

INTERNAL BULLETIN

VOL. XI, No. 3

April, 1949

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Letter to the I.S. from the Political Bureau of the RCP	1
Letter to the Members (RCP) from Ted Grant, J. Deane, G. Hansen	9
A Program for the Jews by Louis T. Gordon	11

Issued by:

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY
116 University Place
New York 3, N.Y.

20¢

TO THE IS FROM THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE RCP

To the IS,
Dear Comrades,

Your letter of February 8th to the Political Bureau and the Central Committee of the RCP and your Open Letter to all members have been received and are in circulation throughout the Party.

The document for entry signed by the four comrades was presented to the CC to initiate the discussion. There had not been a great deal of discussion on the leading committee or in the party and for this reason it was considered unwise to take a vote. Naturally, a vote will be taken, but only after the comrades on both sides have presented a rounded out position, and after the discussion has been held in the Party. The PB supports the position of the four comrades and is preparing a document.

When we sent you the resolution we sincerely hoped that you would participate and assist in the discussion which has been re-opened in our Party. We had anticipated that you would welcome an expression of a new turn in our Party, embodying as it does an acceptance of a position you have fought for some time, and embodying a recognition that we were wrong on the tactical question of entry.

The nature and the tone of your intervention were entirely unexpected by us. You have answered the document by declaring that:

The document is an expression of liquidationist tendencies.

It shows a pernicious method in ignoring the fact that the International has a position.

The authors are pessimistic in respect to the working class and have a lack of faith in our class and in the Trotskyist movement.

And finally, it reveals, once again, that the leadership of the RCP is on the path which leads out of the Fourth International.

We must state bluntly that the impression your letter created was that you are doing your best to drive us out of the International and prevent a fusion at all costs.

We gained this impression by your characterization of the comrades as "liquidationist", "pessimist", etc., and your placing them in the same category as Morrow, Demaziere, Shachtman and others who have left the ranks of the Fourth International. It is our opinion that your sole purpose was to pin a label on us, to create an amalgam between us and people who have left our movement. It appears that you begin with the preconceived determination that "nothing good cometh out of Nazareth"; that every idea expressed by us must of necessity be a reflection of potential renegacy to the Fourth International. We therefore feel it necessary to state that the RCP is not analagous to Demaziere, to Morrow, or Shachtman, or to any other tendency which has left the International. We are part of the International and we intend to remain part of it.

Since receiving your letter we have had the opportunity to discuss with one of your representatives. He expressed surprise when we stated that the document of the four comrades proposed fusion. He apparently had the misconception that we were for liquidation in the organizational sphere. Let us assure you that this is not the case. On the contrary, the only principled conclusion which flows from our change of line is fusion on the organizational basis already established. Any ambiguity in this respect as expressed in the last section of the document is the result of matters raised by you through your representatives in discussion a few months ago, which we have borne in mind.

It appears that you were also under the impression that we were advocating "entry everywhere." We hope, in the course of the discussion, to show that you have either misread the document or have drawn wrong conclusions from what may have been ambiguous formulations.

Let us try and put the discussion on its proper footing by elaborating what is the real position of the four comrades and taking up the real differences which separate us.

You divide our mistakes into "old" and "new". You say:

"We would not have intervened if the authors of the document had only remained faithful to the old mistakes and not added something new which constitutes nothing less than a departure from the program of the Fourth International."

So far as our alleged "old" mistakes are concerned, these can be divided into two: differences on the relative economic and political stability in Britain; the role of Stalinism in relation to Eastern Europe and China. We are anxious to continue discussion on the question of Stalinism, as indeed the whole problem is still in the process of being discussed in the International. We will touch on this briefly later in this letter. However, in the light of your statement above that you would not have intervened had we merely remained faithful to these "old" mistakes, it is evident that you regard them as secondary to the main discussion around our new orientation and perspective. Therefore, let us first take up these "new" mistakes.

We can sum them up under three headings:

- a) The slogan of "entry everywhere."
- b) The method of posing the question of entry which you see as a capitulation.
- c) "Ignoring" the International and past positions.

a) ENTRY EVERYWHERE? - A MISCONCEPTION

Your arguments on this lead us to believe that you did not read carefully what was said. To take an example: you make play on the question of America. You infer that we are for the entry of the SWP into the Norman Thomas Socialist Party. We ask you to re-read what was written in the document.

"In America, where we have our strongest and most influential

section, the comrades would welcome the formation of a Labor Party in which they would find a milieu of work."

Something very different, you will agree. It would be absurd to advocate entry into the Thomas Party in the United States; or to advocate entry at all in America. You are quite wrong in saying that we are presenting a new policy "for all sections of the International." We were pointing to a general world trend which exists. Your misconception may have flowed from our statement: "But it does mean that for the creation of mass parties of Trotskyism, patient and systematic work is necessary for many years, especially in Britain, inside the Social Democratic organization." Perhaps the formulation could have been phrased more clearly. However, the fact that they used the singular and referred to the Social Democratic organization, not organizations, should show that they were referring to entry in Britain. The part of the sentence which is operative to other sections, is that which refers to the necessity of patient and systematic work for many years. What it was intended to convey was that where there were mass Social Democratic organizations with only small isolated Trotskyist groups, the tendency of the Fourth Internationalists was towards entry. We have common agreement with you that entry in America, as in some other countries, is not a practical possibility. This is neither pessimism nor liquidationism. It is facing up to the realities. Indeed you yourselves have no difference of opinion on this point.

In general we agree with your comment that it is impermissible to play about with the policies of our sections. We do not support the idea of a world slogan on this question. Each situation must be discussed concretely by the given section.

We hope that this clarifies the problem and that in our future discussions it will be off the agenda, for there exists no basic disagreement.

b) METHOD OF POSING THE QUESTION OF ENTRY -

IS IT A CAPITULATION?

We pass on to the second "new" mistake. You seek to show that our document represents a capitulation in the method of posing the question of entry, which you claim stems from pessimism and bad method. Let us examine this.

Your previous criticism of us was that we saw entry as a short-term, "raiding" tactic. We now accept the position you counterposed to ours. Our position then was correctly paraphrased by you as follows: that "the Party had much better opportunities of recruiting in the economic struggles and from the Communist (Stalinist) Party, and should therefore turn its attention in that direction." Let us say here and now (and this has a relation to point c, namely "ignoring" the International) that experience has shown us that we have not been able to recruit from the Stalinist Party owing to its left turn and victories in other countries; we have likewise not been able to recruit from the very limited number of economic struggles which have taken place.

Our perspective was based on what we thought was the best method of recruiting members to the Trotskyist party in the shortest possible time. We believe now that it is not possible to make great gains in recruitment either inside or outside the Labor Party. (We think it would be correct to say that the numerical position of both tendencies, in and outside, have not changed a great deal.) We now agree that a period of "patient and systematic work is necessary for many years.... inside the Social Democratic organization." If this is pessimism, we plead guilty. But allow us here to enter such a plea for you also. We take the floor with your statement of January 1947:

"Under these conditions, it is obviously bound to be more difficult to recruit members from the Labor Party directly to the revolutionary party, than to organize them inside for Trotskyism. The worker, even the advanced one, is attracted by the idea of trying to see if the Labor Party, which after such a long time he has finally seen come to power, can be made to work in his interests. That is why your 'experience' does not impress us as a refutation of our proposed orientation.

"But recruiting workers from the Labor Party at present is one thing, and influencing them in the direction of revolutionary action is another. You appear to us to pose the whole question incorrectly. Our task, the task of a Labor Party orientation, even of an eventual entry, is not essentially immediate recruitment. It is to bring the transitional program of Trotskyism to the workers in the course of their development towards struggle, to go through their experiences with them in applying the demands incorporated in this program according to the needs of a given moment, to convince them in the course of participation in their daily lives that this is the program which can achieve their goal. In this process it is necessary to immunize them against Stalinism. But to bring the Trotskyist program to the workers, to combat Stalinism, to go through their experiences with them, to participate in their political life in England today means above all to be in and around the Labor Party, where they indisputably are. That means that the whole work of the party has to revolve on tireless agitation and propoganda around the Labor Government and the attitude of the workers toward it.

"This is not a simple task, nor one of short duration.."

c) "IGNORING" THE INTERNATIONAL

We link our comments on the above with your statement that we "ignore" the International.

In the light of the experience of the past 14 months, we do not think it is possible to forge a revolutionary party outside of the Labor Party. You were correct when you said it was a question of influencing the processes at work there, of building a base for our members, and participating in the main fields where the political issues of the day are raised. If you wish for a special statement that we have learned from you on this score, we give it with pleasure. But surely you are not asking for a "confession" that you were correct

on other aspects on which we are not convinced? So far as your immediate economic and political perspective was concerned, we do not believe you were correct. It is our opinion that the facts contradict it. It is not here a question of "ignoring" your opinion, but of not accepting it.

The document of the four comrades said that while accepting the orientation of entry, it did not accept "the economic and political premise on which the Minority evolved their tactic..." What is referred to here?

Insofar as you and the Minority argued that the "disastrous decline in coal production, far from being halted continues unabated," we still say you were wrong. And our opposition, we believe, was correct to your reference that "exports have never surpassed 120% and are slackening from month to month"; or the perspective on unemployment expressed by the Minority in 1946 as follows: "The comrades (we) talk about the illusion of 'full employment' being maintained and suggested that this will be so until near the end of Labor's term of office, i.e. for about three years. How do the comrades explain that the former 'distressed areas' are once more showing a steady increase in unemployment..." We cannot here refrain from pointing out that the employment figures of that date have been maintained until this day, i.e., "until near the end of Labor's term of office." We do not accept this even today. On the contrary, we believe that our short term economic perspective has stood the test of history. It is this short term economic perspective of decline and unemployment that we do not accept.

We cannot leave this point without declaring that you have not presented our point of view fairly on the perspectives of British economy. You create the impression that we "forget" the decadence of the British Empire, and that we have illusions in the stability of the capitalist system in Britain. We categorically deny, as we have persistently done in the past, that this is our position. We ask you to show us one single article in the "Socialist Appeal" or the "Workers International News" which leads to this reformist illusion.

Likewise, on the short term political perspective of developments within the Labor Party, which flowed from the economic perspective of rapid crisis as against a "relative stability," we still maintain that we were correct. You will recall that you visualized a rapid leftward development against the right wing inside the LP which you argued was already taking place in 1946.

On these two questions, you are entitled to your opinion, we to ours. They are not questions of principle, but merely of prognosis for the short period ahead. They have largely been answered by events. We have no desire to go into this whole discussion again and to reopen the factional feud on these issues. We believe there is no basic disagreement on the whole with the method of presentation in public statements and consider it neither desirable nor necessary to revert to these old discussions.

CLASSICAL CONDITIONS FOR ENTRY

You take up the question of what we termed "classical" conditions

for entry. We do not believe that the conditions laid down by Trotsky exist today. While it is true that you said in the past, as you do in your latest letter, that no hard and fast rules for entry could be applied, you did argue that these classical conditions for entry as we saw them, were valid for Britain in the present period. For instance your letter of January 1947:

"But if Trotsky did not set up any hard and fast rules for entry, the conditions described by him in your citation nevertheless deserve comparison with the present situation in Britain, because in our view they are not so totally different as to back your conclusions, even from that point of view. On the contrary..."

In the past we considered entry to be essentially a tactic of short term duration. It is an undeniable fact that the type of work being conducted is an innovation in our movement and has no precedent.

But in any case, since we have agreement today on the question of a long term perspective of work, it seems to us that further discussion on the term "classical" would prove purely sophistical.

STALINISM AND EASTERN EUROPE

Among what you term our "old" mistakes, you include the question of Stalinism. You assert that the "Socialist Appeal" "...takes the Stalinist point of view in the analysis of events in Czechoslovakia and China, which are today the main arguments of the Stalinists..." You inform us that "the Stalinists are not achieving anything near to Socialism but are strangling the revolutionary movement of the masses everywhere -- even when they make a left turn or use left words, or proceed to nationalizations or to partition of the land." It is not true that we take the Stalinist position, and you do not have to teach us that Stalinism cannot introduce Socialism. Any objective analysis of our press will demonstrate this. On the one hand we do not blind ourselves to the facts, the indisputable facts, that the Stalinists have been forced to carry through the agrarian overturn and eliminate capitalism in the basic sectors of the economy. We are not alone in the International in this. Your assertion that we place the emphasis only on the "progressive" side of Stalinism is also quite unjustified. We have attacked every reactionary manifestation of Stalinism nationally and internationally. (By the way you sneer at the material on the "biological issue" is quite misplaced as it has created a wide interest in the British political movement.) We have attacked the Stalinist slave camps, the lack of workers' democracy, we have exposed the methods of the GPU, the strike-breaking activities of the Italian, the French and other sections of the Stalinist movement; above all, we have consistently shown the need for a political revolution as the necessary prerequisite for the transition to socialism in any Stalinized country.

We are convinced that events will justify our position on Eastern Europe which we presented in amendment form to the World Congress. You say that the RCP does not put the position of the World Congress. In point of fact, the IS itself has not found it possible to maintain the line of the World Congress. This was shown in the letter to the Yugoslav CP and in Comrade Pablo's subsequent article in the "Fourth Inter-

national" which makes nonsense of the position that Yugoslavia is a capitalist state.

We have placed our differences on this question before you in the form of a letter to the IEC. We would welcome a reply to the points raised there and a continuance of the discussion on the nature of the Yugoslav state and the other Eastern European states. Around such discussion, the various aspects of the role of Stalinism in the post-war period and its future development can be thrashed out. We do not claim to have the final answers to these complex problems. We think our position is more in line with the facts than that of the IS. But the discussion is still in progress in the International and the final word has not been said on either side. We are confident that we will eventually evolve to a similar if not identical position.

But before leaving this, we feel it necessary to raise a point. You accuse the RCP leadership of having defended "with assurance" against the IS in the past, the theory that the Eastern European countries were "state capitalist." One comrade, Comrade Haston, expressed this view that Czechoslovakia was state capitalist. As you know he has since gone on record against that position. But the RCP leadership has never taken a position on this question, let alone defended it with or without assurance. There was no question of assurance on our part. Let us quote from our resolution on the Soviet Union, passed at our 1946 Conference.

"The CC notes that our organization, and especially the leading comrades, have failed as have all other sections of the Fourth International, to examine and explain the social transformations taking place in these Eastern countries, to establish the class character of the process, and especially to establish the class nature of the states that have come into being. This is an indication of theoretical hesitation and indecision on the part of our International movement as a whole in the light of the new and amazingly complicated social phenomena."

This was passed at the same conference at which Comrade Haston raised the question of state capitalism in Czechoslovakia. It hardly indicates an attitude of assurance.

CONCLUSIONS

We have never sought to conceal our political differences with you. We have always posed all the problems confronting us with the sincere object of obtaining clarity. We do not believe that covering up our misgivings or differences can serve the best interests of our movement. We hope that our discussions will continue and lead to a greater clarity and understanding between us.

But you will realize that to postpone a decision on the question of entry is not always possible, and in the given conditions must be ruled out. The state of flux and indecision about the future of our party is such that a postponement of a decision on entry will benefit no one. The discussion was opened by the CC on January 9th. At this meeting were present delegates from most party branches and they con-

sidered a 14 weeks period of discussion ample. Your request for a postponement has been circulated to the membership and we will issue any further arguments you may put forward in this connection as soon as they are received. For our part we are opposed to any postponement of the decision to some distant date, when and if all the disputed questions you have raised have been discussed nationally and internationally with all the sections participating. Of course, if the economic discussion continues long enough, the slump itself may wipe that question off the agenda!

Before closing, we think it necessary to make our attitude clear on the future work in Britain. So far as organizational approach and method which have been adopted, we find ourselves in general agreement. We have general agreement on the program of the International, and our agreement on method of work provides a working basis on which to proceed. There is not and never has been any difference on the application of our program in the form of concrete demands to be raised in the British labor movement or even in relation to the problem of Stalinism here. We have common agreement on the need for some years of systematic and patient work around this program.

We approach the whole problem with the greatest measure of goodwill. Perhaps you do not realize the great obstacles which stood in the path of the comrades who have changed their course, in view of the prolonged and bitter factional struggle in the past. We earnestly hope that the impression your letter created will be dispelled by your answer to us. For our part, we sincerely trust that any misunderstandings which have arisen caused by perhaps a too hasty intervention on your part, or by the inadequate statement of the position on the part of the four comrades, will be cleared up and the path will be cleared for a speedy and really successful fusion of the forces of our movement in this country.

Political Bureau RCP
(With E. Hunter co-opted)
Adopted February 21, 1949
E. Grant abstaining.

LETTER TO THE MEMBERS

from

Ted Grant, J. Deane, G. Hanson

Dear Comrades,

Discussion in the Party on the question of entry has naturally provoked a crisis in the organization. The comrades will know that on the PB, the CC and in the Party generally we have maintained that under the given conditions, the best tactic for the Party is the maintenance of our independence.

The discussion has not convinced us that in the present situation entry would constitute a superior tactic. However, faced with the fact that the overwhelming majority of the leadership and the trained cadres, and a substantial section of the rank and file are in favor of entering the Labor Party, and given that the objective situation will be a difficult one for the Party, we believe that a struggle would be sterile. We say this for the following reasons.

With the development of the labor movement and the tendency within it at the present time, it is possible that entry would have to be undertaken in any event a few years hence. The historical tendency in the labor movement has been for the Labor Party to reflect the developments taking place within the working class. At periods of quiescence the right wing has always maintained its hold over the labor movement as a whole. Just as in the trade unions and the shop-stewards committees in periods of lull, the reactionary and backward elements, play an important role. With the upsurge of the workers they are swept away and younger and more militant elements are pushed forward by the workers. Similarly in relation to the L.P. As the political expression of the trade union movement, in the event of a crisis affecting the regime, the L.P. will be shaken to its depths and an entire reshuffle of the leading strata would take place. Under these circumstances the question of entry would be posed.

Taking all the above factors into consideration, and the undoubted fact that even under the best conditions with a unified leadership imbued with confidence in the tactic, only small gains could be made in the immediate period ahead; with the prospect of building an entirely new leadership, all the advantages of conducting a struggle and attempting to continue with the open organization, would be cancelled out. This is particularly applicable, as the possibility exists of entry in the future.

Therefore, given the above mentioned conditions, the objective and subjective conditions would be unfavorable for the maintenance of the independent Party.

Particularly is this so as certain necessary safeguards are agreed on by all-entrists and non-entrists alike. 1) A theoretical journal, and 2) A tight organization.

Entry is a tactical issue and does not involve questions of principle. Above all, it is necessary to maintain a due sense of proportion and to see the problem as purely a practical one as to the best method of the deployment of the forces we possess.

Under different conditions, if really favorable prospects for growth presented themselves, for the independent party, then it might be necessary to maintain a small grouping even against the overwhelming majority of the party. But the present situation is entirely different. Nationally and internationally, the main task consists in maintaining the organization and preparing for the great historical tasks which history will pose before us in the future.

We do not believe that there are great opportunities for the growth of our movement at present wherever we operate. In this period the most important task consists in the maintenance of the unity of the organization, the intensification of the education of our cadres and raising the theoretical level of the entire organization. These tasks will pose themselves as vital for the future, whether we are inside or outside.

Under these conditions, we do not believe it is in the best interests of the movement to wage a struggle on this issue.

A PROGRAM FOR THE JEWS

By Louis T. Gordon

The decision of the party to intensify its work among the Jewish masses should be most welcome. Up to now, for various reasons, this work has been very neglected. However, in order to carry out any serious activity the first prerequisite obviously is a correct program, and at the moment we have no program at all. No resolution on the Jewish question in general and as it applies to the American Jews has been adopted either by the party or by the International. The most comprehensive document issued up to date has been the Draft Theses on the Jewish Question Today, of the International Secretariat, and, whatever its merits at the time of adoption, it has been rendered utterly obsolete by the latest events in the Middle East. How is it possible, then, to approach the Jewish masses? What are we going to say on the most vital problems facing them today? Will we express personal opinions, which incidentally vary in more than one respect? We can't be satisfied merely with partial analyses or general slogans. New events require new formulations.

Our work among the Jewish masses, of course, must be carried out according to the party's policies and in pursuance of its objectives. The following pages are only intended as a first contribution to a discussion which we hope will follow. Our tactical approach to the task, as well as detailed analyses of the various ideologies we will have to combat, will be tackled subsequently.

1. The Jewish People

In this country the Jews are an oppressed national minority. We will not attempt to define these minorities -- Italian, Mexican, Yugoslav, etc. etc. -- nor if the word is the most appropriate. Suffice it to say that the Jews constitute in America a nationally conscious group with special needs and some special interests. Consequently, if we intend to influence them, we have to supply concrete answers to their problems not only as individuals, but collectively. It is not enough to say that socialism alone can solve the Jewish problem. It is not enough to urge them to fight against the growth of fascism. If we want to offer the Jewish masses a choice other than Zionism and Stalinism we have to say not only against what they have to fight but for what they have to fight -- as Jews.

Naturally, there are Jews -- well represented in our party -- who consider themselves purely American and wish to assimilate themselves completely. Certainly no Jew who wants to follow this course should be forced to remain Jewish. Likewise, due regard should be given to the great masses who want to preserve the Jewish people and heritage.

The fact that the Jews belong to an oppressed minority does not signify that no class differences separate them. Some Jews belong to the circles of monopoly capitalism. The upper middle class is ideologically tied to American imperialism. All of them, however, are to a greater or smaller extent discriminated against economically, socially and culturally.

Just as the other minority groups who live in our country, under guise of Americanization, the Jews are being pressed to surrender to the "superior" Anglo-Saxon American culture. We have to oppose these pressures. The true American culture will develop out of a completely voluntary integration in the American pattern. But this pattern is not merely Anglo-Saxon, as the American big bourgeoisie claims. Every strain of immigrants, while developing its own cultural life, contributes to the general American culture.

Also the Jews ideologically or organically tied to the big bourgeoisie, "fight" against discrimination. But their fight is a mockery because they do not strike at the roots of discrimination -- the capitalist system. As is the case with the Negro people, although partial victories of small importance can be won within capitalism, the final victory, the real eradication of anti-semitism and every other "anti" will only be possible when the "free enterprise" system is destroyed. This is why the leadership of the Jewish people rightly belongs to the Jewish workers and their allies in the lower middle class and the ranks of the professionals and intellectuals. They are the only ones who can consistently struggle for Jewish rights because they are the only ones who are interested in eliminating the real hotbed of anti-semitism.

Among these masses it is necessary to struggle consistently against the influence of Zionist ideology and the Bund and the Stalinists. The Bund, although it is dying as a political movement since the destruction of Eastern European Jewry, is still influential among the immigrated Jewish workers, centered around the "Daily Forward." Among the new generation of American Jews it has virtually no influence at all.

The Stalinists enjoy today wide support among the Jewish masses because of their support of the Jewish State and because of the fight against anti-semitism in the USSR. However, their record both in the Soviet Union and Palestine and in America is a reflection of their role as agencies of the Soviet bureaucracy and it will not be difficult to reveal the unprincipled motivations of their successive positions.

* * *

American Jews are not cut off from those of the rest of the world. They not only want to fight anti-semitism here, but, feeling themselves linked to world Jewry, they also attempt, among other things, to help in the rehabilitation of the remnants of the Hitlerite slaughter and to contribute to secure the State of Israel.

Which is the nature of the bonds between Jews in different countries? During the last few centuries and up to the October revolution, and to a lesser degree, until its almost complete physical annihilation, Eastern European Jewry -- the bulk of the Jewish people -- constituted a nation in all respects but the lack of a territory of its own. But although they were a minority of 12 to 15 percent in the totality of the contiguous area they inhabited -- from the rivers Vistula and Niemen to the rivers Dnieper and Don -- the Jews were the majority in hundreds of towns and villages. (Lestschinsky) Yiddish

was the mother tongue of great many of these Jews, who also preserved and developed the Hebrew language and Jewish culture as a whole. Their national consciousness and character sometimes were even more sharply defined than those of the peoples they lived among.

Since the beginning of the century, this Jewish center began its decline. The Jews had had almost a monopoly of trade in Eastern Europe and in the 19th century they had attained a predominant position in certain handicrafts -- i.e. carpentry and tailoring. But when the old economic pattern began to collapse, the belated capitalist development didn't allow them to integrate themselves in the new pattern. National strife increased. Although a small Jewish proletariat did appear on the scene, great numbers of Jews were forced to emigrate. From 1900 to the first world war, almost two and a half million Jews (30% of the total) emigrated. The rate diminished afterwards.

As a result of emigration, the October revolution, and the reign of Nazism, the Eastern European Jewish center no longer exists. The majority of the Jewish people now lives in the American continent. The distribution is as follows:

<u>Continent</u>	<u>1939</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>P.c.</u>
1. Europe	9,500,000	56.8
2. America	5,540,000	33.1
3. Asia	1,030,000	6.2
4. Africa	625,000	3.7
5. Australia	33,000	0.2
<u>Total</u>	<u>16,728,000</u>	<u>100.0</u>

<u>Continent</u>	<u>1947</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>P.c.</u>
1. Europe	3,000,000	26.8
2. America	6,000,000	53.6
3. Asia	1,475,000	13.1
4. Africa	685,000	6.1
5. Australia	40,000	0.4
<u>Total</u>	<u>11,200,000</u>	<u>100.0</u>

("Crisis, Catastrophe and Survival"
by J. Lestschinsky. Page 84.)

Most of the Jews live, unlike in the past, in conditions where assimilationist tendencies are very strong and will be impossible to counteract under Socialism. On the other hand, there is the vigorous new factor of a normal Jewish nation in Israel. Even outside Israel, the Jews still have a strong national consciousness. And both the Jews in Israel and in the rest of the world consider themselves members of one people. A people that lives in different countries and even under different social systems but still one people with a common

cultural and historical background. Likewise, in the consciousness of the peoples of the world there is but one Jewish people. Furthermore, culture or history are not the only bonds. There is also a common destiny. It has been asserted that Jews in different countries and of different classes could have no common destiny. The history of the last few decades however shows that in the period of the death agony of capitalism this is not so. Fascism spells death for all the Jews. Six million were massacred in Europe, regardless of their birth places, and the class they belonged to. And none was spared just because he didn't consider himself Jewish.

2. The Establishment of Israel

The successful establishment and defense of the Jewish State came as a complete surprise to most members of the party. Events in Palestine did not develop along the lines we had envisaged. According to the Theses it was impossible to establish "a Jewish (or by-national) State amid the open hostility of fifty million Arabs" and within decaying capitalist society.

There were those who did believe in the possibility of establishing in Palestine a Jewish State, but only through a deal with Great Britain. Virtually nobody thought that it could be established, as it was, in fierce struggle against British imperialism and with the active opposition of the Arab States.

Surely we can't dodge the issue by saying that nothing much has changed; that the Jewish State is not really independent, and the like. Actually a great deal has changed. A completely new political body has arisen, proving, among other things, the national maturity and affinity of Jews from many countries who proved able to methodically regain all the attributes of nationhood and finally of statehood.

What was the nature of the Palestine war? Undoubtedly, the fact that two oppressed peoples, Arabs and Jews, fought each other makes a definition incomparably more difficult than, for instance, in the clear cut struggle of the Indonesians against the Dutch imperialists. However, it is not too difficult to understand the events if we view them in relation to the anti-imperialist struggle. And here the party made perhaps the greatest error, which accounts for our mistaken prognosis. We didn't consider it possible for the Jews in Palestine to play at present, under any circumstance, an anti-imperialist role. We did not analyze correctly the inner forces of Zionism, the character of the Jewish people in Palestine, the measure in which they, just as the Arabs, were oppressed by British imperialism.

For many long years, the Zionist movement served well and faithfully the interests of British imperialism, but their aims were not the same. While the Zionist movement thought it possible to reach its own goals in close cooperation with the British it was, of course, satisfied. If it had been only up to them we can be sure that the Zionists wouldn't have relinquished their partnership with the British. But once the British assumed an utterly hostile attitude towards the Zionists, they had no choice but to fight back or accept their doom. The turning point came with the White Paper of 1939, although

the showdown was delayed until the war was over.

In Palestine there was no possibility of a stable equilibrium; if the Jewish community did not develop it would have contracted. Jewish industry, which had grown rapidly during war, could not survive, nor new industries could be established under the economic policies of Great Britain which were directed to keeping the country in its colonial status. The whole Jewish economic structure was gravely endangered. On top of all this, thousands upon thousands of Jews in Europe were clamoring to enter Palestine and the British were keeping the doors closed.

According to the Theses "at the present stage the Jewish masses in Palestine do not as a whole constitute an anti-imperialist force." Why? In the first place because "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."

Events have since proven that this appraisal was incorrect. Naturally, the reason was not that the leaders of the Jewish Agency desired to break off any cooperation with the British. Meir Yaari, the leader of the Hashomer Hatzair, who should know, asserts that after the anti-British actions of Haganah, Irgun and the Stern group, "attempts were made repeatedly to renew the partnership with Britain, and to return to the one-sided British orientation. Throughout this period these attempts did not cease. They continued until the speech of Gromyko, and even a few weeks after that."

But Britain would not accept anything but the implementation of the White Paper in one way or another. Jewish Palestine was thus confronted with the possibility of being reduced to the status of another ghetto. What choice did they have then, but to resist? They would certainly have welcomed the presence of more or less friendly British soldiers, but how could they want to have maintained hostile British troops, whom they feared more than the Arabs.

However, regardless of what Shertok or Ben Gurion might have had in their minds it was as a result of the Jewish struggle for independence that a substantial part of Palestine was removed from the realm of the colonially exploited areas of the world thwarting the British plans to transform "Palestine into the key position in the system of imperialist defense in the Eastern Mediterranean." (Theses) Jewish resistance inside Palestine and "illegal" immigration, despite their restricted proportions, imposed such a heavy financial burden upon the dwindling resources of Great Britain that she was forced to leave the country. Besides, British military experts recognized the fact that it was not possible to build an important strategic base in a region with such a restive population. The resolution adopted by the Second Congress of the International on the struggles of the colonial peoples, describes this process as follows:

"Britain's inability to maintain herself in the face of post-war disturbances and rising anti-imperialist sentiments, the shrinking of her Empire resources and the subsequent necessity to reduce expenditures, has obliged Britain to announce the withdrawal of her troops from Palestine."

Although the resolution does not state it expressly, the disturbances and rising anti-imperialist sentiments referred to were first and foremost those of the Jews.

Some will say, however: Isn't it true that the Jews fought against the Arabs after the British withdrawal? This is true but it is not the whole truth. The decisive thing is not who uses the arms and the ammunition but what interests they are defending and who is behind them. The British withdrew but they did not lose interest in what was going on in Palestine. Unable to continue to rule directly, they intended to quit Palestine through the front door and return through the back door by means of the British officered and financed Arab Legion of Abdullah. Abdullah was designed to be the main if not the only beneficiary of the Palestine war. Egypt entered the war mainly to prevent Transjordan from occupying all of Palestine. Throughout the war Great Britain was -- and still is -- the real enemy of the Jews. Whoever analyzes the Palestine events without due regard to the role played by the British distorts the picture. The main struggle in Palestine was that of the Jewish people against British imperialism. Mainly for this reason the Soviet Union gave consistent support to the Jews.

What was the role played by the US? In The Militant it was emphasized that Washington wanted to use Zionism in order to get into Palestine. This, of course, is correct. This desire was what prompted the US to back the partition resolution in the UN. And the Zionists took good advantage of the conflicting interests of British and American imperialisms in order to maneuver. But if somebody should infer from this fact that the Americans backed the Jews in the same or in a similar fashion than the British backed the Arabs, he would be completely mistaken.

It is true that American imperialism was fully aware of the possibilities of using Zionism to further its aims. But this does not mean that they had actually helped the Jews after the 29th of November of 1947. In fact, while Britain was supplying war material to the Arab States, America, while paying lip service to the resolution of the UN, imposed an arms embargo which would have meant the destruction of the Jewish community if it had not been because of the help supplied through Eastern Europe. In practice, for the Jews the American attitude was not fundamentally different from that of the British. And American policy would have been radically different were it not because of the Presidential election and Truman's desire to win Jewish and pro-Zionist votes. Before and after the 29th of November the State Department was against any Jewish State.

Furthermore, it is well known that America backed down from partition very soon. She was against the Jews proclaiming their State on the 14th of May. As practical imperialists, however, after the Jews established the state, after they proved that they could defend it against the attacks of the Arabs, and after they realized that this State was now able to maneuver and could even become too friendly to the Soviet Union, the US started to make overtures to the Jewish State in order to dominate it better and to pave the way for her exports of capital.

Just as in the case of Palestine, America also paid and pays lip service to the cause of the Indonesian Republic. She condemns in very strong terms the recent "police action" of the Dutch, just as she spoke in favor of the Jewish State. But she does not move one finger to interfere with the Dutch, as she didn't do anything to interfere with the British backed Arab armies. If the Indonesians would have defeated the Dutch, Washington would now be saying: We were always on your side! But the fact would have remained that they don't want an Indonesian Republic just as they don't want a Jewish republic.

On the other hand, the Arab countries who saw in the Palestine war a way to divert the attention of their oppressed peoples from their real problems, are paying already heavily for the "help" they received from the British. They have endangered even such independence as they had managed to attain in the past.

It is now the duty of Jewish and Arab revolutionaries in the Middle East to stop the fratricidal enmity and direct the rightful hatred of the masses against imperialism, the real source of all their misfortunes. Jewish revolutionaries in Israel must fight against any open or covered oppression of the Arabs in Israel and against any expansionist tendencies of this state. Also the Arab revolutionaries in the Arab States have to do their best in order to avert keeping Jewish-Arab differences as the center problem because this would be playing into the hands of imperialism.

Our program in Israel will have to be developed by our Palestine section. It will have to struggle for the creation of a truly anti-imperialist party. But what should be our position here in America? To answer this question it is necessary first to see how much, if any, has the Jewish problem changed with the emergence of the Jewish State.

3. Israel and the Jewish Problem

The establishment of Israel puts and end, in principle, to the abnormality of a Jewish people without a country of its own. It will also solve the personal Jewish problem of those who live there. They will be Jews naturally and easily, freed from all the complexes of Jewish life elsewhere. But how will the existence of this state affect the situation of the Jews who are not living there, the five million American Jews, for instance?

Politically, there will be no links between Israeli and non-Israeli Jews. But it is undeniable that, in theory, Israel has altered the status of the Jews of the world because it is not a state merely for those Jews who now live there, but for the Jewish people as a whole. Theoretically, every Jew, wherever he may live, will have the right to go to Israel. This is something new. Throughout the world the entrance of Jews is restricted to the minimum, and many times forbidden altogether, whereas now there is one country where Jews virtually have exclusive right of immigration.

In practice, however, the entrance of Jews cannot be and is not absolutely free. Israel can only absorb now hundreds of thousands with the economic help of the Jews of the world. Furthermore, the absorptive capacity of Israel is not unlimited. The present plans

envisage an immigration of about one million over a ten year period. And the carrying out of these plans is, to say the least, tremendously difficult in this epoch of declining capitalism.

Even assuming the most favorable circumstances -- no crisis, no war -- only about one million Jews could get into Israel in the next decade. And in the Islamic countries of North Africa and the Middle East alone live between 800,000 and 900,000 Jews (about 300,000 in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, Aden and Libya), against whom discrimination is practiced today in all spheres and who, in the words of the memorandum presented by the Jewish Agency to UNSCOP, "are coming ever more to be regarded as hostages for the Arabs in Palestine."

And what if in the meantime something should go wrong with the five million Jews who live in America? Ten years is now a long time, and the world does not remain frozen. It will certainly not be up to Israel to decide how many Jews might need to go there. No substantial help could be expected from Israel if the world should plunge again into fascism.

In Europe, anti-semitism had strong roots embedded in its economic and social life; and the gas chambers were just the most barbarous consequence of the hideous convulsions of capitalism in its death agony. The terrible fate of European Jewry could have been prevented only by a socialist revolution.

Ben Gurion admitted before UNSCOP:

"We are a small weak, defenceless people, and we know that there can be no security for us, either as individuals or as a people, neither in the Diaspora nor in our Homeland, even after we become an independent nation in our own state, as long as the whole human family is not united in peace and good will."

Can somebody envisage such a "human family" under capitalism? As elsewhere, in America anti-semitism has deep economic and social roots and these roots remain unchanged by the birth of Israel. Nahum Goldman, a leading Zionist, recognized this fact speaking at the recent session of the World Jewish Congress:

"The establishment of the State of Israel...does not mean the immediate end of the Jewish problem... So long as Jewish minorities remain in many countries of the world, the problem of anti-semitism, of discrimination, of securing their position, will remain as actual as ever before."

Even those who think that sooner or later all the Jews will have to go to Israel, are beginning to understand that the prerequisite for Jewish emigration to Israel is the existence of the Jews who are to emigrate, and Hitler proved that this is not assured by any means.

4. Zionism and the Jewish Problem

It is now more necessary than ever before to wage an uncompromising ideological struggle against Zionism. Zionists are claiming that their analysis of the Jewish question has been vindicated by events. They point out that while Marxists were saying "fantastic"

they were upbuilding the country, the Jewish population in Palestine was growing from less than one hundred thousand to 650,000 and finally the Jewish State was established. Has this vindicated Zionism?

Lenin and Trotsky, as many other revolutionaries, thought at the beginning of the century that the Jews would be assimilated and anti-semitism would thus disappear, as Trotsky put it, "in a quasi-automatic fashion." This did not happen. "The historical development of the last quarter of a century," admitted Trotsky, "has not confirmed this perspective. Decaying capitalism has everywhere swung over to an exacerbated nationalism, one part of which is anti-semitism."

Anti-semitism, on the other hand, intensified the will of the Jews to survive as a people. No appraisal of Zionism can disregard the will of national survival which permeates it. Trotsky reckoned with it when he said:

"One must therefore reckon with the fact that the Jewish nation will maintain itself for an entire epoch to come. Now the nation cannot normally exist without a common territory. Zionism springs from this very idea."

How can the Jewish problem be solved? Trotsky favored the concentration of the Jewish people in a Jewish state although he didn't think that this was possible under capitalism. "The very same methods of solving the Jewish question," he wrote, "which under decaying capitalism will have a utopian and reactionary character (Zionism) will, under the regime of a socialist federation take on real and salutary meaning."

He contemplated that after the triumph of socialism "the dispersed Jews who would want to be reassembled in the same community will find a sufficiently extensive and rich spot under the sun. . . . This is the grand historical perspective that I envisage. To work for international socialism means also to work for the solution of the Jewish question." And he added: "It may very well be that within two or three generations the boundaries of an independent Jewish republic, as of many other national regions, will be erased. I have neither time nor desire to meditate on this. Our descendants will know better than we what to do. I have in mind a transitorial historical period when the Jewish question as such, is still acute and demands adequate measures from a world federation of workers' states."

Trotsky also emphasized that the Jewish question cannot be resolved "within the framework of rotting capitalism." "The Jewish question, I repeat, is indissolubly bound up with the complete emancipation of humanity. Everything else that is done in this domain can only be a palliative."

Fundamentally, this is as true today as it was before the establishment of the State of Israel.

* * *

There is not one but there are several Zionist ideologies.

However, all those who think of Zionism as a solution of the Jewish problem still agree, in the main, with Herzl's analysis. Herzl thought that the world would go through very grave convulsions in the years to come and that the Jews would be the main victims because of their position in society. The Jews are being forced to emigrate, but wherever they go sooner or later anti-semitism raises its head. Consequently, the Jews should emigrate once and for all to their own country.

On this point the monarchist Herzl agrees with the "revolutionaries" of Hashomer Hatzair. "The point of departure of Zionist philosophy," says a document of Hashomer Hatzair, "from the very outset was that the world, at least for some generations to come, would be passing through periodic political, economic, and social upheavals. The Jews as a group, like a tree on a mountain summit, less deeply rooted and more exposed to the blasts of the storm than others, would be first to be uprooted and last to be restored."

Unfortunately, this is what actually happened in the last few decades. So many Jews are in Palestine -- and so many are dead in Europe -- as a consequence of the failure of the world proletariat to conquer power. If the revolution would have been successful at least in the most important countries of Europe in the Twenties not many more than 50,000 Jews would be now living in Palestine. But instead of socialism came Hitler.

The failure of the proletariat to take power pushed the Jews to Palestine and prepared the objective conditions which enabled them to create the State of Israel. However, if it continues, this very failure will cause the destruction of the Jewish people outside the state and most likely the destruction of the state itself. In a recent speech, Ben Gurion said:

"There is still another problem which I scarcely dare voice: Will there be enough Jews for the State of Israel? Ten years ago such a question could not have arisen. Now, after the Hitler catastrophe, it gives us no rest."

We can answer categorically Ben Gurion's question: if capitalism is not destroyed there will not be enough Jews for the State of Israel. Nor will there be a State of Israel. The Jews of the world should understand this grim reality and adjust their thinking to it.

5. Principles for a Program

Whether we like it or not, Israel is a fact and it would be absurd for us to pretend to ignore it. What should be our attitude towards this state? We can't be against its existence. But Israel is a capitalist State. And of course we will not be for this kind of a Jewish State, just as we are not for a capitalist US. We will support the Israeli workers who will fight, along with the working class of the world, to bring about socialism. Incidentally, only in this kind of a Jewish State, in a State which is part of a socialist world, will Jewish culture have a real chance of developing according to its best traditions, free from clerical and reactionary influence.

In brief, although we should express understanding for the feelings of the Jews of the world with regard to Israel and recognize both the legitimacy of such a state and such feelings, we won't forget for one moment the nature and limitations of Israel.

This, however, should not be confounded with our attitude towards the Zionist movement. We should maintain our decided opposition to this movement, which served as a tool of British imperialism in the past and is now ready to become just as subservient a tool of American imperialism.

On the other hand, we must draw a sharp distinction between the Zionist objective and the Zionist movement. The Zionist objective to ingather the Jewish people in Israel deserves all our support. We emphasize, however, that this objective is utopian under capitalism; it will become feasible only after socialism succeeds. Nevertheless, under very favorable circumstances Israel might in the coming years absorb several hundreds of thousands of Jews. We can't say to the DP's that Israel is no solution. It is no solution for the Jewish problem as a whole, but it certainly is a solution for their own problem. We can't say to the Jews in the Arab countries that Israel is no solution. However temporary it might be, it means a solution for them. But even the industrial development required to enable Israel to absorb a few hundreds of thousands of new immigrants can only be carried out in direct opposition to imperialism. America will not help Israel to become an industrial country whatever promises she might utter to the contrary. The flood of American capital, which the State is now seeking, will only reduce Israel's independence to a mockery.

Why is Zionism reactionary even now, after the establishment of Israel? Because it tends to remove the Jewish masses from the class struggle in their countries of residence, class struggle of whose successful conclusion depends the survival of the Jewish people. The Zionists are now attempting to convince the Jews of the world that they have to "mobilize all their resources" to insure "a final solution." "This single effort," they say, "will, once and for all, solve the problem of every Jewish community threatened with collapse and of every imperiled Jewish group, whose return to Israel, will in its turn, act as a potential factor in the absorption and rehabilitation of additional Jews."

They warn against arousing "new illusions concerning the security of the existence of the Diaspora," because "it distracts the attention of Jewry in the Diaspora from realistic Zionism," that is immigration to Israel. This despite the fact that Ben Gurion himself and many other leaders of the Zionist movement have admitted that if fascism should come the Jews of the world may be annihilated!

This is simply deceiving the Jewish people. Although escape may be the solution for some Jews it cannot be the solution for all the Jews, not even for a substantial minority of them. Consequently, the Jews have to struggle wherever this is not absolutely impossible, in order to combat the root causes which force them to emigrate. This is the only logical, progressive and effective way of fighting.

One final word about immigration to Israel. The establishment of the Jewish State has removed the question of immigration from the forefront. Now it has become an internal affair of the Jewish State and a personal problem of the Jews who want to emigrate to it. We couldn't oppose those Jews who, in order to live a happier or more complete life or for any other reason, may wish to go there. Nor can we oppose the emigration of those Jews who may be forced to take this course because their lives are endangered by anti-semitism.

A program along the lines presented above, would meet both the needs of the Jewish people outside Israel and the people of Israel. It links indissolubly the struggle of the Jewish people for civil rights and for their survival as a nation and the development of Israel with the struggle for socialism and against imperialism. Armed with such a program we will be able to prove ourselves the best defenders of the Jewish people and to oppose a new leadership against that of the Stalinists, the Zionists and the Bundists.

February, 1949