

AGAINST COLONIAL OPPRESSION

Partisan and Mass Fights in Palestine.

By J. B. (Jerusalem).

After the events of the last few weeks there can be no doubt that the anti-imperialist fights in Palestine have entered upon a fresh stage. This stage is characterised by the increased efforts of the Arab feudal-bourgeois leadership to put a complete end to the insurrection and to arrive as quickly as possible at a settlement with the British and — as is shown by a number of signs, such as the visit to Palestine of the British adventurer Captain Canning, projects for the solution of the Palestine question by the well-known “pro-Arab” Philby and by a number of articles in the Arab press — even with the “moderate” Zionists. But neither the terrible methods of Terror of the British Government (death sentences, imprisonments, fines) nor yet the treachery of the leaders will be capable of destroying the movement, which, with the support of the masses themselves, is spreading in two directions: in the direction of **unorganised partisan fights** (especially in the rural districts) and in the direction of spontaneous mass **outbreaks** (especially in the towns).

The partisan fights are chiefly of a peasant character. Now it is the resistance of the peasants to attempts to disarm them (for instance, in the villages around Jerusalem), again the defiance they put up against the confiscations by the Zionist colonists, whose appetite and predatory methods have not been modified by the events (conflicts between native Arabs and colonists have taken place, especially lately, near Wadi Havaras), and again primitive attempts at attacks upon British posts and individual Zionist colonies — such is the expression of the partisan movement in various parts of the country.

Although, in view of this movement, the Zionists shout about "brigandage" and the British make every effort to trace the "bands", "peace and order" cannot be restored. Nor can the terribly high tributes be collected. The Arab fellah and bedouines — the poorest of the poor — whose yearly budget amounts — as was stated in reply to the representative of the British Labour Party on the investigation commission — to 2 to 18 pounds sterling, whose conditions can hardly be worse than they are — continue to fight with the courage of despair and with their own primitive methods, even though they have long been betrayed by the feudal clique.

As to the mass movement in the towns, this, too, has got quite beyond the control of the leaders. As the interests of the commercial bourgeoisie lie chiefly in competition with the Jewish traders, the leaders wanted to use the mass movement by proclaiming a boycott slogan and thus augmenting their own profits under the cloak of nationalism. But their plan to make the movement purely anti-Semitic was doomed to failure. On the contrary, when the Government utilised the boycott agitation as a pretext to arrest several anti-imperialists (including Hamdi Husseini and some of his supporters, who were summarily hassified as "Communists", although they had never represented a radical-nationalist programme), there was a big mass-riot movement in Jaffa, which developed into a general strike.

The strike and the disturbances in Jaffa lasted several days. There was a demonstration in front of the government buildings and it was no easy job to disperse the crowd; several of the people arrested (who were sentenced to deportation by the administration) resisted the British police and the masses made attempts to rescue the prisoners. Things became so tense in Jaffa that a warship was sent to stand by and a number of warplanes were mobilised. But effectual help was again rendered to the Government by the national-reformist leaders: when the movement in Jaffa threatened to become an armed rebellion, when the fellahs from the surrounding villages began to swarm into Jaffa and, when it became necessary to support the action at Jaffa from several other points in the country, the Arab leaders thought it time to call the movement off; they liquidated the strike and stopped the solidarity demonstrations in the other towns.

"As long as the investigation commission remains in the country", ran the decision, which was issued in the name of the Great Mufti, "the Arabs must preserve peace."

This was, of course, only an expedient to give the leaders a chance during the lull in the movement to bargain in London, for the representative of the Arab executive, Jamal el Husseini, had gone there for that purpose.

In the proclamations of the Communist Party of Palestine, which are distributed in the Arab language, the people are called upon to convert the general strike into an anti-imperialist insurrection, to form revolutionary workers' and peasants' committees for the purpose of taking the leadership from the hands of the traitors. The slogan of the seizure of the land of the big landowners and of the rich Zionist colonists is set up. In the proclamations, which are issued at the same time in Hebrew, the Jewish workers are called upon to fraternise with the supporters of the revolutionary Arab movement. Both proclamations close with the slogan: "Down with imperialism! Long live the workers' and peasants government!" In Jaffa large red flags with Arab inscriptions have been hoisted to call upon all workers to unite for the fight against Zionism and imperialism.

The progressive radicalisation of the masses opens up from stage to stage of the revolutionary events greater and greater perspectives for its consciously revolutionary leaders.