and the UNO decisions on the Palestinian question.

The most important of all these forums was the International Conference of Solidarity with the Arab Peoples and with their central problem--Palestine--held in Lisbon in November 1979. It was attended by some 1,000 delegates from 325 political parties and public organisations in more than 100 countries. This was one of the biggest political manifestations in support of the Palestinian people and the PLO. The Conference reflected the desire of the world public, con-

trary to the Camp David deal, to support efforts of the Arab states to reach a just and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East on the basis of the implementation of the national rights of the Palestinian people in accordance with UN decisions.

The Conference formed the International Secretariat of Solidarity with the Arab Peoples which sponsors numerous actions connected with the various aspects of the Palestinian problem and the situation in the Middle East. Representatives of the Soviet public take an active part in the work of the International Secretariat.

An important stimulus for stepping up the activities of international and national public organisations in support of the Palestinian cause was the establishment of the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. The recommendations on the Palestinian question worked out by that Committee and approved by the 31st Session of the UN General Assembly were favourably received by broad circles of the world public. These recommendations contributed to a more intensive study of the various aspects of the Palestinian problem and its place in world politics. The recommendations also disclose the essence of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people and map out ways of their realisation according to international law.

Numerous regional and international seminars sponsored by the UN Committee, in turn, contributed to the growth of the interest of scientific and propaganda centres of various countries in the Palestinian problem and the formation of its scientific-theoretical base, as well as the elaboration and universalisation of its conceptual apparatus. The UN Committee displays a lively interest in the activities of national non-governmental organisations on the Palestinian problem, maintains contacts with them and renders them methodological assistance.

International solidarity with the Palestinian people was vividly displayed during the period of Israeli aggression in Lebanon in the summer of 1982. That barbaric war

against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples unleashed by Israel with the full backing of the US Administration was a frontal attack on the part of the bellicose circles of Zionism and imperialism against the forces of the national liberation movement.

On the initiative of the AAPSO, the World Peace Council, the Arab People's Congress, international trade union, youth, women's, religious and other organisations mass demonstrations and meetings have been held in many countries in protest against Israeli aggression and the US position. Their participants declared their complete solidarity with the heroic Palestinian people and their vanguard--the PLO--as well as with the courageous national-patriotic forces of Lebanon.

Thousands of manifestations in support of the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples have been held in various regions of the Soviet Union. The millions of Soviet men and women taking part denounced the criminal aggressive alliance between the USA and Israel. Soviet public organisations did not confine themselves to voicing moral support to the victims of aggression. The Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee and the Soviet Peace Fund alone have sent four transport planes loaded with medicines, tents, clothing and other prime necessities to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society. The Committee of Youth Organisations of the USSR admitted many Palestinian and Lebanese children to Young Pioneers' holiday camps. The USSR Red Cross Society received more than 100 badly wounded Palestinian soldiers to be treated in the USSR. Fifteen experienced Soviet doctors worked for over two months in Palestinian hospitals on Syrian territory.

The Soviet public energetically supported the initiative of lawyers and parliamentarians of a number of countries to form an International Commission for the Investigation of Israel's Crimes Against the Lebanese People. It included well-known representatives of legal science, medicine and also the creative intelligentsia of more than 30 countries. Later, a Soviet public commission for investigating Israel's

crimes in Lebanon was set up, headed by the Director of the Institute of the State and Law of the USSR Academy of Sciences, V. Kudryavtsev, Corresponding Member of the Academy. The Soviet Commission closely cooperates with the International Commission. The sessions of the International Commission in Nicosia, Athens and Geneva have evoked a broad response. They examined eyewitness accounts, expert conclusions and material evidence testifying to the use by Israel of the most lethal types of American weapons--phosphorous, pellet and vacuum bombs, which are banned by international conventions. On the strength of these and many other facts the International Commission concluded that the USA was the accomplice in Israel's aggression against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples.

The present situation in the Middle East causes justified alarm. Israel continues to occupy Lebanon, steps up its provocations against Syria and prepares a new military venture. Lebanon is being turned into a springboard for the US rapid deployment force, and the number of American marines stationed there is increasing.

US attempts to force the "Reagan plan" on the PLO and Arab countries have failed after the 16th Session of the Palestine National Council and the Palestine-Jordan summit meeting held in April 1983. The socialist countries and the non-aligned movement have supported the Arab plan of Middle East settlement adopted in Fes.

The International Conference on Palestine was an epoch-making event in the efforts the world community makes towards just solution of the Palestinian problem and an allround settlement of the situation in the Middle East. The Conference was held in Geneva in September 1983, to effect the decision of the UN General Assembly. It was participated by official delegations of about 140 countries and the PLO, top officials of the UNO and its specialised institutions, and prominent public figures from more than a hundred international and national non-governmental organisations.

The Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the USSR Council of Ministers greeted the participants in the Confer-

ence with the message which reads: "The Soviet Union reaffirms its unfailing solidarity with the struggle of the Palestine Arab people against Israeli aggression and for national independence. Satisfaction of legitimate national aspirations of the Arab people of Palestine and liberation of the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967 will open favourable prospects for stable and just peace in the Middle East and for security of all peoples and states of the region."

The Geneva Conference unanimously indicated that the refusal of Israel and those supporting its expansionist policy to recognise the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people was the cause of the explosive situation in the Middle East. The Conference resolutions express strong conviction that the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, primarily its right to self-determination and sovereignty, should be ensured on the basis of UN General Assembly Resolution No. 3236 of November 22, 1974. The participants spoke in favour of a special international conference on the Middle East under the aegis of the UNO that could be convened to effect the fundamental principles of the settlement in the Middle East. The PLO which is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people should take part in such a conference on a par with other parties concerned.

It is indicative that the USA and Israel refused to take part in the Geneva Conference, and Great Britain, France, the FRG, Japan and several other countries reduced their participation to the observer status. The very fact appears to show the attitude of imperialist circles towards the Middle East problems and the prospects for their solution.

The world community, at both official and public levels is demanding a halt to Israel's policy of aggression and expansionism, for withdrawal of the aggressor's troops from all occupied Arab lands, for satisfaction of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the establishment of a lasting peace in the Middle East.

THE SOVIET UNION AND THE PALESTINE REVOLUTION

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The development of relations with the Arab people of Palestine and their leader--the Palestine Liberation Organisation--is one of the key elements of the Soviet Union's Middle East policy. The stable and constantly growing Soviet-Palestinian ties characterise the USSR's approach to the Palestine problem--one of the gravest international problems of today. They reflect Soviet support of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Arab people of Palestine and of its programme to ensure their national rights.

An analysis of numerous Soviet foreign-policy documents of recent years--the materials of CPSU congresses, statements of the Soviet Government and the official news agency TASS and speeches by Soviet leaders--make it possible to single out the main features of the USSR's approach to the Palestine problem and its place in the Middle East conflict.

First, solution to the Palestine problem in the interests of the Arab people of Palestine is the key and inalienable element of just and lasting settlement of the Middle East conflict. Such a stand stems, above all, from the premise that historically the Arab-Israeli conflict is rooted in the Palestine problem. Besides, until the legitimate rights and interests of the Palestinian people are guaranteed, their struggle will continue. Historical experience shows that a peace founded on suppression of the rights of states and peoples is fraught with the danger of new wars and armed conflicts.

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Secondly, the Soviet Union considers the political aspect of the Palestine problem to be its main element. The USSR proceeds from the fact that according to the UN Charter and recognised principles of international law the more than four-million Arab people of Palestine have the same right to self-determination as any other people. This right has long and unequivocally been recognised by the UN, and was expressed in the resolution of November 29, 1947 adopted by the UN General Assembly on the abrogation of the British mandate on Palestine and the formation on its territory of two independent states--Arab and Jewish. Subsequently, the right of the Arab people of Palestine to self-determination and the creation of an independent national state on their native land was formulated in the well-known UN General Assembly resolution No. 3236 of November 22, 1974 which has been confirmed by each General Assembly session ever since.

Thirdly, an independent Palestinian state should be set up on the land of Palestine seized by Israel in 1967--the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The eastern sector of Jerusalem should become an inalienable part of a Palestinian state.

Fourthly, along with the political aspect of the Palestine problem, its humane aspect--the problem of more than two million refugees--demands an urgent solution. They should be given the opportunity to return to their hearths, in accordance with UN decisions, or receive corresponding compensation for the property they have been forced to abandon.

And finally, the PLO enjoys the support of the overwhelming majority of the Palestinian people, and as such should be regarded as its sole legitimate representative and take part in the search for peace in the region on a par with all other sides of the Middle East conflict.

A most important feature of the Soviet Union's approach to the Palestine problem is that it has never tried to force on the Palestinians its own idea about the ways it could be solved. On the contrary, the USSR's position has always been based on the demands of the Palestinians themselves. This was specially emphasised by Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the

Executive Committee of the PLO, at a press conference in Moscow on January 13, 1983, when a delegation of the PLO headed by Arafat was on an official visit to the Soviet Union. The Joint Soviet-Palestinian Communique on the talks said:

"It was stated from the Soviet side that the USSR will further firmly support the struggle of the Palestinian people for the implementation of their inalienable national rights, for the establishment of a just peace in the Middle East.

"On behalf of the Palestinian people and the PLO leadership, Yasser Arafat expressed deep gratitude to the Soviet Union for its unselfish support which is an important factor in the struggle of the Palestinian patriots against the Israeli aggressors."¹

It should be noted that the position of the PLO during the almost 20 years of its existence has noticeably developed along the lines of a better coordination of the tasks of national emancipation with the real political situation in the Middle East. Prior to 1974, the Palestinians' demand for self-determination was of a general character pointing to the need to rectify the injustice done to them. The Soviet Union's position on the issue was formulated accordingly at the time. The materials of the 24th Congress of the CPSU held in the spring of 1971 noted the desire of the USSR "...to continue to pursue its line of utmost support for the Arab people subjected to aggression by Israel, which is being encouraged by US imperialism ... seek a just political settlement in the area, which implies withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied territories ... and also satisfying legitimate rights of the Arab people of Palestine".²

After the October war of 1973, when prospects for a just Middle East settlement had improved thanks to definite successes of the Arabs on the battlefield, the PLO elaborated a more concrete programme to solve the Palestine problem. It boils down to the demand to ensure the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland, self-determination, and the creation of an independent national state. This change has been reflected in the Soviet position,

too. The materials of the 25th CPSU Congress held early in 1976 expressed the Soviet view on the Middle East situation in these words: "There is no war in the Middle East at present. But neither is there peace, let alone tranquility. And who would venture to guarantee that hostilities do not erupt anew? This danger will persist as long as Israeli armies remain in the occupied territories. It will persist as long as the hundreds of thousands of Palestinians driven from their land are deprived of their legitimate rights and live in appalling conditions, and as long as the Arab people of Palestine are denied the possibility to create their national state."³

This position of the PLO, as well as the position of the USSR, has remained unchanged since then. Perhaps the only element which defines this PLO programme more thoroughly is the premise adopted by the 16th Session of the Palestinian National Council, that future relations with Jordan should be shaped on the basis of a confederation between the two independent states.⁴ Yasser Arafat informed Soviet leaders about this stand of the PLO during his visit to Moscow in January 1983. The Joint Soviet-Palestinian Communiqué noted that the Soviet side properly assessed this position of the PLO leadership.⁵

One of the distinguishing features of the Soviet stand on the Palestinian issue is its active character. Statements about support to the Palestine revolution are backed, for example, by energetic diplomatic efforts with a view to most speedily ensuring the national rights of the Palestinian people. In certain periods of the Palestine revolution emphases in this work have been shifted, but its essence always remained unchanged.

During the development period of the Palestine revolution the activity of Soviet diplomacy was aimed, above all, at securing international recognition of the national rights of the Palestinian people. Perhaps the most characteristic example of that activity was a Soviet-American summit in the summer of 1973. At the insistence of the Soviet side the

text of the Joint Communiqué on the meeting included the words that, "This settlement ... should take into due account the legitimate interests of the Palestine people."⁶ Assessing the position of the USSR, Yasser Arafat said at the end of 1973: "The Soviet Union and its Communist Party have always acted as sincere friends supporting the Palestine people's just struggle, ... spoken in support of the Palestine people and their legitimate national aspirations."⁷

After the 1973 war, when the USSR, together with the USA, was the co-chairman of the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East, the Soviet Union's effort to draw the PLO into the process of a Middle East settlement came to the fore. The steps undertaken by Soviet diplomacy in this direction were many and varied. On December 21, 1973, speaking at the opening of the Geneva Peace Conference, Andrei Gromyko, USSR Foreign Minister, pointed out that "the Palestinian problem cannot be considered and decided without the participation of the representatives of the Arab people of Palestine".⁸

In the summer of 1974, during a Soviet-American summit meeting in Moscow, the USSR insisted that the USA recognise the necessity to examine the question about other participants from the Middle East in the Geneva Peace Conference.⁹ Although the text of the Soviet-US communiqué did not contain any direct mention of the PLO, the situation prevailing in the Middle East at the time showed that the given formula concerned the PLO first of all.

Leonid Brezhnev's speech on February 14, 1975, at a dinner in Moscow in honour of Harold Wilson, Prime Minister of Great Britain, evoked with wide response in the Arab world. The speech again called for a speedy resumption of the work of the Geneva Peace Conference with the participation of representatives of the Arab people of Palestine which was blocked from the very start by the USA and Israel.¹⁰ A similar position was expressed in a message of the Soviet Government to the US Administration of November 9, 1975, in which the USSR indicated that the PLO delegation "should participate

on an equal basis in the Geneva Conference from the beginning of its resumption".¹¹ However, that Soviet initiative was thwarted by the American side, which regarded PLO participation in the Geneva Conference as a stumbling block.

Another example showing that the USSR's course was aimed at ensuring the national rights of the Palestinian people and drawing the PLO into the process of a Middle East settlement is provided by the Joint Soviet-American Statement on the Middle East of October 1, 1977. It evoked a broad response and envisaged the need for an allround settlement in the Middle East, including guarantees for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. With this aim in view it was agreed "to facilitate in every way the resumption of the work of the Geneva Conference not later than December 1977", with the participation of all sides drawn into the conflict, including the Palestinian people.¹² However, this time, too, these agreements have not been realised due to American reluctance.

Describing the Soviet stand with regard to the Geneva Conference and participation of the PLO representatives in its work, Yasser Arafat said, after his meeting with Soviet leaders in Moscow at the end of August 1977 that, "the USSR had unequivocally stated that it would not take part in the conference if the PLO was deprived of the right to send an independent delegation to take part from the beginning in its deliberations".¹³

A trip to occupied Jerusalem by Egypt's President Anwar Sadat in November 1977 and the separate Egyptian-Israeli negotiations with US participation which started after that, made null and void all efforts to reconvene the Geneva Conference and reach a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East conflict. The task of denouncing the separatist course and returning to collective peace efforts was put to the fore. The Soviet Union has invariably given assistance in keeping to solve this basic task of the Palestine revolution. The Soviet stand on the issue was thoroughly elaborated by Leonid Brezhnev in his replies to questions of Pravda correspondent.

"We by no means consider that the road of unilateral concessions to Israel and separate negotiations with it, such as the notorious talks between the Egyptian and Israeli leaders, leads to the goal [i.e., the establishment of a stable peace in the Middle East--V.B.]," the Soviet leader stressed. "On the contrary, it leads away from it, creating a deep split in the Arab world. This line has the purpose of thwarting a genuine settlement, and primarily of undermining the Geneva Conference even before it opens.

"The lavish praising of the imaginary 'advantages' of the so-called direct talks, that is, of Israel's negotiations with each of the countries subjected to its attack, is actually nothing but an attempt to deprive the Arabs of the strength which lies in their unity and in the support given to their just cause by friendly states."¹⁴

The Soviet Union took a similar position with regard to the Camp David accords. Several days after they were signed Soviet leaders described them as a new anti-Arab deal covering the capitulation of one side and consolidating the aggression of the other, as a deal concluded behind the backs of the Arabs and contrary to their interests.¹⁵ During a visit to the USSR of the PLO delegation headed by Yasser Arafat at the end of October 1978, the Soviet and Palestinian sides gave a more comprehensive assessment of the Camp David deal. "The two sides resolutely condemned the separate deal between Egypt and Israel, concluded with US assistance at Camp David," the Joint Soviet-Palestinian Communique said, "as a deal detrimental to the interests of the Arabs and concluded behind their backs, aimed at helping Israel consolidate its positions on the Arab lands (including Palestinian), seized by it, and preventing the implementation of the inalienable national rights of the Arab people of Palestine."¹⁶

Such was the main assessment of the Camp David accords in the Soviet Union's Middle East policy in recent years. The materials of the 26th CPSU Congress held in February 1981 state that the Camp David policy has pushed back any just Middle East settlement. In this context the Soviet Union has called on all parties concerned to resume honest collective

efforts in order to find a comprehensive settlement on a just and realistic basis. A proposal was put forward to convene a special international conference on the Middle East.¹⁷ This proposal of the USSR is still valid.

Evaluating the USSR's stand on the Camp David issue, the Palestinian writer Rashid al-Khalidi emphasised in his book The Soviet Union and Camp David that it was a logical sequence to a course aimed at defending the interests of the Arab victims of Israeli aggression and at solving, in a comprehensive and just manner, the Middle East conflict, including the genuine realisation of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people.¹⁸

Another distinctive feature of the Soviet position on the Palestinian question is that during the periods when the enemies of the Palestine revolution staked on its military defeat, the USSR invariably defended it resolutely. That was the case of the September 1970 events in Jordan, during the civil war in Lebanon in 1975-1976, and in the course of the broad Israeli aggression against Lebanon in the summer of 1982. We shall dwell briefly on these events.

On September 20, 1970, three days after the start of the Jordanian army's operations against units of the Palestinian Resistance Movement, the official Soviet news agency TASS made a statement expressing the USSR's concern over the fratricidal war that had flared up in Jordan, and calling on the governments of Arab countries to do everything to stop it as quickly as possible.¹⁹ Inasmuch as the situation was being aggravated by open military preparations on the part of the USA and Israel, the USSR Government, through its Embassy in Washington, drew the US Administration's attention to the need to exercise restraint and use its influence on Israel. Contacts were also made with the governments of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Britain, and France, as well as with the UN Secretary-General. It was emphasised in a statement issued by the USSR Foreign Ministry that the Soviet side was convinced that everything necessary should be done in order to put an end, as soon as possible, to the military

hostilities that had broken out in Jordan.²⁰ The Soviet Union was striving, in every way, to contribute to stopping the fratricidal war in Jordan and the extermination of units of the Palestinian Resistance Movement. This goal has been reached.

Grim trials fell to the lot of the Palestine revolution during the sanguinary events in Lebanon in 1975-1976. It was emphasised in a statement of the Soviet Government issued on April 29, 1976, that the true meaning of the events in Lebanon boiled down to the attempts of imperialism, Zionism, and reaction to deal a blow at the forces of Palestinian resistance.²¹ These attempts were especially intensified in the summer of 1976. Late in 1976, the Soviet Union repeatedly undertook diplomatic moves with a view to preventing the enemies of the Palestine revolution from realising their designs.

F. Kaddumi, Head of the PLO Political Department, characterising the Soviet stand with regard to the events in Lebanon noted: "From the very beginning of these events the Soviet Union took the side of the Palestinian Resistance Movement and the national patriotic forces and exerted much effort to mobilise the progressive-minded world public to support these forces."²² As is known, the Palestinian revolution withstood the Lebanese events.

The Soviet Union also took a firm stand during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the siege of Western Beirut in the summer of 1982. The USSR repeatedly called on the USA to take effective joint measures to curb the Israeli aggression. The USSR acted in the same vein in the United Nations. In the heat of these developments, on August 5, 1982 an urgent meeting of the UN Security Council was called at the insistence of the USSR. The Soviet delegation submitted a draft resolution demanding that Israel immediately and fully comply with the previous decisions of the Council to stop hostilities and lift the blockade off Western Beirut. The draft also called on all UN member states to refrain from delivering arms to Israel and granting it military aid. However, the resolution was vetoed by the USA.²³

No doubt, the energetic actions of the USSR in the summer of 1982 largely contributed to the survival of the Palestine revolution and the organised withdrawal of the Palestinian resistance units from Beirut arms in hand. This was noted by the Palestinians themselves. Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, Yasser Arafat, in an interview given to the West German magazine Der Spiegel in September 1982, emphasised that the Soviet Union was a true friend of the Palestinians. It had done everything to curb the Israeli aggression against the Lebanese and Palestinian peoples.²⁴

The consistent stand of the Soviet Union in support of the national rights of the Palestinian people forms the objective basis of Soviet-Palestinian relations. This is a political factor of the strengthening of these relations. Taken in a broader aspect, this factor also includes the Soviet Union's struggle for peace and international security and the struggle of the Palestinian people for their national rights aimed against the policy of the imperialists.

Characteristically, the USSR and PLO present a united front on the principal international problems of today. Anti-imperialism is the main basis for the fruitful development of Soviet-Palestinian relations. However, there are additional factors contributing to the progress of these relations. One of them--ideological--draws the attention of Palestinian scholars themselves. It includes a demunciation of the ideology and practices of international Zionism. This factor is thoroughly analysed, for one, in a book The October Revolution and the Palestine Problem published in Beirut in 1977. Its authors stress that it was Lenin, the founder of the Soviet state, who gave "a theoretical analysis of Zionism, revealed its ideological prerequisites and reactionary class essence, and took practical steps against Zionism".²⁵

In our view, there is one more factor--historical--contributing to Soviet-Palestinian rapprochement. Russian-Palestinian ties go back to the Middle Ages. Later, in 1847, a Russian mission was opened in Jerusalem and in 1858--a consular office. In 1882, a Palestinian Society was established

in Russia. It carried on active scholarly and educational work in Palestine. By 1914, 101 schools and two teachers' training colleges--for men and for women--had been opened there, with a total student body of over 10,000.²⁶ This facilitated the spreading of Russian in Palestine and the native people's familiarisation with Russian history and culture.

There is another important aspect. In contrast to western powers, primarily Britain and France, Russia had never had any territorial claims to Palestine, and its influence there had been confined only to the spiritual and cultural sphere. During the British mandate the colonial authorities obstructed the development of Russian-Palestinian ties. Nevertheless, the ties that have been taking shape over centuries are still alive among both the Palestinian and Russian people. Even today Palestinian Arabs frequently give Russian names to their children. Palestinian motives have firmly entrenched themselves in Russian and Soviet literature.

From the start of the Palestine revolution, Soviet-Palestinian relations have invariably developed along an ascending line. We shall now dwell on their main stages.

In the first years of the Palestine revolution Soviet-Palestinian contacts were mainly implemented between officials of Soviet embassies in Arab countries and leaders of various organisations of the Palestinian Resistance Movement. In February 1970, the first visit of the PLO delegation, headed by Yasser Arafat, to the USSR took place. During the next five years such visits became regular; however, they were organised through a public channel--the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee.

In 1974, a new stage began in Soviet-Palestinian relations. During a visit to Moscow between July 30 and August 3 of the PLO delegation headed by Yasser Arafat, the Soviet side declared its support of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and expressed its agreement in principle to open a mission of the PLO in the

USSR.²⁷ Thus Soviet-Palestinian relations have been raised to inter-governmental level.

The opening of the PLO mission in Moscow in June 1976, the first Soviet-Palestinian summit meeting in April 1977, and the granting of full diplomatic status to the PLO mission in the USSR in October 1981 were milestones in Soviet-Palestinian relations. At present relations between the USSR and the PLO are characterised by the same features as relations with a friendly state. In the political sphere constant consultations are conducted between the two sides on questions that interest them, first and foremost, in connection with developments in the Middle East. Palestine leaders have time and again described relations with the Soviet Union as "strategic".

Exchanges of messages between Soviet and Palestinian leaders on the occasion of important anniversaries in the life of their peoples have now become traditional. PLO delegations participated in the proceedings of CPSU congresses and in celebrations--in connection with the 60th anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the 60th anniversary of the formation of the USSR, etc. In turn, official Soviet delegations participated in the work of the last sessions of the Palestine National Council. It should be emphasised that regular contacts have been established, not only with the PLO, but also with organisations of the Palestinian Resistance Movement included in it. Delegations of the Fath organisation, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, etc., have visited the Soviet Union on more than one occasion.

An important distinctive feature of Soviet-Palestinian relations is their broad scope and informal ties between various public circles. This is facilitated to a great extent by the activity of the Soviet Committee of Friendship and Solidarity with the Arab People of Palestine organised at the end of 1978 and a Society of Palestine-Soviet Friendship set up a year later. Stable ties exist between practically all Soviet and Palestinian public organisations--trade

union, youth, women's, and creative associations. As a rule, they are regulated by corresponding agreements which envisage exchanges of delegations, specialists, information and printed materials, lecturers, exhibitions, etc.

The Soviet Union is rendering assistance to the Palestinian people in the training of national personnel. In recent years, according to the information of the PLO mission in Moscow, about 1,000 Palestinian students have been studying in Soviet higher and secondary special educational centres.

Soviet medical and other aid to the Palestinian people has become a tradition. We have sent medicines, food, tents, blankets and other prime necessities to the victims of Israeli aggressive actions. The Soviet Red Cross and the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions dispatched these goods to the Palestinian side during the events in Lebanon in 1975-1976, during Israel's invasion of Southern Lebanon in March 1978, and in the course of Israeli aggression against Lebanon in the summer and autumn of 1982. Groups of Palestinians--victims of Israel's aggression--have received medical treatment in the Soviet Union. Large groups of Palestinian children arrive in the Soviet Union for holidays in Young Pioneer camps.

Cultural exchanges are developing with due account being taken of the specific position of the Palestinian people. Soviet documentaries and feature films are shown in Palestine refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan. Russian language courses and libraries were opened in the House of Palestine-Soviet Friendship in Damascus, and also at the Lebanon branch of the Society of Palestine-Soviet Friendship (before Israeli aggression in 1982). In turn, the Soviet Union has repeatedly been visited by Palestine folklore ensembles. At the end of 1979 and beginning of 1980 an exhibition of Palestinian decorative, applied and modern fine arts was successfully held in Moscow.

The growing friendly feelings and sympathies for the Soviet Union among the masses of the Palestinian people were

a consequence of the political, ideological and historical factors contributing to the development of Soviet-Palestinian relations. This is corroborated, among other things, by a public poll conducted by the American magazine Time on the West Bank in April 1982. Eighty-two per cent of those polled named the Soviet Union the country rendering the greatest possible assistance to the Palestinian people. Seventy-two per cent stated that they liked the USSR more than the USA.²⁸ Here it is pertinent to note that the inhabitants of the occupied West Bank have incomparably worse opportunities to familiarise themselves with the Soviet Union's policy and participate in Palestine-Soviet contacts than the refugees living outside the boundaries of Palestine.

It should be stressed that Soviet-Palestinian relations contributing to the strengthening of the international positions of the Palestine revolution and its successful advancement along the path of struggle for the realisation of the national rights of the Palestinians, constantly come under slanderous attacks on the part of their enemies. Two these are widely used: during Soviet-American dialogues--about the Soviet Union's deal with the Americans behind the backs of the Palestinians,²⁹ and during the periods of the exacerbation of the Middle East situation--about inadequate Soviet military assistance to Arabs in general, and to the Palestinians in particular. The latter thesis was especially widely propagated by Western and right-wing Arab mass media in the summer of 1982.

The PLO, however, not only ignores such falsehoods, but also defends Arab-Soviet relations and pursues a stable course aimed at developing cooperation with the USSR. This stand was evident back in 1972, during the anti-Soviet campaign unleashed by right-wing Arab circles in connection with the expulsion of Soviet military experts from Egypt. "We defend ourselves when we come out against the distortion of the relations between the Arab liberation movement and the Soviet Union," the weekly Falestyn as-Saura, the organ of the PLO, wrote at the time.³⁰ The PLO sharply criticised the decision of President A. Sadat of Egypt to suspend unilaterally

the Soviet-Egyptian Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation in March 1976.³¹ It can justly be said that a course aimed at defending Arab-Soviet relations has become an inalienable aspect of PLO activities.

The Palestine revolution--a national liberation revolution--pursues aims of its own and is not an instrument in somebody's hands. The creation of an independent Palestinian state, which the PLO is striving for, would usher in an era of a just and stable peace in the Middle East and the liquidation of a dangerous seat of international tension. It would contribute to an improvement of the international situation as a whole--something which the Soviet Union is vitally interested in, for its policy is aimed at peaceful construction. The development of Soviet-Palestinian cooperation is an important factor for the establishment of a genuine peace in the Middle East.

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- 6 Pravda, June 26, 1973.
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- 8 New Times, No. 31, 1974, p. 22.
- 9 New Times, No. 28, 1974, p. 23.
- 10 Pravda, February 15, 1975.
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- 19 Pravda, September 20, 1970.
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- 21 Pravda, April 29, 1976.
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- 23 Pravda, August 7 and 8, 1982.
- 24 Der Spiegel, No. 37, 1982, pp. 147-148.
- 25 The October Revolution and the Palestine Problem, Beirut, 1977, p. 23 (in Arabic).
- 26 Palestinian Collection, Issue 13/76, 1965, pp. 175-176 (in Russian).
- 27 Pravda, August 3, 1974.
- 28 Monday Morning, Beirut, May 24, 1982.
- 29 Characteristically, the Lebanese weekly Al-Khavadis reported on June 8, 1979, that is, on the eve of a Soviet-American summit meeting in Vienna, that the USSR might, allegedly, make concessions to the United States on the question of the rights of the Palestinian people in exchange for US agreement to sign the SALT-2 treaty. Commenting on the report in the same issue of the magazine F. Kaddumi rejected such a possibility outright.
- 30 New Times, No. 31, 1972.
- 31 Monday Morning, Beirut, March 22, 1976.

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This publication, timed for the 16th International Congress of Historical Sciences (Stuttgart, August 1985), generalises the extensive factual material accumulated by Marxist historical science and refutes the biased concepts of bourgeois historiography. The authors analyse the essence, driving force and main forms of the Resistance in Europe during the Second World War. The various aspects of the Resistance, both as a democratic socio-political movement and as a liberation struggle against the fascist invaders, are examined in close relationship. Particularly emphasised is the mass struggle against the fascist invaders on the Soviet territory. Also analysed is the policy of the USSR and of other countries of the anti-Hitler coalition towards the Resistance.

THE LIBERATING MISSION OF THE SOVIET UNION
IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

No army in the world has ever earned the gratitude of progressive mankind as that the Soviet Army has which is often called an army of liberation. The authors of the articles in this collection show how in the fierce combat with the fascist German invaders the Soviet people and its Armed Forces not only upheld the freedom and independence of their Motherland but also saved world civilisation and played the decisive role in the liberation from the yoke of the invaders and in the restoration of the national sovereignty of many European and Asian countries. Analysed are the operations of the Soviet troops during the liberation of the states of Central and South-Eastern Europe and of the Far East, the USSR's internationalist help in forming and training on its territory foreign anti-fascist army units and support for the Resistance Movement. The liberating mission of the Soviet Armed Forces resulted in a whole number of states breaking away from the capitalist system and embarking on the road of building socialism. The authors also analyse the cooperation of the countries of the socialist community in all spheres--political, ideological, economic, scientific, technical and military, their consistent efforts for peace and against the threat of war, for friendship among the peoples.

THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR OF THE SOVIET PEOPLE
AND OUR TIME

Forty years have passed since the end of the Second World War prepared and unleashed by the most reactionary, aggressive imperialist circles. The victory of world historic significance over fascist Germany and militarist Japan is a stern reminder to those who would ignore the lessons of history.

This collection of articles is devoted to the victory of the Soviet people in the Great Patriotic War, which was a major part of the Second World War. The Soviet Union blocked the way of the fascist aggressors to world supremacy and stopped their expansionist drive to other countries and continents. By destroying in fierce struggle the bulk (three-quarters) of the enemy's troops and military hardware, the USSR brought utter defeat to the invaders, fulfilled its great mission of liberation in Central and South-Eastern Europe and in the Far East, and rendered direct assistance to the peoples in getting rid of the German and Japanese occupation.

Prominent Soviet scholars, political and military figures discuss the causes of the war, its course and outcome, the sources of the Soviet people's strength, show the significance of their victory for the destiny of mankind. The authors expose the bourgeois falsifiers of history who are trying to diminish the Soviet Union's decisive role in the defeat of the aggressors.

They analyse the present international situation, show the struggle waged by the Soviet Union, and by all peace-loving forces for peace and against the threat of a thermonuclear war fuelled by the imperialists. The indisputable truth emerges that the victory over German fascism and Japanese militarism in the Second World War, the lessons and results of that war are not only the past but also the present and the future of humanity. They are closely linked with the current struggle against imperialist violence, for peace, democracy and social progress, a struggle which is of vital importance to all the peoples. The collection contains a list of the main Soviet works on the subject.

The following collection will be published in the "Oriental Studies in the USSR" series:

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This collection, prepared under the general editorship of L. Delusin, D.Sc.(Hist.), deals with little-studied problems of Chinese social history, socio-political thought and ideological struggle from ancient times to the mid-20th century.

The collection opens with an article on the problem of continuity in Chinese historiography. Other articles discuss various aspects of social history, viz., conditions of different groups and categories of artisans in mediaeval China, the genesis of capitalism (as exemplified by emergence of hired labour in agriculture), specific features in the formation of the Chinese bourgeoisie, and its structure, which caused its divisions and weakness at the close of the 19th century. Other articles examine ideology and politics in ancient (Confucianism and Legalism in the Ching period) and modern and contemporary times. The emergence and development of socio-political thought in 19th-century China, the methods and forms of ideological struggle on the eve of the 1911-1913 revolution, specific features and the character of the nationalistic ideas, and the ideological basis of the Kuomintang regime are all analysed and appraised.

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