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WRITE FOR COMPLETE LIST

ISRAEL

TODAY:

WAR OR

PEACE?

HYMAN LUMER

45¢

INTRODUCTION

The Middle East crisis precipitated in May 1967 did not end with the Israeli victory in the "six-day war." On the contrary, it has been with us now for more than 3½ years, and during that time the situation has become progressively worse. By the spring of this year the threat of a resurgence of all-out warfare had become extremely serious, and with it the danger of escalation into a world thermonuclear war.

In this grave state of affairs the acceptance by the UAR, Jordan and Israel of the Rogers cease-fire proposals offered a ray of hope for a peaceful way out. But as this is written there exists only a precarious cease-fire and an impasse arising from Israel's withdrawal from the talks with UN representative Gunnar Jarring on the grounds of alleged violation of cease-fire terms by the UAR. The threat of war remains and the serious pursuit of peace has yet to get under way.

Behind the protracted crisis lies the aggressive expansionist policy pursued by the Israeli ruling circles over a period of many years, in league with one or another imperialist power. In 1956 this policy led to the Sinai invasion in collusion with British and French imperialism; in 1967 it led to the Israeli aggression against its Arab



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neighbors, this time in league with US imperialism.

In both wars the Israeli rulers served the imperialist aim of overthrowing the anti-imperialist government of the UAR, and more recently that of Syria. In both wars their goal was the geographical expansion of Israel at the expense of the Arab states. And both acts of aggression were cloaked in the robes of "self-defense" against threatened annihilation—a cloak which successfully deceived many people.

But today it is becoming increasingly evident that the chief roadblock to peace is the annexationist policy of the Israeli government. It is the refusal to withdraw from the occupied territories that underlies Israel's failure to accept the UN Security Council resolution of November 1967 in its entirety, as the UAR and Jordan have done, as the basis for settlement of the conflict. And it is in reality this, not cease-fire violations, which underlies also the breaking off of the Jarring talks.

As the true character and the disastrous consequences of the present government policy become clearer, growing opposition to it is developing in Israel.

These things I was able to observe at close hand on a recent trip to Israel, from September 6 to September 20. They are dealt with in this pamphlet, which originally appeared as a series of articles in the *Daily World*.

What happens in Israel is important to the people of this country. First, the danger of war in the Middle East is a danger of *world* war. Second, the role of the United States in the Middle East, particularly in relation to Israel, is of decisive significance. Third, the sentiments of the American people, and especially of the Jewish people, carry great weight in Israel. It is urgent, therefore, that voices of protest against the present ruinous policies arise in this country as they are arising in Israel.

October 27, 1970

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

DR. HYMAN LUMER was born in Brooklyn, N.Y. in 1909. He began his career as a biologist, earning his Ph.D. in that subject at Western Reserve University in Cleveland in 1935. He later taught the subject there, and at Fenn College, also in Cleveland, where he headed the biology department. He has written numerous research articles in the field of biology.

After leaving Fenn College in 1947, he served as Educational Director of the Ohio-Kentucky district of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers Union until 1950.

In the 1950s he was prosecuted under the anti-Communist section of the infamous Taft-Hartley Act, and served a prison sentence as a result.

Dr. Lumer is widely known as a writer, teacher and lecturer on political and economic subjects, and is the author of numerous books, pamphlets and articles. Among his more recent works are the books *Is Full Employment Possible?* (1962), and *Poverty: Its Roots and its Future* (1965); and the pamphlets "Soviet Anti-Semitism"—*A Cold War Myth* (1964), *Which Way Israel?* (1966), *The Middle East Crisis* (1967), and *What Happened in Poland* (1969).

He served for many years, until recently, as the National Educational Director of the Communist Party and is presently the editor of its monthly theoretical journal *Political Affairs*.

This pamphlet is based on Dr. Lumer's visit to Israel in September 1970, during which he studied closely the political situation resulting from the 1967 war.

I. A WAR-WEARY PEOPLE

The recent death of UAR President Gamal Abdel Nasser came as a tragic sequel to a swiftly-moving succession of Middle East crises, occurring one on the heels of the other. My arrival in Israel coincided with Prime Minister Golda Meir's announcement of the Israeli government's withdrawal from the Jarring talks. Shortly afterward came the disturbing series of plane hijackings. And three days before I left, King Hussein set up his military dictatorship in Jordan, spurring on an outbreak of bloody civil war.

Fortunately the civil war has been brought to an end. But the situation remains critical, and its uncertainties have been vastly increased by Nasser's death.

In Israel I found the atmosphere of an armed camp. The younger generation was either in uniform or in the reserves, waiting to be called up for the next regular turn of duty. And ironically, the jobs of drafted Jewish workers were being filled largely by Arabs, who are not subject to the draft.

In travelling about the country one encountered road-blocks at the approaches to every city. At each of these a soldier would peer into every car, and any passenger who looked like an Arab might then be subjected to questioning and search. In Eastern Jerusalem and the surrounding West Bank territories one encountered armed Israeli soldiers on patrol everywhere. One became swiftly aware that these were indeed *occupied* territories. The newspapers were full of accounts of a bomb set off here, a grenade thrown there, of endless arrests and imprisonment of "terrorists," as well as of strikes, demonstrations and other acts of resistance to the occupation.

To be sure, there was a surface air of prosperity and cheerfulness. On Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Street the sidewalk cafes were crowded. Tourists, mainly from the United States, were numerous. But underneath there was a sense

of tension, of fear of a new outbreak of full-scale war.

The Israeli people have become war-weary. The youth are asking: are endless warfare and endless military service all that we can look forward to? Dalia Heller, editor of *Hit Parade*, published by the Israeli State Radio, says: "War songs were popular a year ago but people are now fed up with them. Composers have stopped writing them and singers don't want to perform them any more." (*New York Times*, September 24, 1970.) Rising taxes and prices provoke mounting unrest. And increasingly the question is being asked: "What will be the end?"

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the Israeli government's acceptance of the cease-fire proposals was joyously welcomed and that there was dancing in the streets. By the same token, the decision to withdraw from the negotiations produced widespread feelings of gloom. But at the same time it gave rise to a mounting volume of demands for a return to the Jarring talks as offering the one present hope for a peaceful way out.

It is now becoming increasingly evident that it was not only the Right-wing Gahal group which opposed the cease-fire proposals. The Meir government as a whole accepted them only with extreme reluctance and under great pressure, and then only with the anticipation—more, the intention—that they would come to nought. Thus, Yoel Markus writes in *Ha'aretz* (August 21, 1970):

"The government had two basic assumptions. One of them was that the Egyptian answer wasn't sincere but only a ruse designed to bring about American pressure on Israel; the second one was that the Americans are staking all their prestige on this move and if we don't cooperate with them for a while (until they themselves come to the conclusion that they were the victims of one of Nasser's tactics) we are liable to destroy American involvement in our behalf. . . ."

When the chips were down and the talks about to begin.

there came the "discovery" of alleged Egyptian violations of the arms standstill. The merits of these allegations are at best highly dubious, and there is at the same time evidence of Israeli violations. Yet these charges were made the pretext for pulling out of the talks and for threats of renewed military attacks.

The battle in the cabinet was led by Dayan. A statement issued at the time by the Communist Party of Israel notes: "The majority, at the outset, was opposed to the extremist proposals of Defense Minister Dayan and his associates, who in fact demanded the resumption of war against Egypt under the pretext of Egypt's violation of the cease-fire. . . . Dayan's threat to resign produced the decision to suspend the talks with Jarring."

These differences, however, are purely tactical. On her visit to the United States, Golda Meir made it plain that there are to be no talks until the missiles are removed, a demand which guarantees that there will be no talks—period. She has herself stated that it may be found necessary to make a pre-emptive strike against the missile sites. And she and other cabinet members have repeatedly emphasized that they would accept nothing less than "secure and defensible borders," which means the retention of at least a considerable part of the conquered territories.

In short, the Israeli government continues to adhere to its annexationist policies, however unfeasible the march of events is proving them to be. Hence the intention to sabotage the negotiations. In this it has the support of the Nixon Administration, which continues to maneuver to "maintain the balance of power" in the Middle East. Toward this end Israel is to be supplied with more arms and aid, and the refusal to negotiate is accepted.

For the Israeli ruling circles, faced with mounting opposition at home, the ill-conceived hijackings came as a godsend. Immediately the question of negotiations was pushed into the background. Instead the press, radio and

television were full of stories of the hijackings and their aftermath, of expressions of indignation and outrage, of condemnations of the Jordanian government, and so on.

The situation was further aggravated by the effort of King Hussein to install a reactionary military dictatorship and to smash the Palestinian commando forces. The ensuing battles led to a serious danger of U.S. military intervention, as well as the threat of an Israeli attack on Jordan. And in Israel the question of negotiations was further sidetracked.

The resolution of the conflict through the mediation of leaders of other Arab countries ended this situation, at least for the present. With this the key questions for the Israeli people again come to the fore, and in the light of the recent events with even greater force. These questions are: the resumption of negotiations, and the acceptance of the UN resolution in its entirety.

Today there is growing ferment and motion among the Israeli people on these issues. A new mood of opposition to the aggressive expansionist policies of Israel's rulers has developed. "The Israeli public would have been unable to swallow a No by the government to the American plan," according to Arye Eliav, general secretary of the Israel Labor Party (Golda Meir's party). This opposition is mounting and increasingly taking on organized form, particularly among the youth.

In these developments lies cause for optimism as to the future, despite the gravity of the present situation. Of these things we shall have more to say later.

II. TOWARD ECONOMIC BANKRUPTCY

Today policies of aggression and expansion are extremely costly, and the cost is rising ever more rapidly as the world anti-imperialist forces continue to grow in strength. For Israel the pursuit of this course is leading to economic

bankruptcy.

The government is now spending some 25 per cent of the entire national income for military purposes. This is the highest proportion in the world (the corresponding figure for the United States is roughly 9 per cent). The present military budget (nearly \$1.5 billion for the fiscal year 1970-71) is five times that of 1966. And since the cease-fire it has been increased by an added \$335 million.

In the case of Israel such astronomical military outlays mean enormous spending for arms abroad, which must be paid in foreign currencies, chiefly in dollars. (The cost of the Phantom jets bought last year was \$300 million.) David Krivine writes in the *Jerusalem Post* (September 18, 1970): "Israel produces 20 billion Israeli pounds of goods and services, military and civilian, a year, and consumes 25 billion. The outside world finances the missing 5 billion, partly by gifts, largely by loans." (Note: $3\frac{1}{2}$ Israeli pounds equal one dollar.)

Since 1967 about \$750 million has been raised in contributions from abroad, nearly \$500 million of it in 1967. But this is hardly enough. During the past few years the gap between imports and exports has been rapidly increasing, and in the past fiscal year the balance of payments deficit reached the unprecedented sum of \$1.1 billion. The total foreign debt is now about half the gross national product. Nearly 10 per cent of the budget goes for interest payments alone. On top of this the government has resorted in effect to printing money, by borrowing from the Bank of Israel.

How is this huge gap to be filled in the coming years? "The economists' advice to the Prime Minister," says Krivine, "can only be: beg, borrow or steal. . . . Appeal to Western politicians. Israel is in the front line of their defense against Soviet expansionism; she cannot be allowed to sink for lack of funds."

Of course, he adds, this can only be a temporary ex-

pedient; "the world will not finance Israel's trade gap forever." But it is this shaky path which Israel's rulers have taken. Increasingly they have relied on loans, credits and financial aid, primarily from the United States. And increasingly they have placed Israel at the service of U.S. imperialism in return.

In their desperate search for foreign currencies they have gone to fantastic lengths to encourage foreign investment in Israel. For this purpose three "millionaires' conferences" have been held in Israel in August 1967, April 1968 and June 1969. The foreign capitalists attending these agreed to establish a \$100 million investment corporation, seeking profitable investments in Israel.

To secure such investments the Israeli government offered large grants-in-aid, long-term loans, big tax concessions, guarantees of high profits and other inducements. In addition, it undertook to "stimulate rising productivity and lower unit costs"—that is, to step up the exploitation of Israeli workers.

The foreign capitalists also demanded that the Israeli government cease competing with private firms and dispose of its holdings in industrial and commercial enterprises. This the government has done, to the point where it has little left to sell.

The fact is, however, that despite all the inducements, foreign capital today has little interest in investing in new enterprises in Israel. As a Histadrut official with whom I met put it, the conferences produced "much talk and little investment." The pledged \$100 million proved to be only \$20 million. And the interest in investing was confined to buying into the profitable government-owned enterprises.

Foreign monopolists have made considerable inroads into such enterprises as the ZIM steamship line, the Israel Oil Refineries, the Timna Copper Mines and Palestine Potash, and are seeking to buy into the Israel Electric Company.

The one large new venture is the Eilat-Ashkelon oil pipeline. Built at a cost of \$120 million, facilities have been completed with a capacity of 20 million tons a year. This is to be expanded shortly to 60 million tons. Such a pipeline is not required by the Israeli economy; its purpose is rather to provide the foreign oil monopolies with an alternative route to the Suez Canal. Furthermore, though it was built mainly with government funds it is being operated as a concession by an international trade organization, a subsidiary of Canadian A.P.C. Holdings, Ltd.

Thus does the Israeli ruling class continue to barter away the country's economic wealth to foreign monopolies and to increase the domination of imperialism over its economy.

The economic burden of the government's adventurist policies is being fastened in growing measure on the backs of the working people of Israel. Profits have risen sharply. In 1968 profits of industrial concerns were 60 per cent higher than in 1967, and in 1969 they again rose substantially. Profits of the leading banks in 1969 rose between 23 and 48 per cent over 1968. But workers have been confronted with rising taxes and prices, with reduced government subsidies for key food items, with cuts in social services, with a wage freeze and with compulsory loans to the government. They have also encountered an upsurge of new anti-labor legislation.

As a result of these inroads into workers' living standards, the number of strikes has been increasing, and this in the face of great pressure by the government and Histadrut and the labelling of strikers as betrayers of Israel's security. In fact, most of the strikes have been called against the wishes of the Histadrut leadership.

The increase in the military budget after the cease-fire was accompanied by a jump in taxes, which in turn became the excuse for a sharp rise in prices. This has touched off a wave of demonstrations and strikes. And these will

undoubtedly multiply as economic conditions continue to worsen, and as workers are increasingly pressed to bear the brunt of the growing mountain of government debt.

There is no way out of this economic dead end except through abandonment of the policy of aggression and annexation and with it of growing dependence on foreign monopoly capital. Life is proving this policy unfeasible economically as well politically. Only if it is ended can Israel develop a truly viable economy.

III. THE ISRAELI ARABS: OPPRESSION INTENSIFIED

In the racist Zionist conception of the state of Israel, the Arabs are looked upon as intruders, as outsiders in their own country, as non-people. Hence they have been the object of the most blatant chauvinism and have been subjected to severe discrimination and oppression in every aspect of life. And since the 1967 war their situation has become markedly worse.

During and after the war there took place a wave of administrative arrests of Arabs, both Communists and non-Communist democrats. Those arrested were frequently severely beaten.

The procedure of administrative arrest is based on the emergency military regulations imposed by the British in 1945 on both Jews and Arabs in Palestine. With the founding of the state of Israel these regulations were abolished for Jews but continued to be imposed by the Israeli government on Arabs. Among other things they provide for the arrests of individuals without formal charges and their imprisonment for an indefinite period without trial.

As late as October 1969 there were still more than a thousand Arabs detained under such arrest, I was told by Dr. Israel Shakhak, head of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights. But since then nearly all of these have

been released, thanks mainly to pressure exerted from abroad.

In addition, under the same military regulations hundreds of Arab leaders, Communist and non-Communist, are restricted in their movements. They are confined to their districts or their cities, towns or villages, which they may not leave without a permit. Often they are required to remain in their homes from dusk to dawn, and to report daily to the police.

Previously permits to travel to other areas could in most cases be obtained; today they are almost universally denied. Arab members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel are thus prohibited from attending meetings of that body. Arab members of the Executive Committee and other leading bodies of Histadrut and other organizations are similarly prevented from attending meetings of these bodies.

The requirement of permits is handled in the most arbitrary fashion. Thus, I was told, the Arab students in the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, some 200 in number, are required to have permits which they must renew every ten days. To do so they must travel to an office in Haifa, some distance away. When it was requested that someone be sent to Jerusalem to handle the renewals the request was flatly denied.

In another instance a group of Arab Communists from Acre were given permits to attend a conference of building trades workers in Tel Aviv, an exception to the usual practice, but were required to return to Acre every night—a distance of nearly 75 miles.

These new forms of harassment and persecution are added to the already existing pattern of discrimination and oppression.

In employment, Arabs are confined mainly to unskilled manual labor. To be sure, with the absorption of Jewish workers into the armed forces they have had greater

access to somewhat better-paying jobs, particularly in construction. But here they are most often employed on a temporary basis and are thus deprived of sick benefits, vacation pay and other fringe benefits which Jewish workers enjoy as a matter of course.

Only half of the Arab workers are members of Histadrut as against three-fourths of the Jewish workers. Only one-third are members of the Health Insurance Fund (Kupat Cholim) as against 72 per cent of the Jewish workers. Moreover, the Fund has few clinics in Arab villages, so that the Arab members receive much poorer service than the Jewish.

According to the official statistics, annual earnings of non-Jewish families in 1967 were less than 64 per cent of those of Jewish families, and this with 1.6 earners per family compared to 1.3 in Jewish families. (One looks in vain in the official statistics for data on Israeli Arabs as such.)

In the cities Arabs are crowded into dilapidated ghettos and are often forced to live in condemned houses declared unsafe for habitation. On more than one occasion these buildings have collapsed, killing or seriously injuring their inhabitants.

In institutions of higher learning Arabs are only 1.5 per cent of the student body, though they are 12 per cent of the population. In such fields as electronics or atomic energy they are excluded as "security risks." And those few who complete their studies and obtain degrees are often unable to obtain work in their professions and are compelled to learn a trade to earn a living.

Arab farmers are discriminated against with regard to credits, irrigation, mechanization and other forms of government assistance. Most Arab villages lack labor councils or labor exchanges through which unemployed workers can seek work under union conditions, while these Histadrut institutions are the rule in Jewish communities.

In addition the military regulations have been extensively used to confiscate the lands of Arab farmers by closing them off on the grounds of "security." These lands then find their way into the hands of the kibbutzim, while the Arab owners are converted into "internal refugees." Some live in shacks in nearby villages or near towns and seek work in the area. Others find their way into the already crowded slum ghettos in the cities.

I visited a collection of galvanized iron shacks on the outskirts of Nazareth. They were inhabited by the former population of the nearby village Ma'lul. I learned also that nearly one-third of the Arab residents of Nazareth are refugees from nearby villages.

The city of Nazareth is illustrative of the whole pattern of discrimination. Lower Nazareth, the old city dating back to Biblical times, has a population of 30,000, all Arab. Upper Nazareth, located on the surrounding hills, with 22,000 residents, consists mostly of a new Jewish settlement.

Lower Nazareth has almost no industry and many of its workers are forced to seek work in other cities. On the other hand the Jewish settlement boasts a Dodge assembly plant, a large textile mill and a number of other modern factories. In these factories few Arabs are employed, and these largely as janitors.

Upper Nazareth also boasts a beautiful Histadrut vacation resort—for Jews only. The only Arabs there were two who were employed in the kitchen. Nor are Arabs able to rent apartments in the new apartment buildings of the Jewish settlement.

Underlying all this is a pervasive anti-Arab chauvinism whose expressions one encounters on all sides. Those who defend the rights of Arabs are dubbed "Arab lovers"—an expression which is as common as is its counterpart among white racists here. The ultra-religious and Right-wing elements openly regard Arabs as less than human and as

people whose departure from Israel could only be welcomed.

In the struggle against the Zionist-inspired ruling-class policies and the racism which lies at their core, Jewish-Arab unity is of central importance. Today the one organization which embodies that unity is the Communist Party of Israel, led by Meir Vilner and Tawfiq Toubi. That this is truly a party of Jew and Arab has come to be widely recognized in non-Communist circles.

Because of this the Party commands wide support among the Israeli Arabs, receiving on an average roughly 40 per cent of the Arab vote. The ruling class does everything to try to break this unity. Hence its singling out of the Arab Communists for special persecution.

It also strives to deprive those Arabs who support the Party of their rightful representation. In the last elections to the Knesset the Communist Party elected three deputies and fell only 70-80 votes short of electing a fourth. The reason they failed to obtain these votes was that the government, a few days before the election, placed some 300 Arabs in Nazareth under administrative arrest and kept them in prison until after the elections.

In the growing opposition to the expansionist government policies the need for Jewish-Arab unity, based on the fight against Arab oppression, is coming to be more widely recognized. And undoubtedly this fight will grow.

IV. THE "HUMANE" OCCUPATION

After the 1967 war the Israeli leaders asserted that they wanted only peace and security, not territory, and would gladly withdraw from the conquered territories if these things could be guaranteed. Since then they have pictured their occupation as a humane and benevolent one. The Arabs in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, they maintain, are better off than before. If harsh measures are

sometimes necessary, it is only because of the persistence of terrorist acts.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. On the contrary, the occupation has been marked from the outset by extensive repression and brutality, which have since grown progressively worse. And it is quite clear that there is no intention of giving up these territories, that the real policy is one of de facto annexation.

I spent two days in East Jerusalem, Ramallah and adjacent West Bank areas. I spoke to a number of people of different views and backgrounds. Even this brief visit was enough to reveal the shocking conditions that prevail in the occupied areas.

The Israeli occupation authorities base themselves on the British emergency military regulations of 1945, of which we have already spoken. These serve as an instrument for depriving the inhabitants of all democratic rights and subjecting them to severe repression.

Strikes, demonstrations, distribution of leaflets, public meetings and all other forms of political expression are forbidden. It is illegal to say anything against the occupation to a group of more than three people. Possession or sale of Communist literature is illegal. People have been arrested for selling *Al Ittihad*, the Arabic newspaper of the Communist Party of Israel, which is perfectly legal within Israel.

Peaceful demonstrations have been brutally broken up and the demonstrators jailed. Strikes of shopkeepers have been followed by confiscation of their shops. All this and more can be abundantly documented from the Israeli press itself.

Administrative imprisonment has become a wholesale practice. Under it anyone who is considered to be a "potential danger to the state" can be imprisoned indefinitely without charges and without trial. The prisons are jammed, largely with such administrative detainees. Some

have been in jail since 1967 and many have no idea why they have been imprisoned. There is also a considerable number of prisoners who have been charged with a crime but never brought to trial.

Among the chief objectives of administrative arrests is to press individuals to "cooperate" with the occupation authorities or to accept "voluntary" deportation. In a number of cases individuals who have refused to leave on their own have been forcibly deported.

Deportation, particularly of political figures, teachers, doctors and others exercising some degree of leadership, is a frequent occurrence. More than 250 cases have already been reported in the Israeli press and they continue at the rate of a dozen or more a week. A reason commonly given is "inciting" others to demonstrate or otherwise protest against occupation practices.

Imposition of curfews is widespread, particularly wherever a bomb goes off. So, too, is the practice of rounding up all the males in the area from 16 to 60 and forcing them to squat or kneel in the local square for as long as eight or nine hours while they are interrogated one at a time.

Then there is the use of torture. The Israeli authorities flatly deny this. They ascribe such charges to Arab fantasies or the false insinuations of defense attorneys. The exposure of cases of torture is beset with difficulties since the government does everything possible to cover them up.

It is made very difficult for attorneys to see their clients soon after arrest. In court, when prisoners charge that they have been tortured and point out those who are guilty, the police officers in question swear they have never laid a hand on the prisoners. This is accepted and in all cases demands for judicial investigation of the charges have been flatly refused.

However, Mrs. Felicia Langer, an Israeli attorney who has courageously devoted herself to defending Arabs in the occupied territories against persecution, has seen a number

of clients immediately after torture, still bearing its marks. She has published a list of these cases, giving detailed descriptions of the tortures. She also has sworn statements of many others, which the courts refuse to investigate.

Other cases are coming to light, including a number which have resulted in severe physical or mental incapacitation. A recent memorandum to the UN Commission on Israeli Practices in the Occupied Territories from the Israel League for Human and Civil Rights lists many additional cases.

There is enough evidence to indicate that, despite all denials, the use of torture is widespread. Mrs. Langer states that from her experience she is convinced it is used before trial in the vast majority of cases.

The use of collective punishment in the occupied territories is well known. A form which has especially elicited condemnation is the blowing up of houses. The demolition of houses is also resorted to for the purpose of displacing the Arab residents. Thus, in the Old City of Jerusalem 153 Arab dwellings were destroyed for the purpose of clearing a large space before the Wailing Wall.

I visited Mr. Aref Al-Aref, a man of 77 years and a well-known historian. A governor of the Beersheba district during the Mandate and three times mayor of Jerusalem, he is the author of 18 books, mainly on the history of Palestine. He is compiling materials on the occupation, among them a list of all demolished houses, with pictures, names of residents and the attestations of local mukhtars.

His list totals well over 7,500—more than three times the number unofficially admitted to by the Israelis. This is an impressive figure, testifying to the wide resort to both collective punishment and displacement of Arabs. And the number is constantly growing.

V. ANNEXATION—A FUTILE POLICY

The process of displacement is especially evident in East Jerusalem, which is being transformed with all possible speed into part of a Jewish Greater Jerusalem. One sees large areas of new housing going up, intended for Jewish occupants. It is being built on land requisitioned from its former Arab owners. The Israeli officials claim that they are paying for this land, but the "payment" is no more than about three per cent of its actual value, which amounts to virtual confiscation.

The conditions of Arab merchants and business men have been made intolerable, especially in East Jerusalem. On the one hand they are prohibited from importing, and must obtain imported goods at a higher price through the Jewish merchants who are their competitors. On the other hand much of their former market has been cut off. East Jerusalem was formerly a commercial center for the West Bank as well as a center of tourism for other Arab countries. Today West Bank inhabitants must secure military permits to enter the city. For this and other reasons the travel to Jerusalem has greatly fallen off.

Income from tourism has been drastically reduced. Tourists can no longer come from the Arab countries, and the Israeli tourist agencies route tourists mostly to places within Israel or to Israeli-owned hotels built since the occupation. As a result, more than two-thirds of the Arabs engaged in this field have been driven out of business. In East Jerusalem, I was told by an individual familiar with the situation, only 6 out of 56 Arab-owned hotels were meeting expenses. In Ramallah most of the hotels were closed.

Most Arab business men were operating at a loss, and were depending on other sources of income or eating up their savings in the hope that things would change.

For a section of the Arab workers in the West Bank the

occupation has meant jobs in Israel, especially in construction. As of July some 23,000 from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were thus employed. These are better off than most West Bank residents. But they are employed almost exclusively for unskilled labor, and as temporary workers receiving no sick benefits or vacation pay.

Furthermore, according to the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, their wages are paid to the Israeli government, which deducts 40 per cent to be placed in a special fund for social welfare and taxes. But meanwhile they are ineligible for health insurance, pensions and other benefits.

These workers are employed primarily because they provide a source of cheap labor for Israeli capitalists. Their situation is indicative of what awaits Arab workers in general in the occupied territories should these be permanently annexed to Israel. At the same time, among other sectors of the working people unemployment is extremely widespread. Many live on funds sent by relatives working in the United States, or in Kuwait or other Arab countries.

Israeli spokesmen talk of a flourishing trade between the West Bank and Israel. But this is a very one-sided trade. In 1969 the occupied territories imported 236 million Israeli pounds worth of goods from Israel but exported only 46.7 million pounds worth to Israel.

These territories have become a substantial market for Israeli manufactures and processed foods. Formerly, West Bank merchants bought many of these goods from Amman, which involved no payment of customs. Now they are required to pay a small duty in Amman plus the full Israeli duty, making the prices even higher than in Israel. Hence the pressure to import Israeli goods instead. But the duty makes the prices of goods much higher than before, while wages are much lower than in Israel.

At the same time, the export of farm products to Israel is restricted and these must be sold mainly to the East Bank.

In short, these territories have become an object of exploitation for Israeli capitalists, both through the very lopsided balance of trade and the employment of cheap labor.

From all the foregoing the nature of the Israeli government's policy in the occupied territories is all too clear. It is a policy of brutal repression and denial of the most elementary civil rights. It is a policy of de facto annexation through confiscation of Arab-owned land, establishment of Jewish settlements and other means. It is a policy of subordinating the economy of these areas to that of Israel, of making them a base of superexploitation for Israeli capital. It is, in a word, a policy designed to reduce the status of the people living in these areas to that of colonial subjects and to make life so unbearable as to induce them to get out. (It is worth recalling that at the time of the 1967 war some 200,000 new refugees fled from the West Bank to the East Bank and Syria, and that only 14,000 of these have been permitted to return.)

What is important to note is that this has been the policy from the very beginning. What is taking place now is a vivid confirmation that the purpose of the 1967 war was in fact the conquest of territory and the annexation of Arab lands to the state of Israel.

The ultra-Right "hawks" in Israel, led by Menachem Beigin, openly proclaim this as their goal. But it is also the policy of the Israeli ruling circles as a whole, albeit in less extreme and less blatant form.

It is this policy of aggression which is the source of war. Without ending it there can be no peace in the Middle East. It is by now quite clear that the Arab peoples will never submit to such conquests and will fight by all available means to drive the invader out.

In the West Bank there is on all sides a hatred of the occupiers and a singleness of purpose—to compel them to leave. To end the occupation, to restore the country to its people—this has become the prerequisite to all else.

The great majority, I was told, support the Nasser policy of seeking a peaceful solution by way of the UN Security Council resolution. They are prepared to live with the state of Israel, but only if it abandons its expansionism and is prepared to live with its neighbors on terms of genuine peace and equality.

Since 1967 the struggle for Palestinian Arab liberation has grown into a powerful national movement. In the words of Meir Vilner, general secretary of the Communist Party of Israel:

"Thousands and tens of thousands of Palestinian Arab youth, workers, fellaheen, women and mothers, students and teachers, volunteer and are ready to sacrifice their lives in the struggle against the occupation, for national and human freedom. With many the struggle for national liberation becomes integrated with the struggle for progressive social changes." (*Information Bulletin*, Communist Party of Israel, July-August 1970.)

There is a growing turn toward Marxism-Leninism and toward the Communist Party. Many are led to take this direction while in prison where they come in contact with imprisoned Communists. As these developments continue, the struggle will not only increase but will attain ever higher political levels. No amount of terror and repression will stop it.

VI. THE RISING PEACE MOVEMENT

When the war took place in 1967, the Jewish people in Israel were overwhelmingly in support of their government. They were firmly convinced that they had been on the edge of literal annihilation and that the smashing military victory had saved them from disaster. Moreover, now the Arabs would be compelled to sue for peace. ("I am only waiting for a telephone call," Dayan announced.)

The Israeli Communist Party headed by Meir Vilner and

Tawfiq Toubi, the only organization in basic opposition to the aggressive policies of Israel's rulers, found itself virtually isolated and the object of extensive vilification and persecution. An attempt was made on the life of its general secretary Meir Vilner.

But the more than three years of continued warfare, growing casualty lists and the gnawing fear of a new outbreak of all-out war have had a sobering effect. There is a growing questioning of government policy and a mounting opposition to certain of its basic features, especially among the youth. Moreover, the government is no longer able to convince everyone that there is no alternative to the present war policy.

Matters first came to a head when the Meir government, earlier this year, refused to permit a meeting of Dr. Nahum Goldmann, head of the World Jewish Congress, with President Nasser. The refusal provoked a flood of angry protest and touched off big demonstrations in Jerusalem. The incident also highlighted the existence of differences between Goldmann and the government, particularly on such points as its insistence on direct negotiations and a formal peace treaty.

Government plans to establish a Jewish settlement in the West Bank town of Hebron also aroused strong protests as an annexationist act. The oppressive measures in the occupied territories, as they become known, evoke increasingly widespread revulsion. And today there is mounting opposition to the breaking off of the Jarring talks.

All in all, a very significant change has taken place. At its plenum last May, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel stated that "there has been an essential change in public opinion. . . . The awakening of broad sections among the Israeli people towards an energetic struggle against the aggressive and annexationist policy of the government has assumed dimensions which were unknown since the June war."

An organized peace movement is taking shape, opposing the government's stand on acceptance of the UN Security Council resolution, withdrawal from the occupied territories, the rights of the Palestinian Arab people and other questions. It is as yet limited numerically and ideologically, and is essentially a movement of intellectuals and students with no organized participation of the working class other than through the Communist Party. But it is active, growing and meeting with an ever greater response. During my visit I was able to meet with a number of its leading figures.

The Communist Party remains the one group branding the 1967 war as an act of aggression and pursuing a consistent anti-imperialist line. But it has grown in numbers, has become more steeled and is breaking out of its isolation. It has working relations with other organizations and groups striving for peace and its influence among these is growing.

Closest to the Party politically is the Left Union of Zionist Socialists, a group which has split off from Mapam. It is headed by Ya'akov Riftin, a member of the Knesset and until recently one of the top leaders of Mapam. It stands, among other things, for acceptance of the UN resolution, for an end to the occupation, for abolition of restrictions on Israeli Arab Communists and others, for Jewish-Arab unity.

In the name of a return to socialist internationalism, it calls in its majority for improved relations with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. Aside from the Communist Party, it is the only organization which is not anti-Soviet. Riftin and others regard the war of 1967 not as one of self-defense but as one for which both sides are responsible. The stand on these questions, at the time that I spoke to him, was to be decided at a coming conference.

The Ha'olam Hazeh (This World) group, which publishes a popular weekly magazine by that name, has two members in the Knesset: Uri Avneri and Shalom Cohen.

This group stands for complete withdrawal from the occupied territories. Cohen told me that they believe Israel should take the initiative in this. By doing so it can create favorable conditions for a resolution of the question of borders. Otherwise it will be forced to evacuate eventually under much less favorable conditions. It should say "we did not start the war" but will return all of the territories in return for a viable peace settlement. They also maintain that the alleged Egyptian missile movements, though serious, do not call for breaking off negotiations.

A prominent role is played by the youth, who form the main body of peace activists. It is the youth who bear the main brunt of the endless warfare. Moreover, the Israeli-born younger generation sees more clearly than the older immigrant generation the need for different relationships with Israel's neighbors.

Most active politically is the Young Communist League, which is recognized as the only Jewish-Arab youth organization. The "Israeli New Left" (Siah) is a loose-knit but highly militant group with adherents in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Though not established as a youth organization, it consists mostly of youth. Currently it is struggling for renewal of negotiations.

The "Independent-Thinking Youth" is a similar organization of high-school students, fighting against conscription and on other issues. A group of students at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, forming the active core of the League for Human and Civil Rights headed by Dr. Israel Shakhak, fights against the brutalities in the occupied territories. And so on.

On the more conservative side is the Movement for Peace and Security, whose dominant element is a Mapam grouping. It tends to support the government on many questions but currently it opposes the breaking off of negotiations. At the other end is a small ultra-Left organization, Matzpen, which today opposes the cease-fire but has

taken a correct stand on some other issues.

Such, in the main, is the political spectrum of the Israeli peace movement. One group was explicitly excluded from it by several of the people with whom I spoke, namely, the Sneh-Mikunis group which calls itself the "Communist Party of Israel." This is one of the two groups into which the Communist Party split in 1965. At that time it had already gone far in the direction of Jewish nationalism and Zionism.

Since 1967 the political degeneration of this organization has become complete. It is no longer regarded as part of the Left or even as an opposition group. It has moved considerably to the right of Mapam and is generally known as a supporter of the government's policies. The journalist Amos Kenan called it "the Left wing of the Labor Party"—that is, of the party of Golda Meir. It is absent from mass struggles and no longer organizes demonstrations, mass meetings or other activities. It no longer has a youth organization and is steadily declining in numbers.

At the same time the ultra-Right has been stirred into greater activity. Centered in Gahal under the leadership of Menahem Beigin, it focuses on complete annexation and more, on the most virulent anti-Arab racism and on growing hoodlumism and violence. Its youth organization resembles the notorious Jewish Defense League in this country.

Clearly, the forces of reaction and progress are becoming increasingly polarized and the struggle is sharpening. I have no doubt that it is the forces of peace and genuine security for Israel, in whose vanguard is the Communist Party of Israel, which will be victorious.

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