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NIGERIA

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SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY

ON THE CHARACTER OF ZIONISM AND THE PALESTINIAN LIBERATION MOVEMENT

by Micha

July 27, 1969

It is natural that the revolutionary movements of the whole world should seriously concern themselves with the situation in the region of the Arab East following the Six-day War. But in the context of this concern there appear "facts" and "analyses" which place the real relationships in a wrong light. Often they do not coincide with the objective relationships.

In the Young Socialist (reflecting the views of the YSA in the USA) of April 1, 1969, two quotations appear on the first page under the title, "Young Socialist Notes:" 1. from Free Palestine, a magazine of Palestinians living in England who are close to Fatah; 2. from the June, 1967 statement of the ISO [Israeli Socialist Organization] regarding the Six-day War.

On the basis of both texts (and also of others), and by contrasting them, I will attempt to clear up some questionable points and to draw conclusions.

The Origin of Zionism and the State of Israel

In the Quatrième Internationale of November, 1968, I wrote an obituary for Hersh Mendel (Mendel Stockfisch), who died on July 22, 1968, and who in his memoirs called himself a Jewish revolutionary. This man in reality was one of the last survivors of the heroic period of the Russian October Revolution and the twenties.

Isaac Deutscher, who knew this man well from their common activity in the Communist Party of Poland and later in the Trotskyist opposition, characterized him this way:

"Hersh Mendel is a truly authentic, heroic type -- his early friends knew him as such -- a figure as though out of a story or legend, but in fact out of the reality of Jewish prewar workers' Warsaw." (From Isaac Deutscher's foreword to Hersh Mendel's book, translated by me from the Yiddish.)

In my obituary on him, whom I had known well in the last ten years of his life, I wrote:

"Hersh Mendel grew up in his Jewish surroundings, suffering Czarist and later Polish reactionary oppression. This situation made him a revolutionist, a fighter against barbarism, and an internationalist communist whose ideas went far beyond the narrow point of view of the martyred East European Jews. He realized that only the achievement of socialism on a world scale could solve the Jewish

question. Hersh Mendel's background was the Jewish working class of Warsaw, Lodz, and the masses of small Jewish artisans in the small towns of Poland, White Russia, and the Ukraine. This background was completely physically destroyed by the Nazi barbarism, and with it Hersh Mendel's family and all his friends." (My emphasis.)

The fate of this unusual man teaches us not only how a people was crushed and how this crushing helped Zionism to build an anachronistic state. It is also an excellent example of the process by which objective circumstances made possible for Zionism the subjective prerequisites for founding a state following the Second World War.

I underlined the above sentence because it expresses not only a personal tragedy, but the tragedy of an entire generation of European Jewry. This tragedy, in which six million Jews were murdered solely because they were Jews, makes understandable how this lamentable Jewish state arose and how it can still function today.

Seen in this light, the above mentioned quotation in the Young Socialist from Free Palestine is senseless: "...the national territory conquered and colonised by...forces founded on religious sectarianism and racial hatred, practising a policy of discrimination and persecution against Christian and Moslem Arabs in Palestine."

This is a total lack of understanding of the situation. Neither Zionism nor the state of Israel are based on "religious sectarianism." The addition "against Christian and Moslem Arabs" emphasizes this element still more. Primitive religious sentiments are being exploited here. The result of this kind of method can only be to the advantage of Arab reaction and strengthens the concentration of the Jewish population of Israel around the darkest Zionist chauvinism.

The situation which led to Zionism and to the origin of the state of Israel has nothing to do with religious fanaticism. Religious fanaticism is present in parts of the population of Israel, just as it is in the Arab states and in many other parts of the world. Among the Jews of Israel only a minority is in its grip. The problem is therefore not a struggle against "religious fanaticism."

The contradiction exists between Zionism, which allies itself with foreign powers in order to realize its utopian goal of the solving of the Jewish question

in Israel, and the Arab masses who are the sacrifice to this configuration.

In order to understand the causality of the origin of Zionist Israel, I cite the above mentioned Hersh Mendel. I am an irreconcilable opponent of his conclusions, and explained that to him over the years. But when one wishes to understand the Jews of Israel, to analyze Zionism in order to fight it (Jews and Arabs together), Hersh Mendel's incorrect definition gives us an important handle.

This man, who gave the best years of his life to irreconcilable battle against capitalism and for the realization of the ideals of socialism, and who because of this battle passed more than half of his life in prisons and in emigration, came to the following conclusion in the afterword to his Memoirs, after his entire generation of Jews had been murdered:

"After long inner struggle and much thought it became clear to me that the Jewish worker will be able to struggle for socialism only in Israel, because only in Israel will the Jewish people gather itself again and begin to create a new and free life, and the worker will have hegemony." (translated from the Yiddish.)

His conclusions are wrong both with respect to the solution of the Jewish question and also from the socialist standpoint. Zionism, that is, the idea of the gathering of the Jews of the world in Israel and their economic and social rehabilitation there, cannot solve the Jewish problem. On the contrary, with an Israel isolated in the region, Zionism develops the Jewish problem anew to a higher power. One cannot speak of economic and political sovereignty, but only of economic, political, and military dependence on the world powers.

The world Jewish problem consists above all in the non-integration of Jews into the society in which they live. Here, in the geographical region of the Arab East, the non-integrated are not individuals but an entire state. Israel finds itself geographically in the region, but economically and politically it is a foreigner; it is at present an appendage of the USA. The departed Hersh Mendel's idea of worker hegemony and socialism remains a figment of the imagination.

In order to understand and to deal in accordance with reality, one must know that before the catastrophe in Europe, by far the overwhelming portion of the Jews now in Israel were not Zionists, or in any case did not consider emigrating to Palestine. Neither the exodus to Palestine nor the building of a Jewish state were a reality for them.

The hundreds of thousands of survivors of European Jewry went to Israel after the

world war because they could not remain in their homelands, because they were uprooted there, because they no longer had relatives, friends, nor homes there. They went to Palestine because they wanted to begin a new life there with their companions in sorrow. They did not go in order to fight the Arabs as colonists and to serve imperialism. Rather these tragic conditions made it easy for Zionism to make these downtrodden and tormented masses into Zionist chauvinists.

At that time and still today these masses wanted only one thing: security in their physical existence after decades of the most brutal persecution. "Religious fanaticism" and phrases of similar ilk are suited only to strengthen Zionist chauvinism.

Hersh Mendel says "Whoever has seen the like [the slaughter of Europe's Jews] will never forget it and will not rest until the conditions are created which make a repetition impossible. He will always be ready to sacrifice everything he has in order to assure Jewish existence in a Jewish Land." (Memoirs)

Already in the thirties and forties, our small Trotskyist group in Palestine, which illegally published KOL-HAMAAMAD (Class Voice), explained the idea of the solution of the Jewish question in Palestine not as unreal, but rather that this idea and the resulting practice serve reaction and imperialism. In 1947-48 we were against the partitioning of the country and against the United States- and Soviet Union-supported establishment of the state of Israel.

But meanwhile the combined Hitlerite and Stalinist crimes had their consequences. Hundreds of thousands of uprooted and desperate Hersh Mendels saw no other path. They presented the human material which made it possible for Zionism to proclaim and defend the Jewish state at the cost of the Palestinian Arabs and with the help of American imperialism and the Kremlin bureaucracy.

After the founding of the state in 1948, the Arab states themselves as a consequence of their narrow-minded anti-Jewish and pro-imperialist policies provided additional hundreds of thousands of Jews to secure the Zionist fortress. Finally came great multitudes from the Kremlin-ruled lands of Eastern Europe, especially from Rumania, because of the inability and unwillingness of Stalin and his successors to treat the problems of national minorities in an internationalist spirit.

This state, whose establishment we opposed and which we still today regard as a servant of imperialism, is now a fact of two decades' duration, but its liquidation through Arab powers, even if

this were possible, can only result in monstrous misfortune and crimes.

The Arab Revolution and the State of Israel

In the quotation mentioned at the beginning, which was taken from the article "Al Fatah's Aim: A Democratic Palestine," stands the following programmatic statement:

"...The revolutionary struggle sets for itself the example of national liberation struggles against colonialism and imperialism.... The Palestinian Liberation Movement 'Fatah' declares solemnly that the final objective of its struggle is the restoration of the democratic and independent state of Palestine, where all citizens regardless of race and religion will enjoy equal rights."

-- First of all, a correction: There has never been a "democratic and independent state of Palestine." Therefore, there cannot be any talk of a "restoration," but only of the founding or erection of a democratic and independent Palestinian state. It would then be a matter of something new, which has not existed previously. This is not a play on words; "Palestinism" has been raised to mystic heights by those who favor the founding of such a state. Until the British mandate, Palestine was not a separate state entity, but a part of a much larger Arab unity under Turkish sovereignty. And because it then became a British mandate, it was neither "democratic" nor "independent." -- I will return to this theme. --

In the "Young Socialist Notes," where the above quotation is printed, there then follows a passage from the ISO declaration after the June 1967 war:

"The state of Israel must undergo a deep revolutionary change which will transform it from a Zionist state into a socialist state which represents the interests of the masses that live in it.... One can therefore sum up the solution which we propose by the formula: de-Zionization of Israel and its integration in a Socialist Middle Eastern Union." (my underlining)

Immediately thereafter comes the observation of the Young Socialist editors:

"The revolutionary struggle which the Palestinian Liberation Movement has undertaken is a step towards that solution."

The difference between the two declarations is in reality very essential. The first, that of "Al Fatah," mentions simply the goal of a "democratic and independent Palestine." Israel simply doesn't exist, is snuffed out.

The idea appears even less ambiguously in a following interview with the president of the "Arab Student Club at Columbia University," Amr Armanazi (page 3 of the same Young Socialist): "In the long run the commandos hope to break up the structure of the Zionist state, economically, and militarily, and to establish in Palestine a secular democratic state open to all, regardless of creed." (my emphasis)

In the chapter on the origin of Zionism and the state of Israel I attempted to prove that it is impossible, both from a humanistic and from an internationalist socialist standpoint, to regard the liquidation of the state of Israel through the "Palestine Liberation Movement" as revolutionary. By the forcible imposition of "freedom" neither "democracy" nor "equal rights" can be realized. The result can only be national hatred and oppression of a new sort.

The declaration of the ISO: "...the state of Israel must undergo a deep revolutionary change...." The declaration does not foresee the abolition of Israel. Israel must be de-Zionized. Then and only in this connection is "integration in a Socialist Middle Eastern Union" spoken of.

The contradiction between the two positions must not be glossed over. Let us repeat it: "Al Fatah" wants to solve the problem of the exiles, the refugees, by creating, independently of the will of the Jewish population of Israel, an Arab-Jewish Palestine with the help of military actions.

The ISO sees in the de-Zionization of Israel a precondition for "its integration in a Socialist Middle Eastern Union."

De-Zionization means: A state of the population of Israel and not of world Jewry; a state which in every manner exists and collaborates in and with its geographical surroundings and is not an agent of great powers against these surroundings. In other words: the prerequisite for and transition to integration must be created.

The ISO stands on the position of Lenin: "The freedom to unite presumes the freedom to separate." (speech of May 12, 1917) This view of Lenin, which the ISO has adopted, is no abstract phrase but the most concrete necessity, for the national question as well as for the objective factors for the realization of socialism.

Palestine, Israel and the Unification of the Arab East

In his interview the already mentioned Amr Armanazi ("...the commandos hope to

break up the structure of the Zionist state....") develops a theory which appears to correspond with that of the leaders of "Fatah":

"Another fact that the Arab revolutionaries have come to recognize is that complete Arab unity is not a prerequisite for effective action against Zionism. In fact, Israel has successfully carried out its function as an effective deterrent to any meaningful movement towards achieving unity.... The conflicts and contradictions within the Arab world can only be resolved by forging a path through this confusion and directing efforts towards the source of these conflicts and contradictions, which finds its embodiment in the state of Israel, the beachhead of Zionism and imperialism in the Middle East."

That is political acrobatics which is supposed to gloss over the failure of Arab unity. That the hindering of Arab unity is regarded as vital for their policies by the Zionist leadership of Israel -- this is granted by the Zionists themselves. But the assertion that Israel is the cause of the lack of unity of the Arab East cannot stand up before objective consideration. Has Egyptian-Syrian unity perhaps exploded because of Israel? Or perhaps the explanations of various regimes and parties in the Arab East -- that there can be no unity so long as the economic and social levels are not counterbalanced -- have an Israeli origin? This list could be broadened significantly.

Particularist interests and egocentricity of the various Arab parties, among them also the Communist parties, have hindered and still hinder unity by all means and sabotage. In this way Zionism is done a great service, and so are the great powers who because of the fragmentation can more easily make each segment of the Arab nation dependent on them. Reactionary forces naturally fight against everything progressive. For them the abolition of the borders artfully created by imperialism in the Arab East is dangerous. National unity is the first step for every revolutionary uprising. The most towering deed of the Chinese Revolution of 1949-50 was the unification of the country.

Amr Armanazi makes it easy for himself: Israel is the cause of inner-Arab conflicts; thus one must proceed against Israel, while one creates an additional small Arab state-- Palestine -- and absorbs Israel into it.

The name Palestine stems from the Philistines who once lived here in antiquity and not even in the entire region of the land later called Palestine by the British. The Arabs of Palestine are historically and nationally an integral component of the whole of the Arabs of the Arab East. In actuality there was a

state of Palestine only through the division into spheres of influence between Great Britain and France with the fall of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War.

Armanazi (and with him the leaders of "Fatah") says: "...Arab unity is not a prerequisite for effective action against Zionism." Thus the Palestinian revolutionaries show what they really have to offer: a state of Palestine. I doubt that this can be an "effective action against Zionism," but do not want to go into this further here.

What interests us here are two decisive problems in this complex:
1. The danger of an additional separatism, a Palestinian separatism raised to a myth. 2. "Palestinism" makes it impossible to solve the Arab-Israeli problem in a revolutionary way.

In principle no one has the right to prescribe to another which nationality he should regard as his. It could be argued that if the Palestinians want to constitute themselves as a separate nation, even if only for a time, then that is their affair. But in the concrete reality Palestine is, on the one hand, a problem of all Arabs (which does not need to be proven again), and on the other hand the Arab-Israeli problem can be solved only in the framework of the whole of the Arab East.

I stress once more what I already said above: a binational Palestinian state is incapable, even with the best of intentions, of overcoming the national, economic, social and cultural contradictions. Such a state can only raise these contradictions to a new power and play into the hands of native reaction and imperialism.

The particularist tendency of "Fatah" should be understood as the consequence of the incapacities of the existing regimes in the Arab East. These regimes cannot solve their domestic political and social problems and they are not uniting the Arab East. Likewise they are able to contribute only negative solutions to the Arab-Israeli problem and to the unfortunate situation of the Palestinian refugees. This continues so long as they do not work toward a unification of these lands. Therefore there arose the independent activity of the Palestinians. This independence of the fighters from the conventional state apparatuses and armies conceals within itself a powerful revolutionary socialist potential. But at the same time particularism contains the potential of reactionary tendencies and even of capitulation to the state apparatuses, the international economic monopolies (petroleum), and the great powers.

Progress and socialism require a perspective with broad horizon and scope. For this there must be developed a transitional program which serves these goals. Particularist narrow-mindedness destroys the revolutionary potential of the struggling Palestinians.

Israel and the Jews of the World

The Zionist movement describes itself as the national liberation movement of world Jewry. At the beginning of this work, I attempted to present the origin of Zionism, its inability to solve the international Jewish question, and the factors which made possible the founding of the state.

But because much nonsense is spread about the mutual relationships between the Jews of the whole world and Israel, something must be said about this.

One of the resolutions of the sixteenth party congress of the Communist Party of Israel (Rakach) in June of this year on "The Jewish Question and Zionism in Our Time" maintains: "Contemporary Zionism is a reactionary nationalist ideology and policy of the pro-imperialist Jewish bourgeoisie, having its centres in Israel and in the USA."

These followers of the Kremlin strategy believe they have put forward theoretical wisdom when they label Zionism as bourgeois and as centered in the USA. However, Zionism never was and still is not the "ideology" and "policy" of the international Jewish bourgeoisie.

The Jewish capitalists of the whole world are parts of the bourgeois classes of the countries in which they live. Their class existence stands and falls with the standing and falling of American, English, French, South African, etc. capitalism. That is where their capital is invested. The capitalist of Jewish ancestry who lives in the USA or France is not a Jewish capitalist, but an American or French capitalist.

Certainly among parts of the Jewish bourgeoisie there are sentiments, sometimes very strong ones, in favor of Israel (and not only the bourgeoisie, but also among many other Jewish layers) But Jewish big capital does not invest its money in Israel. Several years ago the Paris Rothschilds managed their investments in the framework of French interests in Israel. But when these interests no longer existed, as the French government imposed so-called sanctions, then the Rothschilds invested nothing in the planned pipeline from Elat to the Mediterranean. And the Paris Rothschilds do not belong to the good little French capitalists who are compliant when the big men give orders. Rothschild is himself one of the "big men;" he is an important commander of the French

profit makers.

An analysis of investments in Israel would show that the Israeli economy does not rest upon capital invested by Jewish capitalists from all over the world. Jewish capitalists from all over the world (and not even all of them) are prepared to give gifts of money, sometimes very large ones; above all, when they can write it off their taxes. But they invest real capital in Israel only in very minimal amounts, because it is much too uncertain and the profit is in doubt. A few invest because the Israeli government insures the original capital and the dividends even if the business makes no profit.

Israel is a bourgeois state in both its economic structure and its class character. The Israeli bourgeoisie rules here in the same way as the bourgeoisie in the rest of the bourgeois world. But Zionism is not the ideology and practice of Jewish world capital in either its origin or the present configuration of Israel. Rather it is correct that the Zionist ideology and the Israeli reality of foreignness and isolation in the region must inevitably be economically and politically dependent on imperialism. The fathers of political Zionism knew that already and conducted themselves accordingly.

Therefore the ISO speaks of de-Zionization, the content of which has already been explained above. But de-Zionization is only possible when the Jewish masses in Israel have security not only for their physical existence, as "Fatah" explains. They need no less the security of their national and political existence. The Israeli population is not a socially homogeneous mass; they are not colonialists in the classic sense of the word, because most of them belong to the exploited classes. But after the experience of centuries, the question of security stands in first place.

The Palestinian Resistance Movement and Israel

In the Tricontinental of January, 1969, "Fatah" leader Yasir Arafat said: "We are carrying the war forward to expel from our country a military occupation force set up by international imperialism and led by the US government, British imperialism, and international Zionism...."

The counterrevolutionary forces in the Arab East, as well in Israel as also in the Arab states, are paid and directed by US imperialism. Israel as a state has for imperialism the function of a policeman against the Arab revolutionary movement. These facts have important significance for the determination of a revolutionary strategy both for the Arab

forces and for the smaller forces in Israel.

But nevertheless the question must be clearly stated as to the meaning of "to expel from our country a military occupation force." And this question must be answered just as clearly.

Arafat compares his movement with the liberation front in Vietnam. There the "military occupation force" is the invading armies of the USA which must be driven out. The "Liberation Front" must fight against the troops of General Ky, the traitor to his people, in order to free the land from local opponents. But the troops of Ky and Thieu are not "occupation forces," because they are Vietnamese who must be won for the "Liberation Front."

If by "occupation force" in Palestine Arafat understands the Israeli forces which have occupied the West Bank of the Jordan, the Gaza Strip, Sinai, and the Syrian heights, then there exist no differences of opinion; the withdrawal from the occupied areas is an elementary demand, even if the existing problems are still not solved by the realization of this demand.

But "Fatah" speaks in its various declarations of "breaking up the structure of the Zionist state." The same idea is repeated in various formulations, even though always with express reference to the maintenance of the rights of the Jews.

If the Palestinian liberation movement fights Zionism as occupation troops and the agent of imperialism, and at the same time wants to treat the Jews of Israel not as Jews but as people to be won for the common struggle -- as it is stated in the declarations of the liberation movement -- then it must act accordingly.

Setting off a car full of explosives in the middle of peaceful buyers in the vegetable market in Jerusalem, exploding a time bomb in the mensa of the university in Jerusalem, explosions in the bus station of Tel Aviv, where crowds of workers and small shopkeepers were on their way to work, the placing of bombs at the entrance to a circus performance, and dozens of similar actions -- all this is suited not to win these masses, but to repel them and chain them more firmly to Zionism.

A further example of the inability of the leaderships to think and act internationally is the following: In the platform of the "Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine," "class struggle" is mentioned very often, but only once is it explained what they really mean by this: "For the national struggle represents in its origin a question of class struggle. The national struggle is a struggle for

the land, and those who fight for this are the peasants who have been driven from their land...." (Printed in Was Tun, October 28, 1968.)

This means that the "Popular Front for Liberation" simply equates the Jewish peasants in Israel with colonialists in the colonial lands. But these Jewish peasants will be driven out again and the Arab peasants will receive the land. -- And this is, they believe, "class struggle," and in this manner they will solve the problems "democratically" and lead the Israeli population into a common struggle against imperialism.

For socialists the "democratic" solution of the land question is the agrarian revolution. I do now want to determine here whether and how the land would be divided or worked cooperatively. If the solution of the agrarian problem makes it necessary, then the lands must be returned. But in any case the demand for the exchange of small and middle peasants according to the nationality to which they belong is not "class struggle" but the most brutal nationalist proceeding. This is the brutal fashion in which for decades the Zionist settlers treated the Arab Fellaheen. However, reversing the situation cannot solve the problem, but can only awaken the most reactionary and bloodthirsty instincts. Class struggle in the area of agriculture is the agrarian revolution, which is capable of serving both peoples jointly and winning the Jewish farmers for the common cause.

There are a few Zionist tendencies (Uri Avneri, people split off from Mapam, among others) who declare for the Arab right to self-determination, but only if the Arabs unite in a federation with Israel. Naturally this is preposterous. If they are obligated to federate, not drawn to it by their own will, one cannot speak of "self-determination."

But in fact this is the behavior of "Fatah" toward Israel. It is very good when they explain: "We have not taken up arms to force two million Jews into the sea or to wage a religious or racial war." I do not doubt the sincerity of this statement. But I deny most emphatically that one can speak of any sort of "democracy" in a Palestine conquered by Arab forces and in which, contrary to the will of the Jews living there, Israel is dissolved in order to be incorporated into a binational Palestine.

That sort of forced "integration" of a people is oppression. Integration can only proceed from the Jews themselves; and for that they must receive from the Arab freedom fighters the right of self-determination. Revolutionary socialists are not interested in an anachronistic state structure which also has no economic or political basis for independence.

But, as I have already said above, integration into a larger state structure, as in this case into a United Arab East, can only proceed from the integrating nation, Israel.

This should not limit the right of the Palestinian Arabs to wage their freedom fight against the occupation and oppression. On the contrary; that is their elementary duty. But when Arafat says "to expel from our country a military occupation force" and by this means the dissolution of Israel into a Jewish-Arab Palestine, then that is, to put it mildly, suspicious. It is not the same as in Vietnam. There exists here no American or other imperialist "military occupation force." We are dealing with Israelis who to be sure work for the Western powers at present, but who tomorrow, after the "Moors" have done their duty, will be shamefully abandoned by their present masters. This "military occupation force" must not be driven from Israel, but rather won for the common Arab-Jewish cause through explanation, example, and above all the securing of their own national independence. Israeli revolutionary socialism can work actively here. ,

In the last section I intentionally mentioned the position of the CP (Rakach). Because if Zionism is the affair of the international Jewish bourgeoisie, then so is Israel. To us that is incorrect. Israel is a state whose economic system is run on the principles of capitalist competition and the market and exists essentially through the services provided to the world's most powerful monopoly capital (not Jewish capital).

The daily radio broadcasts in Hebrew by "Fatah" are directed not only to

Israelis, but in one breath to all the Jews of the world. This is terribly out of place and creates suspicions. This is a matter of two worlds. The simple equating of world Jewry and the Israelis is Zionism.

Likewise one must stop speaking of international Judaism and international Zionism, as is often done. -- "International Judaism" has a bitter aftertaste. It recalls the shameful fabrication of the czarist antisemites, "The Elders of Zion," which unfortunately has appeared in many editions in the Arab language. It recalls the filthy propaganda of the Nazis against world Judaism, which allegedly wanted to rule the world. It also recalls many bureaucracies in countries which call themselves "socialist."

Once more: Israel is a country whose population, as is true of the whole capitalist world, consists of social classes. Zionism plays a reactionary role. But the Jewish population of Israel can be won for the anti-imperialist and pro-socialist struggle only through guarantees for its physical and national existence. It must be patiently made clear to the Jewish population that this is not a matter of a new particularism which can only serve the great powers and reaction, but of a revolutionary movement embracing the whole region which struggles against Arabic as well as Zionist reaction.

Only a United Socialist Arab East will be able both to solve the tragic Palestine question and refugee problem and prepare for the Jewish population of Israel its place in the framework of a liberated region.

NIGERIA

by Africanist

1. Nigeria is Africa's largest country. It has a population of 56 million. It has more foreign investment and greater resources (groundnut, cotton, iron and coal in the North tin mines on the Jos plateau, and oil in the South and East) than any other black African country with the exception of South Africa. The Nigerian state was created by the state in Britain for the purpose of safeguarding investments made by British capitalists and by the capitalist state of Britain.

2. The differences between the so-called tribes of Nigeria are greater than the differences between the Attic tribes of the 5th century B.C. and between the clans of Scotland. The Attic tribes were all Greek. The Scottish clans are all Celtic. But the differences between the Hausas, Yorubas and Ibos are as great as the differences between the Hungarians and the Russians. The Hausas, Yorubas and Ibos are different racial groups. The 14 million Hausas and Foulanis in the North are Muslim and more Arabic than Negro. The 13 million Yorubas claim relationship with the ancient Egyptians. The eight million Ibos differ racially from both the Hausas and Yorubas. The Yorubas and Ibos are mainly Christian or pagan and better educated than the Northerners (i.e. Hausas and Foulanis).

3. The capitalist mode of production was superimposed on a feudal mode of production in the north. In other parts of Nigeria it was superimposed on a pre-feudal, tribal mode of production. But the capitalist mode of production is the predominant mode of production in the whole of Nigeria.

4. The political system inherited at independence (October 1, 1960) gave a political advantage to the Northerners which they exploited.

5. The General Strike of 1964 shook the whole capitalist system in Nigeria.

6. The massacre of Ibos by Hausas, the retaliation of the Ibos and the subsequent civil war are an advantage to the capitalist class as they divide the working class on racial lines.

7. If there are national minorities oppressed by the Ibos (some of the oil wells are, for example, in the territory of the Ijaws who number about two million) there are also national minorities (e.g. Tivs) oppressed by the Hausas and Foulanis.

8. The civil war is a war of aggression of the North and West against the South and East. The Easterners and Southerners are waging a defensive war against the Northerners and Westerners.

The workers on both sides suffer while the contractors and capitalists gain. Workers on both sides are forbidden to strike. Ibo capitalists have left the country. Many Ibos of the upper middle class have found jobs abroad. It is the workers of the South and East who are bearing the brunt of the struggle. The war is not in the interest of the workers of any of the regions of Nigeria. But the civil war has divided the workers of the North and West from the workers of the East and South.

9. The task for revolutionary socialists is to unite the workers of all regions and tribes against the capitalists of all regions and tribes and against foreign capitalists. It is from this practical revolutionary point of view that the policy of Nigerian socialists must be judged.

The socialists of the North and West to judge from articles published in "Nigeria Socialist" and from the publications of the Nigerian Afro-Asian Solidarity Organization, consider the war waged by the North and West under Gowon to be a war against imperialism. But:

1. There are imperialist groups supporting Gowon.

2. Though it may be true that the biggest indigenous capitalists are Ibos neither the persecution of the Ibos by the Hausas and Foulanis nor any action taken by the governments of the North and West against Ibo capitalists proves that the governments of the North and West are anti-capitalist. Hitler instituted pogroms against the Jews and the Nazi Government of Germany confiscated the property of Jewish capitalists. But the Nazi government of Germany was not anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist.

3. The fact that the USSR is supplying arms to the North and West is no proof that the North and West are waging war against imperialism. The fact that the Soviet government, after the USSR was invaded by Hitler, supported the capitalist governments of USA and Britain against the Nazi government of Germany did not alter the fact that the second world war was a conflict between rival groups of imperialists. In the Indo-Pakistan war the government of the USSR helped India. But it did not necessarily follow that India was waging a war against imperialism. In the same war China supported Pakistan. But it did not necessarily follow that Pakistan was engaged in an anti-imperialist struggle. The fact, if it is a fact, that Ojukwu is getting arms from West Germany, France and Portugal does not make the war which is being waged by the North and West an anti-imperialist war

9 The question that Marxists should ask is

not where Ojukwu gets his arms but for what purpose he uses them. We Bolsheviks, if we cannot get arms from anywhere else, will get them from the devil himself and even from the devil's own grandmother and use them for a revolutionary purpose. Ojukwu is not engaged in an anti-capitalist struggle. But he is using the arms he gets for fighting a defensive war against the Hausas, Foulanis and Yorubas who have invaded the South and East.

4. When I went to the North and West in late December 1966 I found that Yoruba, Hausa and Foulani capitalists, traders and contractors had taken the place of the Ibos who had been expelled from, or had voluntarily left, the North and West. The rail services had broken down as the majority of engineers, mechanics, engine-driver, guards and signal-men had been Ibos. But there was a monopoly of road transport. There was always a man standing outside a taxi or lorry who collected a passenger's fare before he stepped into the taxi or lorry and gave only a part of the money to the driver or conductor. Anyone who refused to pay the amount demanded was not allowed to enter the taxi or lorry. The departure of the Ibos had created for more business for Yoruba, Hausa and Foulani capitalists, traders and contractors. More business has again been created for them by the war. They are now making fat war profits while the burdens of the war are falling on the shoulders of the Yoruba, Hausa and Foulani workers (both industrial and agricultural).

The policy followed by the socialists of the North and West is chauvinistic. They should have established contact with the socialists of the South and East (contact between the socialists of the North and West and Ibo socialists had broken down after the Ibos left the North and West in 1966) and followed a policy of revolutionary defeatism.

The socialists of the North and West should have issued statements and shouted slogans like the following: Only the capitalists, both foreign and indigenous, benefit from this war which divides the workers on tribal lines. Hausa, Foulani and Yoruba workers, hands off the South and East! Your main enemy are the capitalists and feudalists of your own region! Turn the tribal war into a revolutionary class war! Hausa, Foulani and Yoruba workers in uniform, fraternise with the Ibo workers in uniform! Workers of all tribes, unite! Nationalise without compensation the factories, mines, plantations, oil wells, banks and transport system of the whole of Nigeria (and not only of the South and East). For the protection of the rights of all racial minorities! For a Socialist Federation of Nigeria!

The question must now be raised: What should the socialists of the South and

East do? Ojukwu, it is true, is the representative of a section of the indigenous capitalist class and of a group of foreign capitalists. Insofar as he is fighting to prevent Ibo territory from becoming a conquered province of the Yorubas, Hausas and Foulanis the war he is waging is just. Insofar as he has occupied territory in which the Ibos are not in the majority the war he is waging is unjust. The reasons for the Ibo occupation of non-Ibo territory are partly military and partly political and economic. The capitalists represented by Ojukwu want the oil wells outside Ibo territory, e.g. in the territory of the Ijaws (N.B. Some of the oil wells are in Ibo territory, others in districts of the East and South in which Ibos are not in the majority).

The Socialists of the South and East should in my opinion have formed a united front with Ojukwu against Gowon in the way in which the Bolsheviks formed a united front with Kerensky against Kornilov. They should join in the anti-Gowon struggle, keeping their organisations intact and carrying on their own (if necessary, secret) propaganda. No oil concessions to the imperialists! Nationalise the oil wells, mines, plantations, factories and banks without compensation and place them under workers' control! Publish all secret agreements made with imperialists! No secret diplomacy! No negotiations with foreign or Yoruba, Foulani and Hausa capitalists, or with the Soviet Union or China behind the backs of the workers! Protection of the rights of racial minorities, including racial minorities oppressed by Ibos! Arming of the workers of non-Ibo districts of the South and East and withdrawal of Ibo troops from the non-Ibo districts of the South and East as soon as it is militarily possible! Workers of all tribes, unite! Ibo workers in uniform, fraternise with the Yoruba, Hausa and Foulani workers in uniform! Yoruba, Hausa and Foulani workers in uniform, stop the offensive war of the North and West against the South and East! Turn the tribal war into a revolutionary class war! Replace the capitalist Nigeria with a socialist Nigeria in which the rights of all racial minorities are protected! For the protection of the rights of all racial minorities, including racial minorities oppressed by Ibos!

On no account should the Fourth International take the side of Gowon against Ojukwu or of Ojukwu against Gowon. On no account should the Fourth International try to say into how many regions Nigeria should be divided and what those regions should be. Such questions should be decided by the Nigerian workers themselves. On no account should the Fourth International accept the point of view of the OAU which is an organisation of capitalist states trying to preserve the

capitalist system in Africa. The Fourth International should point out that the war has divided the workers who were united in the General Strike of 1964. It should expose the chauvinistic role of the socialists of the North and West and the opportunistic policies followed by the USSR and China towards Nigeria. It

should recognise the right of secession of oppressed racial minorities, pointing out at the same time the political and economic disadvantages of establishing small independent states.

March 24, 1969

THE NIGERIAN SITUATION AND OUR TASKS

by Baba Oluwide

Nigeria now is involved in a civil war that is the natural consequence of all the contradictions of a neo-colonialist post-feudal pre-capitalist country. The task of revolutionary marxists that arise out of this situation is the mass mobilization of the peoples in both sectors of the civil war to utilize the war to drive away imperialism and so lead to the creation of the vanguard for the consequent armed struggle for the erection of toilers power for a socialist Nigeria.

THE HISTORY

Having waged a nationalist struggle dynamized by the Great National General Strike of 1945, revolutionized by the Zikist Movement of revolutionaries' Positive Action, mobilized by the Farmers' Agitation and carried forward by innumerable mass democratic agitations but tempered by the bourgeois nationalist leaders and curtailed by British imperialist manoeuvres, the Nigerian peoples attained self-government in 1960.

Towards the end of the struggle, revolutionaries mobilized the masses for a programme for economic independence. But the new rulers of the country acclaimed the limited political independence won, as according to their President of the 1st Republic on a "platter of gold." Thus in 1960 Nigeria came under the rule of a 3-class power structure based on the Big 3-tribal unholy alliance, an unholy alliance, with foreign monopolies as the senior partner.

Specifically, the 3-class/3-tribe structure were the feudal emirs of the North, the feudal-cum-comprador capitalists of the West and the Bourgeois comprador class of the Eastern Region. The hegemony of this 1st Republic was in the hands of the Fulani feudal class with the Yoruba feudal compradors and the Ibo compradors in tow. The 3 groups formed a "Broad Based Government" at the centre and each ruled its own home region exclusively.

With foreign monopoly participation, the 3 began a rabid process of primitive accumulation of capital. They raped the public treasuries, used corrupt means of wealth grabbing, burdened the toiling people with heavy taxes and generally oppressed the people. Revolutionary marxists, in alliance with the peasantry (75% of the population) and the town workers (900,000 out of a population of 56 million) agitated most vigorously against that regime. In the minorities areas, the people stood up in armed rebellions particularly in the Tiv Middle Belt region, and also in Kano in Northern Nigeria and in the Rivers Area in Southern Nigeria.

The workers went on a general national strike in June 1964 that created a dual-power situation before it was reversed with:

i) the standing of British and American gunboats off the coast to support the old classes,

ii) the betrayal by trade union bureaucratic leaders, and

iii) the lack of resources of revolutionary marxists to organize insurrectionary moves and supply the vanguard of the strikers with the necessary equipment to carry forward the struggle to its logical end.

The masses of the western region, whose leaders were in jail or exile for leading a democratic struggle, began a massive continuous armed onslaught on the ruling class for the overthrow of the imposed rule of the Northern/Western ruling classes in government over their region.

At this junction, the old regime planned a big army repression to "end" the rebellion. Also, the feudal class with their reactionary officers in the army plotted a coup d'état. The Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference was taking place in Lagos. It ended on January 13. The fascist coup was for January 18. In fact, the events of January 15 found Archbishop Makarios, President of Greece, almost stranded in Lagos. To stop the eventual massacre, the Revolutionary Council of the Nigerian Army organized an insurrection on January 15, 1966.

JANUARY 15, 1966

The Ministers of State fled. The emirs and chiefs locked their palace gates. For a while, the Council was in effective power. There was absolutely full mass support generated in mass demonstrations. Although the Council's programme was limited to: NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, END OF CORRUPTION and the building of A UNITED NIGERIA, the imperialists came to the aid of the old ruling classes and organized a counter-coup to the counter-coup and installed General Ironsi, Commander-in-Chief of the Nigerian Army in government. The Council was placed under arrest.

The insurrection failed because:

- the movement of officers was not linked with the masses;
- the Council did not call for armed mass support;
- the weakness of revolutionary marxists to even have the resources to mobilize mass action.

geois hegemony for Fulani feudal hegemony.

The Northern feudal class supported by British Broadcasting Company and Voice of America launched a campaign characterizing January 15, 1966 as an Ibo coup giving birth to General Ironsi's chauvinistic practices.

They mobilized their old warriors and political party thugs (private armies used electorally by the 3-tribal parties) and also the reactionary officers of the army in direct opposition to the Revolutionary Council and launched a campaign of terror against Ibo people, mainly petty bourgeois living in Northern Nigeria, on May 29, on July 29, and on September 29, 1966 and massacred hundreds of Ibo people.

Revolutionary marxists through the trade unions appealed to workers to protect their fellow workers from Iboland to arrest the fascist organized massacres.

WHO ARE THE IBO PEOPLE?

The Ibo people belong to the Bantu ethnological belt of Africa and lived in the deciduous land of East and West Nigeria, now the East Central and part of the Mid-West States of Nigeria. They were a communalistic people at pre-feudal stage of social development before the colonization of Nigeria in mid-19th century.

However, before then, the influence of the Ibo people living in the Mid-West and under the rule of the Benin Slave Empire had penetrated eastwards and resulted in a feudal monarchy in the Ibo East at Onitsha, and one or two other places, by the close of the last century. Also to be counted is the influence of the feudal dominion at Calabar that also penetrated the customs of their countrymen, the Ibos.

Until today, however, there persists elements of the slave tradition to which stage of social development the Ibos were in process of, in the OSU CASTE system in the East. Before mid-19th century, it must be remembered, the slave trade and the trade activities of the merchant mariners of pre-capitalist (but post-feudal) Europe had organized trading communities in the East, particularly in Calabar and the Rivers, and among the more southerly Ibos.

So that what we find by the end of the 2nd imperialist war was a people with a strong communocratic social structure, with a feudal political leadership in embryo and with a mercantile economic basis.

In a Nigeria being forged by the British, the Ibos as a people struggled for social class upliftment as traders in all parts of Nigeria, in Camerouns, Gabon, Sao Tome, Fernando Po, and some parts of

West Africa.

One must note the arid land which is not much productive as agricultural soil for geographical reasons of its lying in the thick forest or clayey belt. Also of significance is the social organization of the Ibos scattered in small clan settlements -- practicing concentrated use of the soil in their given locations on a subsistence productive level -- of contributory factor to the low productivity of the labour on land.

The Ibos also struggled to gain positions in the professional and government services. And so we have the Ibos becoming a great migratory people with a large proportion of the population living, labouring and profiteering abroad. By the time of Responsible Government in 1951 there had emerged an Ibo bourgeois and intelligentsia elite.

This elite have, with the other ruling classes in the other "parts" of Old Nigeria created the tragedy of the present civil war.

While revolutionary marxists were agitating for a unitary government that caters for the equal development of the peoples, in uneven historical developments, and in small provincial administrative units, the Ibo bourgeois-intelligentsia alliance fostered IGBOKWENU or Iboism, for their own self-advantage.

Be it remembered, in parentheses, that the Yoruba Feudal-compradors have stated, however feebly, under their feudal chiefs and intelligentsia, the same movement cloaked in a rather vague Cultural Risorgimento that effected itself in the fostering of one Egbe Omo Oduduwa (descendants of the mythical founder of the Yoruba nation who was said to have emigrated from the Middle East).

The Ibo elite formed an Ibo State Union, Ibo schools, and Ibo Bank and several Ibo enterprises financially aided by:

- i) the contributions of poor Ibo toilingmen
- ii) and the Ibo bank called the African Continental Bank (that howbeit remains as the most progressive indigenous finance house in Nigeria founded by Dr. Azikiwe, President of the 1st Republic).

With the 1960 Self-Government, this Ibo elite formed part of the unholy alliance of the 3 big tribes that misruled Nigeria.

Be it noted that Ibo militants fought, with other Nigerian militants, in trade unions and mass organizations against this conspiracy.

Nevertheless, the Ibo trading com-

munities existing outside Iboland proper formed themselves into neo-masonic chambers of commerce and by 1960 had come to dominate, disproportionately, the distributive and services industries in the Northern Region, in Cameroon, in Sao Tome and to a little extent in Lagos. This is why it was relatively easy for the Northern feudal class to whip up anti-Ibo feelings in their domains. Added is the fact of difficult acculturation with the nationalities amongst which the Ibos lived; a contributory factor of identification of Ibo trading communities (mostly petty-bourgeois) with the capitalist sector of the ruling classes.

Now when oil was discovered in the Rivers region of Eastern and Mid-Western Nigeria, American imperialism came openly into Nigerian politics and with the British, aggravated the inter-tribal conflict among the ruling classes desperately struggling for the hegemony of the 1st Republic whilst they needs must unite to keep the beasts of burden, the toiling peoples of all nationalities, underfoot. These toiling peoples belong mainly to more than 100 other minor nationalities that make up Nigeria.

The Ibo ruling class wanted to win all the price of oil for themselves alone. Talk of secession started. The Northern feudal class started their own secession moves.

BIAFRAN SECESSION

There were two coups on the night of July 29, 1966. One was by the fascist officers undertaking a Fulani feudal coup supported by the CIA and by the British imperialists, to unseat the Ibo bourgeois hegemony so as to replant the Fulani feudal hegemony in alliance with the Western feudalists as junior partner AND so gain the oil for imperialism.

The coup was accompanied by another massacre, of Ibos living outside the East especially in the armed forces officer echelon. On the same night, patriotic officers turned their guns on the fascists and unseated the Ironsi administration. Immediately thereafter, the Ibo ruling class ran to the East and condemned the existence of Nigeria. They ran away to the East, away from the public tribunals that was to seize the "ill gotten wealth" of all ex-politicians.

They whipped up tribal sentiment for an Ibostan, rich with honey of oil. They made tons of money transporting Ibo workers and traders home despite the assurance of the patriotic officers at the head of the government. They drove out all non-Easterners from the East while thousands of Ibos refused their call but stayed on at their jobs in factories, government, police and in agriculture.

The Ibo intelligentsia enthused by Nietzsche, Hitlerite, Mussolini, and Peronista ideologues, hatched the idea of an Ibostan Biafran Republic at their University Campus at Nsukka.

Revolutionary marxists, revolutionary officers, progressive trade unionists, anti-imperialists, mainly Easterners, who had gone East to utilize the situation to mobilize the region as a new basic field of struggle, were shot or sent into detention camps by Military Governor Ojukwu while the idea of secession and fascism coagulated into the Republic of Biafra.

Revolutionary marxists, through their mass organizer, The Nigerian Socialist, and by other means, condemned the arrests and executions, called for the uprising of Biafran and Nigerian workers to defend Nigerian Sovereign Independence and replied to the fascists misquoting Lenin while executing Leninists:

THAT THE LENINIST THEORY OF SELF-DETERMINATION OF PEOPLES PRESUPPOSES A RACIALLY OPPRESSED PEOPLE BY A MORE REACTIONARY CLASS WHOSE NEW SELF-DETERMINATION WAS TO BE UNDER A MORE PROGRESSIVE CLASS MEANING A BETTER LIFE FOR A WHOLE PEOPLE IN DESIRE OF THAT SELF-DETERMINATION.

The East, we argued, then Biafra, is made up of the Rivers, the Calabar, the Ogoja people who make up 5 millions of a population of 13 millions and had been fighting for autonomy from the big Ibo tribe cum Ibo mercantile class oppression and federal central misrule for years. In the later days of the 1st Republic, Jasper Boro led a Rivers peoples' liberation army which conquered the Nigerian Army, Marines and Police combined.

The Ibo toiling masses who live in the factories, farmsteads and offices in other parts of Nigeria, in millions, would live in difficulty in a Biafra devoid of the oil which the Rivers people would certainly take with their liberation.

The Ibo ruling class would exploit, in rapacity, the Ibo toiling classes especially with the militants and steeled leaders of the masses having been removed from the political scene. We asked for the whereabouts of several comrades-in-arms, amongst which are:

Chukumah Kaduna Nzegwu, the hero of January 15; Philip Alele; Obi Wali; Igbokwe; Emmanuel Ifeajuna; Nduke Eze; Mokwugo Okoye; Osita Agwuna; Chukwumerije; Colonel Banjo; P. Epu; G. Okoro; A. Ikoro; Dr. Ananzie.

There was no answer as these and other valiant militants have been executed or coerced. The campaign to indoctrination

continued. Arms were stockpiled that checkmated the moves of mass organizations in Nigeria to stop the war.

And so began the Nigerian civil war.

SELF-DETERMINATION OF PEOPLES

The CIA arms Biafra, American private arms dealers offer arms to Nigeria. British business arms Biafra, British government arms Nigeria. Western Germany arms Nigeria, France arms Biafra. Red Cross aid arms Biafra, World Council of Churches aid arms Nigeria. The Russians arm Nigeria, Czechoslovakia was said to have armed Biafra. Clearly this is principally an imperialist conspiracy to weaken Nigeria, dismember Nigeria and consolidate their foothold in the centre of Africa.

The Biafran radio launched vitriolics against socialism and socialists and hoped at the same foolish time to gain Chinese Peoples support. They got Formosa's Chiang Kai-Shek mercenaries.

The Nigerian Federal Army and the Biafran Army began battle in earnest at the River Niger front.

The new Nigerian government decreed the creation of 12 self-determined states in Nigeria, including one East Central State for Ibos in Biafra AND settled the minorities problem. The government passed the Companies Decree that curbs the excesses of foreign monopolies. The government released political prisoners amongst which was Chief Awolowo the social-democrat mass leader from the West and S.G. Ikoku, revolutionary marxist from the East Central State. The Federal government invited civilians into the government most of whom are nationalists, progressives, fighters against the reaction of the First Republic; namely, Aminu Kano, Anthony Enahoro, J.S. Tarks, Chief Awolowo.

The Biafran Army successfully invaded the Mid-West, removed the accepted Governor, and put an Ibo Major in office instead. Atrocities against the natives who, it was claimed, the Biafrans have come to liberate from Fulani Islamic Northern Oligarchy, followed.

The Mid-Western people, followed by the Federal Army, drove away the Biafrans. The Rivers people, led by Isaac Jasper Boro and followed by the Federal Army, drove away the Biafrans from their homeland. The oil was no more in Biafra. But Biafra, the idea, cannot live without the oil. It conceded the oil, in another's land, to the French monopoly -- SAFRAB -- and got French mercenaries. Shell-BP have started to pump the oil paying royalties to the Federal government. America and Britain now claim they believe in a united sovereign Nigeria.

The Calabaris, the Ibibios, the Ogajas, in alliance with the Federal Army drove away the Biafrans and set up their own South Eastern State of Nigeria Government.

It was a peoples war in miniature on the Nigerian side. Revolutionary marxists however continue to demand that the peoples of these areas be armed to safeguard their self-determination, and guarantee Nigeria's sovereignty from imperialist intervention.

The Mid-West Ibos are in Nigeria and in government partnership with other Westerners in the Mid-West State Administration of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The minority peoples in the East, in the Mid-West, in the North, are free. Whatever the military advantage the Biafra Republic cannot exceed the East Central State Ibo homeland. And the Republic itself continues on the mass fear-phobia which shall soon diminish and vanish with the progressive anti-imperialist measures that may be effected in the other 11 states. Have no mistake about it. The Eastern non-Ibo states will not give up their independence won in battle, with the blood of their own peasant sons and in suffering from which they have attained the fact of autonomy, of democracy, albeit in a bourgeois administration professing socialist plans.

In Nigeria, the progressively inclined federal government is hampered by the existence of a reactionary state structure in the army, police judiciary, the church, the mosque, the civil service, the universities, business, and on the land.

This government's hand continued to be strengthened by the conquest of local government by the North's progressives affected under the leadership of mass leaders like Tanko Yakasai and Yerima Balla. This has led to the enforced hibernation of the emirs who lurk plotting a return to the status quo of square 1. The anti-tax-anti-feudal rising of the Western masses, the demonstrations and agitations organized by revolutionary marxists and peoples' front organizations against imperialism are part of the engendered social upheaval that is unleashing an affront on the reactionary state structure.

That is why this government continues to be threatened by a fascist imperialist conspiracy the success of which shall lose us, in Nigeria as in Biafra, the heads of the few revolutionary leaders that have been produced in such arduous struggle. The overthrow of this government, if ever effected, must never leave a vacuum for the Biafran and Nigerian reactionaries to compromise the emergence of one free progressive Nigeria.

ANTI-IMPERIALIST STRUGGLE

Thus we are today in the midst of an anti-imperialist struggle, an imperialism implanted in Biafra, an imperialism existing in the Nigerian ruling classes. And because the government is broadly progressive, revolutionary marxists have a duty to mobilize the people to combat the threatening fascist-imperialist onslaught in Nigeria that will unseat a government that is not fully prepared for that onslaught.

For the fascist conspirators are the old ruling class of the 1st Republic whose feudal authority is weakened, whose wealth is being sequestered by public Tribunals. The imperialist conspirators are the oil monopolies, the CIA, who see in a united progressive democratic independent Nigeria the greatest danger to their "stability" in Africa.

The Nigerian peoples have cultural and racial links with all the surrounding republics excepting South Africa, the North African and Rhodesia. The Nigerian economy and those of the francophone and anglophone territories are interwoven. The large Nigerian population and potential wealth plus the combat-preparedness of the progressive forces is a threat to this imperialism in Africa.

That is why today, every day, the fascists' plot to repeat the Indonesian massacre is ever present in the unseating of this government for a less progressive one. Then a close alliance would be formed with the Biafran fascists. Biafra would be extended by force to cover the whole East. Feudalism will extend the whole North and compradom will extend the whole West. And we will be back in square 1.

We are not given to talking in superlatives in our submissions because the centres of world revolution are today multifold and indeed 3,4,5 Vietnams are

being created. But the Nigerian scene is now a sector of that contest between the Third World and imperialism and demands also the attention of the world's revolutionaries.

OUR TASKS

Our task is not to support Biafra or Nigeria. For the socialist countries, for revolutionary marxists, there can be no question of choice between non-socialist countries like Nigeria or Biafra.

Nevertheless, our support is for the peoples --

of Biafra against a fascist, racist, Bonapartist repression,

of Nigeria against the danger of imperialist intervention,

and of all the Nigerian peoples reunited in Greater Nigeria against the whole oppressive classes, foreign and local.

And that struggle can only be successful with the materialization of the socialist revolution in Nigeria.

The climax for all struggles, for change of power from one class to the other is by armed combat.

The Nigerian people are experienced in this method. Their unbearable condition demands the freedom to be won in the highest form of struggle. The revolutionary marxists are fully prepared to enter the school for this struggle to organize for this finale that will resolve all the contradictions generated by all the previous class societies that is yet Nigeria's.

Long Live the Nigerian Revolution!

Long Live the Struggle of the Toiling Peoples of the World!!

April 24, 1969