

WORLD YOUTH

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25 years in prison

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The challenge before Indian Youth



To defend and safeguard the unity and integrity of the nation is the most important challenge before the youth in India today.

The internal reaction-divisive, caste, communal religious, regional, separatist and chauvinistic forces are raising their ugly heads and causing havoc to the unity and integrity of the country.

The external enemies, international imperialism headed by the US and the reactionary regimes in the region, are working overtime to destabilize India.

On the other hand the capitalist path of development adopted by the ruling class is pushing the country and its people into an ever-deepening socio-political and economic crisis. It results in unending misery for the working masses.

According to the official statistics the number of unemployed young people has risen well beyond 35 million. India will have the largest number of illiterates in the world by the turn of the century. Despite the tall claims of the ruling circle, over half of the total population live in utter poverty.

Thus the task to defend and safeguard India's unity and integrity is closely linked with radical changes in the socio-economic and political structure of the country. It is with this perspective that the All India Youth Federation and All India Students Federation launched a massive campaign under the slogan "SAVE INDIA, CHANGE INDIA".

The first stage of the campaign was a long March of youth and students from different corners of India to the capital city, New Delhi. Volunteers of the two organizations travelled 7000 km, on bicycle, across the length and breadth of the country.

The "March", which started on 1st January 1987, culminated in Delhi with a huge rally of over 25,000 youth and students on 26th March.

Rajaji



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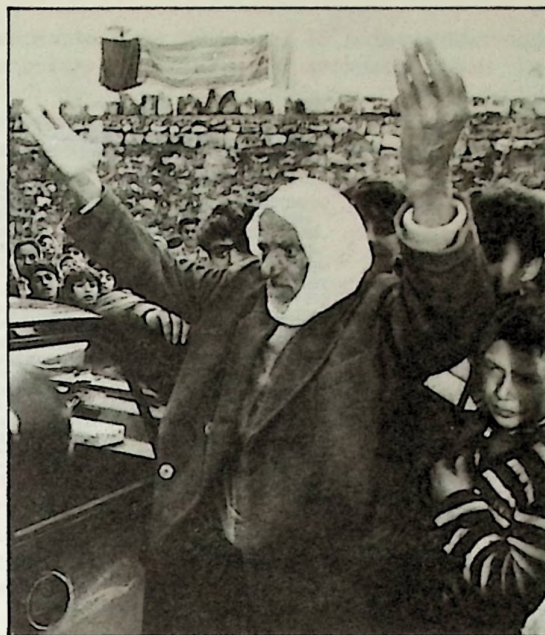


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«Let us do our utmost...»

«Let us do our utmost so that the international youth movement plays an honourable role in the anti-imperialist struggle!» — said Karl Liebknecht, the President of the Socialist Youth International, to the participants in the first international congress of socialist youth organizations which was held in Stuttgart in 1907. Before, in his speech on «Militarism and Antimilitarism taking into special consideration the international youth movement», he had stressed the necessity of the joint struggle to be waged by the progressive youth of the world against war. Due to this speech, he was accused of high treason and sentenced to one and a half years' confinement in a fortress, but in history he earned the honourable reputation of a pioneer in the struggle for the unity of action of youth against war.

Common responsibility for survival

With this historical background it was more than a gesture to-

wards the host organization, the Free German Youth (FDJ) when young communists, socialists, social democrats and revolutionary democrats gathered in Berlin-Friedrichsfelde at the grave of Karl Liebknecht in his memory. This was a sign of recalling the roots of the joint struggle for peace and, at the same time, was an occasion for reflection on the path that has been covered since then jointly or separately and on the experience gained so far in a positive or painful sense. It was also a cause for reflection on the fact that in the past, for instance, the dialogue between young social democrats and communists has not always been a matter of course, as one of the participants commented.

Berlin offered five days and nights of abundant opportunities for such a dialogue, and 158 youth organizations from 102 countries and West Berlin made full use of them to exchange their opinions on the most burning question of our time, the safeguarding of peace in the nuclear era. The Berlin seminar was attended by young communists,

socialists, social democrats, representatives of liberation movements and countries that have won their national independence.

Dirk Drijbooms, General Secretary of the IUSY, for instance said that he would not have thought, that in view of a «certain inflation» of meetings of this kind, so many organizations would be represented in Berlin. «You have come to meet here in the conviction that today it is more necessary than ever to strive in common responsibility for the survival of human civilization.» With these words, Erich Honecker, the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED) and President of the Council of State of GDR, welcomed the guests. In this community of responsibility, as he emphasized, the progressively-minded youth and student movement is an irreplaceable political force raising its voice on all continents for the most important human right of youth — a life in peace and with a guaranteed future. The subsequent five days and nights of discussion proved the correctness of what he had said. Common responsibility was the key word, since it determined the contents and, not least, also the atmosphere of the discussion. The readiness of explain points of view and experience without intending to instruct was accompanied by the readiness to listen to each other and to dispense with polemic.

There was no ideological identification, but a joint search for points of contact in order to achieve joint political actions. Orientation on common matters rather than continuing well-known controversies — that was the keynote of the discussion in Berlin. Right at the beginning an encouraging sign was set by the speeches of the general secretaries of WFDY and IUSY. WFDY General Secretary, Vilmos Cserveny, pointed to a wide range of tasks in the struggle for

peace «the solution of which we can reach more quickly and effectively if we achieve joint actions». The WFDY sees «good opportunities for developing the cooperation between communist, socialist and social democratic youth organizations at international level, and also — which may be even more important — at the national level».

IUSY stated that the broad participation of young socialists in the seminar «is the best way of showing that we believe in the importance of our cooperation today and also in the future». With the words «it is also a matter of speaking about an anti-nuclear coalition of youth, as proposed by WFDY, to eliminate the nuclear danger in the world,» IUSY responded for the first time to the call of the WFDY General Assembly held in November 1986. Respect was clearly shown for the endeavours of others as, for example, in the speech of the Hungarian KISZ representative who reminded participants of the fact that realistically thinking politicians of social democratic parties and youth organizations made a considerable contribution to making the 70s a decade of détente on our continent.

The response of the West is needed

All this created an objective and constructive atmosphere which made it possible to concentrate on the question for which the seminar was organized: How can the youth of the world today make peace in the world more secure?

Here we can only sum up some of the most important ideas.

There was complete agreement that mankind today stands at a crossroads of its development, bringing a special responsibility of the young generation. This concordance was evident in the

speeches of the young communists and the young social democrats from the FRG when they declared: «You are the first generation that must not commit any mistake,» said the JUSO representative recalling Olof Palme's admonition and they warned that «any kind of waiting, hesitating and failure to take advantage of existing opportunities could result in a mistake which can never be made up for again». The SDAJ declared that the youth of today are the first generation which is in the position to banish nuclear war from the lives of the peoples,» and, at the same time, «is confronted as the first generation with the real threat of mankind being eliminated in a nuclear war».

There was also agreement on the fact that today peace can no longer be safeguarded by accumulating more and more weapons, by old doctrines and sticking to the «policy of force», but only by political reason, independently of whether it is called «new way of thinking», «new approach» or «change of consciousness».

The discussion reaffirmed that for precisely this reason, the radical proposals on peace and disarmament made by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries are giving a strong impulse to the struggle of the youth for peace in the world and are meeting with a positive response even where the fear of contact with communists still exists.

Apart from young communists and representatives of liberation movements, even a number of social democrats — and not only those belonging to the so-called left-wing spectrum — demanded with remarkable insistence «an urgent response from the West» (IUSY) to the proposals of Mikhail Gorbachev and stressed: «when today Mikhail Gorbachev puts the old proposals of the Americans on the table as the Zero Option for the European continent, then the world is in

conmotion... If today somebody wants peace seriously, then he can also achieve it» (Socialist Youth of Austria). The Flemish Socialist Youth Organization from Belgium declared: «The Soviet Union has now proved that its proposals have not been 'mere propaganda'. Now it is up to the West to show its good will.»

At the same time, the youth organizations from the socialist countries have done away once and for all with the prejudice that they support only the peace initiatives of their own governments. There was applause for the peace initiatives of the Palme Commission of the Socialist International, «on creating a nuclear-free zone and a nuclear-free corridor in Europe» (SSMD) as well as for the initiative of the six states which is «an active and constructive contribution for freeing our planet from nuclear arms and force» (Dimitrov Komsomol).

Broad unanimity was noted also on the question of how security can and cannot be ensured today. Vladimir Axionov from the Leninist Komsomol said: «The security of one side must not be guaranteed at the cost of that of the other». Michael Guggemos of JUSO, stated: «The partnership of security is the only political conception which corresponds to the threats of today».

SDI — The main obstacle for nuclear disarmament

As a logical consequence a number of speakers expressed opposition to the arms race of the Reagan Administration and, in particular, to the «Star Wars» programme which was frankly qualified also by social democratic organizations as «the main obstacle to nuclear disarmament» (Labour Youth, Australia).

It does not serve, as emphasized by the Peruvian APRA youth «for purposes of defense, but, in

reality, it is a superoffensive not only because of its fatal consequences but also because of the astronomical profits it generates for the armament industry when selling these weapons». Although none of the participants in the seminar had illusions about finding a common answer to the question «Who is to be blamed for the arms race?», representatives of the newly independent countries and from liberation movements, apart from communist youth organizations, also took a clear position. They pointed to the social reasons for the escalating arms race which is particularly pursued by US imperialism «under the pretext of defending themselves from communism» (ANC).

Among the social democratic organizations the spectrum ranged, as expected, from «one cannot say whom to blame for it» (Socialist Youth Organization, Portugal) to the avowal of that «against the theory of both the superpowers, we hold imperialism responsible for the ever faster turning of the armament spiral and the current danger of war». («Falken», FRG.)

The examination of areas for joint actions resulted in a number of starting points for possible actions at national and international level in the field of concrete disarmament. Besides saying NO to extending the arms race into outer space, the demand for banning all nuclear tests was put forward. Numerous organizations hailed the Soviet moratorium, which was several times prolonged, as a proof of good will and demanded that the USA agree to a general test ban. MJCF (France), the Socialist Youth Organization of Australia, the Labour Youth of Australia and other organizations, especially from Asia, opposed the testing of nuclear weapons in the South Pacific. It became very evident that youth is consistently striving for the creation of zones free of nuclear and chemical weapons in the

various regions of the world. The joint initiative of the FDJ and JUSO to set up a joint working group for mobilizing youth for the promotion of the creating such zones in Central Europe was welcomed as evidence of the possibility of resolute joint actions. In the meantime, WFDY and IUSY joined this initiative which was included in the Programme of Action of the All-European Youth and Student Cooperation.

Peace is more than the absence of war

In the invitation to its seminar, the FDJ as host organization had already pointed to the need to discuss the question of safeguarding peace in its entire complexity which, due to the participation of many youth organizations from Asia, Africa and Latin America, became an imperative necessity. «We cannot talk about peace as long as there are hunger and a shortage of food in the developing countries, as long as more than two thousand million people are suffering from malnutrition and more than 500 million from chronic hunger», said Ajax Delgado, representative of the Sandinist Youth. The dialectic between peace, disarmament and development played an important role in most of the contributions to the discussion. In this connection, several tasks were mentioned resulting from this dialectic interaction: preventing a nuclear war from breaking out as the precondition for any development, halting the arms race and diverting the means wasted so far on it, to the «Third World», as well as the necessity of consistently carrying out programmes of development. The Leninist Komsomol expressed the opinion that an approach of the positions of communists and socialists on the conception of a

New International Economic Order could be of «enormous, and one can even say without exaggeration, decisive importance for the solution of the disgraceful economic and social problems in the developing countries». Many speakers drew attention to the dialectic relationship between peace and international security since the «economic welfare and development of the majority of countries will certainly strengthen the forces for safeguarding world peace» (Communist Youth Union of China).

The solidarity with the struggle for national and social liberation in Asia, Africa and Latin America, with the peoples of Nicaragua, El Salvador, South Africa, Namibia, East Timor, the West Sahara, the PLO and others proved as banner uniting of all currents of the youth movement represented. An example of this was when a press conference was spontaneously convened on the arrest of Clodomiro Almeyda, the former foreign minister of the Allende government, in Chile. Much criticism was directed at the «dirty and undeclared war being waged by the White House which is stained with the blood of murder» against Nicaragua, as the President of the Young Socialists of the FRG (JUSO) stigmatized the US aggression against the people of Sandino.

The Sandinist Youth was requested to speak at a peace meeting towards the end of the seminar on behalf of all participants — a clear expression of the recognition of the contribution the struggle for national and social liberation renders to the establishment of a lasting peace in the world. During the discussion, two main aspects were deliberated. On one side, the struggle for national liberation contributes to safeguarding peace by «isolating the forces of imperialism in many regions of the world» (Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Organization) and, thus, «having a great bearing on the develop-

ment of the international balance of forces and also on the decision of either surviving or perishing» (SDAJ).

On the other side, «peace is not divisible, and in order to safeguard peace, hunger and misery, injustice and oppression must be eliminated, since these are the scourges of the majority of the peoples on our earth» (UJSARIO). The representative of the ANC Youth Section declared that «the people living in our region have not known peace for too long. We have to bring them this lasting peace and we have to safeguard it...»

In this connection there was general agreement that «the first category of peace means the absence of a nuclear war and that this is the main guideline for our political actions. But the peace conception of communists and socialists goes beyond the absence of a nuclear war... We must also be aware of the fact that, if we strive for a peace of social justice, there will still be many struggles for national liberation on this path» (Socialist Youth of Austria). The Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Organization underlined in this respect that «when following the right path the revolution for national liberation and social progress in Asia, Africa and Latin America will be able to achieve victory under the conditions of peaceful

coexistence between states with different social systems».

The course of the discussion has shown that there is a fundamental agreement within the progressive international youth movement on the fact that the struggles for peace and liberation cannot be considered separately.

Berlin – important experience for future meetings

With regard to this it was clear from the beginning that a seminar like the one held in Berlin would be able to discuss the struggle for peace in its entire complexity, but not to discuss all questions comprehensively.

The contributions of the 149 youth organizations who took the floor contained many suggestions on possible follow-up meetings at international, regional or national level. It was generally considered that the Berlin seminar should be regarded as an important milestone in the result-oriented search for common points of view within the international youth movement with the aim of safeguarding peace, and with a special view to the 13th World Youth Festival.

Therefore, everybody agreed with Ebenhard Aurich, the First Se-

cretary of the Central Council of Free German Youth, the host organization, when he declared that «at this table we have come closer to each other. Now, we know each other better. We know more about how each of us thinks about peace and what each of us is going to do for it. Confidence has been strengthened. We have had debates on several opinions, listened to and discussed various proposals. In our opinion, it was extraordinarily useful for the dialogue to look for common points, to emphasize this and not to make existing differences an obstacle to our understanding. This corresponded also to our agreement to consider the complete minutes of this seminar as the Final Document of the International Youth Seminar on Peace. We have reached an important objective and gained new experience for future meetings of the democratic world youth movement.»

If, despite the agreement not to have a separate final document, a conclusion were to be drawn from the Berlin seminar, it would certainly be the following: Never before has there been greater conformity of opinions on the basic question of our time, the question of peace, than today among the currents of the international youth movement represented in Berlin.

Bernd Grässler



The JUSOs — integral part of the peace movement

Interview with Olaf Scholz, Vice-chairman of the Young Socialists (JUSO) in the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD)

— What is the place of the peace struggle in the current activities of the JUSOs?

— The peace struggle is one of the most important fields of action within our activities. In the last 10-15 years we have developed these activities into a real participation in the peace movement on the basis of developing political convictions. What we, as Young Socialists, are doing, is characterized by two points: the further improvement of our positions in the field of peace and security policy on one hand and on the other our active involvement in the peace movement in the FRG. We apply two important principles to this peace movement: the principle of independence from any political party, from states and others, and the plurality of different ideological and social convictions, whether concerning the peace policy or other issues. This is for us a very important aspect, since we believe that the peace movement has become more influential precisely because of this. We are of the opinion that we have to preserve this situation — the autonomy and the plurality.

— What are your main fields of activity in the peace work?

— Here I would like to mention first that we are opposing the American programme of militarizing outer space. We demand that there must be no participation from the FRG in the SDI project, that the participation of West German enterprises in the SDI project should be made impossible. Our second point is the demand for the dismantling of the Pershing II missiles and the

non-deployment of American cruise missiles. This demand is even more relevant since the former demand for a Zero-Option by those opposed to the arms race is becoming realistic in the current period. The third point, which is very important for us, is the discussion about conventional arms. On national level we stand for the limitation of the military budget, which we consider an important means for the prevention of a further armament escalation. We consider it necessary to reach international agreements too in this field.

Let me just mention two other points of special interest in our peace work: the anti-militarism and the discussions on conscientious objection. As an organization we do not give recommendations on this, but in fact the majority of our members stand for conscientious objection.

— Have you developed new forms of actions to attain these aims?

— Regarding our decisions which I have mentioned concerning the peace movement, it was not our intention to organize our own actions. Within the peace movement we participate in the development of very different forms of resistance against the armament policy. These include big mass demonstrations and big meetings of people who have been mobilized for peace as well as work on a smaller scale with information points in the streets. There are also blockades at places where armaments are located, especially at the places

of deployment of Pershing II or cruise missiles.

— Do you think that while carrying out such activities you have also found new partners?

— Here I want to underline once more that the peace movement in the Federal Republic has a specific coordinating structure, independent of parties, conventions and ideologies. This structure was able to mobilize broad strata of people for the peace movement and managed to become the genuine political expression of this movement. On the other hand, many other initiatives for peace have appeared in the FRG in recent years, such as the physicians or the scientists against nuclear war. Now we consider it important to include these groups into the peace movement.

For us as JUSOs it is important, that recently we have had more possibilities to develop international cooperation for peace policy on those issues where we have common understanding with other forces. Let me mention three examples: Jointly with the FDJ of the GDR we made the proposal to include in the programme of action of the All-European Youth and Student Cooperation a seminar on the problem of a nuclear weapon-free corridor in Central Europe — as proposed by the murdered Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme — and a seminar on a chemical weapon-free zone in Europe. Both issues have been discussed as well with the SSM of Czechoslovakia. As a second example we have proposed jointly with the Italian Communist Youth Federation an initiative on the occasion of the anniversary of the Chernobyl catastrophe, namely to issue an appeal against the nuclear threats in the world, especially against the American SDI programme, against the nuclear medium-range missiles of the Americans but also against the further civilian use of nu-

clear energy, since we have seen what horrible consequences nuclear energy could have. A third field of activity for us is our involvement in the European Nuclear Disarmament structure and in the respective Convention, which will be held in Coventry this year. We have proposed — also together with the FGCI — to organize there a special forum on youth for peace.

— Do you see any further possibilities to enlarge this international cooperation?

— I do think that there are further possibilities and that we have to search for manifold possibilities to develop new forms of cooperation, to develop a concrete policy for peace.

I do think that the discussions between social democratic youth unions and the youth organizations of the communist world movement in particular have been freed in the recent period

from many ideological reservations. The existing strategic differences between us — on questions of political democracy, on the way to socialist societies, especially in the industrially developed countries in Western Europe — must not prevent us from discussing any important issue. The fact that we are meeting and discussing has become a state of normality, and I find this important and correct. But now we have to undertake new, further steps to make the political content of the peace policy the main content of our actions. Here I want to mention once more our joint initiative with the FDJ. I consider this a very political initiative, since we are of the opinion that such a step can really serve the cause of disarmament. And such discussions, which reflect our common opinion that peace in Europe and in the world cannot be assured by military-technical means but only by political measures, I find useful and I think we have

to continue searching for such agreements.

— The JUSOs are a member of IUSY, the FDJ is a member of WFDY and both take an active part in the work of their international organizations. As you know, the 12th Assembly of WFDY last November issued an appeal for the creation of a world-wide anti-nuclear coalition. Do the JUSOs have a position on this?

— We do have a position on peace policy, as I have explained. I think that mainly real movements are of importance for the development of the discussions about peace issues in the world. Anyhow, I think that this appeal is an interesting point in our debates and we will contribute to this debate with the positions I have characterized here.

Uli Brockmeyer



P • A • L • E • S • T • I • N • E

It's certainly a strange game of numbers that numerous decisive events in the history of the Palestinian people took place in the 7th year of decades. This was the case for the Balfour Declaration in 1917 when the then Foreign Minister of the United Kingdom, Lord Balfour, by promising a «national homeland» for the Jews on the territory of Palestine largely influenced the chances of the Palestinians to establish their own independent state; for the adoption of the so-called «Partition Resolution» (UN Resolution No. 181) by the UN General Assembly in 1947; and for the 3rd Arab-Israeli war in 1967 in which Israel invaded Arab territories among others, the

rest of those where, according to the partition plan, the Palestinian state ought to have been established.

Besides these «full-decade» anniversaries, this year the world commemorates the 5th anniversary of the Israeli massacres in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps, as well. The Palestinians who throughout their history lived under occupation, and then were invaded by the Israelis, had their first real and legal possibility for self-determination in 1947 after the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution No. 181. What has happened since then? Why couldn't the Palestinian state be established? The events are summed up by the following chronicle:

1947, 29 November: The General Assembly of the UN adopted the «Partition Resolution» (UN Res. 181) according to which an independent Jewish and an Arab state and the special international directory of Jerusalem ought to have been established on the territory of the British mandate in Palestine. The Arab states did not accept the resolution.

1948, 14 May: End of the British mandate gained on 29 Sep-

tember 1923 from the League of Nations. The next day the Jewish state, called Israel, was established by the Jewish National Council at a mass meeting in Tel Aviv. The Soviet Union was among the first to acknowledge the new state. On 15 May Israel was attacked by Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Transjordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Israel was backed by the United States while the Arab countries were supported by Great Britain.

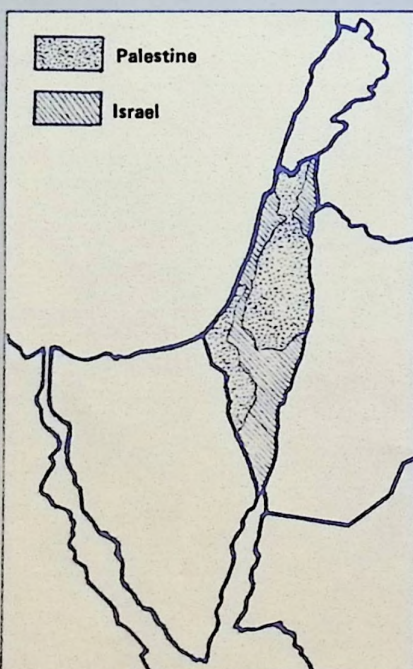
1948, 11 December: The General Assembly of the UN adopted Resolution 194 on the right of the Palestinians to return to their homeland saying that «the Palestinian refugees wishing to return to their homes to live in peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practical date»... This Resolution has been recalled annually by the General Assembly but has never been implemented.

1949, 24 February: The representatives of Egypt and Israel signed a cease-fire agreement on the island of Rhodes. Negotiations went on till 20 June as a result of which the territory of Israel increased to 20,500 sq kms instead of the 14,000 sq kms defined in the «Partition Resolution». Transjordan annexed the 5,600 sq kms of the West Bank, originally planned to be part of

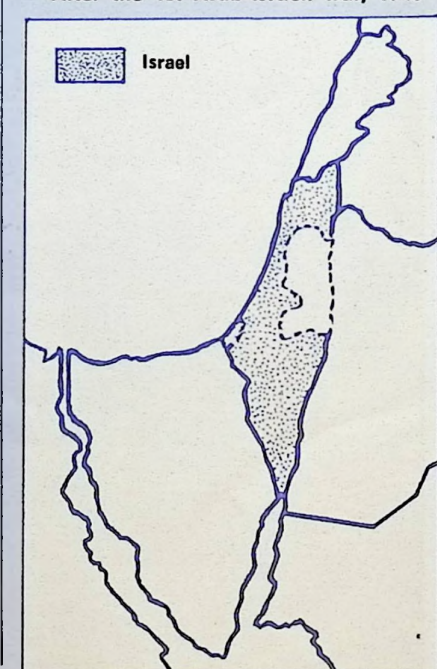
Arab Palestine, and took the name of Jordan. The Gaza Strip's 250 sq kms came under the authority of Egypt. The Western part of Jerusalem was controlled by Israel, the Eastern part by Jordan. About one million Palestinians had to leave their homeland. The refugees went to live mostly in Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon and Syria.

1949, 11 May: Israel became a member state of the United Nations.

Borders according to the UN 'Partition Plan'



After the 1st Arab-Israeli war, 1948



1956, 23 June: G. A. Nasser elected President in Egypt. One of the first measures of the Egyptian government was the nationalization of the Suez Canal three days later. Israel was denied the right to use it.

1956, 29 October: Israel launched an attack against Egypt. British and French troops also took part in the intervention. The US condemned the military actions. The Soviet Union announced its readiness to use force to help Egypt and restore peace if Britain and France did not cease to intervene in the region.

1956, 6 November: Cease-fire agreement signed and on 22 December the last French and British troops withdrawn. On 9 March 1957 the Israeli troops were also withdrawn from the territory of Egypt.

1964, 28 May: At a Palestinian national conference, convened in Jerusalem, the Palestinian National Charter was adopted and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) formed. Its first chairman Ahmed Shukeini with his statements against Israel served a pretext for the Zionists to launch the 3rd Arab-Israeli war in 1967.

1967, 5 June: In the «Six-Day War» Israel seized the West Bank and Gaza, Syria's Golan Heights and Egypt's Sinai peninsula.

1967, 22 November: The UN Security Council adopted the much discussed Resolution 242. It says among others:

«... the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East... should include the application of both the following principles:

(i) Withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from occupied territories of recent conflict;

(ii) ... respect for and acknowledgement of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area...»

The Security Council «affirms further necessity... for achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem...».

This resolution was accepted by Israel and Egypt but was rejected by the PLO because it obliterates the patriotic and national rights of the Palestinian

people and deals with the Palestinian cause as a refugee problem.



After the 3rd Arab-Israeli war, 1967

1969, 1-5 February: In Cairo at the session of the Palestine National Council Yasser Arafat, leader of Al Fattah, was elected chairman of the PLO.

1970, 16 September: The Jordanian regime launched a bloody war against the PLO forces with the aim of exterminating the Palestinian armed presence in Jordan.

1970, 27 September: An agreement was reached to end the so-called «Black September», the civil war between PLO fighters and Jordanian troops. The headquarters of the PLO were moved to Lebanon.

1970, 28 September: Nasser, the President of Egypt died of a heart attack. He was followed by Anwar Sadat, former Vice-President.

1971, 13-17 July: The Jordanian Army dealt another heavy blow at the Palestinian armed forces in the country. Out of around 2500 Palestinian fighters, 2200 were captured. King Hussein stated that the Palestinian question ceased to exist for him.

1973, 6-24 October: 4th Arab-Israel war. Around a month af-

ter a summit of the Presidents of Egypt and Syria and the King of Jordan, two fronts were opened in the North (Golan Heights) and in the South (around Suez). On 24 October a cease-fire was reached due to the Resolution of the UN Security Council.

1973, 26-28 November: The Arab League Summit in Rabat, Morocco (Iraq and Lybia did not take part) reiterated its resolution of 1969, saying that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Jordan refused to accept the resolution.

1973, 21 December: The opening of the peace conference on the Middle East. Gromyko, FM of the SU: All nations of the region should live in peace and security. The Middle East issue cannot be solved without the Palestinians and Israel's right to existence cannot be questioned. The basis for the solution is the UN Security Council resolution of 1967 (242).

1974, 17-18 March: OPEC lifted the oil embargo on the US despite the conditions for the release (as stated in the embargo resolution of the previous October: Israel should withdraw from all the occupied territories and ensure the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people) have not been realized.

1974, 29 May: Agreement to stop hostilities between Israeli and Syrian troops and withdraw to the lines of before the 1973 October war.

1974, 13 November: Arafat, Chairman of the PLO delivered a speech at the General Assembly of the UN demanding the establishment of a state on the former British Mandate where Christians, Moslems and Jews can live together.

1977, 19 November: Sadat in Jerusalem. The next day in his speech delivered in the Knesset he said that he was ready to give all the guarantees required by Israel if they withdrew from all the occupied Arab territories. The road to peace leads through the establishment of the Palestinian State. This visit ended without any results.

1977, 2-5 December: Summit meeting in Tripoli, Libya, with

the participation of Libya, Syria, Algeria, Iraq, PDR of Yemen and the PLO. They denounced the visit of Sadat to Israel. On 5 December Egypt severed diplomatic relations with the summit participants.

1978, 17 September: The signing of the Camp David accords by Begin, Sadat and Carter on «peace in the Middle East» and «on the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel». The PLO most firmly denounced the Camp David agreement.

1979, 26 March: The signing of the Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel in Washington. The Israelis were to withdraw from Sinai in five stages by 1982. Thus Egypt recovered all its territories of before 1967 except the Gaza Strip.

1979, 8 May: The 10th meeting of the Islamic Foreign Ministers. The membership of Egypt was suspended by a unanimously adopted resolution. The participants declared Jerusalem a Palestinian capital and sharply denounced the Camp David Agreement.

1979, 7 July: Arafat in Vienna conducted talks with Willy Brandt, President of the Socialist International and with Bruno Kreisky, Chancellor of Austria. Brandt's impression after the talks: The acknowledgement of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination does not mean the questioning of the existence of the State of Israel. Kreisky accepted the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

1980, 12-13 June: EEC summit in Venice. The resolution concerning the Middle East stated: Israel should leave the occupied territories.

1981, 6 October: Sadat is assassinated at a parade. The President of Egypt is Hosni Mubarak.

1982, 6 June: Israeli troops entered the territory of Lebanon and on 14 June they blockaded West Beirut, site of the headquarters of the PLO. The Israelis demanded the disarmament of the PLO and their evacuation from Lebanon. On 6 June the UN Security Council demanded that the Israeli army withdraw to the in-

ternationally acknowledged borders of the country.

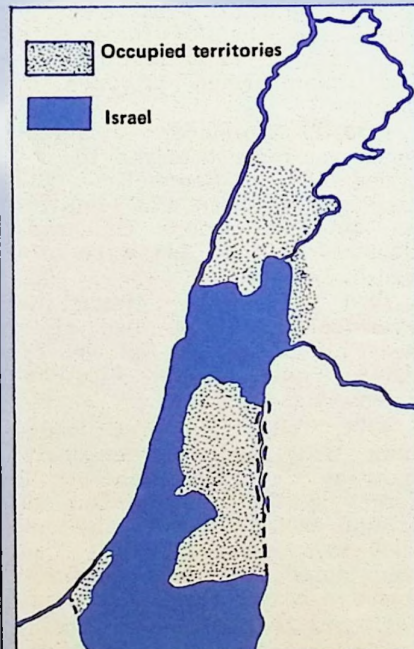
1982, 28-29 June: EEC summit in Brussels where a 40 million dollar loan to Israel was suspended because of invasion. They also demanded the withdrawal of the Israeli troops.

1982, 29 July: The Arab League officially announced that the PLO agreed to evacuate Palestinian fighters from West Beirut. Under a separate agreement between Lebanon and Syria some Syrian troops were also withdrawn. The Palestinians began to leave Beirut on 21 August and by 1 September together with their families and also counting the withdrawn Syrians, about 15 thousand people left the country. The operation was supervised by an international peace-keeping force consisting of 800 US, 800 French and 500 Italian soldiers who worked in cooperation with the 3000-strong Lebanese army.

1982, 15 September: Pope John Paul II received Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the PLO.

1982, 16-17 September: Massacres in two Palestinian refugee camps in West Beirut, Sabra and Shatila, committed by right-wing

After the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, 1982



Lebanese militias with the connivance of Israel.

1983, 17 May: After five months of negotiations with the mediation of US Secretary of State George Shultz, an agreement was reached between Lebanon and Israel on the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon. It was to come into force when both Syria and the PLO withdrew their forces from the country.

1983, 20 December: On Greek vessels under the UN flag Arafat and his 4000 fighters left Tripoli, Lebanon. The Palestinians were shipped to Algeria, Tunisia, North Yemen and Sudan.

1983, 22 December: Arafat's visit to Egypt. This was the first official high-level meeting between Egypt and the PLO since the Camp David accord. On 23 December the CC of the Al Fattah denounced the visit, saying that it was against the collective leadership. Neither the Al Fattah nor the PLO accepted the results of the talks.

1984, 8 February: US President Ronald Reagan commanded the US marines stationed in Lebanon as part of the international peace-keeping force to withdraw to the ships anchored off the Lebanese coast. The British troops also withdrew on the same day and the Italians left Beirut on 20 February. The US Navy completed the evacuation of Beirut on 26th.

1984, 5 March: The Lebanese government declared the separate peace deal with Israel, signed on 17 May 1983 but never ratified on the Lebanese Part, to be invalid. The reason for doing so was the failure of the agreement, they stated.

1985, 10-11 February: In Amman King Hussein and Yasser Arafat reached an agreement that they would make common efforts for the settlement of the Middle East problem. They offered peace to Israel in return for the occupied territories. Peace was to be achieved with the help of an international conference.

1985, 25 March: In Damascus a new Palestinian organization was formed: Palestinian Nation-

al Salvation Front, which the Al Fattah wing which opposes Arafat's policy also joined. They demanded abolition of the Arafat-Hussein agreement. The Executive Committee of the PLO denounced the formation of the new organization.

1986, 13 February: Arafat, Chairman of the PLO arrived in Cairo after a visit to Jordan lasting almost two weeks. Egypt tried to mediate in the debate between the PLO and Amman.

1986, 22 February: The Jordanian Parliament supported the decision of King Hussein to dismantle the cooperation agreement between Jordan and the PLO signed a year before.

1986, 1 March: King Hussein of Jordan declared in a press statement that the decision of the Arab League summit in 1974 recognising the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people should be reconsidered.

1986, 27 March: Israeli air raid against a Palestinian refugee camp in Lebanon two hours after a rocket had been fired on a town in Northern Israel from Lebanese territory.

1986, 4 April: After the end of the congress of the Shiite Amal movement in Lebanon the fighting resumed around the Shatila refugee camp. The Amal wanted to prevent the re-establishment of self-government in the camps and the infiltration of the pro-Arafat forces.

1986, 7 April: Israeli air raid in three waves against the Palestinian camp near Sidon, Lebanon. The Israelis claimed the camps were military bases of the Palestinian fighters.

1986, 27 April: Simon Peres, Israeli Prime Minister disclosed in a televised interview that they were conducting secret negotiations to settle the Middle East issue.

1986, 7 July: Jordan closed all the offices of Al-Fattah. The offices of other organizations belonging to the PLO continued to operate.

1986, 15-19 July: In Tunis, the extraordinary meeting of the CC of the PLO, convened to work

out the position concerning the relation towards Jordan, ended with no result.

1986, 22 July: Two-day visit of the Israeli Prime Minister to Morocco. Peres conducted talks with King Hassan who raised the issue of an international conference for the settlement of the Palestinian question. Though the visit did not bear fruit as Israel was not willing to acknowledge the PLO, the Arab world received the visit with astonishment. Syria severed diplomatic relations with Rabat.

1986, 28 July: The Israeli Foreign Minister Jitzach Shamir declared in a press statement that he was ready to take the risk of the establishment of a Palestinian state if the autonomy proposed by Israel for the Gaza Strip and in the West Bank, would lead to it.

1986, 3 August: The Israeli Prime Minister Simon Peres received 25 Palestinian public figures, mainly mayors from the occupied territories.

1986, 10 August: The Israeli Air Force launched an attack by helicopters and rockets on the buildings of the leadership of two Palestinian refugee camps near Sidon in Southern Lebanon.

1986, 6 September: Three Palestinian organizations: the Al-Fattah, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Palestinian Communist Party announced in Beirut that at their joint meeting in Prague held on 1-5 September they rejected the Palestinian-Jordanian agreement of February 1985 and that they do not accept the UN Security Council Res. No 242. In Tunis, Abu Iyad, the deputy of Arafat welcomed the declaration stating that it opens the way towards Palestinian unity.

1986, 3 October: In Tyre, Southern Lebanon, fighting resumed near the refugee camps between Palestinian and Shiite Amal fighters.

1986, 6 October: The Israeli Air Force attacked the headquarters of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine north of Tripoli, Lebanon.

1986, 21 October: The US Administration refused the request

of the new Israeli Prime Minister that Washington close the PLO offices in the USA.

1986, 2 November: For the first time in two years a joint statement was published in Damascus by the Palestinian Communist Party and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. It contained proposals for the reunification of the PLO:

— official and open rejection of the Palestinian-Jordanian agreement of 1985;

— to sever political relations with Egypt;

— the refusal of Res. No 242 of the UN Security Council.

1987, 14 February: In Southern Lebanon the Shiite Amal movement lifted the blockade of two Palestinian refugee camps in Rashidye and in Borg-el Barajne where the supply of food and medicines was restored. Previously the Palestinians fulfilled the condition of Amal to evacuate the village of Maghdushe.

1987, 25 February: The Israeli Foreign Minister began his 3-day negotiations in Cairo, as Prime Minister Jitzach Samir said without any authority. Peres stated that he would agree with the convening of an international conference for the settlement of the Middle East issue which would lead to negotiations with the participation of all parties concerned.

1987, 5 April: The first transport of food reached the Palestinian refugee camps of Shatila and Borg-el-Barajne in Beirut. The military blockade by Syria and the Amal movement was still in force as armed Palestinians could not leave the camps.

1987, 20 April: The opening of the 18th session of the Palestinian National Council, with the participation of the major organizations mainly Fatah, PFLP, PDLF, PCP. The minor pro-Syrian organizations boycotted the meeting. This National Council abrogated the Amman agreement of 1985 and reevaluated relations with Egypt. The Palestinian Communist Party was elected to the National Council and to the EC. Yasser Arafat was elected Chairman.

THE PALESTINIANS

Statistically speaking, the Palestinians currently number a total of 5 million. They are distributed as follows: 700,000 inside 1948 Occupied Territories; 1,300,000 inside West Bank and Gaza; 1,200,000 in Jordan; 400,000 in Lebanon; 400,000 in Syria; 800,000 in other Arab states and 200,000 in the rest of the world.

THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO)

The Palestine Liberation Organization was formed in 1964. In 1968 the PLO was reformed: the commando groups became members of the PLO. The Palestinian Charter was revised. Political programmes were developed and a commando wing was developed.

MAJOR INSTITUTIONS OF THE PLO:

The Palestine National Council (PNC)

The PNC is the supreme political and decision making body of the Palestinian nation. It is considered to be the Parliament in exile. All Palestinian institutions, trade unions, resistance groups and community groups have the right to elect members of the council according to a quota.

The National Fund

The first National Council resolved that a Palestinian National Fund be established to be managed by a board of directors. Revenues from the fund come from the following resources: (1) a fixed tax levied on Palestinians by the Arab governments in whose countries they reside; (2) financial contributions by the Arab governments and peoples; (3) loans and contributions from friendly nations; (4) any additional source approved by the Council.

Social, Educational and Information Bodies

The last ten years have seen an increasing involvement of the PLO in the broad social and human concerns of the Palestinian people in exile. The institutions set up to deal with this are various: they concern trade union organisations, medical aid, education and information. In the field of medical services, the major institution affiliated to the PLO is the PALESTINE RED CRESCENT SOCIETY (PRCS) which is a humanitarian organisation similar to the RED CROSS rendering services to civilian and military, regardless of nationality or religion.

Extracts from the Ten Point programme approved by the Palestine National Council in 1974

The key points of the ten points are as follows:

1. The assertion of the PLO position regarding

Resolution 242 is that it obliterates the patriotic and national rights of our people and deals with our people's cause as a refugee problem. Therefore, dealing with this resolution on this basis is rejected at any level of Arab and international dealings including the Geneva Conference.

2. The PLO will struggle by every means to liberate Palestinian land, and to establish the people's national, independent authority on every part of Palestinian land to be liberated. This requires more changes in the balance of power in favour of our people and their struggle.

UN Resolution 3236: Question of Palestine 22 November 1974

The General Assembly,

Having considered the question of Palestine,

Having heard the statement of Palestine Liberation Organization, the Representative of the Palestinian People,

Recognising that the Palestinian people is entitled to self determination in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations,

1. Reaffirms the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine including:

- a) The right to self determination without external interference;

- b) The right to national Independence and Sovereignty.

4. Recognition that the Palestinian people is a principle party in the establishment of a just and durable peace in the Middle East;

5. Further recognises the right of the Palestinians to regain its rights by all means in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

7. Requests the Secretary General to establish contacts with the PLO on all matters concerning the Question of Palestine.

UN Resolution 3379: ZIONISM AND RACISM 10 November 1975

The General Assembly

Recalling its resolution 1904 of 20 November 1963. Proclaiming the United Nations Declaration on the elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, and in particular, its affirmation that any doctrine of racial differentiation or superiority is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous...

Determines that Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination.

Resolution on Palestine

The 11th WFDY Assembly held in Prague, Czechoslovakia, from the 3rd to the 9th of June, 1982, taking into consideration the facts that

— the Palestinian problem is the main cause in the Middle East conflict,

— this problem is a direct result of the joint conspiracy of US imperialism, Zionism and Arab reaction which has led to the occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories, has created the Palestinian refugee problem, and has been responsible for the loss of life, property, security and peace of the Palestinian Arab people,

— US imperialism, contrary to its allegations, is not and cannot be entitled to solve the Palestinian problem, and that it is, in fact, trying to put an end to it at the expense of the Palestinian people and in favour of the US-Zionist reactionary regional and global interests,

— the US sponsored Camp David Accords, the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty, the self-rule and the civil administration which the Israeli occupation authorities are trying to impose on the West Bank and Gaza Strip are directed against the Palestinian people and all the progressive and democratic forces in the region, making peace more unreachably than at any other time and encouraging Israeli military aggression and political intransigence.

The participants in the 11th WFDY Assembly state that

— genuine, just and lasting peace cannot be achieved in the region without the unconditional Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories and the realization of the Palestinians' inalienable national rights, especially their right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent state under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people,

— the Palestinian revolution is an inseparable part of the world liberation movements, which enjoys the sympathy, support and recogni-

tion of all progressive democratic, peace-loving forces and states of the world, above all the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries.

The participants in the 11th WFDY Assembly vehemently condemn:

— the continuation of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian and Arab territories and the expansionist aggressive policy of Israel,

— the aggressive arbitrary measures and actions carried out by the Israeli authorities against the Palestinian people under their occupation, the policy of collective punishment, imprisonment, assassination, deportation, educational and cultural sabotage, aggression against religious places, torture and the violation of human rights,

— the incessant US-encouraged Israeli military aggression against the Palestinian and Lebanese peoples in Lebanon, especially the criminal air raid against Al-Fakhani in Beirut and other civilian positions in Lebanon,

— the annexation of Jerusalem, the Israeli measures to change the historical and cultural features of that city and the announcement by the Israeli cabinet that Jerusalem is to be the eternal capital of Israel,

— the settlement policy of the Israeli occupation authorities and the confiscation of Arab lands.

The participants in the 11th WFDY Assembly hail:

— the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation, their uprising and resistance against the so-called self-rule and civil administration, and the distinguished role of the patriotic mayors of the occupied territories,

— the heroic struggle of the Palestinian armed revolution,

— the strategic unity of struggle between the Palestinian revolution and the Lebanese National Movement and Syria directed against US imperialism, Zionism, reaction and the isolationist forces,

— the UN General Assembly resolutions stating that Zionism is a form of racism and that Israel is not a peace-loving country.

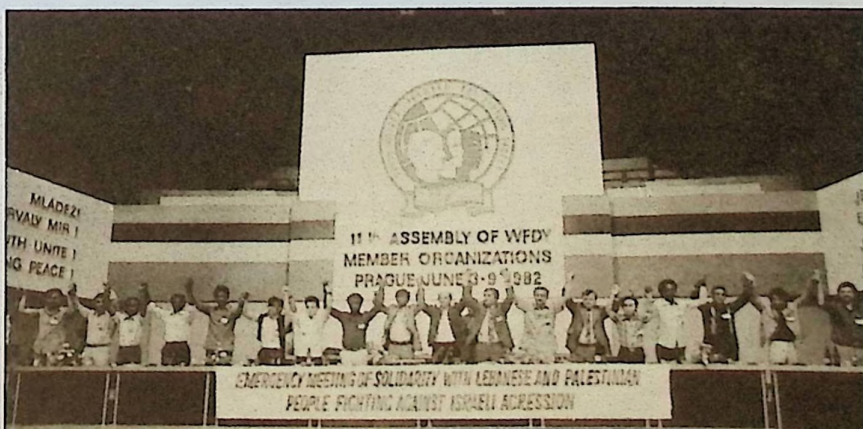
The participants in the 11th WFDY Assembly appeal to all the youth of the world and their organizations to:

— promote solidarity with the just cause and struggle of the Palestinian people inside and outside the occupied territories,

— organize functions and activities in solidarity with the PLO, the people, youth and students of Palestine,

— launch campaigns for the release of the Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli jails,

— organize a consciousness-raising campaign that will counteract the Zionist propaganda and underline the danger it represents to the peace of the region and to world peace.



STATEMENT

on the 29th of November – International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people

29th November is annually observed as the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

The World Federation of Democratic Youth, in marking this occasion, reiterates its principled position in solidarity with the just struggle of the Palestinian youth and people against imperialism, Zionism and reaction, for the achievement of their inalienable national rights, the top of which is their right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent state on their national soil under the leadership of the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

The occasion this year coincides with the Assembly of WFDY member organizations who have been second to none in giving all forms of support within their power to the Palestinian cause, the core of the Middle East crisis and the central cause of the Arab people.

Next year we will be marking 40 years since the UN General Assembly resolution on the partition of Palestine according to which a Palestinian state should have come into existence, and 20 years since the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in 1967. This fact in itself underlines the intransigence of US imperialism and Zionist Israel and their scorn of international laws and denial of the national rights of the five million Palestinians, a third of whom are suffering under the Israeli military occupation and its poli-

cies of suppression, deportation, collective punishment, torture, discrimination, cultural deprivation, land confiscation and the mushrooming of Israeli settlements all over the occupied territories.

Two-thirds of the Palestinian people are dispersed in the neighbouring Arab countries and all over the world suffering from the US-Israeli genocidal wars, and their policy of state terrorism and also from the harassment of the Arab reactionary regimes and horrendous aggressions, provocations and massacres in their refugee camps.

WFDY is of the belief that a comprehensive solution of the Palestinian question, and a just and durable peace in the Middle East can be achieved by a fully empowered international confer-

ence under the auspices of the United Nations with the participation on an equal footing of the PLO together with all partners in the conflict and the five permanent members of the Security Council. All other separate deals and agreements not only were proved futile but also aggravated the situation in the region, resulted in more aggressive actions and wars and endangered the real chances for peace in the region and consequently in the world.

WFDY takes this opportunity to hail the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people under the leadership of the PLO and appeals to all its member and friendly organizations to further strengthen their solidarity and multiply their support to this struggle.



Five years after the Israeli invasion

On the eve of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon at the beginning of June 1982, the Zionist general Sharon assured his men that the invasion of the Lebanese territory would be a walkover for them, little more than a sightseeing trip to this beautiful country!

On the 4th of June, 1982 the Zionist army in fact began the execution of its plan for «Galilee's security» with air raids on military and civilian positions in the south of the country and even on Beirut. Then the Israeli army invaded the Lebanese territories, laying waste everything in its path, destroying whole villages, bombing towns, not even sparing schools, hospitals and factories, thus wiping out the infrastructure of the Lebanese economy. The aggressors also perpetrated massacres of the innocent population, making no distinction between men and women, young and old.

For Lebanese and Palestinian peoples it was the beginning of a sad chapter in their contemporary history. Israel set up detention camps (similar to the concentration camps of the Nazis), including the infamous Ansar camp, to detain, torture and liquidate thousands of Palestinian and Lebanese patriots. The Israeli occupation authorities refused to give them the status of prisoners of war. When the Ansar camp was evacuated in 1985, 1167 patriotic prisoners were transferred to the notorious Atlit prison in Israel, in violation of the 4th Geneva Convention adopted in 1949 of which Israel is also a signatory. The Israeli policy in the occupied Lebanese territories took the form of systematic and intensive repression to achieve the form of «state terrorism» practised by the whole Zionist administration of Tel Aviv.

— What were the motives of the Israeli invasion in 1982?

Lebanon represented the second stage of the capitulatory process of the Camp David agreements. Then the targets of the invasion were actually Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese: that is, to crush Palestinian resistance, to force the Syrian troops to withdraw from Lebanon, to liquidate the Lebanese patriotic and progressive forces and to instal the fascist party of the Phalangists at the head of the Lebanese state.

Another important aim of the invasion was to appropriate the waters of the Lebanese river Litani in the south of the country. Many people were astonished by the scale of the Israeli offensive, for the Zionist plans went beyond the «Biblical framework». The Israeli state was not satisfied with the domination of the territories claimed on the basis of ancient history or the Bible. It wants to expand its economic and military empire over the whole of the Middle East.

In reality this Israeli power is due to the fact that Israel is and will continue to be the spearhead of imperialist policy in the region. This is also the result of the US-Zionist strategic alliance.

Thus we need to define clearly the nature of the Arab-Israeli conflict. It is not a question of the recognition or non-recognition of the Hebrew State, nor is it a question of a «peace treaty». The essence of this conflict is the struggle between the national liberation movement of the Arab peoples, social progress and unity on the one hand and imperialism on the other, of which Israel constitutes an advanced military base in the region. The siege of Beirut by the aggressive Zionist army which lasted three months in the summer 1982 was met with a heroic defence on the part of the Lebanese and Palestinian patriots. The departure of the PLO forces was followed by the massacre at Sabra and Shatila and by the entry of the Israeli army into Beirut and by the US marines and their NATO allies, namely, the French, the Italian and the British. Under the cover of the Israeli tanks, a Phalangist president was elected to the head of the State, thus opening a sad

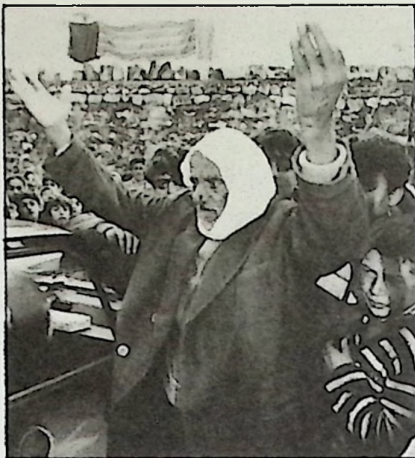
Israel is an absolute evil says the slogan of the demonstrators



new period in the history of the Lebanese people. The Phalangist regime, after signing the capitulatory treaty of the «17th of May» (similar to that of Camp David), turned its back on all peace solutions presented by the progressive forces of Lebanon and by Syria and strengthened its political, military and economic links with the USA.

During this time, South Lebanon suffered the bitter experience of Israeli occupation, with the occupiers using every fascist and inhuman method in the face of the local population. These were nothing short of Nazi practices. Systematic and punitive actions were organized against the villages in search of patriots; fields and plantations were destroyed on a large scale. Patriots and «suspects» were subjected to psychological and physical tortures. In the face of this wave of repression and general annihilation of life in the regions occupied by Israel, on the 16th of September 1982, the Lebanese patriotic and progressive forces proclaimed the birth of the Lebanese National Resistance Front (FRNL) having the liberation of the country as its principal goal. Despite the monstrous Zionist practices and with many sacrifices, the heroic militants of FRNL achieved historic victories. The FRNL operations (a total of 13 in Beirut against the Israeli army of occupation) pursued the Zionist enemy everywhere in the occupied regions.

This struggle obliged the Israeli enemy to withdraw unconditionally from the major part of the occupied Lebanese territories. The FRNL operations against the Zionist occupation forces advanced to a qualitatively and quantitatively higher level. The FRNL struggle constituted and still constitutes an exemplary experience of the peoples' liberation struggle and a new dawn of the Arab national liberation movement's struggle. All the patriotic and progressive forces in Lebanon, including the communists,



Protest against Israel led by a sheikh

played an important and leading role within the framework of FRNL thus inciting all the strata of the population in the south to raise up against the presence of the Israeli neo-Nazis in Lebanon. At present, Israel still occupies a frontier strip in South Lebanon. But the FRNL is continuing a bitter struggle to complete the country's liberation.

At present, the country is going through an acute crisis at every level.

The fascist regime of the Phalangist party is aggravating the socio-economic crisis as the State is speculating in the dollar, to the detriment of the Lebanese pound. In the summer of 1983 the dollar stood at five Lebanese pounds; by the summer of 1986 it had exceeded 100 Lebanese pounds! Investments in industry declined. A great part of the labour force is unemployed. The number of workers fell from 150,000 in 1975 to 60,000 in 1986. Each year 36,000 young people enter active life, and only 5,000 of them have any hope of finding a job! Many of them go abroad. The perspectives of the socio-economic struggle are the perspectives of a change in the political system.

The fundamentalist movement culminated after the annulment of the «tripartite agreement» (signed by one part of the Leban-

ese Forces, by Syria and by the patriotic forces) when the obscurantist forces demanded the creation of an «Islamic republic» in Lebanon. In order to put this separatist and confessional plan into practice, the obscurantist forces attacked the Communists, who are the most firmly opposed to the participation of Lebanon and the confessional plans. Michel Waked, communist paediatrician, Khalil Naous, Souheil Tawile and Dr. Hussein Mroue, members of the Lebanese Communist Party's Central Committee were victims of these attacks.

In face of the Phalangist and confessional plans, the patriotic and progressive forces drew up a patriotic and national programme to solve the Lebanese crisis on a democratic basis.

A question arises: will there be lasting peace in Lebanon? The recent events in West Beirut in February 1987 essentially brought the patriotic and progressive forces on the one hand into confrontation with the confessional (for example Amal movement) and obscurantist forces on the other. These events proved that lasting peace in Lebanon is only possible after the unconditional withdrawal of the Israeli enemy from Lebanese territories and after the establishment of a non-confessional, united and democratic state in Lebanon. The Syrian army and the Lebanese regular army have taken the responsibility of bringing law and order to West Beirut.

In 1987, the FRNL militants are ready to continue their struggle to drive out the Israeli army and to open the way for this democratic change. Neither the 6th Fleet of US imperialism nor the Zionist army, nor the Phalangist fascists have been able to prevent historic victories by the patriotic and progressive forces. After 12 years of civil war in Lebanon will there be peace at last?

Lebanese Democratic Youth Union

The «Valley of the Calls»

The «Valley of the Calls» in the occupied Golan Heights is day after day the scene of a show that strikes one as grotesque. It is a special kind of resistance with which the inhabitants of the mountain village of Majdal Shams steadfastly renounce the Israeli attempts to seize their land and subjugate them to the Jewish state.

For 20 years barbed wire and minefields have separated the inhabitants of Majdal Shams from their family members and friends who at that time fled before the approaching Israeli troops or later were forced into Syria.

Ever since, they have been gathering every day at a field path that runs between two hills. On one hill, on «their» side lies an Israeli outpost. On the other, a few kilometres away a Syrian outpost is situated. The valley in between becomes the «Valley of the Calls» when on the other side their relatives and friends, as tiny as ants, arrive for their «chat».

The special acoustic conditions in the mountains make it possible to understand each other and where the voice is not strong enough they use megaphones and portable loudspeakers.

Only 600 of the exactly 6,000 inhabitants of Majdal Shams fled in 1967 before the Israelis. Majdal Shams was not gripped by the panic which made some 100,000 inhabitants of the Golan Heights leave their hometowns and villages which they have not seen again since then. The land of these refugees was long ago seized and converted into «property of the state of Israel». About 40 Israeli settlements have been established and for the remaining 15,000 original inhabi-

tants Israeli laws have been introduced — as part of the annexation of this strategically important region.

Hayel Abu Jabal, around 40 years of age, needs no megaphone. He makes signs and calls to draw the attention of the people standing on the opposite side. «One of them is my friend Hamed Halawi,» he tells me. «We meet each other here every week at the same time,» he adds as a figure on the other side of the armistice line is motioning with his arms. Then follows a prolonged exchange of news and family affairs, without paying any attention to the Israelis assiduously listening in behind us (and the Syrians on the other side), as well as some joking which produces laughter.

Meanwhile Hamed Halawi's father, sister and brother have joined us. Their resounding talk turns to more serious themes. Halawi senior has to use the megaphone. The loud joking in the beginning, Hayel Abu Jabal explains later, served only to overcome the frustrations that exist on both sides.

«When I was last together with Hamed we were still boys. That was on June 14, 1967. Only now, a few months ago, I saw him on Syrian television. Tears came to my eyes and I would have liked to embrace him.» Telephone connections with Syria have been cut off since the Israeli occupation, he tells me. The only connection possible is by letter via the Red Cross. «But I do not use this way. I do not want to speak to my friends through letters,» Hayel Abu Jabal says.

Majdal Shams — together with three other places — is one of the few villages that have not

been abandoned by their inhabitants or destroyed by the Israelis. Abu Jabal sees the reasons for that in the fact that the people here are attached more closely to their land, while the rest of the Golan population had lived under more »feudal« relations and not developed such a high political awareness. An acquaintance of Abu Jabal, Salman Braik gives the following explanation: «In Majdal Shams and in the neighbouring communities of Masadi, Bokhata and Ein Kiniya, under the rule of the Ottomans and the French we learned one lesson above all: to stay on the land and never to abandon our property regardless of what happens». Braik who firmly rejects the designation of Druze for the inhabitants of the Golan insists that they are Arab Syrians. He admits though that in Majdal Shams there is only a single non-Druze, a Christian. For the most part it was the Druze people who heeded that lesson of history and did not leave their land, while large numbers of Moslems and Christians were driven into exile.

Druze territories exist not only in Lebanon and Syria but also in Israel, although they have hardly any contact with the rest of the believers in the Golan Heights.

Those who remained in the Golan Heights have meanwhile rejected all Israeli attempts to integrate them and to force Israeli citizenship on them.

«Today the Israeli law is valid here, but we consider ourselves to be Arab Syrians under Israeli occupation,» says one of the crowd who asks to remain anonymous. We have our resistance against the occupation, but we use purely political, not violent

means. Nobody is shooting at Israeli soldiers. We are far too few and too isolated to use violent means».

Las year some people set fire to Israeli outposts and mined the road of the armistice line. They captured some Israeli weapons and destroyed them. But they were arrested and are now awaiting trial before a military court. Altogether there are some 25 political prisoners from this area, he said. He himself had been imprisoned several times because he kept up contacts with the government of his country.

The Israeli occupation power showed the inhabitants of the Golan its brutal face openly for the first time in the year 1982. It was then that the population prevented Israeli citizenship being forced upon them by staging general strike that lasted six months. The Israelis who had previously engaged mainly in a policy of persuasion gave this up after the general strike. «Now they don't want us any longer

as Israeli citizens,» Salam Braik said laughingly.

The population of Golan regards itself as wholly Syrian; each year they celebrate April 14, the day of Syria's independence from France.

In fact the question of traditional party affiliation may be irrelevant in an area where the connection to the Syrian hinterland is effectively cut off and where contacts to political groups in Israel are equally excluded because of the refusal to accept Israeli citizenship. Several people questioned did talk about «three equally strong main trends: the sympathisers of the Syrian Arab National Baath Party, the Panarab Nasser followers and the Marxists who maintain good relations with the Communist Party of Israel».

These groups have an influence particularly among the young generation and the Marxists are experiencing a strong growth among the common people, without, however, planning the

founding of a party of their own. The contest for winning «souls» takes place in peaceful discussions, since one common aim clearly prevails in the political work: the fight against the occupation. Every inch of land is being defended and even in the «Valley of the Calls» between minefields and barbed wire the landowners place special emphasis on regular sowing and harvesting so as not to supply the Israelis with a pretext for the confiscation of «unused land». Instead the Israelis often claim «reasons of security» in order to expropriate Arab land.

All families are in one way or another bound to the land; they are peasants or engaged in related occupations and even in the valley behind Majdal Shams apples are still being harvested. Harvesting here has almost become a political weapon, an expression of steadfastness like the calls which re-echo over the apple trees through the valley.

Klaus Larsen

Israeli troops on the Golan Heights in 1967 (archive)



PLATOON-WAR IS HELL

Platoon is the first honest movie about the Vietnam war to appear in a very long time. Unlike the racist and jingoistic fantasy *Rambo*, *Platoon* makes no attempt to glorify the war or to justify the role of the United States.

Filmed from the viewpoint of an ordinary «grunt», the film does not shrink from showing the grisliest and most unsavory aspects of the war: American soldiers murdering Vietnamese civilians, getting high on drugs, being attacked by ants and flies, being blown apart by booby traps and even killing other Americans. *Platoon* is graphic testimony that «war is hell».

But as I was watching this movie, I noticed that some members of the audience were not getting the point. In fact, they sounded as if they were watching *Rambo*, whispering obscenities at the Vietnamese troops and cheering as they were mowed down. And I wondered how a movie so different from *Rambo* could have virtually the same effect.

I think the reason is that *Platoon* and *Rambo*, for all their differences, have some basic similarities. Both consist mainly of explicit violence. Both were written primarily to ex-

plore the psychological phenomenon known as «Vietnam Vets Syndrome». And most important, both films ignore the real reason why the Vietnam war was a military, political and moral failure for the United States.

This reason was well stated by President Eisenhower in his book *Mandate for Change*: «I have never talked ... with a person knowledgeable in Indochinese affairs who did not agree that 80 per cent of the population would have voted for the Communist Ho Chi Minh as their leader».

The fact was that the Vietnamese people wanted their country united under the National Liberation Front, an anti-colonial, pro-socialist movement which had liberated the country from the Japanese during World War II. Beginning in 1945, France, the former colonial power there, waged a war with US support to re-establish their control, and in 1954, a pro-US regime was in place in the South. But the stiff determination of the people to restore their choice of government proved to be the death knell for the United States intervention.

Platoon deals with none of this,

although it was the central fact of the Vietnam war. As a result, the conflict between the American soldiers and the Vietnamese people, which is the basis of the movie's plot, makes no sense.

The movie implies that the real conflict was not between the Americans and the Vietnamese, but among the Americans themselves.

«I realized that we were really fighting ourselves during the war, but we were not the enemy,» says the narrator at the very end of the film. This is a dangerous rationalization for the US defeat in Vietnam, and a message that undermines *Platoon's* effectiveness as an anti-war statement.

One scene in the movie, however, redeems the whole. The narrator, who is a college student, remarks on the predominantly working-class composition of the American forces. At one point an Afro-American soldier asks him, «What are you doing here? It seems like you have an education». The narrator replies, «The poor are always fighting the rich man's battles. I thought it was only fair that the rich carry their share». «We have here a crusader,» the soldier replies scornfully. «You'd have to be rich in the first place to think like that».

In real life, many Vietnam veterans realized that the way to take the side of poor and working people was to oppose the war. Many continue to be actively involved in the struggle for peace. If the movie had shown this, it would better deserve its claim to be a realistic account of what happened.

Kermit Snelson

DYNAMIC

(Magazine of the YCL of USA)





The dream has not died

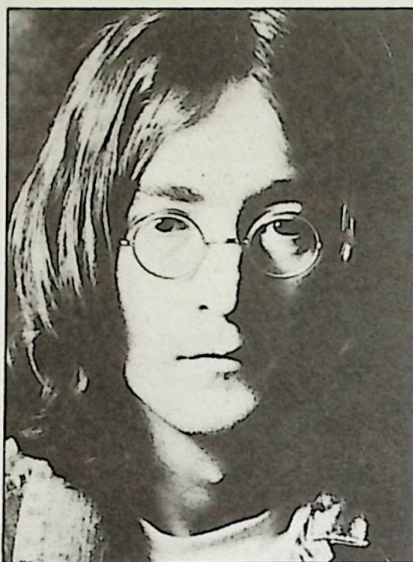
«It has been poetry's world-wide victory. In a century when those who obtain more votes, those who score more goals, the wealthiest men and the most beautiful women are the winners, it is stimulating to see the shock the death of a man who simply sang of love has produced. It is the apotheosis of those who never win,» wrote García Márquez on Lennon's death.

After that, came the unavoidable cult of death that is so widespread in our society: tens of magazines announcing as exclusive «the latest interview», the unknown recordings (so unknown that they wouldn't have been recognized by Lennon either), sale of buttons with his picture, photos, posters, etc. The great myth industry tried to sell us an image of Lennon as bland as possible, as detached as possible from the real Lennon, from Lennon as man, as lover, as rebel, as politician. An image Lennon tried to destroy throughout his life.

The Beatles

Behind the hysterical shouts of the fans of the group who changed the history of music, those who had ears for it could hear the rebellious and despairing poetry of a thin man with a fringe, who had discovered a new style. Previously songs said: «Baby, don't leave me» or «I miss you». Lennon wrote about credible stories, about love like

Six years after the murder of John Lennon



yours or mine, besides reflecting the society of his time in a nearly journalistic style.

Of all the members of the group, Lennon was always the most likely to be loved, the one who was nearest to the people, the most irreverent one, who dared to say, during a performance attended by the Queen: «You people in the cheap seats, applaud, and those in the stalls can rattle their jewellery».

Furthermore, he was the only one of the four who gave back the Order of the British Empire in protest over the British intervention in the Vietnam and Biafra wars.

After the Beatles' split, John came down from the ivory tower where producers and advisers had tried to keep him. For him, his life and his music were closely linked. As he became more involved in his struggle for peace, this was reflected in his music. Lennon composed «Give peace a chance», with the idea that it could be sung during marches. He succeeded and it became a sort of anthem in demonstrations over Vietnam. He continued to sing

of love, but at the same time he supported the struggles of the racial minorities, of women, and denounced injustice in all its forms.

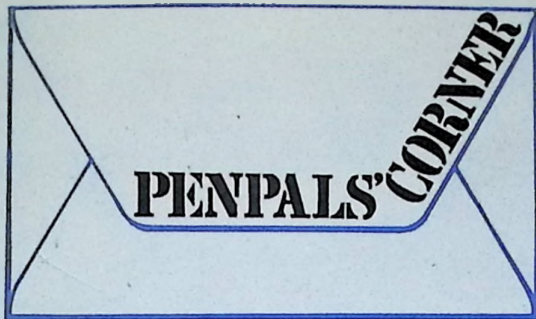
The return that could not be

John Lennon had withdrawn from public life in the last five years. He wanted to have time to spend with his wife and son. Just as he was «starting over again», Mark David Chapman perpetrated the crime. «Somebody» did not want to run the risk.

Lennon influenced several generations of musicians and modified the present century's popular music (those who have not been influenced by him raise your hands).

For many people his death was like the loss of an elder brother: he had always been there somewhere. For others it was the death of a dream, of an illusion, of thinking that the world can be changed by songs. Lennon himself, when The Beatles broke up, said: «Nothing has really changed. South Africa is still being sold arms, people are still being killed in the streets and there are people living in poverty, with rats crawling over them. Nothing has changed. Some kids let their hair grow and we got rich. The dream ended».

But if we want, the dream can continue. It is up to us to keep it alive. To give peace a chance, to struggle so that woman is no longer the nigger of the world, to keep thinking that there's no heaven. You may say I'm a dreamer. But I'm not the only one.



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US \$ 10 or equivalent Single copy US \$ 1

Eng. sz. III/IFJ (7) 1976.

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