



Theses and common resolutions

Contribution for a European action programme to meet the crisis.

10 February 2014

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1) The crisis worldwide

Today's crisis has its roots in the attempt to restore the rate of profit in the mid-1970s, after the end of the long post-war boom, to tackle the growing crisis of over-production that had replaced it. A vast amount of credit was made available alongside the radical deregulation of the banking system and the wider

economy, and massive attacks on the trade unions and basic rights.

The result was two and a half decades of casino capitalism under Reagan and Thatcher in the 1980s and a speculative bubble which turned into a catastrophic banking crisis when the US sub-prime mortgage market, where the most reckless lending regimes were located, collapsed.

The current crisis (the biggest since the 1930s) broke in the summer of 2007 when the US investment bank, Bear Stearns, reported huge losses on the US sub-prime mortgage market. A year later, in August 2008, two gigantic US-government backed mortgage lenders, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, collapsed. Since they were too big to be allowed to fail they were nationalised by US Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson.

A month later (in September 2008) Lehman Brothers – the fourth biggest investment bank in the US and the one most exposed to sub-prime mortgage losses – collapsed and was allowed to go to the wall. When this was followed by AIG – the world's biggest insurance company – the implications of letting it go to the wall were clear to US Treasury Secretary Paulson and he nationalised it with an injection of \$150bn.

These nationalisations were hugely controversial, but the “leave it to market forces” option – which had been the approach of the US and British governments during the first years of the 1930s slump (in the period before the second New Deal) – was seen as too dangerous to contemplate. It had resulted, at that time, in a wave of protectionism and mass unemployment (10m in the USA), which was only overcome by the Second World War and the reconstruction that followed.

Today's crisis is a systemic crisis of the capitalist mode of production itself, and not a cyclical phenomenon or business cycle. What makes it more enduring is its dual character. It is a crisis of the economy and the ecology of the planet. If the ecological crisis was not clear enough before the new revelation in September 2012 that Arctic thaw has smashed all records and that the North Pole could be ice-free by 2030, it should be now. This is not only a massive landmark in the process of global warming with all its consequences, but a defining moment in human history

The dual nature of the crisis was directly reflected in rising world commodity prices – in particular energy and food. The price of oil and gas has dropped temporarily because of the onset of the crisis but its long-

term trend is sharply upwards - driven by peak oil and demand from the emerging economies.

Food and commodity prices were a decisive factor in the emergence of the Arab Spring in 2010. The Arab revolutions, including Tunisia, cannot be understood if you forget their origins in the 2008 crisis which led two years later to a huge increase in the prices of staple goods.

State intervention saved capitalism in the first phase of the crisis in 2007 and 2008 by the nationalisation and massive "re-capitalising" of the banks alongside the introduction of limited stimulus into the economies. Governments across Europe, however, quickly repackaged the banking crisis and private debt as public debt and set out to make the working class pay the bill though the imposition of massive austerity programmes of cuts in welfare and living standards. They began using the debt as an ideological weapon to beat down opposition to austerity and to argue that there was no alternative but to massively cut public spending and privatise public assets.

2) Meltdown in the EU

Since the end of the post-war boom the EU has been the central project of the core sections of the European bourgeois in their drive to compete more effectively with rival economic power blocks. This required the creation of a single deregulated market (the largest in the world) and the full implementation of the neo-liberal agenda.

The impact of the global recession on the EU, however, has been dramatic. The deep contradictions, which have existed in the EU since the launch of the Euro and before, have been compounded by the world recession. This has thrown both the Eurozone, and the EU itself, into a crisis of existential proportions. This crisis continues unabated under conditions where a collapse of the Eurozone would be a catastrophic event for the world economy.

These contradictions are rooted in the deep inequalities that exist between the 17 Eurozone Member States and the inability of the EU, due to the Stability and Growth Pact (SGP), to conduct effective fiscal policy - or to make fiscal transfers between its Member States in the way the USA is able to do amongst the states of the USA. The SGP, which limits annual budget deficits to of 3 per cent of GDP and the national debt to 60 per cent of GDP, was designed to ensure that efforts to stabilise the EU at a time of crisis would be dealt with by supply side austerity, cuts in public services, and attacks on the working class. This mechanism itself collapsed as the crisis developed when Germany and France took the leading role in ignoring it and it had to be reasserted.

By the summer of 2011 the most debt-ridden Eurozone Member States - Italy, Greece, Portugal, Ireland, and Spain - had been forced, by the EU and the IMF, to accept increasingly draconian austerity packages in an attempt to save the Euro Zone from collapse, at their expense. Greece, Ireland, Spain and Portugal all received massive bailouts from the EU and International Monetary Fund (IMF). These countries stood on the brink of debt defaults that could have triggered a renewed crisis across the banking system potentially greater than the sub-prime crisis of 2008.

3) The paralysis of the EU elites

A striking feature of this crisis, after four years, has been the inability of the European elites to have any significant affect the course of events. Nineteen EU crisis summits over the past four years have produced nothing. The crisis is as acute now as it was at the start.

In May 2012, attempts were made, at the G8 Summit, to reconcile the mutually contradictory strategies of the need for growth and jobs with austerity and so-called "fiscal responsibility". Germany opposed further bailouts, while François Hollande wanted to collectivise the debt with issuing of Euro-bonds. Both wanted to save the Euro, but for

different reasons. Merkel wanted to keep an under-valued Euro in relation to the German economy in order to subsidise German exports. France wanted to protect its banks, which were dangerously exposed to the Greek debt. They all wanted to prevent contagion spreading from Greece to Spain and elsewhere, but could not agree on how to do it. All they could agree was that that the system has to be rescued by making the working class pay for the crisis.

A year ago, in the June 17th 2012 elections, Greek society was clearly reaching breaking point. The narrow victory of the pro-Memorandum parties on June 17th against a remarkable challenge from Syriza, however, resolved nothing for the Greek bourgeoisie or the EU elites. The new coalition behind ND and Antonis Samaras was a collection of deeply discredited parties committed to implementing the Memorandum at all costs

The EU elites do, however, have a more immediate imperative than European integration. That is to impose a crushing defeat on the Greek working class to use this as a "shock tactic" example to the rest of Europe.

With the enforcement of the last agreement of November 2012 Greece is experiencing a deeper crisis from the collapse caused by the policy of austerity of the European Union and the diktats of the Troika (EU, IMF, ECB). It is marked by social destruction unprecedented in Europe since the Second World War. The country has been demolished. The popular classes are being bled dry: the official unemployment rate is nearly 30 per cent, wages have been cut by 30-40 per cent, or even more, hospitals are without medicines, which are overpriced or sold on the black market. In Athens thousands of shops have closed down. What remains of social legislation is in the process of being dismantled. The whole of southern Europe is being attacked, but on the scale of austerity-driven destruction Greece arrives at the top, ahead of Portugal and Spain. So we must take stock of the process of dislocation that Greek society and the Greek economy are experiencing. Greece is at the centre of a new

confrontation between the central powers of the European Union and its periphery.

Despite all this, the Greek people live, survive and resist. Social and political fatigue is making itself felt, after 29 days of national strikes since the beginning of the crisis, but the mobilisation is there, with its potential, but also its difficulties. The last strike on 20 February was still very big. The trade union movement is resisting. But there is now a race against time with the neo-Nazis, both in the working-class districts and in defence of immigrants. Beyond social struggles, it is everyday resistance and basic solidarity – food, health... – in neighbourhoods, villages, families that allow the popular classes to survive.

This means that we have to step up solidarity with Greece in order to prevent its isolation. If the Greek working class is defeated, and its resistance to austerity crushed, capitalism will eventually be able to get out of the crisis by imposing a new harsh new conditions based on low wages, flexible working, and minimal public services.

4) Austerity governments under pressure

With the Eurozone and the UK in recession, the German economy shrinking, and France flat-lining it could hardly be clearer that the crisis is deepening. Moreover popular support for austerity – the argument that there is no alternative but to pay the debt by cuts – is losing ground. The usual remedies to prop up capitalism offered by traditional parties of the centre left and centre right increasingly lack credibility.

Despite this, the failure of the austerity approach to halt the crisis or reduce the debt is being repeated across the EU, including in Italy, the fourth largest economy in the EU. Many of the parties that have been implementing austerity, whether centre-right or social-liberal, are experiencing problems as they face

elections. It was the case in France where Sarkozy was defeated even if the social-liberal government of Hollande is driving the same liberal policy.

In Italy, the general elections of March 2013 were a slap in the face for the European Troika and its candidate Monti, and a failure for all the traditional parties. In Spain right-wing People's Party Government is facing serious problems. It faces continuing strikes and mobilisations against austerity. Its economy, the fourth largest economy in the Eurozone, is close to breaking point. Its flight of capital is now worse than that experienced by Indonesia, one of the hardest hit countries during the Asian crisis in the late 1990s. Like Greece it has over 20 per cent unemployment with over 50 per cent amongst young people.

In Germany Merkel is facing an election in 2013, after the loss, since 2009, of four of the main lands for the profit of the Green/SPD coalition. In Britain, Labour already looks like the most likely winner in 2015. The British economy is now in a double-dip recession and with over 40 per cent of exports to the Eurozone it is unlikely to change.

Despite this pressure on the centre-right however, resistance to austerity EU-wide remains inadequate and the trade unions in most countries passive or worse. Massive attacks continue on the working class at all levels: living standards, job security, pensions and welfare.

5) An ecosocialist response to the crisis

The radical left has a responsibility to present a clear alternative and a clear explanation of the crisis from an ecosocialist perspective, if we are to help the resistance to crystallise into a political alternative. It means campaigning around a radical alternative programme whilst explaining that cuts and austerity will only worsen the crisis and accelerate the drive to recession.

Our starting point must be the rejection of all cuts and austerity and to work in every country across Europe to maximise resistance on the broadest possible basis. The Europe against Austerity conferences in London in October 2011 and 2012 were good initiatives in the development of a Euro-wide response to these attacks. We must build strongly on these initiatives.

Our overarching alternative is for investment not cuts to meet the crisis. We call for massive investments by governments in public works programmes to create large numbers of new green jobs designed to construct an environmentally sustainable society. Whilst calling for such investment we reject the capitalist obsession of year on year growth. This is both socially undesirable and environmentally unsustainable. We reject the perverse capitalist logic that people always need more commodities irrespective of what they already have, which is driven by the thirst for profit. We call for a rise in the quality of life rather than in quantity of things people possess, for an abundance of free time rather than abundance of unnecessary commodities.

We call for big increase in investment into renewable technology and crash programmes to construct a renewable energy infrastructure and to improve energy conservation. We call for the insulation of the housing stock and public buildings and the construction of sustainable (and free) public transport systems. The demand for the creation of millions of green climate jobs in order to directly address global warming, already raised in Britain, should extend across Europe, and such work should be carried by workers directly employed by the governments themselves. If trillions of Euros can be given to the banks the money can be found for public works aimed at creating large numbers of green jobs and a low carbon infrastructure.

We call for radical change in the way the wealth of society is distributed. The share of wealth going to wage earners continues to decline while the share going to the wealthy continues to escalate. This is completely

unacceptable. We therefore call for the imposition of much higher taxes on the rich and on big business. We call for the bonuses of the bankers to be abolished, for the wages of the mass of workers to be increased, and precarious work conditions abolished.

We call for a tax on all financial transactions including short-term investments. This must be used not to bail out banks but to provide massive investment, in a nationalised framework, into a green infrastructure. Such a tax would not only create jobs and increase purchasing power but it would generate the resources necessary to maintain a range of socially necessary services and benefits currently under attack including welfare, pensions, education, childcare, health care and social services.

At the same time we call for working hours across Europe to be reduced without loss of pay. This would rapidly reduce unemployment, create large numbers jobs, and enhance the quality of life of the population.

6) The impact of the crisis on women

Women are forced to bear the harshest burden of the crisis worldwide. Women are the most intensive users of the public sector, particularly childcare and health facilities. Cuts and privatisations of such services increase the double burden most women face. Furthermore women's place in the labour market is often dependent on the existence of such services because of the sexual division of labour in the family; without free or affordable child care women may either be forced to leave paid employment or to work in even more precarious, antisocial and low-paid jobs. They are also a large proportion of the employees in these sectors. This is why in many European countries women's unemployment rates have started to rise for the first time in several decades.

Fighting for women's right to control their fertility and campaigns against

violence against women are also increasingly important in the current economic and social crisis where reactionary forces are attacking women's rights.

7) Our approach to the debt

We reject, as a first principle, any responsibility for the crisis or for the debt. We resolve to challenge the debt in each country by calling for debt audits. Such audits can uncover the sources of the debt and the terms under which they were made. They can identify illegitimate debts and demand that those responsible be held publicly accountable. They should ask not only whether the debt can be paid but whether it should be paid at all. Citizen participation in this process is essential in order to ensure the objectivity and the transparency of the process.

In the so-called peripheral countries of Europe, which are at the epicentre of the crisis and are faced with punitive EU/IMF imposed austerity programmes and economic meltdown, we call for debt repudiation and default with debt audits used to facilitate that process. In the core economies (such as Britain and France) debt audits should be used to raise consciousness of the role and nature of the debt in preparation for a future more acute state of the crisis rather than to call for immediate defaults, which would not currently be understood by most people.

8) Demands

Today, demands that, in the boom years after the war, appeared to be mildly reformist, such as nationalisation of the banks and programmes of public works, today take on an anti-capitalist dynamic. We therefore advance the following demands:

- * Repeal the Maastricht and Nice EU treaties;
- * No to all cuts and privatisations;
- * Nationalise the banks under

democratic and popular control;

- * Nationalise bankrupt industries under workers' control to preserve jobs and reorganise production;

- * A tax on all financial transactions, to be used for green investment;

- * A crash programme to construct a sustainable, publicly owned, energy infrastructure based on wind, wave, and solar power to create millions of new jobs in manufacture, construction and engineering;

- * A crash programme to insulate housing and public buildings to conserve energy;

- * For a major programme of job conversion to socially useful production for industries such as car manufacture;

- * For a sharply progressive tax system which would impose much higher taxes on the rich and the corporations;

- * Open the books of both the financial and industrial companies to prevent the use of the crisis to force through redundancies and closures;

- * for a minimum wage assessed in each country of the EU allowing the same and good standard of life for workers and maximum working hours (30 hours per week), for an upward harmonisation of living standards, for transfers out of an increased EU budget to less developed member states in order to make such a development possible;

- * For shorter working hours without loss of pay to create jobs;

- * Halt the attack on wages, working conditions and pension rights;

- * For free and sustainable public transport systems;

- * Stop imperialist wars, cut military spending;

- * Break the power of agribusiness and the stop the speculation in food;

- * Break the power of the supermarkets and protect the small sustainable producers;

- * Halt all house re-possession for

mortgage arrears.

9) For a different Europe

In Greece in particular the issue of leaving the Eurozone or staying in has now been placed at the centre of the stage by the severity of the crisis. In fact the EU ruling elites themselves now see little chance of the Eurozone surviving this crisis, at least in its current form, and are prepared to see Greece go.

We should make clear that whilst we do not call or campaign for Greece or any of the “peripheral countries” to leave the Euro or the EU we cannot defend the integrity of either of these anti-working class institutions. The working class in Europe has no stake in either the Euro or the EU. They are both neo-liberal set-ups designed to increase the exploitation of the working class and as such they are a part of the problem not the solution. They are demanding the immiseration of the populations of Greece and the “peripheral countries” in order to attempt to stabilise the Euro. They are designed to manage the crisis in the interests of capital by whatever means necessary – not as frameworks for developing progressive policies.

The EU is clear a supra-national construct designed to help the individual Member States to more effectively take on their own working class. The Euro was never simply a currency but a political instrument designed to cut wages and destroy welfare systems – in other words create a bosses Europe.

The EU has a long-term democratic deficit that is getting worse. Every Treaty since the Single European Act of 1986 has degraded it further. The European Parliament was established to give the impression of a democratic structure, which did not exist. Power in the EU lies with the Council of

Ministers and the Commission – neither of which are elected bodies. They are dominated by the biggest and most powerful countries, meet in private, and cannot be challenged through the structures of the EU.

In our critique of the Euro and of the EU itself, however, we give no ground to the rightwing forces that advance a nationalist xenophobic and racist objection to them. We oppose their view at every stage and advance instead a working class and a socialist critique of the EU designed to challenge its neoliberal core and anti-working class structures.

We are pro-Europe internationalists. We call for a real internationalism. We call for the repeal of the Maastricht and Nice treaties which lock-in the EU’s neoliberal agenda. We call for a different Europe, a Europe of the workers and the peoples, free from such structures and restrictions which would allow the working class of each country to challenge their own ruling classes more directly than they can under the current EU set-up which seeks to support the employers and serve their interests at every stage.

Our task is to wage the class struggle as effectively as possible whilst striving for the maximum international solidarity through the construction of links between both trade unions and social movements across Europe and beyond.

10) Nationalisation

This approach to the crisis implies a planned and coordinated approach to the crisis, which can only be met by a programme of nationalisation. This should start with the nationalisation of the banks and of bankrupt industries with the participation of, and control by, workers and consumers. It should also apply to other critical sectors such as housing, energy, infrastructure, pension system,

education, and health.

Nationalisation is also central to any debt default. Without full control and ownership of the banking system a debt default could well lead to a freezing of credit, deeper recession, and big losses to workers’ pensions since the majority of a country’s debt is held by domestic banks and domestic pension funds. Taking banks under public control and ownership is crucial in order to nullify a credit crisis in defaulting nations and provide resources to cancel and write off large parts of the debt in major economies. Financial resources could then be directed towards useful, green, planned investment.

Nationalisation does not equal socialism, of course, but it does provide a practical way to defend jobs and opens up a space in which socialist ideas can develop. The nationalisations of 2008 were carried out in order to socialise risk and bail out the creditors, and with the intention of handing them back at a later date. Some were simply government majority shareholdings, which can be sold off at any time, and meanwhile managed “at arms length” from government. We should welcome them as far as they go, as better than leaving it to market forces – but we should call for workers’ control.

We advance the necessity to organise an ecosocialist and democratic Europe: other supranational institutions; other relationships between local and regional decisions and national or supranational decisions; other mechanisms of decision and control; the redirection of the economy towards fulfilling the needs of ordinary people (regional circuit economy), away from an export orientation; the strengthening of the commons and the implementation of basic mechanisms of planning, starting from a local level.

Draft Theses on the Jewish Question Today (1947)

8 February 2009, by **Ernest Mandel**

In presenting its draft theses on the Jewish question prepared one year ago, the International Secretariat of the Fourth International has issued the following statement:

"In view of the fact that this question is being raised in our ranks for the first time and that the discussion is likely to bring forth numerous contributions, the International Secretariat presents these theses as a general line of orientation, but is ready in the course of the discussion to offer clarifications, amendments or corrections if necessary." - Ed.

A. The Jewish Question in the Capitalist world

1. Throughout the ages the lot of the Jews, a mercantile people whose survival among other peoples has its root causes in a special social function, has been determined by the general evolution of society, an evolution which brought about changes in their relationships with the various classes. The bourgeois revolution in Western Europe opened the doors of the ghettos and merged the Jewish masses within the environing society. The assimilation of the Jews seemed to be an accomplished fact. But the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, those vast reservoirs of Jews confined for centuries to the functions of middlemen, entered upon the road of capitalist development at a time when world capitalism had already embarked on its imperialist phase. Although the age-old relations of exchange and production experienced an abrupt upheaval which robbed the Jews of the material base for their

existence, there was no widespread industrialization to allow these millions of now useless middlemen to become integrated in the proletariat. Social differentiation of the Jewish masses was thus blocked. A small part of the Jews became capitalist or proletarian; a larger part emigrated, thus contravening the tendency toward complete assimilation which was going on in the Western countries. The largest part of all remained in the wretched condition of small merchants, "crushed between feudalism and capitalism, each feeding the rottenness of the other" (A. Leon).

2. The anti-Semitic movements of the past always had a direct or indirect social base. They were movements of various social classes whose interests came into conflict at a certain time with the social function of the Jews. The anti-Semitism of the beginning of the Twentieth Century was nowise different.

1. In the backward countries of Eastern Europe, reactionary political forces were able to turn the discontent and despair of the masses into periodic pogroms - for the hatred of the little people toward the Jewish petty usurer and pawn-broker, the Jewish small merchant and shop-keeper, was an undeniable social reality.

2. In the countries of Central Europe, the anti-Semitic movements, such as that of the burgermaster Lueger in Vienna, had their social roots in the sharpening of competition within the professional and mercantile middle-classes who were being inundated by a tide of Jewish immigrants.

3. In France, the anti-Semitic movement which broke out at the time of the Dreyfus affair had its social origin in the hatred of the aristocracy for the Jewish bankers who had bought up their castles, and of the

sons of aristocrats who saw the careers that formerly had been "reserved" exclusively for them now occupied by these dangerous competitors. These social layers were successful for a certain time in turning against the Jews the inflamed nationalist sentiments of a large part of the petty bourgeoisie.

Rooted in specific social conflicts, these various anti-Semitic movements took on most diverse manifestations, all the way from phenomena of utter barbarism (the Russian pogroms) to the formulation of the "subtle" nationalist theories which were characteristic of the imperialist epoch (Charles Maurras).

3. In Western Europe the social opportunities for assimilation of the Jews had created a powerful ideological movement toward complete assimilation. In Eastern Europe the impossibility of widespread assimilation of the Jews resulted in a strong current in the direction of a national renaissance and preservation of national characteristics. It was within the large concentrations of Jewish masses in Poland, Lithuania, Western Russia, Hungary, Rumania and Slovakia that there developed a new literature in Yiddish, a new folklore, an intense autonomous cultural and even political life (the "Bund" in the workers' movement). Wherever the Jewish masses who had emigrated to the United States were again socially restricted to certain economic fields, and where they were geographically concentrated, this movement continued even in these countries. Lenin, who alone in the Second International understood how to apply Marxist strategy to the national question, rejected all pedantic formalism in his appraisal of this current. He started from the

standpoint that the task of the revolutionary party was to integrate into the movement of proletarian emancipation every current of cultural and national autonomy which corresponded to a genuine aspiration of the working masses. That is why he recognized the legitimacy, from a socialist point of view, of the Jewish movement as much as of the Polish or Czech movements. The task of the Jewish workers consisted in struggling, at the side of the workers of the country where they lived, for the overthrow of capitalism, and after this they would be left completely free to carry out the organization of their national and cultural economy as they chose.

4. The epoch of decaying capitalism is also the epoch of the sharpened crisis of the Jewish problem. Inflation, the increased pressure of finance capital, and finally the profound economic crisis, ruined millions of small tradesmen and merchants and inflamed to the highest pitch their hatred of their Jewish competitors. In Central and Eastern Europe the appalling unemployment among the intellectual workers and the increasingly wretched situation of the professionals created a climate especially favorable for the appearance of vast petty-bourgeois mass movements, which found in anti-Semitism one of their ideological weapons. In the countries of Eastern Europe, these movements revealed a very deep popular current which manifested itself in many bloody outbursts. In Germany, it was the state power, fallen into the hands of the Nazi rulers, which organized from on top the persecution and later the extermination of the Jews. In this sense it is decaying capitalism, which deliberately placed power in the hands of a band of bloody criminals, that bears full responsibility for the horrible fate of the Jewish European masses during the war. The extermination of the European Jews by German imperialism is a warning to all other peoples and shows them the fate that awaits them so long as present-day society continues to decay.

5. Zionism arose among the Jewish petty bourgeoisie of Central Europe as a reaction against the rebirth of anti-Semitism at the beginning of the

Twentieth Century. A typically petty-bourgeois movement, it remained for a long time without the support of the Jewish bourgeoisie and isolated from the popular masses. During the First World War, British imperialism, which wanted to use Zionism as an instrument for establishing itself in Palestine, seemed to offer Zionism the possibility of becoming a reality through the Balfour declaration. At this time there began a small flow of capital imports, and a slight movement of immigration. It was only after the coming of Hitler to power and the sudden fall of European Jewry into the abyss, that these two movements "speeded up," though obstructed both by the nationalist outbursts of the Arabs and by the policy of British imperialism which threw up more and more barriers against Jewish penetration into Palestine.

For the revolutionary proletariat, Zionism must be looked upon as a movement which is both utopian and reactionary:

Utopian and Reactionary Character of Zionism

Utopian:

(a) Because Zionism believes that a "harmonious" development of the productive forces is possible within a "closed economy" in Palestine, in the midst of a capitalist world undergoing ever greater economic convulsions. The immense development of Palestine economy that would be necessary if several million immigrants were to be absorbed, is not realizable within the framework of present-day world capitalist economy.

(b) Because Zionism considers the creation of a Jewish (or bi-national) state possible amid the open hostility of 50 million Arabs - in the face of the fact that the Arab population grows in the same proportion as the Jewish immigration and the gradual industrialization of the country.

(c) Because Zionism hopes to reach

this goal by relying on the maneuverings among the great powers, all of which, in reality, want to utilize the Zionist movement simply as a pawn in their play for power in the Arab world.

(d) Because Zionism thinks it possible to neutralize anti-Semitism throughout the world by the simple grant of a nationality to the Jews - in the face of the fact that anti-Semitism has deep social, historical and ideological roots which will be all the more difficult to tear out as the death agony of capitalism is prolonged.

Reactionary:

(a) Because Zionism serves as a support for British imperialist domination, by giving to imperialism the pretext of acting as "arbiter" between the Jews and Arabs, by demanding the maintenance of the British mandate, and by developing a "closed" miniature Jewish economy within which the working masses have a much higher standard of living and different immediate interests than those of the Arab working masses.

(b) Because it produces a nationalist reaction on the part of the Arab masses, causes a racial division of the working-class movement, strengthens the "sacred union" both of the Jews and of the Arabs, and thus makes it possible for imperialism to perpetuate the conflict by continuing to keep its troops in Palestine.

(c) Because it retards the movement for the agrarian revolution, by buying lands from the large Arab landholders and working them, thanks to foreign subsidies, as a "closed" Jewish agriculture within Arab Palestinian agriculture. In this way the position of the large landholders is to some extent reestablished, lands are taken from the Arab peasants, and most important of all, the Jewish masses in Palestine have no interest in fighting for partition of the lands of the effendis among the Arab masses, since this would mean the end of their land purchases.

(d) Because it acts as a brake on the participation of the Jewish working masses in the class struggle in the rest of the world, separates them from the

world proletariat, gives them autonomous goals to strive for, and creates illusions as to the possibility of improving their lot within the framework of decaying world capitalism.

For all these reasons the revolutionary workers' movement has always conducted a violent struggle against Zionist ideology and practice. The arguments advanced by the "socialist" representatives of Zionism in favor of their cause are either the classic reformist arguments ("the possibility of gradually improving the situation of the Jewish masses"); or the social-patriotic arguments ("it is first necessary to resolve the national question for all the Jews before approaching the solution of the social problems of the Jewish workers"); or the classic arguments of the defenders of imperialism ("the penetration of Jews into Palestine has developed not only industry but also the workers' movement, the general culture of the masses, their standard of living, etc.") - the arguments advanced by the defenders of colonialism in every country.

B. The Present Aspect of the Jewish Question throughout the World

6. After the Second World War, the especially tragic situation of the Jews appears as a symbol of the entire tragedy of humanity slipping back toward barbarism. After the fearful tragedy of European Judaism, the Jews in every part of the world are facing a revival of the hostility of large layers of the population against them.

1. In Europe, two years after the "liberation," more than 100,000 Jews are still living under the infamous regime of the concentration camps. The imperialist masters who in the course of their military operations were able to shift millions of men in the period of a few days have been unable, after searching for twenty months, to find any refuge whatsoever

for these miserable survivors of the Nazi camps. Throughout the continent there are hardly a million Jews remaining.

2. In Palestine, 700,000 Jews face an Arab world in full eruption. The development of Egyptian and Syrian capitalism adds the factor of economic competition to the many causes for the militant anti-Zionism. British imperialism and the Arab feudal lords and bourgeoisie will for their part do all they can to turn the hatred of the oppressed Arab masses against the Jew as a scapegoat. Thus the Jews in Palestine are in danger of being wiped out in the widespread explosion which is preparing in the Middle East.

3. In the Soviet Union, the bureaucracy in its struggle against the opposition has made use of the anti-Semitism latent within the peasant masses and the backward working-class layers. During the period of the First and Second Five-Year Plans, millions of Jewish merchants and artisans were brought into the lower and middle ranks of the bureaucracy as engineers, technicians, directors of cooperatives, and into the upper layers on the collective farms. In Western Russia they constitute that part of the bureaucracy most directly in contact with the oppressed masses, and thus it is in large part against them that the hatred of the masses for the parasites and profiteers of the regime is concentrated. The bloody pogroms launched by the native population at the time of the German invasion furnished very clear evidence of the intensification of this hatred (70,000 Jews killed in Kiev in twenty-four hours). A sharpening of the social crisis in Russia and the purges of a civil war would certainly see the extermination of the Jewish masses if the counter-revolution were victorious.

4. Finally, in the United States, the confining of Jews to certain sectors of small manufacture and trade and to commercial and professional occupations will cause, in the acute economic crisis ahead, a heightening of the competition which will give a strong material base to the anti-Semitism existing now in latent form. Exploitation of reactionary prejudices against "racial minorities" has been a long-time favorite weapon of the American fascist gangsters. Insofar as

the sharpening of the social crisis, the politicization of the workers' movement and the rapid decay of American "democracy" give birth to the development of a fascist mass party, anti-Semitism as well as anti-Negro agitation will assume gigantic proportions. The fate of the Jews in the United States is tied in the very closest way to the outcome of the tremendous struggle of the American working class against the Yankee bourgeoisie. A victory of the latter through the establishment of a dictatorship would signify within a short period a catastrophe for the Jews comparable only to the catastrophe which Hitler's coming to power meant for the Jews in Europe.

7. The endless series of ordeals undergone by the Jewish masses in Europe has without question accelerated the growth of a national consciousness, both among the survivors and among the Jewish masses in America and Palestine who feel themselves closely tied to the fate of their brothers in Europe. This national consciousness is manifested in the following ways:

1. The Jewish masses in general now want to affirm their own nationality as against other peoples. Violent Jewish nationalism corresponds to the violence of the persecutions and anti-Semitism.

2. The eyes of the Jewish masses in Europe are turned toward emigration. With all frontiers hermetically sealed, and as a result of the general conditions of the postwar world and in harmony with the engulfing wave of nationalism, the desire of the Jews to leave a continent which for them is nothing but a vast graveyard finds its expression primarily in a Zionist desire to go to Palestine.

3. Within the Zionist movement, the struggle for the "Jewish state," hitherto conducted exclusively by the extreme right (the "revisionists"), has now been taken up by all parties (the "Biltmore program") except the centrist Hashomer Hatzair.

The rebirth of the national consciousness of the masses is the result of capitalism's decay which raises once more all the problems that had been solved in its period of expansion. The Fourth International,

basing itself firmly on its program and on a scientific analysis of the situation in Palestine but at the same time taking into account the actual state of mind of the Jewish masses, must recognize that their desire to lead their own national existence is a legitimate one. The Fourth International must show concretely that the winning of their nationality cannot be realized within decaying capitalist society, and is especially unrealizable and reactionary in Palestine. The Fourth International must show that for the Jews as for all other peoples of the earth, the defense or the final winning of their own nationality cannot be achieved by building "closed" states and economies, but that a planned world socialist economy is the only realistic framework within which the free and normal development of a people is possible today. The Fourth International must make the Jewish masses aware of the terrible catastrophes which await them if the decay of capitalism continues its course. Integration of the Jewish emancipation movement within the movement of the world working-class is the only thing that will make possible a harmonious solution of the Jewish problem. Socialist planned economy, "completely altering the topography of the globe" (Trotsky), will assure to all who desire it their own national existence within the framework of the United States of the World.

A Program of Action

8. But the Fourth International will never win decisive influence over the Jewish masses by simply proclaiming that only the socialist revolution will bring their emancipation. Only by taking leadership of a vast world movement of solidarity on the part of the proletariat toward the victims of imperialist and fascist persecution, only by showing the Jews in practice that the solutions proposed by the revolutionary movement offer more hope and are more realistic than the Zionist "solution" - only in this way will the Fourth International succeed at the next turn in drawing the Jewish masses into the world struggle against imperialism. To march against the Zionist current today, and to oppose to it another immediate and concrete solution - these are the two

indispensable factors in making preparations for the next stage. When the Jewish masses have gone through their disillusioning experience with Zionism and have learned the futility of their efforts and sacrifices, they will turn toward us - provided we understand how to move toward them today with our solutions as well as with an intransigent criticism of Zionism.

1. All sections of the Fourth International must advance the slogan: "Open the doors of every country to the Jewish refugees! Abolish all restrictions on immigration!" This slogan must be supported especially in the United States, on the one hand, and by the English, Canadian, French and all the Latin American sections on the other. The latter, particularly the Argentine and Brazil sections, and also our Australian section, must add to this the slogan: "Abolish all discriminatory racial and religious clauses in immigration legislation!" Every concrete occasion (complaints about the insufficiency of manpower and the population decline, partial opening of the country to certain categories of immigrants, actions in commemoration of the victims of fascism, etc.) must be utilized to arouse the working-class public opinion of the country and to demand the launching of concrete actions as the way to get immediate results. Resolutions like those of the CIO must be used as a point of departure for demanding actions from the World Federation of Trade Unions, for organizing joint movements in those sections of the economy and society which are most ready to express their solidarity in action (seamen, government employees, etc.) through slow-down strikes, organized sabotage of discriminatory measures, protest actions, joint meetings and manifestations, etc. Only insofar as our sections can prove to the Jews that they are carrying on a real and effective struggle for the opening of their own country to immigration - only thus will they succeed in getting the Jews to choose immigration into these countries rather than into Palestine, since immigration into Palestine would then be more difficult while at the same time constituting an act contrary to the interests of the

anti-imperialist masses of the Middle East.

2. All sections of the Fourth International must devote themselves seriously to the task of combating the foul vapors of anti-Semitic ideology existing or steadily growing in large layers of the population of every country. This work of disinfection is all the more urgent because the "official" working-class movement, whether through conservatism, cowardliness or narrow partisan calculation (the anti-Trotskyism of the French CP is expressed not infrequently in anti-Semitic arguments), does nothing to eliminate from the consciousness of the masses the anti-Jewish poison introduced by the Hitler propaganda.

On every concrete occasion our sections must demolish the fascist lies about "Jewish capitalism" or the "Jewish monopolists." They must constantly warn the proletarian mass organizations against every attempt to rebuild anti-Semitic organizations. Using the tragic examples of the last years, they must impregnate the consciousness of the masses with the fundamental truth that their own fate is at stake in the struggle against anti-Semitic gangsterism. Only insofar as our sections can bring the masses to understand this truth and to translate it into action - only thus will they succeed in convincing the Jews that the integration of their emancipation movement into the world working-class movement is the only thing which will put them in a position to defend themselves effectively against new waves of anti-Semitism.

3. All sections of the Fourth International which are faced with an organized fascist movement making full use of anti-Semitic demagoguery and proceeding to terrorist acts against the Jews, must strive to mobilize the working class in armed formations (militias, etc.) to defend the Jewish people. Wherever the Jewish population, is geographically concentrated in Jewish quarters, they must propose and help to set up armed defense guards, while endeavoring to fuse them with the workers' militias. They must explain to the Jewish masses that only such fusion in the armed struggle can guarantee an effective defense; but at the same time they must warn the workers that only armed defense of

the Jews can prevent the crushing of the entire working-class movement later on by the same fascist weapons.

C. The Present Aspect of the Palestine Problem

9. The Palestine problem has received a new and special importance since the end of the Second World War because of a number of "new factors" profoundly changing its physiognomy:

1. The industrialization of the Near and Middle East has to some extent strengthened the native Arab bourgeoisie in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, and to a lesser degree in the other Arab countries. The social differentiation of the old feudal or patriarchal Arab society has been speeded up. An Arab proletariat much more powerful numerically and already politically conscious has appeared on the political scene in numerous countries of the Middle East (strikes in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Iraq and Iran). Arab nationalism shows the same differentiations. Alongside feudal and reactionary pan-Islamism there now appears a progressive pan-Arab current which sees in the realization of a union of the Arab countries of the Middle East the only real framework for the development of the productive forces and for the constitution of an Arab state. The bourgeoisie can support this idea only in a hesitant way on an ideological plane, insofar as it desires expansion of the market for its industry which has been plunged in a profound crisis since the end of the war. The only force capable of accomplishing the program of the national-democratic revolution in the Arab world is the proletariat, which alone can carry out to the end, through the mechanism of the permanent revolution, the struggle against feudalism, for the agrarian revolution, for the emancipation of the Arab world from imperialist intervention, and for the constitution of the unity of the Arab world.

2. Growth of anti-imperialist movements within the framework of the colonial revolutions, the most significant upheavals of the immediate postwar period. The weakening of the

old imperialist powers (Great Britain, France, Italy) had the result that the bourgeoisie and even certain feudal layers seized the opportunity of obtaining by pressure - and without having to unloose genuine mass struggles, from which they always recoil - important concessions from the occupying powers, such as withdrawal of French troops from Syria and Lebanon and preparatory steps for withdrawal of British troops from Egypt. These various retreats on the part of imperialism are an incentive for the anti-imperialist struggle in the other colonial or semi-colonial countries of the Middle East. They strike a powerful blow at the prestige of imperialism and they increase the confidence of the native masses in their own strength.

3. Transformation of Palestine into the key position in the system of imperialist defense in the Eastern Mediterranean. After the withdrawal of British troops from Egypt, Palestine will be the main base for the British fleet, air force, land army and secret services in the Eastern Mediterranean, and the key position for defense of the Suez Canal and the imperialist route to India. The terrorist actions are used simply as a pretext for the large concentrations of British troops in Palestine. In reality, what is involved for British imperialism is constructing a strong base with a view to the coming conflicts and for defense of the Empire.

4. Transformation of the Middle East into one of the main stakes in the rivalry between the "Big Three." Before the war the Middle East was the part of the world where the predominant influence of British imperialism was least menaced. Since then, the drive of Rommel all the way to El Alamein, the installing of American "observers" in the kingdom of Ibn Saud, the outbreak of the Anglo-American dispute over Arabian oil and the Russo-Anglo-American dispute over Iranian oil, the Russian penetration into Iranian Azerbaijan, the Russian attempts to threaten the integrity of Turkish territory, the organizing of the Orthodox Church throughout the Middle East as a powerful agency of the Kremlin diplomacy - all these have brought into question the exclusive domination of Great Britain in this part of the

world and have transformed it into an arena of constant conflicts between the great powers. And since the Middle East is, moreover, the least tapped and most important source of oil in the entire world, it is now becoming the principal contested area in the world struggle for this strategic raw material, the reserves of which in the United States and the Soviet Union are greatly reduced. The various "tactical" movements of American and Soviet diplomacy toward the Zionist movement must be seen as elements in their intrigues to supplant British domination in the Arab world.

5. The demand for immigration into Palestine - advanced by the mass of Jewish refugees in Europe and supported by a powerful protest movement on the part of American Zionism, and culminating in the "peaceful" actions of the Hagana in Palestine as well as the terrorism of the Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Stern group.

Our Point of Departure

10. The starting point for the position of the Fourth International on the Palestine problem must be an understanding of the necessity for the anti-imperialist struggle waged by the Arabs, setting as the goal of this struggle the establishment of a union of the Arab countries of the Middle East. The Arab masses, the workers and poor peasants, constitute the revolutionary force of the Middle East and also of Palestine, because of their numbers, their social conditions and the material conditions of their existence which set them in direct conflict with imperialism. The revolutionary party must base itself first of all on the dynamics of the class struggle waged in defense of their interests. The Middle East section of the Fourth International, growing as the Arab proletariat develops and grows in strength, and built on the base of the existing nuclei in Palestine and Egypt, must lead the actions of the masses in defense of their daily interests, must raise the workers' consciousness to an understanding of the necessity of political action, and must strive to weld a bloc of all the

exploited around the revolutionary proletariat through a struggle for the four following essential demands:

1. Immediate withdrawal of British troops. Complete independence for Palestine.
2. Immediate calling of a single and sovereign Constituent Assembly.
3. Expropriation of the lands of the effendis, with management of the expropriated land by committees of poor peasants.
4. Expropriation of all enterprises which are the property of foreign capital, with workers' management of the nationalized enterprises.

Through the struggle for these four central objectives the revolutionary party will educate the masses on the need for setting themselves increasingly in opposition to the Arab bourgeoisie which is so closely tied to the effendis. When the struggle of the masses reaches its peak, when committees of workers and peasants cover all the Middle East and the question of seizure of power by the Arab proletariat is placed on the order of the day, the revolutionary party will have sufficiently educated the masses to be able to lead them on to expropriation of the "national" bourgeoisie.

11. Can these four objectives be realized at the present stage in a common struggle of the Arab masses and the Jewish working-class masses? To answer this question we must start not from abstract formulas but from the social and ideological realities of Jewish life in Palestine. With the exception of several thousand Jewish workers employed on the railroads, in the IPC, the refineries and the port facilities, the entire Jewish industrial and agricultural proletariat of Palestine is employed in "closed" Jewish industry, which operates on the basis of the steady imports of foreign capital and guarantees the Jewish workers a standard of living far above that of the Arab workers. Moreover, the Jewish community in Palestine lives in constant fear of an Arab uprising, and in the face of this danger places all its hopes in continuous immigration and maintenance of the British occupation. We can therefore assert the following:

(a) Far from desiring the immediate withdrawal of the British occupation forces, the Jewish masses on the contrary wish to have them maintained in the country. The only thing demanded by the Zionist leaders, bourgeois as well as workers, is concessions on immigration and on the setting up of a Jewish state. But the overwhelming majority of Jews in Palestine (primarily the Hagana) are not ready to "act" against imperialism except insofar as such "action" does not endanger the fundamental "security" of the Jewish community as against the Arab world. That is why armed struggle or even large-scale sabotage undertaken by the Jewish masses is at the present stage virtually excluded. The aim of Zionist action today is simply to exert pressure on British imperialism in order to win concessions, and not to strive to expel British imperialism from Palestine.

The terrorist movement and the so-called "Hebrew Committee of National Liberation" do set forth the objective of expelling British imperialism from Palestine. But they cannot conceive of such expulsion except in the form of a general arming of the Jews in Palestine who would hold the Arab world in check until such time as large-scale immigration of Jews would give them the military strength to oppose the "Arab menace." These ideas, an abstraction formed out of complete utopianism, are ultra-reactionary and can only deepen still further the gulf separating the Jewish and the Arab workers in Palestine.

(b) All the Jews in Palestine are opposed to the immediate calling of a Constituent Assembly, which would place power in the hands of the Arab majority of the population.

The terrorists claim that they are struggling for a free, independent and democratic Palestine. But since they are the most ardent partisans of a "Jewish state," they also have to find an excuse for depriving the majority of the population of sovereignty. They say they are not ready to organize general elections until the Jews in exile have been given "the opportunity within a certain period of time" to return to their country. In other words, they do not support general

elections until such moment as the Jews constitute an absolute majority of the population.

(c) The Jews have no interest in expropriation of the effendis, for this would actually deprive them of any possibility of buying new lands and enlarging their "closed Jewish economy" in Palestine.

(d) They are even more violently opposed to expropriation of the enterprises built with foreign capital and to the closing of the country to capital imports, since this would be a deathblow to their Jewish economy.

Thus the conclusion is inevitable that at the present stage the Jewish masses in Palestine do not as a whole constitute an anti-imperialist force, and that the establishing of a Jewish-Arab anti-imperialist bloc cannot become a slogan for immediate agitation.

12. The question of Jewish immigration into Palestine must be viewed in the light of the foregoing considerations. As long as the Jewish and Arab economies exist as two separate economies in Palestine, the Arab working population will consider every new influx of Jewish immigrants as an act of open hostility. With the entire population of Palestine living under the perspective of the outbreak of a bloody conflict in the Middle East, the Arab masses must necessarily look upon the arrival of new immigrants as the arrival of enemy soldiers; and this point of view is confirmed, moreover, by the way in which the Jewish masses look upon this, immigration. That is why we must recognize the fact that continuance of Jewish immigration into Palestine widens the breach between the Jewish and the Arab workers, strengthens the positions of and prolongs the presence of British imperialism, and cannot but prepare the ground for the complete extermination of the Jewish minority when the Arab uprising comes in the next stage.

The Fourth International must therefore do its utmost to dissuade the Jewish refugees from immigration to Palestine; it must endeavor, within the framework of a movement of world solidarity, to get the doors of other

countries opened to them, and must warn that Palestine is for them a terrible trap; and in its concrete propaganda on the question of Jewish immigration, it must start from the sovereignty of the Arab population. Only the Arab population has the right to determine whether or not immigration into Palestine should be open or closed to the Jews. The immigration question must be decided by the Constituent Assembly elected by all the population from the age of 18. That is the only democratic position on this question - and at the same time it is a position which fits into the framework of general revolutionary strategy in the Middle East.

Furthermore, the Fourth International must condemn and combat the British repression of Jewish immigration, denounce all their police measures and constantly oppose to these the concrete demand for withdrawal of the British troops. It will not be hard to explain to the Arab masses that this imperialist repression, now limited to the Jews, is only the preparation for much more savage repression of future Arab movements. It is in the interest of the Arab masses that every protest movement against British police terror should be utilized to bring forward concretely the question of withdrawal of British troops. Moreover, it would then become clear that the very "victims" of the repression would not at all accept a consistent struggle against their "oppressors."

Similarly, the Fourth International must oppose all the "solutions" proposed and perhaps carried out by imperialism, with or without the help of its agents in the Jewish Agency. All these solutions, such as division of Palestine, limited immigration of 100,000 Jews, surrender of the British mandate to the UN, have the aim of prolonging the presence of British troops in the country, and they all deprive the majority of the population of its right to self-determination.

13. At the present stage, large-scale unity between the Jews and the Arabs in Palestine is unrealizable; only on a very limited scale and to the extent that a section of the Jewish workers is employed outside the "closed" Jewish

economy, has it been possible for Jewish-Arab strikes such as those of the past year to occur. But this does not mean that such unity is excluded for all time. Up to now the Jewish population in Palestine has bent all its efforts toward strengthening its autonomous economic and political positions. But already the radical section of the Jewish nationalist youth has recognized the futility of the Jewish Agency's efforts at "conciliation" and "maneuvering" in order to win from imperialism or from the great powers unlimited immigration and establishment of a Jewish state. The present waves of terrorism on the part of the Irgun Zvai Leumi and the Stern group are acts of despair on the part of this minority which is first utilized and then abandoned by the bourgeois leaders of the Zionist movement and which arose because of the blind alley into which the entire movement has wandered. Obviously this terrorism of despair is not in itself the road to a solution of the Palestine problem. Quite the contrary. Against this terrorism, the Arab feudal lords and bourgeoisie are able to create an atmosphere of artificial "solidarity" between the masses and imperialism, and to aggravate the hostility between the Arab and the Jewish workers. From a military standpoint, the terrorist acts can only hasten the establishment of a British police force in Palestine, the goal of the entire postwar imperialist policy. But as the ultimate phase of Zionism, terrorism, achieving no concrete results, may make the most conscious and most active elements among the Jewish masses more disposed to reconsider the whole question of Zionism and the solution of the Jewish problem. This reconsideration of the entire question is what the Fourth International must work for today.

Any possible unity between the Jews and the Arabs must first of all move along the road of the abolishing of all racial ideology and practice on the part of the Jews.

* Down with exclusively Jewish enterprises! For the employment of Arab workers in every industry in the country!

* Down with separate Jewish and Arab trade unions! For the establishment of

Jewish and Arab trade unions!

* Down with the hidden boycott of Arab or Jewish products! Down with the "closed Jewish economy!" For the mutual integration of the Jewish and Arab economies!

* Down with the idea of a "Jewish state" imposed on the majority of the population! For the elimination of Zionist concepts from the workers' movement! For the integration of the Jewish workers into the national-democratic revolutionary movement of the Arab masses!

* For the breaking-away of the Jewish trade unions and working-class organizations from the Jewish Agency, and the publication in full of all the secret proceedings of the Agency.

* For the breaking-away of the Arab trade unions and working-class organizations from the Arab League and the Arab High Committee for Palestine, and the publication in full of all the secret proceedings of these organizations.

All these slogans, which today can be advanced only as general propaganda slogans, will necessarily meet with furious opposition from the Zionists, not only for ideological reasons but also and especially because the privileged material situation of the Jews in relation to the Arab masses is thus threatened. But as the bankruptcy of Zionism becomes more and more strikingly revealed to the masses; as immigration slows down and the terrible danger of the Arab explosion comes nearer; as our propaganda helps in getting the masses to realize that it is a life-or-death question for them to find a common ground with the Arab masses, even at the price of temporarily giving up certain privileges - under these conditions our slogans will be able to pass from the propaganda stage to the stage of agitation, and will help in bringing about a split between the workers' movement and Zionism. This is the condition sine qua non for the realization of Jewish-Arab unity of action against imperialism. This alone can prevent the Arab revolution in the Middle East from passing over the corpse of Palestinian Judaism. In Palestine as well as among the Jewish masses in the rest of the world, a firm position today against the current is the only thing which will make it possible to work toward a reversal of

the current in the next stage.

This means also that it is necessary for the sections of the Fourth International to carry on preliminary propaganda work within the Zionist organizations of the extreme left. While showing that the slogan of a "bi-national state" is a nationalist and anti-democratic slogan, running counter to both the right of self-determination and the immediate needs of the anti-imperialist struggle in Palestine, our members must at the

same time constantly put on the order of the day the question of concrete realization of the slogan of Jewish-Arab unity. They must confront the centrist leaders with their responsibilities, they must put on the order of the day the adoption of the anti-racial program outlined above, and thus speed the development of the consciousness of the Jewish working-class vanguard beyond the stage of Zionism.

January 1, 1947

From Fourth International, Vol.9, No. 1, January-February 1948, pp. 18-24. Transcribed & marked up by Daniel Gaido for the Marxists' Internet Archive in 2006. Proofread by Scott Wilson.

[Note by the transcriber: This document appeared anonymously but was actually drafted by Ernest Mandel [Ernest Germain]. The original French version is available online as [Projet de thèses sur la question juive après la seconde guerre impérialiste.](#)]

The Arab Revolution (1974)

8 February 2009, by **Fourth International**

The first draft of this statement was completed in February 1973. The final draft, however, which is the one printed below was only completed in March 1974. It includes, in addition to the original text, a few secondary alterations, and a new chapter (the third) on the October 1973 war.

In publishing this statement, it is the hope of Arab communists, that it will contribute to an enrichment of the discussions now unfolding amongst Arab revolutionaries. Furthermore, it comes as a preparatory step to the establishment of a revolutionary communist party for the whole of the Arab region.

INTRODUCTION

The Arab revolution has played an important role in the last two waves of the colonial revolution. Toward the end of the 1950s, the Algerian revolution stood in the vanguard of the struggles for national independence and culminated several years later in a process of social radicalisation that for a time approached the Cuban model; and at the end of the 1960s, in the new upsurge of the world revolution, the Palestinian resistance established itself as a front-line of anti-imperialist struggles.

But each time, the advance of

struggles in one region masked the absence of a global strategy. In the cases of Algeria and Palestine, there was a tendency to forget the whole of which they formed a part. The imperialists and their Arab clients had a substantial interest in encouraging this diversion; the duty of revolutionists was to combat it. The Fourth International has not shirked this task. In every instance, it has put the struggles of sectors in their real context - the Arab revolution as a whole.

In the historic sense, the Arab revolution has an importance far exceeding that of its regional components. It is itself an integral part of the revolutionary movement of the Eastern peoples. Besides its intrinsic importance - resulting from the more than a hundred million human beings involved and from the role of the Arab region as an energy reservoir and source of financial resources for the imperialist West - the Arab revolution has had a considerable carry-over into other areas. For geographical and cultural reasons mainly (such as Islam), an interchange has taken place with large portions of Asia, Africa, and even Europe (through the immigrant workers in particular).

This importance of the Arab revolution is commensurate with the tasks confronting it, of which the major one undoubtedly is abolishing imperialist control over the Arab region, winning real and complete liberation of the Arab nation.

SECTION ONE

THE ARAB REVOLUTION IS A PERMANENT REVOLUTION

1. Well before the discovery of oil, the Arab region was coveted by the imperialists because of its exceptional strategic position as a bridge linking the West, the Orient and Black Africa; as well as for its own riches. The second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth witnessed the gradual conquest of the Arab territories of the Ottoman Empire by the European colonial powers, with France and Great Britain setting the pace. From Algeria, France extended its empire to Morocco and Tunisia, while British imperialism consolidated its influence in the valley of the Nile and established itself in the southern part of the Arabian

peninsula, thereby assuring its route to India. The accords following the first world war divided the Mashriq (the Near East) among the two European powers in the form of colonial mandates. In this way, the classical colonialist territorial partition of the region was completed.

The second world war upset all these arrangements. The Arab colonies or semicolonies won their independence one after the other in a process that culminated in the Algerian war of liberation, leaving under a British protectorate a few territories on the Arabian peninsula, which have since won their independence. In the Arab countries, as elsewhere, one form of imperialist domination came to an end, but others persisted. Certain imperialist powers were pushed out here and there. Another moved in in force, sometimes playing an anti-colonialist card - American imperialism, the principal victor of the second world war.

Today, besides the presence of imperialist capital, three forms of imperialist domination appear in the Arab region:

- "Indirect" domination through economic dependence. Imperialism has restricted most of the Arab economies to the role of exporters of one, or virtually one, agricultural or mining product (oil, cotton, etc.). These economies find themselves dependent on the world capitalist market, which in turn makes them highly sensitive to the development of international terms of trade, and to the ups and downs of the world monetary system. In addition, these countries find themselves technologically dependent on the imperialist countries, especially since the Soviet Union has proved incapable of replacing imperialism in this respect. In reality, inter-imperialist competition has proved to be the main arena for manoeuvre for the Arab economies. In recent years, as a result of the exacerbation of contradictions between the imperialist countries, this arena has broadened somewhat.

â€" Quasi- direct military-political domination. This is the case of the puppet monarchies and emirates, whose military apparatus is tightly

controlled by imperialists and which can maintain themselves only on the basis of imperialist support. (This goes most of all for the oil-producing regions on the Arab- Persian Gulf.)

- Colonial type domination, which is the situation in the Zionist state of Israel. This type brings together three features: first, the Zionist emigration movement, through its settler-colonial character, managed to pull together hundreds of thousands of Jews most of them fleeing from anti-semitic oppression, and placed them in Palestine at the expense of the original Arab inhabitants, most of whom were expelled. Second, the creation of a Zionist state, accompanied by the formation of a Jewish proletariat springing from this emigration. This process was distinct from the traditional forms of colonialism which were based on exploiting the original inhabitants. (The Arab minority remaining in Israel is subjected to extreme economic exploitation, and on top of that national oppression that is perpetuated through the Zionist institutions.) Finally, the very nature of the Zionist state - as expressed in its origins and continued reasons for existence, makes it a state that is of necessity directly linked to imperialism. It plays the role of a military bastion in the service of a counterrevolutionary American imperialist strategy for the Arab East region.

2. Western imperialism is at the root of the fragmentation of the Arab region. Historically, the Ottoman Empire reunited under the same authority all the territories Arabised by the Islamic conquest (except Morocco and the southern part of the Arabian peninsula). This reunification strengthened the objective bases for the development of an Arab nation. Added to a common language and culture was a history fashioned by the same occupier, and thus the consciousness of a common future. What was lacking was a class that could represent this national aspiration - the economic basis for a nation - in the absence of its crucible par excellence, the national market. Certain nationalist manifestations did appear early in the nineteenth century. But, these were more often

regional than Arab, reflecting the rejection of Ottoman domination by those elements that found it particularly oppressive â€" hounded tribal or semi-feudal authorities, intellectuals and Christians. In dividing up the region between them, the British and French imperialists erected frontiers blocking the formation of an Arab national consciousness. Moreover, they encouraged various regional, ethnic or religious particularisms in accordance with the well known watchword of "divide and rule". But at the same time aiding the penetration of capitalism in the Arab countries by undermining the old precapitalist autarchy of the agricultural regions and developing the cities and means of communication that favoured the growth of the urban strata, the imperialists laid the material foundations of the Arab nation even as they fragmented it.

It has been most of all since the second world war that Arab national consciousness has really become general, helped along by three factors - the rise of the colonial revolution; the ephemeral Arab industrialisation during the world war, due to the isolation and weakening of the British and French colonial systems; and, last but not least, the Palestinian war of 1948, which by establishing an anti-Arab state in the Near East, provided the most effective catalyst for Arab national aspirations.

3.. Today, the consciousness of belonging to the same nationality is strongly rooted in the Arab masses, even in the most socially backward regions (the Arab peninsula) or those where the colonialists have left the deepest cultural imprint (the French colonies of the Maghreb). This consciousness has often penetrated in a directly political form, propagated by the anti-imperialist currents and promoted by the successive aggressions of the Zionist state.

The artificiality of the present state divisions in the Arab region is absolutely flagrant. These states were carved up to suit imperialist interests. Thus, what is Iraq except the sum total of the concessions granted to the Iraq Petroleum Company? (Comprising part of Kurdistan, it is

certainly not a national entity.) What has shaped the Lebanese state, or the Sudanese state, except the communalist mixtures determined by imperialism? What is the Algerian state but a former French department? What is “Saudi” Arabia but an immense concession to American Aramco? And so on.

The fragmentation of the Arab nation is more than ever anachronistic and contrary to the course of history. It blocks the economic development of the Arab region by preventing the formation of a unified national market and stands in the way of the conscious aspirations of the overwhelming majority of Arabs. Arab national unification is a historic and economic necessity. It is the essential prerequisite for a real industrialisation of the Arab lands. Its revolutionary potential exceeds that of the German and Italian unifications in the nineteenth century. It must confront not only local particularist interests, but above all world imperialism which cannot willingly accept the formation of an Arab national state capable of standing on its own feet. Moreover, none of the present Arab states can hold its own by itself against world imperialism.

It is in this sense that Arab national unity is the central task of the Arab revolution. However, this does not in any way mean that the prevailing ideology of the Arab revolution will be a nationalist one. One must distinguish very clearly between revolutionary national tasks and nationalist ideology with its essentially bourgeois character, which forms the greatest obstacle to revolution because it delays the formation of a class consciousness for the working masses.

4. However, as a direct consequence of the imperialist fragmentation of the Arab region, there has been added to the Arab national question, other national problems: the problems of the non arabised Berber masses and the problems of the nationalities artificially included in the Arab states, as well as that of the Jewish population of the state of Israel.

Revolutionary marxists perceive the unification of the Arab nation from an

exclusively internationalist point of view. This means that unification must not be imposed on any people. The arabisation of the Berber minorities in the Marakesh and Algeria must therefore be acceptable to these masses. Revolutionaries denounce all forced attempts at arabisation. They defend the right of the Berber masses to self determination. However, at the same time they encourage these masses to integrate into the Arab region while fully respecting their cultural particularities.

In the case of the oppressed national minorities of the Mauritania, southern Sudan and the Iraqi and Syrian parts of Kurdistan, it is evident that the programme of the Arab revolution cannot fail to assert their inalienable right to self-determination, including their right to a completely separate state. For the Kurdish people, this right is part of their general right to national unification in a united state of Kurdistan. It is the duty of revolutionary marxists to help build a proletarian leadership for the Kurdish revolution in conjunction with their unconditional support for the struggle of the Kurdish people for self determination against its Arab, bourgeois oppressors and others.

The Israeli case is completely different. In the present state of Israel, the oppressor majority is Jewish and its oppression has been primarily based on expelling the original Arab inhabitants. In this sense, the only revolutionary attitude is to recognise the complete and unconditional right of the Palestinian Arabs to self determination, that is, their right to return to all the territories from which they have been expelled and to live free of all national oppression.

The exercise of this right presupposes the destruction of the Zionist state, which rests on racist foundations incompatible with such a perspective. Only after the achievement of this necessary historical task of the Arab revolution, will it be possible to deal concretely and correctly with the question of the rights of the Jewish national minority in Palestine. The liquidation of Zionist relationships - of the colonial type “between Jews and Arabs presents Israeli revolutionaries

with the considerable task of breaking the Jewish masses from Zionism. Only the achievement of this task can guarantee the harmonious integration of the Jewish minority into the Arab region. The forms this integration will take, depend in their details on the pace and breadth of the development of class consciousness “that is, anti-Zionist consciousness “of the Jewish workers. On the other hand this solution cannot be envisaged outside the context of a revolutionary overturn in the entire Near East at least, which alone can provide the forces necessary to liberate Palestine from the Zionist and imperialist grip. That is, the destruction of the Israeli state goes hand in hand with the abolition of the other Arab states, on the road to creating a united Arab state. Thus, the national aspect of the revolution in the Near East is not defined solely by the case of the Palestinian people, but by the general problem of Arab national unity.

It is in this framework therefore, that the question arises of the present Jewish population of Israel, which will become a national minority once the Zionist state is abolished. In regard to this question, as for any national community, the programme of workers democracy, which is fundamentally contrary to all chauvinism, was clearly defined by Lenin: “No privileges for any nation or any one language. Not even the slightest degree of oppression or the slightest injustice in respect of a national minority... .” (“The Working Class and The National Question,” Collected Works, Vol. 13, p. 92.) This means guaranteeing full civil and cultural rights for the Jewish population, as well as complete equality between Jew and Arab. Likewise, workers democracy requires recognising the right to self-administration of the Jewish workers in their regions, within the context of the political and economical centralism demanded by a workers state. This is the working class programme for the solution of the Israeli question.

In the present conditions of the continued existence of the Zionist state, demanding the “right to self determination for the Israeli nation”, could in the last analysis only be

reactionary. However, after the destruction of the Zionist state and after the reestablishment of the rights of the Palestinians, and only after this, it becomes possible to recognise the right to self determination of the Jewish national minority in Palestine. This would include their right to form an independent state on a part of Palestinian land. However, this should take place with strict adherence to the condition that the exercise of this right in no way affects the rights of other peoples. This means that above all the exercise of this right should be in harmony with the right of the Palestinian Arabs to Self determination. Furthermore, the Arab revolution cannot accept the creation of an expansionist state or a state armed by imperialism. In all cases, revolutionary marxists in Israel, must educate the Jewish proletariat in the perspective of a united state, which alone corresponds to their real interests, just as it is the duty of Arab revolutionaries to combat chauvinist tendencies among the Arab workers.

5. The agrarian question in the Arab countries, as in most underdeveloped regions, has a major importance, since a considerable part of the economically active population of these countries is employed in agriculture.

The fundamental aspects of the agrarian question in the Arab countries, which are common moreover to a number of backward countries, are the following: an agrarian population whose overwhelming majority is made up of poor and landless peasants, as against a tiny minority of big landowners and farmers; obvious overpopulation of the land, which is reflected in very grave underemployment, both on a seasonal and permanent basis; a very low level of mechanisation of agriculture, with primitive techniques remaining dominant; a large proportion of the arable land left uncultivated, often owing to the absence of adequate technical facilities (such as irrigation).

The solution to these problems is closely linked to other aspects of the social and economic revolution needed in the Arab region. It lies in a thoroughgoing industrialisation (including mechanisation of

agriculture) in the Arab countries and the creation of a unified national market. It demands a nationally planned investment and finance policy. Without national unification and economic sovereignty, as Trotsky pointed out in the similar case of China, an agrarian revolution in the Arab countries can in no way solve the problem of underdevelopment in the region.

Moreover, many agrarian reforms already tried in certain Arab countries - as well as elsewhere - have shown irrefutably that when land division is carried out in the framework of a market economy and by bureaucratic methods, it leads in the long run to accelerating rather than reducing social differentiation on the land by promoting the growth of a Kulak stratum.

Furthermore, attempts at imposing "socialised" agriculture bureaucratically on the peasants have always proved lamentable failures (which are cited hypocritically by pseudo-progressive Arab leaders trying to justify the situation on the land in their countries). In rare cases where agrarian reform experiments have met with successes in the Arab countries (Algeria in the early years of independence, Southern Yemen), they have been based on a mobilisation of the peasant masses that took place in the context of a general revolutionary process going beyond the bourgeois framework.

6. If the theoretical arguments are not sufficient, historical experience has already demonstrated that none of the essential tasks of the Arab revolution can be accomplished within the framework of the bourgeois state. It is for this reason precisely that none of these tasks have yet been accomplished. For the Arab region, as for all the underdeveloped countries, the only alternative remains: either a socialist revolution or a caricature of a revolution. There is no other way that the Arab countries can break out of their underdevelopment except through a dictatorship of the proletariat supported by the poor peasantry.

Only a dictatorship of the proletariat can achieve the popular mobilization

needed to take on world imperialism, expropriate its Arab holdings, and break the chains binding the economies of the Arab countries to the world capitalist market. Only a dictatorship of the proletariat can break down the regional frontiers erected by imperialism, which have bred local bourgeoisies with competing interests. Only a dictatorship of the proletariat can achieve the unity of the Arab nation. It alone can pool the resources of the Arab nation by nationalizing the big agricultural and mineral holdings, as well as big industry, without compensation. It alone can unify the Arab market by nationalizing all foreign trade and centralizing distribution among the Arab people. It alone can develop a radical agrarian reform— along cooperative lines— by basing it on a mobilization of the masses of poor peasants (a large part of which are proletarian). Only through primitive socialist accumulation, can the dictatorship of the proletariat industrialize the Arab region, which does not lack the material resources. Only a dictatorship of the proletariat, through an internationalist program, can win to its cause the national minorities of the Arab countries as well as the Jewish workers of Israel. Only a dictatorship of the proletariat can carry out the cultural revolution, urgently needed in the Arab countries, a prerequisite for real liberation of Arab women.

The Arab revolution will be socialist or it will not be a revolution. It will triumph through the length and breadth of the Arab region — the Maghreb, the Mashreq and the Nile Valley — in the framework of a federative Arab socialist republic.

The Arab socialist revolution will necessarily carry over into the adjacent African and Asian areas and be in close solidarity with the revolutionary internationalist movement of the workers in the imperialist West.

This process illustrates in a striking way the theory of the permanent revolution developed by Leon Trotsky which inspired the programmes of the Communist International in Lenin's time and the Fourth International.

SECTION TWO

THE JUNE 1967 ARAB DEFEAT AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

7. Against a background of objective social and economic conditions long overripe for revolution, events of a political nature have intervened on several occasions to shake the established regimes in the Arab region. Among the most important of these events have been the Israeli-Arab wars. Planted in Palestine to defend the imperialist interests in the Near East, the state of Israel has contributed objectively and more effectively than years of agitation to developing the anti-imperialist national consciousness of the Arab peoples, thereby magnifying the threat hanging over the very interests this state was intended to guard.

Twenty years before the June 1967 war, the 1948 conflict — which came as a consequence of the official founding of the Zionist-state — was to set off a change in the Arab political map. The economic and social crises of the Arab regimes was compounded by the defeat of their armies by the new state, which helped to discredit the existing governments and to create conditions favourable to their overthrow. A prerevolutionary situation was to take form in the Arab region, and in particular Egypt, the major loser of the 1948 war, where the social crisis was most acute.

The corrupt Farouk monarchy became hopelessly moribund. But there was no social force capable of supplanting it. The Egyptian bourgeoisie, which consisted in the main of comprador elements and which was in no way inconvenienced by the monarchy, had more to fear than to gain from any overthrow of Farouk. On the other hand, the so-called national industrial bourgeoisie was too weak to lead a popular uprising against the monarchy and the fact that the street demonstrations of the time were tending to develop in an anti-bourgeois direction made it even more incapable of doing so. The proletariat, finally, besides its numerical weakness (which was an important but not a decisive factor) lacked a revolutionary

leadership. The Stalinists themselves were weak and disorganised and had been discredited by an ultra sectarian attitude towards the Palestinian question.

This typical situation — “a prerevolutionary crisis in the absence of a revolutionary leadership — was to produce a no less typical response — “a bonapartist coup d'état. The likelihood of this response was enhanced, moreover, by the common specific characteristics of the army in many underdeveloped countries. After these countries won their independence, the army was the strongest component of a bloated state apparatus — precisely because of the atrophied state of the economic structures and the ruling bourgeoisie — and constituted the main lever of power. It contained within it the basic elements of the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois nationalist tendencies, who saw it as a particularly favourable organised framework, given its social composition and the ideology presiding over the constitution. A military government of “liberal officers” is the perfect example of bonapartism.

Nasserite bonapartism rested on an equilibrium of forces between the proletariat and petty-bourgeois working masses on the one hand, and certain sections of the bourgeoisie on the other. As a bourgeois bonapartism, it represented the general historic interests of the national bourgeoisie, fighting the enemies of this class — colonialism, imperialism, the comprador bourgeoisie, and the big landowners, as well as the labour movement and especially the Communists. It attempted to accomplish the historic tasks of the national bourgeoisie, in particular industrialisation. The struggle of the Nasser regime for Arab unity, corresponded fundamentally to the interests of the national bourgeoisie in enlarging its market. The cultist veneration of the petit-bourgeois masses — the urban petit-bourgeoisie and the small peasants — for the particular leader, Nasser — fits in perfectly with bonapartism and is in fact characteristic of it.

The special features of Nasserite bonapartism — what distinguished it

from the classic bonapartism of a rising bourgeoisie — were linked to the consequences of imperialist domination over the country it ruled. The extreme weakness of the national bourgeoisie, smothered in its cradle by the imperialist world market, meant that it itself could only participate directly in a very limited way in the endeavor that represented its historic interests. Nasserite bonapartism had to find another path for its economic development. It found itself compelled, in order to promote the industrialisation of the country, to substitute economically and not only politically, like classical bonapartism, for the class it represented. For these reasons the public sector was the favoured political instrument of the Nasserite regime. But this sector was no less governed by capitalist production relations. It represented a bourgeois state capitalism and not “a non capitalist path of development” as the neo-Stalinists revisionists claimed.

Moreover, this economic autonomy of Nasserite bonapartism meant that it was more sensitive to the relationship of social forces than classical bourgeois bonapartism. Under strong pressure from the masses it could undertake certain radical measures which at times were absolutely contrary to bourgeois interests, as was the case in 1961 and 1963. Such steps have, of course, been only of a limited and above all temporary character.

The Nasserite experiment in the strict sense went a long way in its attempts to build an advanced bourgeois Egypt and to unify the Arab market. It nonetheless failed, confirming irrefutably the postulates of the permanent revolution. The Nasserite phenomenon has been repeated in a number of Arab countries (Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and to a certain extent Algeria). For more than a decade it placed a strong imprint on the Arab region and the entire colonial world. The June 1967 war was to highlight its limitations and deal a decisive blow to its original Egyptian expression.

8. The Israeli aggression in June 1967 fitted into the worldwide offensive launched by American imperialism in the 1960s. It was aimed at choking off the developing anti-imperialist dynamic in the Near East represented

by two main processes. On the one hand, there was a revival of the Palestinian people's struggle. Armed nuclei arose within and resumed military activities against the Zionist state. On the other hand, there was a radicalisation of the Syrian regime established in the 1966 coup d'état, with a left petit-bourgeois wing of the government imposing its radical policy on a state apparatus which was still bourgeois.

The June 1967 war resulted in a crushing military victory for the imperialist-Zionist axis. In this sense the imperialist counteroffensive was crowned with success. But this success was compromised by the reaction aroused by the imperialist victory itself, something that could by no means be predicted by the victors. Galvanised by the defeat suffered and the national affront it represented, the Arab popular masses entered into the politically most intense mobilisation in their recent history. This rise of the anti-imperialist movement of the Arab masses combined with the world-wide revolutionary thrust, powerfully counterbalanced the imperialist victory. It enabled the Syrian and Egyptian regimes, hard hit by their defeat, to maintain themselves in power.

Nasser was saved by the giant demonstration of June 9 and 10, 1967, which revealed the new equilibrium established between the pressure of imperialism and of the working masses. Nasser remained in power, but Nasserism - dealt a mortal blow by the Israeli victory - became moribund in its turn just as its royal predecessor had. The limit of Nasserite anti-imperialism, which had already become evident in the economic arena, were starkly revealed in the political and military realms. Incapable of competing technologically with the Zionist state armed by imperialism and endowed with much more highly skilled manpower, imported directly from the industrialised countries, the Nasserite regime was unable to both arm and mobilise the popular masses to the degree needed to defeat Israel, since this would have undermined the foundations of its bonapartist rule.

In June 1967 Nasserism reached its

ultimate limits. The policy conducted by Nasser after June was marked by his capitulation — his regime's collaborating with its recent enemies, the tools of imperialism in the region, the main one being "Saudi" Arabia. Such collaboration was the condition for getting financial aid from the pro-imperialist regimes.

After June 1967, Nasserism became virtually impossible in the Arab region, since any real anti-imperialist activity necessarily involved a revolutionary dynamic incompatible with a bourgeois bonapartist state power. In relation to the pre 1967 Nasserism, the Sudanese and Libyan coup d'états were nothing but rightist caricatures. As for the short lived Federation of Arab Republics established in 1971, it has nothing in common with the old United Arab Republic except its reactionary repressive function. It has none of the unifying and anti-imperialist content of the Nasserite attempt at Arab unification.

With the death agony of Nasserism, an era of the Arab revolution was coming to an end; another was beginning to take form.

9. The most important feature of the rise of the Arab mass movement after June 1967 was the extraordinarily rapid extension of the armed organisations of the Palestinian people, designated under the common name of the "Palestinian Resistance".

After twenty years of lethargy during which they were lulled by the promises of the Arab governments, the Palestinian people - more precisely, the most severely tried section of it, the Palestinian refugees quartered in the "camps", were rudely awakened, shaken by the Arab defeat and the new Palestinian exodus that resulted from it. The growth of the Palestinian resistance expressed primarily the desire of the Palestinian people to take charge of the struggle for the liberation of Palestine, their native country. But the spontaneity of this reaction also indicated its limitations.

As a group composed largely of non-producers and, above all, containing few owners, bereft even of territory, the Palestinian refugees formed a

social milieu particularly receptive to any maximalist tendency, inasmuch as having absolutely nothing to lose they had, on the other hand, a country to win. This fact helps to explain the immense popular support for the Palestinian Resistance despite its distinctly maximalist slogans and its conception of the liberation of Palestine.

The Palestinian Resistance, at least the greater part of it, advanced a perspective- of a "people's war of liberation", a strategic goal totally unrealistic without a precise social content and without transitional political, organisational, and military objectives. It is absolutely illusory to think that the Palestinian Resistance, even with its unquestionable popular support, can settle accounts with the Zionist army, which also has close ties with the popular masses, although on a reactionary basis, and is infinitely better equipped. Achieving such a goal requires not only the participation of the Jewish revolutionists, who alone are capable of undermining the ideological foundations of the cohesiveness that characterises the population of the Zionist state and from which it draws its strength, but also and above all, the participation of the Arab peoples in a generalised revolutionary war against imperialism and its Zionist bastion, which is the only realistic road to victory.

The Palestinian Resistance was unable to advance any programme capable of insuring the combined participation of the Arab and Jewish masses in the struggle. Its maximalism was intrinsically linked to its Palestine-centric regionalism. In this there was a reflection of the historical experience of the Palestinian people, among whom particularist tendencies have been favoured by the peculiar fate they have suffered and their disillusionment with the Arab regimes.

But, whatever their importance, these underlying objective factors did not make the maximalist regionalist orientation of the Palestinian Resistance inevitable; they merely produced a tendency in this direction. A revolutionary marxist workers vanguard could have combated the illusions existing amongst the

Palestinian masses and explained to them that the liberation of Palestine necessarily involved a revolutionary overturn of the established Arab regimes, which was impossible without a working class leadership for the entire Arab region., including revolutionists fighting in Israel itself. Avoiding these pitfalls and deceptions, such a vanguard would have been able to incorporate its military struggle against the Zionist state in an overall revolutionary strategy. In this way without presenting it falsely as a "people's war of liberation", such military activity could have made an extremely important contribution to building a revolutionary party for the entire region. But a vanguard of this type was historically absent.

The leaderships of the Palestinian Resistance could not have come from a workers movement represented by the Stalinists who, following the USSR, recognised the right of the Zionist state to exist. They all come from petit-bourgeois nationalist movements dominant in the Arab region. They are all, with the exception of direct extensions of ruling Arab parties, more or less radicalised petit-bourgeois patriotic teams, whose most advanced elements have come close to the revolutionary Marxist programme without drawing the practical political, military and organisational conclusions. The most influential of the Palestinian leaderships, the leadership of Fateh, is also the most right-wing. By its pronounced right wing regionalism, it justified its dependence on the Arab regimes, including most prominently the worst reactionary governments, the open tools of American imperialism, Israel's chief supporter. In the name of the "main contradiction" with Israel, the Fateh leadership justified its collaboration with the Palestinian and Jordanian reactionaries, accomplices in the creation of the state of Israel itself. In the name of the special identity of the Palestinian people, it isolated from them the other Arab peoples with whom they were in contact, forbidding them to participate in the social struggles of these peoples. Drowned in the fabulous subsidies it received, the Fateh leadership developed a bureaucratic apparatus almost as large as that of an ordinary bourgeois

state. Its military organisation was paid, in flagrant contradiction to the principles of creating a revolutionary army.

But despite all this, Fateh - the major section of the Palestinian Resistance - led a struggle whose objectively anti-imperialist character is undeniable. It personified the just patriotic aspirations of the Palestinian people and provided an umbrella for the revolutionary tendencies that arose in the Near East after the June 1967 war. This paradox is explained by the ambiguous position of the Fateh leadership. Although it was dependent on the equilibrium between its relations with the Arab regimes and the mass movement it led, the radicalising pressure of the mass movement also afforded it a certain measure of autonomy.

10. The crushing of the Palestinian Resistance, the major stage of which was the campaign of extermination waged by the Jordanian Hashemite regime in September 1970, resulted directly from the policy followed by the leadership of the Resistance, and most of all Fateh.

In fact, the Fateh leadership contributed more than anyone else to deceiving the Palestinian masses about the real intentions of the Hashemite regime. It propagated the deceptive slogan of "closing ranks against the national enemy" instead of organising the existing mass distrust of Hussein. Rejecting any attempt to resolve in its favour the situation of dual power that existed for nearly two years in Jordan, and constantly on the defensive, it left the initiative to the reactionary regime, and after every campaign of extermination conducted by this regime, it gave free reign to illusions about a definitive reconciliation. Furthermore, it granted concession upon concession to the Jordanian regime - going so far as to disarm the masses - for the sake of accords that were never respected by the regime. But, besides this demagogic attitude, the Fateh leadership ruled out the support of the Jordanian masses and the soldiers of Hussein's army -the only forces that could have blocked the Hashemite regime. In the name of the "Palestinian identity" and

"noninterference in the internal affairs of the Arab countries", it put forward no programme capable of winning such support, sometimes even going so far as to oppose the struggles of the workers.

Although not taken by the illusion of "patriotic unity" with the Hashemite regime, the Palestinian left did not distinguish itself from Fateh in practice. It, too, proved incapable of gaining a base among the working masses of Jordan or preparing for the inevitable campaign of extermination. It was unable to put forward a transitional programme capable of mobilising the Jordanian masses, sometimes raising regionalist slogans without class content (such as "All Power to the Palestinian Resistance"), and at other time ultraleftist ones relating to nothing concrete ("All Power to the People's Councils"). It did not organise effective opposition to the Fateh leadership's capitulation and ended up failing to distinguish itself from Fateh under the pretext of unity. The Palestinian left was characterised by a maximalist-regionalist orientation similar to that of the rest of the Resistance. It failed above all to understand the urgent need for a revolutionary class party leading the military organisation and which alone could root itself in the productive classes on a non-Palestinian-centric basis. Moreover, it linked itself to the pseudo-progressive Arab regimes, providing them with a left cover and thereby betraying the interests of the revolutionary struggle against these regimes.

The same policies by the leaderships of the Palestinian Resistance explains the relatively easy success of the combined efforts of the Israeli army and the Lebanese regime aimed at isolating the Resistance from the Lebanese population and freezing its military activities based in the territories of Lebanon. In Syria, the Resistance never asserted itself as an independent power, repaying support it got from the regime by total obedience. Today, this obedience has meant the immobilisation of the Palestinian troops, which for all practical purposes have been placed under the command of the Syrian army.

The precipitous decline of the Palestinian Resistance matched its rise. The focus of many illusions, its defeat was a terrible shock, and a still more bitter one than June 1967. But the lessons of this defeat will not be lost. The intrinsic link between national and social struggles is clearer today than ever. It has become very obvious that the liberation of Palestine cannot be achieved in isolation but only as a part of the Arab socialist revolution, under the firm leadership of a proletarian revolutionary party for the entire region. The new Palestinian and Arab vanguard will have to assimilate this truth.

11. The crushing of the Palestinian Resistance in September 1970, three years after June 1967, crowned the imperialist victory by liquidating the armed movement of the Palestinian people in its main arena. The Hashemite regime— the pliant instrument of imperialism— destroyed the equilibrium established after 1967 between the Israeli victory and the rise of the Arab mass movement represented most importantly by the Palestinian Resistance. The way was cleared for reorganising the Arab region in accordance with imperialist and bourgeois interests, which meant above all throttling the anti-imperialist Arab regimes. This task was also facilitated by the death of Nasser coming at the same time, since his bonapartist prestige gave him a certain possibility for resisting imperialist pressure.

A month after the massacres in Jordan, the petit-bourgeois radical team ruling in Syria was overthrown by a military coup d'état organised by the right wing of the regime representing the bourgeois state apparatus. The new regime was to extend its hand at home to the Syrian bourgeoisie and abroad to the Arab governments linked to imperialism.

In 1971, the Sadat regime in Egypt liquidated the Nasserite bureaucracy, the political and military apparatus inherited from the Nasserite past. Likewise, it set about progressively dismantling the nationalisation measures affecting the interests of the Egyptian bourgeoisie as well as abolishing the obstacles to the development of both local and

imperialist private capital, which comes down to liquidating the special economic aspects of the Nasserite regime. In fact, the Nasserite experiment, like any bonapartist regime, could only be a passing one. It produced two possible gravediggers. On the one hand, a new bourgeoisie arose, made up of the vestiges of the old (whose property was paid for by the state or left untouched) and a section of the ruling bureaucracy that turned the profit it made out of the state apparatus into capital. On the other hand, Nasserism gave rise to a numerous and concentrated proletariat, which, however, was marked by a lack of independent experience in struggle and was without any representative trade union or political leadership. Once the bonapartist equilibrium was broken and after the death of the Bonaparte, the best organised of these two forces, the new bourgeoisie, was able to rid itself of the Nasserite bureaucracy, a parasitic growth blocking its development. The Sadat regime was the instrument of this bourgeois restoration.

In 1971 also the Sudanese dictatorship, ringing down the curtain on its brief parody of Nasserism, was able to liquidate the Sudanese Communist Party, the main organiser of the workers movement in Sudan, and attempt open collaboration with Western imperialism.

Finally, imperialism strained every effort to strangle the revolutionary experience in progress in South Yemen. Bringing military pressure to bear through the intermediary of "Saudi" Arabia and North Yemen, it succeeded in forcing the government of South Yemen to accept a treaty of union with the North, threatening to liquidate the anti-imperialist and anticapitalist content of the regime that was established in the South after the ouster of the right-wing faction of the National Liberation Front in 1969.

Thus, American imperialism, after a few years delay, garnered the fruits of its 1967 victory. Its objective today is to consummate this victory once and for all by imposing its "peaceful solution" to the Arab- Israeli conflict and liquidating the revolutionary explosiveness of the Palestinian

question.

12. In spite of the crushing of the Palestinian Resistance in Jordan, the victory of bourgeois reaction in certain Arab states, and increased imperialist pressure on the entire Arab region, the national and social struggles of the Arab masses have not ceased to develop but on the contrary have taken a considerable qualitative step forward with the appearance in Egypt — for the first time in years— of a persistent movement of active opposition.

The key to this apparent paradox resides in the fact that the success of the imperialist offensive has in no way altered the underlying causes of the political agitation in the Arab region. Not only has the fundamental social and economic crisis of the Arab countries by no means been resolved but it has even been aggravated by the consequences of June 1967 in the belligerent countries (the weight of the military budget, the closing of the Suez Canal, etc.). This crisis has been compounded by the extreme political tensions resulting from the defeat of the Arab states, which grow more serious every day, since ever broader masses in the Arab countries are becoming disillusioned and convinced of the betrayal of their governments.

The reactionary onslaught unleashed in the Arab region in 1970 was able to defeat only certain leaderships. It overturned the two main regimes linked to the (bourgeois and petit-bourgeois) Arab nationalist current, crushed the Palestinian Resistance whose leaderships originated in this current, and liquidated the Stalinist leaderships of the workers movement in the Sudan, the strongest of the Arab Stalinist leaderships. But just as it is clear that Nasserism will never rise again, that the petit-bourgeois leadership of the Palestinian Resistance has been irremediably compromised, and that the Arab Stalinist movement has more than abundantly demonstrated its bankruptcy, it is equally clear that the radicalisation of the Arab mass movement has entered into a new phase. It is in Egypt once again that the new radicalisation has manifested itself with the greatest vigour, both in the very significant revolt of the

workers in the Hilwan steel complex and the impressive movement of the Egyptian students.

The new stage of radicalisation of the Arab masses promises to dig its roots deeper than the previous one and therefore comprise a far greater danger to the existing regimes. It is as if the wave of radicalisation following June 1967 were simply the prelude to the storm that is taking shape. The exacerbation of the socio-economic crisis in the Arab countries, which has been further sharpened by the crisis of the world capitalist system, has begun to threaten to push the major weight of the proletariat and the poor rural masses into motion. This after a long period of waiting. There is no doubt that the Arab ruling classes, who have begun to perceive this danger, will take measures to halt it.

SECTION THREE

THE OCTOBER 1973 WAR AND THE LATEST STAGE IN THE CAPITULATION OF THE ARAB REGIMES

13. The October 1973 war was waged precisely in order to stop the second wave of rising struggles, which began to appear in the Arab countries. The objective of the Arab regimes was to end the "no war, no peace" situation, whose impact was continuously increasing, and which was thereby accelerating their political fragmentation. In fact, it was becoming clear that an attempt to relieve the political tensions in the area, by direct implementation of the "peaceful solution" (the commonly accepted formulation for the United Nations Security Council's resolution number 242, which was passed on November 22, 1967) without going through a transitional stage of preparation, could threaten to have an opposite effect: it might lead to a generalised movement of opposition to a settlement that represents, in the eyes of the broad masses, a decision that had been imposed by Zionism and imperialism in 1967, especially since the Israeli authorities had such vague interpretations of this UN resolution. Since a perspective of a war of liberation has been out of the

question, primarily because of the character of the Arab regimes, the "peaceful solution" formula was in a state of crisis.

The October war came to resolve these contradictions. It was a war aimed at peace, a military operation that opened up the road for concentrated diplomatic activities aimed at settling the Arab-Israeli conflict. The main aim of the October war was to push forward the implementation of the "peaceful solution" by creating an excuse for the energetic intervention of the major powers — primarily American imperialism — in the diplomatic manoeuvres that aimed at doing away with the effects of the June 1967 war, and more specifically, liquidating the revolutionary content of the Palestinian question.

The military objectives of the October war were very limited. Egypt and Syria had not planned to liberate all of their territories occupied in 1967. In reality, the Egyptian operation constrained itself to a sphere of operation, whose limits remained within Sinai. Naturally, neither regime planned to "liberate" Palestine, i.e. to attack the areas under the control of the Zionist state since 1948. The two Arab armies did not even significantly bomb within the 1948 borders of Israel. The sole military objective of the Arab regimes was to shift the balance of forces between their armies and the Zionist armies to their favour. This was primarily useful in the eyes of the regimes because it improved their position in the bargaining over the conditions of a peaceful settlement. These attempts by the Arab regimes ended up in a half defeat; whilst the Israeli army advanced on the Syrian front, on the Egyptian front its advance west of the canal was balanced by the Egyptian army's eastern crossing of the Canal. Despite this reality, however, the Sadat regime managed to orchestrate a wide and organised propaganda operation on the basis of the successes of the early days of the war, a campaign in which the Egyptian president appeared as the Salah-a-din of modern times, and in which the October war was made to look like a modern version of the ancient battle of Hittin. In this way the Egyptian

regime tried to throw together a national front, the very thing that had become so difficult to do after 1967. But what increased its importance to the regime this time was the latter's intention to sit at the negotiating table with the Zionist government. From all aspects, therefore, the October war was fundamentally a means to place the implementation of the "peaceful settlement" on the agenda. In this sense the October war was far from being a war of liberation. It was in reality a war of capitulation. Although revolutionary Marxists supported the Arab armies in the face of the Zionist occupation army, they denounce the capitulationist political strategy into which the October war was placed and which imposed on this war predetermined limits. The October war — despite impressions of petit-bourgeois nationalists — simply underlines once again the bankruptcy of the Arab regimes and their capitulation to Zionism.

14. The October war, in trying to push forward a peaceful settlement, was clearly no mindless adventure. It was part of a carefully studied, total plan, that included other means of pressure, in particular, the famous "oil war".

Sadat's government was aware of the total inability of the Soviet Union, singlehandedly, to remove the political crisis then prevailing in the Near East. Furthermore, it was interested in avoiding the full exposure of its policies in the eyes of the Arab masses that would be the result of sidling too close to the United States. This government therefore, tried, for a period of time, to rest itself on the West European imperialisms, and had for this purpose conducted numerous contacts with the governments of France, Britain and West Germany. However, the Egyptian regime soon had to face to reality; capitalist Europe, no matter what the economic perspectives which it might present, was much weaker than American imperialism, and more specifically, far less capable than the latter of exercising influence on the Zionist state. This is the reason why the pro-Arab European declarations and statements concerning the Middle-East conflict had no real effect. The Sadat government had however, set itself as a primary task the removal of

political tensions in the area. This was the indispensable precondition for any capitalist economic development plan. There was, finally, no choice but to look towards American imperialism, in this way fulfilling the aspirations of an important section of the Egyptian bourgeoisie, and especially the aspirations of those big owners of Arab capital — the Saudi regime.

The role of "Saudi" Arabia had begun to impose itself in 1973 as a mediator between the bourgeois Arab regimes and Washington. This mediatory role brings about dual developments that have a tendency to converge: on the one hand, the movement of Egypt toward multi-faceted forms of cooperation with American imperialism, and on the other hand, the tendency of the latter to move away from the virtually unconditional support of the extremist positions of the Zionist regime and toward the adaptation of policies more in line with the needs of the Arab regimes. The opening up of Egypt to American imperialism will take place on numerous fronts. On the economic front, this opening has found an expression for itself in the Egyptian decision to hand over the execution of the pipeline project between Suez and Alexandria (SUMED) to an American company in competition with European ones. And today, the construction that is expected in the Suez Canal area (which undoubtedly will bring about economic improvements after the opening of the Canal) is being planned in cooperation with American capital and through the World (imperialist) Bank. On the political front, the repression of the progressive, anti-imperialist intellectuals has paved the way for this opening to American imperialism. Furthermore, the return of known and outspoken agents of American imperialism, and their appointments to important positions underlines in an even more unambiguous way the character of this opening. This is also expressed in the renewal of diplomatic relations between Cairo and Washington to say nothing of Sadat's declarations praising "America" and its foreign affairs negotiator, the famous Kissinger.

This new orientation of the Egyptian regime would have been impossible

had it not been for the firm guarantees concerning its results. The political dangers for the Egyptian regime, as a result of extending its hand to American imperialism, were very great, because this same imperialism in the eyes of the Arab masses is the very defender of the Zionist state. It was "Saudi" Arabia, which had played such an active role in the reorientation that had provided the necessary guarantees.

The Saudi monarch, who owns the largest oil resources in the world and from which it collects vast profits, is a helpful ally of American imperialism. In fact the relative decline of Washington's power in the last years - which is related to the economic crises of the dollar and the exacerbation of the interimperialist rivalry, combined with the world energy crisis and its effects on rising price of oil - have ended the age in which the oil producing countries were no more than completely obedient, semi-colonial countries. These countries have acquired, since then, a position of power and a consciousness of this power, which has pushed them to reconsider the conditions of their economic dependence on imperialism, and to press for adjustments to these conditions in a direction more favourable to their particular interests, which these regimes have learned to differentiate from the interests of imperialist companies. Algeria, and later Libya, first set this new politics into motion, taking advantage of the particular circumstances of Mediterranean oil which was not effected by the closure of the Suez Canal in 1967 (which resulted in increased transport costs of Gulf oil). Later on they were followed by the oil producing countries of the Gulf and the world grouping of oil producers which forced the cartel companies to reconsider the division of oil profits and also to accept the gradual participation of the producer countries in the capital of those companies which had the concessions. The "oil war" inaugurated in 1973 — parallel to the military Arab operation — represents an important step forward in this regard. It is, in this sense, a continuation of a policy that goes back to 1970, and not a sharp break with the past.

The Arab-Israeli conflict, for the oil producing countries, was nothing more than a good opportunity to impose a reconsideration of agreements and terms of exchange which tied them to the imperialist countries and to the West. Thus, these countries were realising two goals at once: an excellent financial project and an effective political operation. Politically, the aim was to give American imperialism a little push in the direction of putting pressure on Israel to begin the implementation of the "peaceful solution". "Saudi" Arabia had, in fact, already, a few months previously, began to demand that American, which were exploiting its oil, should support its efforts in Washington. The "oil war" from this point of view is, therefore, a double edged sword. By increasing the price of Arab oil, it benefits American imperialism by weakening its other imperialist competitors and by sharpening the competitive edge of the USA's own oil producing capacity. However, this same process set in a motion a movement to increase the oil prices that overstepped all American calculations. For this reason America did not begin its protests until after the first period when it had reaped tremendous benefits from the increase in prices. In a similar manner, the companies whose power and authority was being challenged were simultaneously, making vast excess profits. However, it is clear that once again, imperialism did no more than open up a Pandora's box. The "oil war" touched off a new round of world inflation which, undoubtedly, will further exacerbate the crisis of the whole imperialist system. Furthermore, the backward raw material producing countries will, from now on, also tend to demand higher prices for their exports to the West. They will, at the same time, tend to want further security of control over the extraction of their resources and, eventually, to manage without the imperialist countries. From the financial point of view, the "oil war" for the Arab countries, up till now, has not only compensated for their losses resulting from the decline in the value of their resources exchanged for steadily declining imperialist money, but also it has achieved a huge surplus of profits as a result of the increase of

oil prices far beyond the imperialist calculations.

The general shift in the relations between the imperialist countries and the backward producers of primary products is very clear. However, we should beware of arriving, in religious fashion, to hasty conclusions which could result in dangerous political mistakes.

On the contrary, it should be emphasised that, although it is true that there is an undeniable shift in the relations between the oil producing countries and the imperialist countries, this shift does not change in the slightest the essentially dependent character of these relations.

"Saudi" Arabia and the Gulf Emirates have acquired large money assets which have accumulated over the years, and which these countries have been unable to invest locally either because of territorial constraints (the Gulf Emirates), or as a result of not wishing to change their ancient social structure which has become the basis of these countries' socio-political stability ("Saudi" Arabia). These assets have, until recently, been placed in imperialist banks for the use of Western capital. However, the crisis of the world monetary system and the fall in the value of the major imperialist currencies has had a significant effect on these Arab deposits. This explains why the countries most concerned have wanted to change their money reserves into gold, and to change them into non-transferrable cash, in addition to using these reserves to find more profitable returns than those gained from mere deposits. As a result of this, there rises a necessity for these countries to directly manage and control the use of their bank capital. The recent developments concerning the use of these deposits and investments are very important: "Saudi" Arabia is trying to invest part of its reserves into the oil industries of the United States — a matter which suits the financial needs of this industry. On the other hand, the loans given by rulers of the Gulf to the backward Arab and non-Arab countries are generally aimed at financing projects which are carried out with the assistance of the

imperialist countries to which they are linked. These loans are also tied to political conditions which fit the situation. Thus, it becomes clear that the dependence of the Arab countries on imperialism is far from reaching an end. On the contrary, it is being strengthened. In fact, we are witnessing an increasing integration of the resources of these countries into the economy of imperialism, an integration which almost allows one to consider their ruling classes as increasingly active branches of the Anglo-Saxon imperialist bourgeoisie. This also corresponds to the intentions of these classes, which apart from not having any independent economic perspectives, as they are incapable of setting up an industrial economy proportional to their capital), also know only too well that there can be no political survival without the protection of imperialism. The pressure from these partners of American imperialism on Washington, originally derives, in many of its aspects, from the traditional game of interest groups and lobbying within the United States (our analysis is limited to the Arab monarchies and Gulf Emirates).

The turn of October 1973 represents the crowning point of imperialism's generalised attack on the Arab East, which had started in the late sixties and which not only succeeded in regaining its control over previously lost areas, but also brought to it new ones (most significantly, Egypt).

The price of this victory will not have to be paid for by American imperialism, but by its Zionist fortress. The latter will have to return the areas occupied in the June 1967 war, after they had served the function of increasing the political and economical influence of the United States. The hour of the "peaceful solution" has struck.

15. It is the influence that the U.S. has over the Zionist state, that pushed Egypt towards the former. It remained up to the United States to use this influence, in accordance with the wishes of the Arab ruling classes, in order to secure and strengthen its own penetration into the area with the cooperation of these classes. The main obstacle to the "peaceful solution"

since 1967 has been the Israeli refusal to withdraw from the Arab lands occupied during the 1967 war. The Arab ruling classes, headed by the Egyptian bourgeoisie, were prepared to concede all that had been laid down in the United Nations resolution 242, including the recognition of the Zionist state, and ensuring the security of its borders with the establishment of a demilitarised zone. This also included the freedom of Israeli shipping in the Suez Canal. The Zionist government, on the other hand, insisted not only on keeping significant areas of the 1967 occupied territories, but also demanded direct prior negotiations with the Arab countries as an added condition to any withdrawal.

The situation, up until 1973, was well suited to the line of the United States, which had been trying to win control over the largest number of positions in the region through a sharp policy of attack. However, ever since the success of "Saudi" Arabia in convincing Egypt, and to a certain extent Syria as well, to cooperate with American imperialism, it has remained up to the latter to play its stronger cards. Thus, it is not unlikely that the Arab governments waged the October war with American guarantees. In this way, at long last, the Egyptian regime, whose prestige was increased both by its war effort and by the American guarantees, was able to make its final concessions: sitting at a negotiating table face to face with the Zionist regime even before the latter's withdrawal from Sinai. Thus, the Geneva conference took place.

It is clear that the new line of American policy in the Near East does not fit the direct interests of the Zionist state. Apart from the material losses that would result from the withdrawal to the June 4th, 1967 borders, such action would lead to an important crisis in both the institutions and ideology of Zionism. However, in the final analysis the Zionist regime can only follow the demands laid down by the United States, especially since its margin of independence from the latter narrowed considerably during the sixties. That is why they are trying to get the highest price for their obedience, a matter which is reflected

in the large influx of dollars into its treasury. It is important to emphasise in this context, that the usefulness of the Zionist state to American imperialism is far greater than in any other past period, contrary to what some may think. For it was the Zionist victory of 1967 that led to the present success of U.S. imperialism in the Arab region, and the American government is well aware of this fact. On the other hand, the opening up of Egypt to American imperialism, is far from putting Israel into second place. Rather, it is increasing its importance as a watchdog of American interests, it being the only state in the area with a sufficiently stable right-wing socio-political composition that enables it to play the role of a military bastion continually prepared to intervene where imperialist interest demand. The counterrevolutionary role that "Saudi" Arabia plays—and Iran whose military strength has increased significantly in the past few years — are complimentary to the Israeli one, and not in competition with it.

The delays in the negotiations for an Israeli withdrawal are to the benefit of American imperialism, which is trying to strengthen its new positions, especially by pulling Syria finally into the camp. There is, however, another problem that is connected to the Israeli withdrawal, the same problem that led to the so-called Arab-Israeli conflict; namely the Palestinian question. No "peaceful solution" will be satisfactory in the eyes of the Arab ruling classes, and in the eyes of imperialism, if it did not include a semi-"solution" to the Palestinian problem: Arab reaction, Zionism and American imperialism want to secure stability in a region which has been reorganised according to their interests. To achieve this it has no choice, but to remove the revolutionary content of the Palestinian question. This question has formed, since the thirties, one of the main sources of anti-imperialist activities in the Arab region. Hence, many competing projects are being put forward for this purpose. They are all connected to the "peaceful solution". The two most important projects are, first, the Palestinian state, and second, the project for a Jordanian-Palestinian state. The first one is based on the establishment of a

statelet comprising the West bank of the river Jordan as well as the Gaza strip. The second project is based on the unification of the latter with Jordan. Whatever solution is adopted, however, it is clear that it would be meaningless without the consent of representatives from the Palestinian Resistance, and without their actual involvement. It is this condition that makes it difficult to carry out Hussein's plan — i.e. the united Jordanian-Palestinian kingdom plan — since renewed collaboration with the main butcher of the Palestinian people would be very costly for any wing of the Palestinian Resistance. On the other hand, the probability of a semi-progressive coup in Jordan, which is not impossible, would solve this problem. As for today, and under the present conditions, a significant section of the official leadership of the Palestinian Resistance, including the majority of the historical leadership of Fatah and also the leadership of the Democratic Popular Front (which has moved since 1969 from the "the extreme left to the extreme right" in the Resistance), has declared its adoption of the Palestinian state project. This position represents the last stage in the degeneration of the bureaucratic leadership of the Palestinian Resistance, a degeneration which exposes their willingness to abandon the very struggles which have fed it since its establishment, in order to gain the privileges of a state apparatus which will undoubtedly overflow with aid from the rulers of the Arab oil producing countries. This classical form of degeneration, which was evident in the very nature of the Palestinian leadership, as we have described it above.

Revolutionaries refuse to choose between the various projects attempting a "solution" to the Palestinian problem, which are being laid out these days for discussion. They consider these different projects are all, equally, means of liquidating the Palestinian question, and primarily the struggle of the Palestinian people for the liberation of their country. Apart from the misleading conception which presents a possible future Palestinian statelet as a form of self-determination for the Palestinian people, it must be emphasised that all the proposed forms are within the

United Nations framework, i.e. they are all interwoven, not only with general capitulationist concessions to Zionism, but also, and more specifically, by a total ban on the armed character of the Palestinian struggle. Without such a ban any guarantees securing the borders of Israel would be meaningless. At present, the armed struggle of the Palestinian people forms the main expression of its struggle for self-determination, and therefore, it is clear that all the liquidationist formulas laid down for resolving the question lead in the final analysis, to an entrenchment of the historical process that plundered the rights of the Palestinian people. Within the framework of their transitional demands for complete and unconditional withdrawal from the occupied territories, revolutionaries also present the question of a "Palestinian" or "Jordanian-Palestinian" government as that of a national revolutionary, workers and peasants government, connected to the revolutionary struggle against Zionism, imperialism and the reactionary Arab ruling classes and directed at the destruction of the Zionist state. They also call for the unconditional defence of the right of the Palestinian people—the same as any other oppressed people ---to armed struggle against its oppressors. They consider that this struggle is not only a right of Palestinian revolutionaries, but also their duty.

16. The rejection of all liquidationist solutions from an anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist standpoint is, today, shared by wide layers within the Palestinian Resistance movement, and between the different groupings of the Palestinian people, primarily the refugee population. However, those holding this revolutionary position are at their weakest amongst the population of the Palestinians living on the West Bank of the river Jordan. This is because of the accumulation of the effects of Zionist repression and the delusions of a nationalist Stalinism, coupled by the special position of those who see in the Palestinian West Bank project, primarily, a means of ridding themselves of the Zionist oppression and its Hashemite complement (which they have experienced before 1967). It

is part of this latter segment of the population whose direct interest in liberating the whole of the Palestinian territory is less than the interest of most other groupings of Palestinians. On the other hand, the opponents of opportunist collaborationism represent a large popular current inside the refugee camps, the most important arena of the Palestinian Resistance. This current includes essentially the base and middle layers of the cadres of the Resistance. Despite the fact that some sections of the leadership are working with the tendencies opposed to liquidationism, the majority of the official Palestinian leadership are prepared, in varying degrees, to participate in the ongoing settlement efforts. It is important to dispel any illusions about these leaderships which involve themselves in the refusal currents for purely opportunist reasons, connected to maintaining their control over the bases of their organisations, as well as those who associate themselves with regimes carrying out cheap nationalist demagogical campaigns, like the Iraqi Baathist regime. Such leaderships will not hesitate to reverse their positions when it is in their interests to do so. In this way, these leaderships tend to politically distort the refusal current as a whole.

The main weakness of the refusal currents lies in their organisation and political unclarity. The anti-imperialist revolutionaries in the ranks of the Palestinian Resistance totally lack centralisation, whereas they have to face the official right-wing leaderships which possess a highly centralised apparatus at their disposal. Hence, there is very little collaboration between some of the revolutionary tendencies. On the other hand, their rejection of the liquidationist projects is a continuation, rather than an overgrowing, of their original and spontaneous maximalism which, for a long time, distinguished the Palestinian Resistance. Added to this, the repressive measures being carried out by the official leadership of the movement, with the help of the Arab regimes, are not without effect on those rejectors who attempt to justify their silence and cowardliness in the name of their nationalism, using the excuse of the importance of keeping the "national unity" of the Palestinian

Resistance.

All this throws a light on the necessity and urgency of building a revolutionary leadership on an equally Palestinian and Arab scale. And surely enough, the suitable objective conditions for achieving this task do not exist within the Palestinian refugee population only, but also in the whole Arab region. The effects of the campaign of deception organised by the Arab regimes since October 1973 are quickly dwindling. The Arab people are increasingly becoming more aware that the settlement is no more than a capitulation of the Arab governments to Zionism. They also cannot avoid noticing the victorious return of American imperialism — enemy number one of the world's nations — to the Arab region. On the other hand, the liberal changes in the Egyptian and Syrian economies, which have been the two main fortresses for Arab anti-imperialist feelings) in addition to the increased integration of the Arab area into the imperialist world market and the influx of capital which was witnessed in relation to the "oil war", all these factors have led to an exacerbation of monetary inflation in the Arab countries, thereby increasing social tensions.

The social crisis inside the Israeli state is continuing to deepen. Two factors define it: the inflationary Israeli economic crisis, and the ideological-political crisis of Zionism whose further deepening has dealt Zionism a hard blow. This crisis led, at first, to a political polarisation between the extremist far right and the "moderates". It has also been accompanied, more and more, by an increase in social struggles which strengthens the opposition to the government. To the extent that these struggles increase and gain a political dynamic opposed to the government and objectively directed against capitalism, the Zionist regime will find itself forced to strongly suppress it, thus, revealing its true nature in the eyes of the Jewish masses themselves. Furthermore, the Zionist concessions to the Arab countries imposed by Washington, clearly prove how the Zionist state is, before everything, a military bastion for American imperialism serving the latter's interests at the expense of thousands

of Arab and Jewish victims. In this way, anti-Zionist revolutionaries in Israel get the opportunity, better than any other in the past, to explain to the masses that the security of the Zionist state, rather than overlapping with the security of its population, is in reality, based on the perpetual abrogation of their security and on the sacrifices of the Jewish workers. The real interests of the latter lie in their participation in the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist (hence, anti Zionist) struggles which are being waged by the toiling Arab masses. For it is not possible for the Jewish workers to have any political class consciousness without its being directly anti-Zionist.

The student movement today stands in the forefront of the struggles throughout the Arab area, as has happened in other parts of the world. From the Maghreb to the Arab-Iranian Gulf, passing through Egypt, Syria and Lebanon, the youth in education have been in the midst of a political ferment and they are facing the repression of the existing regimes. As for the working masses, they have not yet waged generalised struggles, except for some partial and sectoral ones. It will not be long before they spring forward, as has been demonstrated recently by the increase of social and national struggles in Lebanon, the Arab country most effected by the world capitalist crisis.

The Arab revolution needs today, more than at any time before, a leadership that is up to the level of its tasks. Only a proletarian leadership can provide these conditions. The building of this leadership is, thus, the main goal of revolutionaries in the Arab region. The construction of such a leadership requires, as a preliminary step, a complete evaluation of all the politically anti-imperialist tendencies in the Arab region.

SECTION FOUR

BUILDING THE ARAB REVOLUTIONARY LEADERSHIP

17. The Arab nationalist current, in its bourgeois and petit-bourgeois manifestations, has not succeeded in producing a firm and historically

stable leadership for the Arab revolution. Nasser's immense personal prestige was not enough by itself to lead the masses of the Arab nation. This prestige, moreover, after reaching its height in 1958, was sharply challenged; rivals appeared on the same nationalist ground. The only organisation loyal to Nasserism on an all-Arab scale was the Movement of Arab Nationalists, whose fate is eloquent enough. The radicalisation of the movement in the 1960s, under the impact of the shift to the left by the Nasserite regime in Egypt, culminated after June 1967 in the majority of this originally anti-Marxist movement repudiating its Nasserite allegiance and evolving toward Marxism. If Nasserism has a prophet, it has left no Koran (coherent ideology) and, as is shown by the evolution of Egypt since Nasser's death in 1970, can have no caliph. Although the Baathist movement grew out of a party, unlike Nasserism, which was the outgrowth of a regime, it presented still less cohesion. The anti-imperialist nationalist ideology of the Baath party and its vague socialism could attract partisans in various social layers, and all the more so because the Arab Stalinist movement had deserted the field of national struggles. As long as the Baath was an opposition party, it could preserve its unity. But once confronted with the concrete problems of power, the diversity of its social composition was to lead inevitably to splits. The most important was the one that opened up in 1963 between the traditionalist section grouped around the founders and historic leaders of the Baath, and a young radicalised tendency influenced by the Nasserite regime's turn to the left. The former tendency continued along the trajectory set by the Baath in its first years of participation in the Syrian government. A right-wing tendency in the service of the bourgeoisie, it opposed all anti-bourgeois measures in the name of the priority of nationalism over socialism. But it also made deals with imperialism, as shown by its relations with the Iraq Petroleum Company in 1963. This tendency was distinguished most of all by its Anti-Communism. It took part in the repression of Communists in Syria at the time of the Syrian-Egyptian union in 1958. In 1963, it conducted a

campaign of extermination against the Communists in Iraq. In 1968, it organised the reactionary coup aimed once more at liquidating the Communists and above all the left-wing faction of the Iraqi Communist Party, which was attracted to armed struggle. Discredited by its attitude of objective support to Hussein at the time of the 1970 massacres in Jordan, the Iraqi Baathists regime tried to restore its nationalist facade in June 1972 by nationalizing (with compensation) some of the IPC concessions, a measure that caused the imperialists no annoyance since it was counterbalanced by increased oil production in the concessions that were retained (Basrah Petroleum Company), which, moreover, were more profitable.

Since then the Iraqi government has benefitted from the "oil war" started after October 1973. It has extended oil nationalisations to cover all petroleum production in Iraq except for French imperialism's shares which were left intact. The directions of these nationalisations uncover the real nature of the Baathist dictatorship, which represents the interests of the Iraqi bourgeoisie: as they endeavour to maximise their profits by taking advantage of the changing balance of power between the oil producers and world imperialism, they also strive to develop their economic relations with European imperialisms (especially France) and Japan, as they are against American imperialism for historic reasons (on the 17th of June, 1968, the pro-American wing of those who had participated in the latest Baathist coup, were deposed).

On the Kurdish front, the Iraqi Baathists had signed in 1970 a truce agreement with the bourgeoisie and semi-feudal leadership of the Kurdish national liberation movement. Thus it was left unhampered to confront the workers movement. Today, the period of truce has come to an end and the government must grant the Kurds the self-government it had promised them. The reality is that the national-bourgeois Baathist dictatorship cannot find a democratic solution to the Kurdish problem. War is thus inevitable, no matter how long it is postponed.

The other tendency of the Baath party, including various petit-bourgeois layers and even a proletarian faction seized full control of the government in Syria following the ouster of the right-wing nationalist tendency of the Baath in 1966. It took a series of radical measures against the Syrian big bourgeoisie and initiated a policy of anti-imperialist offensives. But social divisions appeared within this tendency, and although the workers militias supported the regime, they were dissolved. The left petit-bourgeois team was overthrown in its turn in 1970 by the right wing which, basing itself on the state apparatus, then set about restoring the bourgeois interests. The failure of the left tendency of Baath shows clearly that only a dictatorship of the proletariat, breaking up the bourgeois state, can take up the construction of a society liberated irreversibly from the bourgeoisie and imperialism. The defeat of this tendency in June 1967 had already shown the limitations of an anti-imperialism not based on a mobilisation of the working masses. This is one more illustration of the Trotskyist lessons on the permanent revolution.

18. The leading role played by the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois teams in the anti-imperialist national struggles of the Arab masses, the radicalisation of whole sections of the nationalist movement and their evolution towards adopting a confused "Marxism" while remaining in a nationalist framework would be a perfectly understandable phenomena if no Communist workers parties existed. But the fact is that the Communist parties are amongst the oldest political organisations in the Arab region, coming well before the Baath and Nasserism. This paradox is explained by the total default of these parties in the area of national struggles.

Formed at the height of Stalinism, the Arab Communist parties were always strictly subordinated to the diplomacy of the Kremlin. They paid the price of this servility, which sometimes cost them mass defections, by periods of total political isolation. Thus, in the aftermath of the Comintern shift in 1935 and particularly during the second world war the Soviet

bureaucracy's policy of an alliance with Western "democracies" had the corollary in the Arab region of the communists abandoning struggles for independence directed against the Kremlin's imperialist allies. In 1948, following in the footsteps of Moscow, the Communist parties made an agonising revision of their former anti-Zionist attitude and all approved the formation of the state of-Israel, denouncing the Arab counterattack that it provoked. This position wiped out all the prestige that the Soviet victory over Nazism lent the Arab Communist movement. In order to defend it, the Arab Stalinist theoreticians developed a series of ultrasectarian theses on the national question that strongly marked the Communist parties. This sectarianism took on clearly reactionary dimensions in the case of the Maghreb sections of the French Communist parties, which on several occasions condemned the national liberation movements in their region, as, for example, the Algerian Communist Party condemned the armed struggle for independence initiated in 1945.

The sectarian failure to understand the national question disarmed the Arab Communist parties, and above all the Syrian Communist Party, in their opposition to the Syrian-Egyptian union of 1958, which was in part directed against them. Instead of waging its democratic struggle in the framework of the union, the Syrian CP opposed the union as such, which isolated it completely from the Syrian masses and facilitated the repression that fell on it. Likewise, in opposing the union for the sake of supporting General Kassem, the Iraqi Communist Party lost a considerable part of its influence to the nationalists. In all these positions, the Arab Stalinist movement placed itself at the opposite pole of the nationalist movement, denigrating the national aspirations of the Arab masses in the name of a so-called class attitude, totally overlooking the revolutionary potential of the question of Arab unity. Furthermore, the Stalinists never demonstrated their class attitude against the Arab bourgeois regimes, defining their positions not on the basis of the class nature of these regimes but on the basis of the relations of each with the USSR.

The example of Iraq is most instructive in this regard. The Iraqi Communist Party mobilised its supporters to support the bourgeois bonapartist Kassem regime that came out of the 1958 coup d'état. Instead of orientating the mass of the workers toward seizing power during the revolutionary situation that convulsed Iraq in 1959, the Communist Party did everything possible to divert the popular mobilisation into supporting the Bonaparte. The reward for this servility, besides the beginning of anti-Communist repression under Kassem, was the reactionary coup d'état of 1963, which, two years before the Indonesian tragedy, reaped thousands of victims amongst the Communists. In 1964, ignoring this clear lesson, the Egyptian Stalinists dissolved their organisation to enter the Arab Socialist Union, the political umbrella of Nasser's bonapartist dictatorship. In 1969, the Sudanese Communists gave their support to Nimeiry's coup d'état; two years later he was to murder their principal leaders.

Thus, in the course of the last fifteen years, the Arab communist parties have several times underlined in the blood of their martyrs the teachings of revolutionary Marxism on the need to maintain a class attitude of no confidence in all bourgeois regimes, for maintaining the independence of the working class and arming it. These lessons will be assimilated by the Arab proletarian vanguard; by the Stalinists - never! Even today they are participating in the bourgeois restorationist government in Syria as well as in the Baathist dictatorship in Iraq.

Also in Algeria, the Stalinists are preparing to disband their organisation in a national liberation front, a party for the bureaucratic-bourgeois dictatorship of Boumedienne.

The balance sheet of the Arab Stalinist movement shows complete bankruptcy. Since 1967, the four largest Arab Communist parties have undergone splits — the CP's of Iraq, Sudan, Jordan and Syria. This crisis of Arab Stalinism is an integral part of the crisis of world Stalinism. The failure of the USSR's Arab policy — which became evident in the

deterioration of its relations with Egypt, its former favoured ally — can only aggravate this crisis.

19. The radicalisation in progress in the Arab region in the 1960s was considerably accelerated by June 1967. Under the impact of the defeat of the Arab armies, large sections of the youth — especially among the petit-bourgeois ranks of the nationalist movement — became disillusioned with the so-called "progressive" Arab regimes and evolved toward revolutionary Marxist positions. Bourgeois and petit-bourgeois anti-imperialism had failed lamentably; on the other hand, the Vietnamese revolution was showing that only a proletarian course could effectively combat imperialism. Inspired by these examples, tendencies claiming to be Marxist-Leninist formed in the Palestinian, Lebanese and North and South Yemeni sections of the Movement of Arab Nationalists and soon broke with the right-wing tendencies. But the "Marxism" of these tendencies was strongly marked by its spontaneous character. Rejecting the Stalinist movement, they were unable to develop a coherent revolutionary strategy that could stand as an alternative to Stalinism, and based their general slogans on a superficial theoretical eclecticism. The organisations of the radicalised petit-bourgeoisie that were formed on this basis displayed centrist-type political behaviour, vacillating according to the circumstances between a reformism close to Stalinism and ultraleftist positions. Moreover, under the influence of the Stalinist model, these organisations departed from the conception of a Pan-Arab party practised by the movement from which they came, resting content with mere solidarity among independent regional groups.

As long as the Palestinian Resistance was in its ascendent phase, the groups in the Near East stood on a generally revolutionary line. But with the decline of the Resistance after 1970 they degenerated, coming to stabilise on right-wing opportunist positions. As for the South Yemeni branch of the Movement of Arab Nationalists, the National Liberation Front of South Yemen — whose left faction has been in power since 1969 when it ousted

the rightist faction — it has carried out a series of radical anti-imperialist and anti-bourgeois measures unleashing a process of permanent revolution. But, under the pressure of imperialism and the Moscow and Peking bureaucracies, this leadership recently began a right turn, accepting a treaty of union with North Yemen, which has a reactionary semi-feudal regime dominated by imperialism. Since that time, this treaty has remained unimplemented. However, the political lull that prevails in South Yemen allows for the possibility of a stabilisation of its right wing political shift. At any event this right turn has not, up to now, been expressed on the social and economic levels.

For some years, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf has been waging a heroic struggle against the puppet sultanate of Oman and British imperialism, but it has still not succeeded in extending the guerilla war to other regions of the Gulf. It is clear, moreover, that any struggle confined to the Arab Gulf can not hope by its own strength alone to liberate the (very small) population of this area, to drive imperialism from the part of the World from which it draws its greatest profits. This is the task that will have to be accomplished by the Arab revolution as a whole.

Among the “new vanguards” that have appeared in the Arab region, we should also note the “Central Command” wing of the Iraqi Communist Party and the Israeli Socialist Organisation (Matzpen). Following the split in the Iraqi Communist Party, the left fraction was attracted to a foquista experience in the south of the country. But the fierce repression that struck it following the Baathist coup of July 1968 completely shattered it. Since then, groups outside of Iraq calling themselves the “Central Command” have slipped into ultra-Maoist-type positions as regards the USSR, while maintaining their Stalinist strategy of revolution by stages.

In the 1960s, the Israeli Socialist Organisation (Matzpen) was a quasi-united front grouping of anti-Zionist revolutionary tendencies rejecting the adaptation of the Israeli Communist Party to Zionism, which in differing

degrees characterizes both its factions (Maki and Rakah). Under the pressure of some of its members who were affiliated to the Fourth International and carried forward the heritage of the Trotskyist group formed in Palestine in the 1930s and disbanded after 1948, “Matzpen” adopted a series of advanced revolutionary positions. After June 1967, the organisation underwent the same experience as the Arab and international left in general, with its perceptible increase in numbers and political weight. But the relative ebb of the Arab revolutionary movement after 1970 had its impact on the membership. A series of splits culminated in the original group’s breaking up into its different tendencies - various types of spontaneists, Lambertists and Trotskyists. The ISO-Matzpen Marxist (sympathising section of the Fourth International) is the only one today to advance a dialectical conception of the interrelation between the Arab revolution and the class struggles in Israel, as well as the Leninist corollary of this — the need for building a revolutionary proletarian party for the entire Arab region, a task assumed by the Israeli Trotskyists together with all of the Arab Trotskyists.

20. In several Arab countries, Trotskyist nuclei are developing, although in some cases they are still in the embryonic stages. This represents an important advance for the Fourth International in a region where up till now it had almost no foothold. The Trotskyist militants of the Arab region — including those in Israel — are working towards founding an Arab section of the Fourth International.

Their struggle to build a revolutionary communist party for the entire Arab nation arises from their analysis of the Arab national question and the interaction of the revolutionary struggles throughout the Arab region.

The interaction of revolutionary struggles in the world’s large cultural and geographical blocks is a conspicuous phenomenon in our time. The extraordinary development of the means of communication and exchange since the second world war paralleling the increasing integration of all the world’s economies by

imperialism has greatly changed the conditions of struggle by comparison with those at the start of the century. This evolution is moving in the direction of stronger international centralisation of revolutionary struggles, reinforcing the Leninist conception of the International, and also of greater coordination of struggles at the level, of the great regions of the globe (Western Europe, Latin America, the Indian Subcontinent, Southeast Asia, etc.), as has been illustrated by the experience of OLAS and the Indochinese Revolutionary Front. Moreover, the imperialists and the bourgeoisies with world-wide interests are ahead of revolutionists in this field, since they already have their organs of regional military, political, and economic coordination, as the case may be (NATO, the EEC, the OAS, SEATO, etc.).

In the Arab region, the national factor — above all the language — gives rise to a close interdependence of the Arab countries, which since the middle of this century has been demonstrated by the creation of the Arab League, the holding of summit conferences of the heads of Arab states, as well as the work of the various organs of inter-Arab cooperation in different fields, to say nothing of attempts at Arab unification. This interdependence cannot fail to have its repercussions on the revolutionary struggles that are already running up against joint repression by the Arab ruling classes and will do so increasingly in the future.

Besides the real, close interaction of the situations in the Arab countries, the centrality of the task of national unification in the programme of the Arab revolution means that simply coordinating struggles on an all-Arab level is not enough but must be complimented by a unity of political positions on key events, as well as unity in action on the common themes of the struggle. The petit-bourgeois Arab nationalist organisations have already understood the necessity of such unity.

It is essential to centralise the Arab revolutionary struggles. Only a proletarian party can achieve a lasting unification on an all-Arab scale, since

it would represent the only one of the social classes in the Arab countries that does not have locally competing interests. Only the Trotskyist movement, the heir of the Bolshevik programme and the sole representative of the historic interests of the world working class as a whole can achieve such a proletarian centralisation of revolutionary struggles on an all-Arab scale. The spontaneists and the centrists are

incapable of it, because they have no coherent programme. The Stalinists refuse to do it, since, not wanting to oppose the interests of the bourgeoisies of their countries, they are in bondage to them.

The Trotskyist militants of the Arab region take on the task of building a revolutionary communist party to lead the Arab proletariat. Only such a party

can lead this oppressed and divided nation towards achieving the fundamental tasks of the Arab revolution and linking up with the world revolution in the framework provided by the Fourth International.

Organisations belonging to the Fourth International in the Arab region.

Date of completion of final draft:
March 1974.