

# British Plan Terror Rule in Palestine

By AL FINDLEY

His Majesty's Imperial Government—The Labour Party, "Defenders of Freedom"—has declared open warfare on the Jewish population of Palestine.

At present a defacto "police state" exists in Palestine, characterized by suspension of habeas corpus rights, mass arrests, concentration camps, house-to-house searches and attacks on unarmed civilians. This is now to give way to a legal "statutory martial law," removing all barriers to a complete smashing of any resistance movement in Palestine.

The decks are being cleared for action—the wives and children of the British officials are being evacuated from the country. This is an unprecedented peacetime action. No similar measures have been taken anywhere in British territory during peacetime. The only other equivalent action was the evacuation of British subjects from Gibraltar after France fell in 1940 and from Egypt when Rommel was attacking Alexandria in 1942.

## INCIDENT A PRETEXT

High Commissioner Sir Allan Cunningham, who is also military commander-in-chief, has been given wider powers than any other governor throughout the British Empire.

Bevin, who claimed that it would

take a division of soldiers to keep order in Palestine if 100,000 Jews were permitted to enter the country, is now using 100,000 armed soldiers to keep them out and to suppress the Jewish resistance movement.

What is supposed to have precipitated the all-out campaign of terror against the Jews was the events surrounding the imposition of a death sentence on Dov Grunner for taking part in an attack on a police station. He was to be hanged on Tuesday, January 28. On the preceding Sunday a British judge and a British banker were kidnapped and held as hostages by the Irgun, who demand prisoner-of-war status for their members.

British authorities announced that Grunner would appeal the sentence and granted an indefinite stay of execution, but warned that martial law would be declared if the two hostages were not released within 48 hours. Shortly before the deadline, the hostages were released.

Grunner has since repudiated his appeal on the ground that he is a soldier and not a criminal. If he refuses to reconsider, the death sentence will stand and the execution will take place on February 4. Further reprisals by the Irgun are expected.

Like all other so-called "incidents," these kidnappings are only a pretext on the part of the British and not the real reason for the proposed military occupation of Palestine. The institution of martial law was actually planned when Montgomery visited Cunningham in Palestine.

The imposition of military law is in line with the secret plans exposed by the Haganah as early as last spring. The aim of these moves is not the Irgun or the Stern group, which are being used as red-herrings in an attempt to disarm the Haganah, the main Jewish underground organization, and to destroy the fighting power of any Jewish resistance movement.

In this job, the British are attempting to get the aid of Palestinian industrialists and business men, who are hampered by the continual breakdowns of transportation and communication. Spokesmen for this group, typified by Mayor Rokeach of Tel-Aviv, have in the past been closely associated with the Revisionists in their so-called militant nationalism and their anti-labor programs. But like business men the world over, they oppose any active resistance. It is interesting to note that the Irgun called a truce to allow shipments of citrus produce.

## HAGANAH FAILURE

The Haganah, led by the reformist labor leaders, has failed to take the active leadership of resistance. Under the pressure of Palestinian Jewish officialdom and business leaders and the pro-British Weitzman, they first postponed and then gave up their "irrevocable decision" to launch a mass resistance and civil disobedience campaign against British imperialism. The failure of the Haganah to provide effective leadership has resulted in a shift of emphasis from mass actions of Haganah to individual terrorist actions by the Irgun and Stern groups.

The Jewish Agency, having no confidence in the ability of the people to solve anything, is lost in a maze of diplomacy. Circumventing the Zionist Congress decision not to attend the London conference, they are attending in an "unofficial" capacity. As the New York Times puts it: "The pattern followed in the Palestine conference makes it clear there actually are two conferences. One is official, with the Arabs. The other is unofficial, with the spokesman of the Jewish Agency. The timing of the adjournments of the official conference leaves alternate days free for the unofficial conference."

The Palestine labor movement, Arab and Jewish, cannot rely on the diplomatic maneuvers of their so-called leaders. They must take the initiative in organizing a joint struggle of Jewish and Arab workers, AGAINST the British and for an INDEPENDENT Palestine.

## File Petitions for Draper In Los Angeles Campaign

LOS ANGELES, February 3—One thousand signatures, twice as many as the law requires, were filed in the office of the city clerk this morning to nominate Harold Draper for councilman from the working class and Negro 7th District. Draper was the first of the thirteen candidates in the field to file, although it is safe to say no one of the other twelve is backed by less money.

House-to-house canvassing for Draper had begun January 27, just one week before. The collection of so large a number of signatures in so short a time was not a happy accident but the result of careful and precise planning and a spirit of high revolutionary enthusiasm. Every member of the Los Angeles branch of the Workers Party, of which Draper is organizer, except those few physically unable to do so, has been involved in the work.

Only a few of those willing to sign the petitions were ineligible to do so, a consequence of the enormous registration last fall in connection with the unsuccessful campaign for a California FEPC.

Although signatures were not hard to get the first three days of the canvassing, they came even more easily beginning January 30 when Draper's twenty-four-page illustrated campaign pamphlet went on sale. Mere sight of the cover page, a street map of the southeast side with the title "Jim Crow in Los Angeles" superimposed, seldom failed to arouse interest and usually brought an invitation to come inside and explain the candidate's position. In the first two days, seventy-two pamphlets were purchased—it would be inaccurate to say "sold" because little salesmanship was necessary—and by the end of the week well over 100. Several newsstands in the district are now displaying the pamphlet, and others are likely to handle it soon. (Editor's note: "Jim Crow in Los Angeles" is appearing serially in LABOR ACTION.

An important item of equipment carried by the canvassers was a note sheet on which they jotted the names of interested persons who wished to be contacted later, to be sent sample copies of LABOR ACTION, or notified of public meetings. The branch expects to develop an important sympathizer group as a result of this campaign.