POLITICS IN PALESTINE

"The explosion at the King David Hotel is a grim reminder that with or without 100,000 immigrants, the problem of Palestine will remain as urgent and inescapable as ever." (The Economist, August 5, 1946).

As the geographical juncture of the ancient homes of the Jewish and Christian peoples, Palestine was the scene of many conflicts. Changing allegiances, as often as the power of the conquerors, divided the inhabitants of Palestine often backed the losers, and as a consequence suffered exodus. At the time of the Pharaohs of Egypt and then under the Assyrians and Persians. Undoubtedly, it was only a fraction of the population that was expelled. The leaders of a number captured as slaves, the vast majority remained at their agricultural pursuits. It was under the Roman and Byzantine Emperors that Jerusalem was utterly destroyed in A.D. 135 and the Jews of Palestine were dispersed all over the globe.

Wherever the Jews settled in the Medieval world they became the political scapegoats, persecuted and massacred from time to time and restricted to moneylending and old clothes and rag trading by edicts of Popes and monarchs. The effect of this persecution and exclusion was to force the Jews to cling to the one heritage they had in common—their nationalistic religious beliefs. They were the Chosen People, and for the last 2000 years at the Passover Jews have said, "Next year in Jerusalem." This is the spirit which began to mature at the end of the nineteenth century.

"Political Parties"

The Zionist Movement was founded in 1865 by Dr. Theodore Herzl, and at the first congress held in 1897 at Basle where the policy of "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people" was declared, Dr. Herzl tried in vain to interest Turkey, Germany and Britain in the aim of Zionism; Britain, however, offered limited aid in the support of a Hebrew National movement in the course of Palestine, an offer which was rejected at the Zionist Congress of 1905. A Jewish state in Palestine with the continuance of non-Arab minorities was considered the only feasible plan by the majority of Zionists, whilst a minority advocated the absorption of the Arabs to the deserts of Arabia.

The Zionist Movement is divided into four main groups: Democratic Zionists, Socialists, Revisionists, who were the Nazis in each anti-semitic as wearing brown shirts, pouring kerosene over the agricultural goods of the Arabs, and the maintenance of a private army, broke away from the main organisation in 1934 and formed the New Zionist Organisation.

The Arabs conquered Palestine in the Seventh Century and after four centuries of stagnation under the declining Turkish Empire an Arab national movement began to rise parallel with the Jewish Nationalist Movement towards the end of the nineteenth century, their aims being to gain their national independence and half the territory of the Turkish Empire.

The largest Arab organisation is the "Palestine Arab Party," often referred to as the Mufti's party because of its leader, Haj Emir Iyad el Husseini, who is the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and also a member of one of the large land owning families. The next in importance is the National Defence Party led by Rashid Bey Nachshibi, a bitter opponent of the Mufti and Arab terrorism.

"The Too Much Promised Land."
The Arabs, growing restless under

WAGES AND PRICES

- Prices are based on the value of goods, and price-fluctuations are due to the law of supply and demand.
- Capitalists are not free to raise prices as they like. They can, however, take advantage of market conditions of short supply and thus use the excuse of higher wages to justify higher prices.
- If the capitalists could simply pass on increased wages by raising prices at will—why do they fight tooth and nail against such increases?
- Wages dropping is a farce. The index of retail prices on which the basic wage is based does not include fresh fish, fruit and vegetables. Furthermore, prices of these goods, which also include furniture and furnishings, have all registered increases. They are "non-index" goods, the basic wage has not been adjusted accordingly.
- Items which ARE included in the index include rice, tinned salmon, canned fruit, sago, and dried apricots—goods which have been unobtainable for years.
- As for rents, the index assumes that the average house is a 4-5 roomed unfurnished cottage. A 6 roomed flat A £60 TO £111.
- According to this lovely "index" prices have only risen by 24 per cent, during and after the war, and the wage has been adjusted accordingly. Your, or your wife's, experience, shows you that this figure is incorrect.
- Latest figures supplied by the Commonwealth Statistician to the Arbitration Court reveal that the total profits of all companies, public and private, but excluding life assurance, after payment of taxes, range from £73,000,000 in 1938-9 to £83,000,000 in 1944-5. This means an increase in profits OF MORE THAN SIXTEEN PER CENT.
- Again, those who argue in the direction of reduced taxation which "would be a real increase in wages," while an increase in wages "would only lead to higher prices and inflation"—ask the truth. If higher wages and increased taxation were really higher wages, decreased taxation wouldn't mean higher prices? The argument is nonsense.

REMEMBER THE ABOVE FACTS IN YOUR NEXT ARGUMENT WITH YOUR MATE!

R.Y.
PALESTINE—Continued.

The First District Court of the Tel Aviv Magistracy has ordered the arrest of a Jewish soldier in connection with the recent shooting of an Arab infant. The order was issued on the basis of evidence presented by the Arab family of the child, who claim that the child was shot by a Jewish soldier. The soldier denies the charge, and a hearing is scheduled for next week.

THE FORUM

WHO IS GOING TO DO THE "DIRTY WORK?"

MR. WHITE: "I know that you can't do the "dirty work", but I need someone who can do it. Who is going to do the "dirty work" that you can't do?"

MR. GREEN: "I can't do the "dirty work", but I can help you find someone who can."

MR. WHITE: "Who can do the "dirty work"?"

MR. GREEN: "I'm not sure, but I know someone who might be interested."

MR. WHITE: "And who is that?"

MR. GREEN: "I can't tell you, but I know they are willing to do the "dirty work" if they receive the right compensation."
PALESTINE.—Continued.

So all this talk of either a Arab, Jewish or Palestinian independent state is highly illusionary. Russia is already wooing the Arabs in an endeavor to offset Palestine's international position, and the marines of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Dardanelles. Britain has brought America into the palestinian question by allowing the American states a large share in the poll of the Middle and Near East. While President Truman supports the American-Canadian-American Committee in regard to the Jewish immigration with an eye to the Jewish role in forthcoming U.S.A. elections, a section of the American capitalistic class with an eye to a market of 60,000,000 Arabs favors the Arab cause. In an article, "The Arabs are on the Move" (October 46, "Readers" Digest"), Edwin Muller supports this latter view as follows: "Now the war is over and although the French and British are trying to stay, the Arabs will have none of it. Both powers are on their way out, leaving a partial vacuum, and the re-elections by stating: For centuries the Arabs were led by foreign nations who came here to settle themselves. If the United States might be a leader who comes there to serve and thereby serve ourselves as well." 

This to the British ruling class the conflict between Arab and Jewish national interests becomes of secondary importance when faced with the competition of the other powers and therefore they also see the Arabs as a part of the powers to maintain their imperial interests. Both Jews and Arabs recognize the myth of Palestinian independence. Ben Gurion (chairman of the Jewish Agency) states, "We are already forty years connected with the same political line of collaboration with Britain. A collaboration that must be redoubled and not one-sided." While the Jewish spokesman only hints to Britain of support from other imperialistic powers, the Arab spokesman is more outspoken, Jumal Husseine, of the Arab Higher Committee, states: "The Arabs hope for the friendship of Britain and America and if, on the question of Palestine there is no improvement everything is liable to be changed." (Quoted from "Workers International News," August, 1948. Britain's answer to these comments is to strengthen her armed forces in Palestine whilst the Jews and Arabs prepare for civil war, the outcome of which, it is feared, will be decided by the support of British arms unless another imperialistic power intervenes, in which case the civil war would be transformed to World War III. "—F. A. WATKINS.

(To be continued.)

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