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ISRAEL

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RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE POLITICAL BUREAU
OF THE C. P. OF ISRAEL, ON THE STAND OF THE
LEADERSHIP OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA

The Political Bureau of the C. P. of I., at its meeting of 4.9.1966, adopted the following resolution :

The Political Bureau notes with concern the international tension resulting from the intensification and the expansion of the American imperialists' aggression in Vietnam and adjacent areas. The aggressive war being waged by the U. S. government in South-East Asia has the effect of stepping up tension in other parts of the world, too, including our own region — the Middle East — and carries the threat of an universal nuclear conflagration.

Since the crimes committed against humanity by the German Nazis no more ferocious crimes have been perpetrated than those being carried out by the American imperialist forces in Vietnam. Despite the incessant flow of reinforcements being brought in by the U.S. invaders; despite the savage bombing raids on the territory of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam — despite all these, the valourous Vietnamese people, in both the North and the South, are causing the aggressors one defeat after another. In addition to the military defeats it is incurring, U.S. imperialism is also suffering political setbacks. Never before was American imperialism so isolated, never before did the peoples of the world feel such burning hate for it. Never before, since the end of World War II was there such a deep rift in the imperialist camp, with even a big power such as France coming out against American aggression in Vietnam. It is many years since the U.S. itself has seen the activity of such a broad mass movement as the one now fighting against the Johnson Administration's criminal war in Vietnam.

This state of affairs calls most urgently for unity of action between all Socialist states, all Communist Parties, all anti-imperialist and peace-loving forces in the struggle against American aggression, for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam, to ensure liberty, unity and progress for Vietnam. The 23rd Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which took place in April of this year, expressed the resolute will of the Communists and of the representatives of national-liberation and democratic movements

from over 80 countries, for unity of action against American aggression, particularly in Vietnam. The 23rd Congress adopted a special resolution concerning U.S. aggression in Vietnam; the Congress called on the Soviet people and the peoples of the whole world to extend the fullest assistance possible to the heroic Vietnamese people.

And it is a fact that very valuable aid is being given to the people of Vietnam in their fight against American aggression. Of particular importance is the assistance extended by the U.S.S.R. in Soviet weapons (missiles, fighter planes, etc.) which are the best in the world, and in large numbers of specialists, enabling the Vietnamese people to repel the U.S. aggressor and inflict very grave reverses on the most powerful of imperialist powers.

The government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the leadership of the South Vietnam National-Liberation Front have, on several occasions, expressed their gratitude and high appreciation for the considerable and decisive aid given by the Soviet Union. At their meeting in Bucharest, the USSR and all the other member-states of the Warsaw Pact voiced their readiness to send volunteers to Vietnam, if such a request be made by the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

In the light of all the above it is impossible not to be truly shocked by the anti-Soviet resolutions adopted by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, as well as by the demonstrations against the Soviet Embassy in Peking and the other anti-Soviet outbursts in China. All the talk about "collusion" between the U.S.S.R. and U.S. imperialism, directed against the Vietnamese people and aimed at restoring capitalism in the Soviet Union are nothing but vulgar abuse and slander of the USSR but also of the whole Communist movement, which is solidary with the Soviet Union and with its glorious Communist Party. These declarations and acts of the Chinese Communist Party leadership only serve to deepen the rift in the Communist movement and do great harm to the anti-imperialist struggle and to the cause of Socialism, the only ones to rejoice being the American imperialists and their allies who are thus receiving encouragement from a quite unexpected quarter. The reactionaries in our country and the world over literally leap with joy on hearing of anti-Soviet speeches in China. The imperialists and the reactionaries know full well that the USSR

is the principal bastion of peace, democracy, peoples' independence and Socialism throughout the world, that the Soviet Union is their main enemy, and that is why they are specially happy at any and every attack on the USSR. They know full well that the strength of the Communists and all anti-imperialists resides in their unity, and that is why any split in their ranks gives the imperialists cause to rejoice.

A component part of the erroneous, unprincipled and pernicious line pursued by the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party is the encouragement they extend to all sorts of adventurist plans and attitudes, which are in contradiction to the peaceful solution of the Israeli-Arab dispute and to the principle of respecting the national rights of the people of Israel and of the Palestinian Arab people.

The Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Israel voices its high appreciation for the all-round internationalist aid given by the Soviet Union to the Vietnamese people and views it as a token of exemplary proletarian internationalism, condemns the Chinese leaders' anti-Soviet activity, which, in fact, is of assistance to the American aggressors and appeals to them to put an end to anti-Soviet provocations and do their share to unite the efforts of all Communists and of all anti-imperialists and peace loving people the world over in the struggle against the American invaders, for freedom and peace in Vietnam, to avert a third world war.

There is (nor can there ever be) no such thing as anti-Soviet Communism. Anti-Sovietism stems from nationalistic isolationism which is alien to Communism.

There is (nor can there ever be) no such thing as a proletarian cultural revolution hostile to the land of the October Revolution, which bears the brunt of the struggle against imperialism and reaction, for peace, peoples' independence and Socialism.

The Communist Party of Israel voices its complete solidarity with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in its correct and unabating struggle to heal the rift in the Communist movement, strengthen the ties of friendship with the Chinese Communists and the Chinese people on the basis of the general line of the world Communist movement, elaborated in common at the consultations of 1957 and 1960, on the basis of Marxism-Leninism and proletarian internationalism.

Long live the unity of the international Communist movement and of all anti-imperialist forces in the fight against the U.S. aggressors in Vietnam, in defence of peace and freedom of the peoples!

"Zu Haderech", 18/8/66

IN THE SERVICE OF REACTION

by Wolff Ehrlich, Member, Politbureau, C. P. of Israel.

The 5th session of the World Jewish Congress, which opened in Brussels on the 31.7 of this year and closed on 9.8 had a fairly extensive echo in Israel. The newspapers, however, found it difficult to evaluate the event in their reports and summarizing articles, because from the very beginning no one was clear as to what to expect. Gabriel Ray, "Al Hamishmar" special correspondent at the Congress, wrote (12.8) :

"As it convened on exactly the 30th anniversary of the Congress' foundation, this was to have been the largest and most important World Jewish conference ever to have met; above all, the congress was designed to provide an occasion for a piece of Jewish stocktaking and for an account of its activities from the organization itself."

These are high-sounding words, but apart from the "Jewish stocktaking" with which I shall deal later, they are utterly void of any real content. This, however, should not be taken to mean that the organizers of the Brussels conference, and especially the President of the W. J. C., Dr. Nahoum Goldman, had no real objectives, albeit undeclared.

The ideological and political objectives of the World Jewish Congress were defined by Cde. Uzzi Borstein, member of our Party's Political Bureau in an article printed in issue No. 37 of our paper (5.5.66), in which he showed that the Congress is an arm of the World Zionist Organization, its aim being to bring to the theory and practice of Zionism broad sections of the (Jewish) public who are not actually affiliated to the World Zionist Organization. This task seems an easier one today, now that the W.Z.O. itself lays less stress on the Ingathering of Exiles and more on the moral-spiritual attraction to Israel. The Congress tries to sever the masses of Jewish working people in capitalist countries from the general class struggle, with the aid of a neo-Bundist theory which places imaginary all-Jewish interests over and above their class interests. In accordance with this theory, the Congress concentrates its attention on two special tasks of a practical nature: whitewashing Bonn and waging a slander campaign against the USSR.

Considering this general character of the World Jewish Congress, there is a rather naive or utopian sound to the "Kol Ha'am" editorial (11.8) summing up the W. J. C. session :

"What is called for, in order to ensure faithful representation for all sections of the Jewish people, are not efforts for reconciliation with Hitler's successors, but participation in the fight against the supply of atomic weapons to Bonn, for the cessation of the Vietnam war and for the maintenance of peace throughout the world."

The very nature of the World Jewish Congress makes it impossible for it to work for these constructive goals.

The truth of the matter is that, like all peoples, the Jewish communities, too, in capitalist countries are cut across by class and political differences and they are not united around the lofty aims mentioned above. The Congress actually represents the interests of the big bourgeoisie.

The truth is that these were not the goals that the founders of the W. J. C. had in mind.

I will not enter into an argument with the assumptions enunciated by Y. Lipski in the article he wrote on the eve of the Brussels conference ("Kol Ha'am", 29.7.66), in which he stated that the Congress' task "was to provide representation for the whole of world Jewry, in the entirety of its communities, the more effectively to represent the interests of the Jewish people". Lipski spreads all kinds of illusions by concluding his article with the hope that "organizations and personalities will emerge from within the Congress itself ... who will show themselves capable of placing this organization on the high road".

Such organizations and public figures did not, however, appear on the scene and it was, in effect, impossible that they should.

The persons who did appear at the Brussels meeting were not the elected representatives of the broad masses nor even of the movement's membership. These were professional politicians, self-appointed Congress delegates as the result of mutual agreements between the various organizations and currents of opinion.

The Congress and the World Zionist Organization

Because of the role it has assumed, the World Jewish Congress cannot openly appear as a Zionist organization. Very characteristic in this respect is the style of writing used by Arie Avneri ("Lamerhav" - 12.8) :

"The Congress could not even issue an appeal for emigration to Israel to those Jews who are directly threatened, since formally speaking (the underlining is mine — W. E.), the Congress' task is to fight for the rights of Jews in their places of residence"

Policy coordination between the Congress and the Zionist Organization is ensured by N. Goldmann who heads both of these organizations. Arieh Pinkus, Chairman of the Jewish Agency Executive Committee, testified at the Brussels Congress to the existence of a close and permanent link between the World Zionist Organization and the World Jewish Congress.

Nahum Goldmann stated at the Brussels Conference that Israel must, of necessity, take its place as a powerful new centre — cultural, spiritual and religious — of Jewish life, in lieu of the former centres in Central and Eastern Europe, now in ruins. Further on in his speech, in an obvious move to draw special attention to the Jews of the USSR, Goldmann laid it down as an axiom (i. e. a proposition that needs no proof) that "it is the right of every Jew and of every Jewish community to maintain moral and spiritual ties with Israel", the implication being that Dr. Goldmann believes himself authorized to claim this "right" in each and every country.

These very same words could just as well have been pronounced at the opening session of a Zionist Congress.

The close ties existing between these two world organizations was strikingly demonstrated at the Brussels meeting, when the ideological crisis affecting the Zionist camp was passed on to the World Jewish Congress. At first sight, it would appear that there was no absolute necessity for this to happen, yet the fact of the Congress' being an arm of the Zionist Organization makes for the transfer of this crisis, and this accounts for the desperate attempt to carry out a piece of "Jewish stocktaking".

Already on 1.8.66, at the opening of the Congress, "Jerusalem Post" came out with an editorial entitled : "Jewry in Crisis", with the following concluding lines : "The challenge now facing the world Jewish leadership . . . is to work out anew and define anew the mission of the Jewish people."

In his opening speech Nahum Goldmann noted the fact that, in the capitalist countries, too, Jewish labouring youth is, in its majority, attracted to the ideas of scientific socialism. He put it this

way : "It is a fact that large segments of our fine, idealist youth is lost to us in other revolutionary movements. . . ."

These words (of Goldmann's) apply also to the Jewish youth in the U.S. who are enthusiastically participating in the movement for Negro rights and in the struggle to put a stop to the war in Vietnam.

A loss to Zionism is at the same time a loss to the World Jewish Congress. This is also how we should construe the nostalgic tone in which N. Goldmann speaks of the "shocking processes of indifference".

Just as the various Zionist congresses are hard put to it to find an adequate answer to the ideological problems raised by Zionist theory, so, too, the task proved difficult for the W. J. C. This weakens the influence these organizations exert on broad sections of the Jewish public, but does not stop them from energetic activity in strictly practical spheres : the creation of an atmosphere of friendship for Bonn and the sowing of enmity toward the USSR, and for these practical lines of activity N. Goldmann was also able to provide the necessary theoretical foundations.

In his opening speech, N. Goldmann developed the idea that, at the present juncture, the Jewish question does not take the form of a refusal to grant formal equality of rights. He claimed that, in many parts of the world, Jewish minorities are not given the right and the possibilities of developing a specifically Jewish way of life. It is thus N. Goldmann's opinion that — since the question of equal rights has allegedly been settled in most cases — the struggle that remains to be fought out is for the right to be different : "The focal problem in the new order of priorities is the revival of Jewish communities as special and separate groups."

This proposition is unequivocal and strictly one-sided. Anti-Semitism in the U. S., "Tecucara" in Argentina and new-Nazism in West Germany become merely secondary phenomena while the struggle for Soviet Jews to be different becomes the central struggle. This also provides the justification for what is known as the "Jewish-German dialogue".

N. Goldmann's plan for a "Jewish-German symposium" elicited a great deal of opposition, especially on the part of Mapam and "Ahdut Ha'avoda" delegates, who were later joined by "Herut", which for its part relied on racialist arguments. Goldmann had to

exert all his influence, even to the extent of threatening to dismiss, in order to push through his project, in particular the invitation to the Chairman of the West German Bundestag, Eugen Gerstenmaier.

Gerstenmaier's Nazi past came to light. He had made use of his clerical robes to carry out various assignments for Ribbentrop's Foreign Ministry. Goldmann was of course perfectly well aware of this and he had to resort to a special clean bill of health which he found only the Israeli government could provide him with. We are told by G. Ray (in the above mentioned report) :

"In mentioning the fact that Dr. Gerstenmaier had visited Israel as a guest of honour and had been received with all due marks of deference by the Hebrew University, Dr. Goldmann exclaimed : 'Have we been made holy by Israel, we have been made holy by Jerusalem'."

This is no new game. The government of Israel throws the ball to Goldmann and Goldmann passes it back to the government.

In the concrete case we have before us, all pointers indicate that Gerstenmaier's trip to Israel is connected with his special role as executor of West Germany's neo-colonialist plan in Africa (he is the president of the Germany-Africa Corporation). It is then perfectly clear why he came to Israel and why he was received here as a guest of honour. If that is the attitude of the Israeli Government there is really no need for Nahum Goldmann to wrap himself in the mantle of a "holy man".

Gerstenmaier availed himself of the Congress rostrum to obscure and prettify reality in West Germany, minimize the importance of anti-Semitic outbreaks as phenomena of secondary importance and exonerate the regime in the Federal Republic from any responsibility for the revival of revanchism and racialism. Whereas Bonn's Ambassador in Tel Aviv, Pauls, explicitly states that West Germany no longer needs rehabilitation, Gerstenmaier in Brussels makes the following demand :

"We, Germans, shall have to put up for a long time to come with that forbearing and onerous distance that quite obviously most closely corresponds to the impossibility of forgetting the Holocaust." (official Israeli name for Nazi extermination of European Jewry — trans.)

As for Goldmann, he proved himself to be true to type. It was he who had been the architect of the Reparations Agreement and of

the Jewish certificate of clearance to West Germany, enabling that country to be reinstated in the community of Western states and be accepted for NATO membership. And today, when West Germany is the strongest economic and military power in the framework of the Atlantic alliance, constituting the most serious threat to peace in Europe, Goldmann places at the disposal of an official representative of this self-same Germany an official forum of "World Jewry". *

It only remains to be said that Goldmann and other speakers also bowed to Gerstenmaier's will in accepting the Hallstein Doctrine which lays down the Bonn government's exclusive right to speak for the whole of Germany : Goldmann and those who followed him all the time spoke and wrote of "Germany", "the German Government", when Bonn was actually what they were referring to.

Goldmann continued in his ways, in accordance with the time-honoured tradition of Zionism which has always sought ties with imperialism, be it even German imperialism. He is, therefore, perfectly true to himself in refusing to disqualify German imperialism and in actually embellishing its image. The fact that the walls of the building in which the Congress convened were daubed with swastikas will not suffice to convince Goldmann of the wrongfulness of his policy. He will go on arguing that these are but marginal phenomena, the main front being the problem of Soviet Jewry.

Incitement against the Soviet Union

Anti-Soviet incitement on the "Jewish issue" at long last provided the Congress with a topic capable of spanning all the differences of opinion that had cropped up on other points :

"The one and only question on which were united almost all the delegates of the bodies represented at the Congress, was that of the Jews in the USSR (A. Avneri in the "Lamerhav" article quoted above).

It is true that Y. Kellerman (in an article on the Congress printed in the "Ha'yom" issue of 5.8) and others did attack Goldmann from the Right for not having explicitly placed this question on the

* The West German Bundestag prepares Fascist emergency laws to suppress the population in anticipation of the revanchist war being prepared by the militarists, and the Chairman of the Bundestag lectures from the rostrum of Dr. Goldmann's Congress.

agenda, but this was, in fact, a case of slight differences of opinion, of a purely tactical order. This problem was, in effect the question on the conference's agenda.

Although Goldmann did acknowledge the fact that, in the USSR, the individual Soviet Jewish citizen is not subject to persecution, he claimed that the Jewish minority in the Soviet Union lacks, as a religious and national minority, the possibility of living its life as a collective Jewish entity.

Actually, the overwhelming majority of Soviet Jews consider themselves an integral part of the Soviet people struggling for peace in the world and building a Communist society. What Goldmann, however, and the other leaders of the World Jewish Congress would like to see is a distinction; in other words, they are asking the Soviet Government to enable Soviet Jews to be different, and Soviet Jews to be, in practice distinct from the Soviet people, apart, a foreign body in Soviet society. Goldmann now shows less concern for the satisfaction of religious and linguistic needs, which is where the emphasis used to be laid in the past. What he is striving for is that the Jews of the USSR should not lead their lives as Soviet citizens, but that they should consider themselves wedded to the Zionist idea to the greater benefit of the gentlemen behind him, but Soviet Jews will never agree to this.

The Congress' debates really brought nothing new on this point. The Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs, Abba Eban, and the speakers from the U.S., Britain and Israel, demonstrated their unity in slandering the Soviet Union on the Jewish question. In so doing they shed no light at all on the condition of Soviet Jewry but they did throw plenty of light on their own political line.

*

The Congress has ended its session. The protocols have been put into the archives. The Congress did not have any great influence, but its organizers spared no efforts in their endeavour to exploit it in the service of the policy of world reaction. They "did their bit" in further whitewashing the neo-Nazi regime in Bonn and in intensifying anti-Soviet incitement. The present grave international situation also goes to explain the timing of the Brussels conference.

THE KNESSET DEBATE ON THE MOTION OF
NO-CONFIDENCE IN THE GOVERNMENT

M. Vilner : The Government is preparing a calamity for the economy and the working people.

On Wednesday 10.8, on the last day the Knesset met in its old building, an unusually full House heard a no-confidence motion against the Government put forward by the Communist Knesset group. The motion was backed by the two members present of the Communist group (M. K. E. Habibi being abroad at the time), U. Avneri and S. Mikunis, with 22 Knesset Members from the Gahal (Right-wing bourgeois "Herut"-Liberal Bloc — trans.), Rafi (Ben Gurion's "Israel Labour List" — trans.) and "Agudat Yisrael" (extremist religious party) abstaining. The motion was opposed by all Coalition groups, including Mapam.

We gave a brief report of the voting in our last issue. Because of the importance of the matter we have decided to give a detailed account of the debate in the present issue.

M. K. Meir Vilner's speech :

We ask the Knesset to express its lack of confidence in the Government for its economic policy and measures which have dealt severe blows at the working class and all working people as well as the middle strata, increased Israel's subservience to foreign capital and done very great harm to Israel's national economy.

If we let the Government pursue its present policy, it might bring down on Israel an economic calamity, and not only an economic one at that.

During the very brief period that has elapsed since the elections to the Sixth Knesset, after the formation of the present government, we have witnessed an extremely violent and literally unbridled attack launched by the Government and the big capitalists on the interests and the rights of the working people while, at the same time profits are soaring and ideal conditions prevail for foreign capitalists to exploit the workers and ransack the national economy.

A policy of mass unemployment

Please take note of the steep decline in development that has set in since this Government was formed! I shall take just one example: the building industry. In 1964 work was started on buildings with a total surface area of 5.5 million square metres; in 1965 — 4.5 million square metres; in 1966 the estimate is for 3 million square metres. And this against the background of a very serious housing problem in Israel and large clusters of slum quarters and of buildings unfit for habitation.

The number of unemployed building workers is already on the increase and it will grow at an even faster rate with the completion of the building projects begun in 1964 and 1965. The Finance Minister's plan provides for a 50% slash in development activity carried out by local authorities, i.e. very urgent projects of vital importance for the citizen, in the field of education and medicine, the creation of decent sanitary conditions, etc.

The moment it was formed the Government, acting in breach of the promises made by the Coalition parties in the course of the election campaign, enunciated a deliberate policy of creating mass unemployment. The results were not slow in coming although it should be said that we are still in the middle of the process of expanding unemployment.

The Histadrut's Central Commission was lately given the following figures: 6,000 are now employed in emergency works at reduced salaries; 4,000 are employed at established places of work but only 4 days a week, in order to avert dismissals; 5,000 Arab workers are unemployed. The Arab workers have been hit especially hard because many of them worked in building jobs. This worsens still further the condition of the Arab population which in any case had become worse as a result of the intensification of the policy of land seizures.

Official statistics do not reflect the full extent of unemployment. A large number of workers are compelled to bypass the Labour Exchanges in their search for work. Many do not even register at the Labour Exchange because there is no real chance for them to obtain suitable work that way.

In the review of the situation he presented to the Government, Minister of Finance Pinhas Sapir openly stated (and I quote): "There is a very close connection between wage levels and the employment situation. I do not make light of the 6,000 unemployed

registered in the month of May, twice as many as last year . . . for every family whose breadwinner is unemployed, the problem is a very big one. But the leadership of the State must not be swayed. . . ." Thus spake Finance Minister Pinhas Sapir. The Minister even sees a positive aspect in unemployment, and he says : "This state of unemployment has a favourable influence in the matter of consumption."

Or, to put it plainly : the Government creates unemployment whose proportions are already twice what they were last year, its intention being to press down on wages, reduce cut down the consumption of the working people. Unemployment is thus being created — I would say — in order to slash real wages and reduce the consumption of the working people and the popular masses.

When presenting the new Budget, the Finance Minister already spoke of 10% redundant workers in the economy, out of a total labour force of 900,000. The number of those seeking work will rise by another 90,000 in the next three years. According to what the Minister of Finance told the "Alignment's" economic commission, half that number, i. e. 45,000 will have difficulties in obtaining employment.

Skyrocketing prices

The Government has brought not only the plague of unemployment but also that of skyrocketing prices. The figures given by the Central Board of Statistics show that in the first half of 1966 the consumer price index rose by 6.5% as compared to an increase of 5.5% in the corresponding period of 1965. It thus follows that, even according to the official index, prices have risen even more than last year, but nevertheless the cost-of-living allowance once due in July was not paid. Still, some people have the impudence to say that payment of the cost-of-living allowance would boost prices. We see with our own eyes that prices have soared, are still soaring, even in the absence of a cost-of-living allowance payment.

The Government itself is the chief factor responsible for the rising cost of living.

In the above-mentioned period, the first half of 1966, the various taxes went up by 40% on the average. Nearly all municipalities have increased their taxes. Some local authorities have

increased taxes by as much as 200%. Here, too, the Government bears the main guilt, since it is slashing allocations for the budgets of municipalities and local authorities. Postal and telephone tariffs have gone up by 47.5%, public transport fares by 18.9%. There has also been a considerable rise in the price of clothing. The Government put up purchase tax on cotton yarn, thus causing a rise of several dozen percent in the price of cotton fabrics and clothes. Tuition fees have shot up in secondary schools and higher institutions of learning. Rents will shortly be increased by from 50% to 100%.

Simultaneously, under pressure from the government and the employers, payment of the July cost-of-living allowance was withheld, even though everybody is agreed the workers were fully entitled to obtain it. Schemes are afoot to abolish the whole c-o-l allowance system, with no consideration for the rise in prices. This would be the destruction of one of the Israeli working class' most valuable achievements. The attack on the cost-of-living allowance has served to eliminate a barrier which, in the past did do something to put a brake on the rise in prices. In the absence of a c-o-l allowance there will be nothing to halt price boosts.

*

The Government has announced it will very shortly bring up for enactment bills aimed at limiting the right to strike. One of the ideas contained in these laws is that only Histadrut approval could make a strike legal. This would mean that 75% of the strikes that broke out last year could have been defined as illegal and police force used against them.

These are the 'presents' the Government has already given, or is about to, the workers. What about the capitalists, what did they get ?

A growing profit rate and increased subservience to foreign capital.

The process is continuing of turning the economy over to foreign capital; as before, state enterprises are being handed over to private and foreign capital, and this is now also the fate of certain armament factories. In addition we also note the start of a new process : that of the absorption of small enterprises by big ones, chiefly foreign, and the exposure of local plants to competition from overseas capital and foreign monopolies.

Capitalists' profits are constantly on the increase. A Bank of Israel review which shows the profit rate in relation to the owned capital of 300 companies controlling 70% of all industrial output, reveals that 28% of these companies had a profit rate of from 20% to 50%, while 16.5% of the companies had one of over 50%.

Instead of cutting profits, the Government has announced the introduction of incentives that will make possible a further rise in rates of profit; IL50 million to exporters, IL15 million to contractors. Calling a "premium" by the name of "incentive" is quite immaterial. If fresh tax concessions are to be accorded foreign capitalists, this is tantamount to paying them out premia. There is absolutely no difference between these concessions and premia, just as there is no difference between taxes, "levies", "contributions", etc.

We have been told of a number of amendments to be incorporated in the Law for the Encouragement of Capital Investment, in the form of further concessions for foreign capitalists.

The State is sinking into ever deeper subservience to foreign capital. In his report to the Government of July 20th, Minister of Finance Sapir said according to the Press: "Our long-term foreign currency debt has risen these last two years and has come to \$1,225 million, representing an increase of \$240 million." Who are the creditors whose debt to them has increased? There has been a growth of \$155 million in the debt to Bonn and an increase in debts to various American sources.

The new Budget provides for an even greater increase in our long-term debt and a redoubling of efforts for a tie-up with the European Common Market whose main pillars are the West German financial magnates.

The new Sapir-Eshkol plan

We have now had heralded to us the new plan for the next three years (till the next elections) launched by the Minister of Finance, Mr. Sapir, with the backing of the Prime Minister and other cabinet members. The main idea of the plan is to increase production for export as well as step up investments for export purposes. Now exports are a very important thing but the availability of export markets hinges on our own policy. We are, with our very own hands cutting ourselves off from markets in a large part of the world, and all for political reasons.

An important point in the Finance Minister's economic plan deals with reducing production costs per unit of output. All this, however, is to be achieved by cutting workers' real wages and an attack on the standard of living of the middle strata, by what is termed — increase in labour productivity and by empty words about alleged limitations on capitalists' incomes. In export branches premia (incentives) for exporters are being prepared; the Government, as the Finance Minister put it in the "Alignment's" economic commission, "will guarantee reasonable profitability in industry, agriculture and tourism — the three main export branches — either through government assistance, reductions in certain taxes on the refund of certain compulsory levies".

Capitalists are being given all kinds of assistance while the workers are told: dismissals, 'mobility' of the labour force, unemployment in all branches of the economy, abolition of the cost-of-living allowance. The wage policy laid down by this plan will be as follows: wage freeze and the extraction of 10 points from the C.o.L. Index: 5 points in January 1967 and 5 in January 1968. Instead of the present 3% basis used to determine payment of the cost-of-living allowance in July 1966 it is now being raised to 5%.

The Finance Minister's economic plan provides for the freezing of social benefits, a further cut in subsidies for essential food-stuffs, the dismissal of thousands of workers in State employment and other public bodies, with no provision whatsoever for alternative employment, meaning, in other words, that these workers are to be thrown out onto the street.

In the Coalition too, there is opposition to this draconian anti-working class and anti-popular plan. We have heard that Knesset Member Ya'akov Hazan said at the convention of the Kibbutz Ha-meuhad he was concerned lest Mapam might have no choice but once again rejoin the Opposition, because they could not lie to themselves or to their electors.

The Way Out

What does this prove? It proves that there is public opposition to the government's economic policy.

The thorny problems facing the Israeli economy must and can be solved. But the steps the Government has already taken as well as those it is about to take, far from settling anything will actually aggravate the situation.....

We are of the opinion that there is a way out and a solution, but this calls for a basic change in Israel's official policy : the passage to a policy of national independence and peace, independence from foreign monopolies and neutralism in foreign policy; cessation of the arms race and abandonment of the "positions of strength" policy. There must be awareness of the fact that Israel is a Middle Eastern state and not an European or American one. A policy must be pursued that strictly concerns itself with Israel's own national needs, her economy and her security; a policy that is not a party to the Western powers' regional and global scheming.

The national economy staggers under the burden of a direct military budget running into IL1.5 billion. The national economy is burdened and subject to a process whereby the key branches are coming under the control of foreign capital. Were a policy of peace and independence from foreign monopolies to be pursued, our economic position would then be totally different.

Israel has a working class and professionals endowed with a great creative capacity and possessing a high scientific level who could certainly — under other circumstances — bring about all-round development of the economy, thus averting unemployment and enabling the absorption of additional population. But government policy contradicts development requirements as well as the interests of all the working population and the middle strata. The government's policy serves a mere handful of big capitalists — Israeli and foreign.

The Government's policy is liable to bring a catastrophe down on the national economy, Israel's security and her international standing. The government's policy is dictated by American and German creditors. Our dependence on these is fraught with very grave dangers. We might, one of these fine days, be left stranded without fuel, without bread, without machines for industry and agriculture, without spare parts, without raw materials.

We Communists call on sections of our people affected by this policy of subservience to foreign capital — workers, cooperative farmers, artisans, professionals, small traders, the owners of small enterprises, the national bourgeoisie — to unite in a national-democratic front against foreign monopolies and their valets in Israel, for the defence of the national economy and its expansion, to safeguard the interests of the working people, increase their well-being and their confidence in the future.

We call on the representatives of these strata in all parties to vote with us no-confidence to the government.

Life has shown that, far from being of any help to the working class, Mapam's joining the government has actually been exploited by those who have the upper hand in the government, as Left-wing cover for the execution of its Right-wing anti-working class policy.

In its policy aimed against working people, the government causes legitimate discontent and arouses the workers, the unemployed and all working strata affected to wage a growing struggle against the government.

The Right uses this anti-popular policy to its own profit.

The government's policy therefore paves the way to domination by the Right and the strengthening of its position among the public. The government would very much like — but cannot succeed — to compete with the Right by taking over its policy in the economic sphere and in others as well.

We warn against the danger of the extreme militaristic and bourgeois Right. We warn that the Government's policy is doing the Right's work for it.

If the policy of the British Labour Government is taken as an example, it should be stressed that there, too, the anti-popular policy is paving the way for the Conservatives' return to power.

Under these circumstances the only way open is for a new grouping of forces to be formed among the people and the working class and a popular struggle to alter the policy. Influence will be wielded not by sitting in ministerial chairs but by grouping and mobilising the broad masses in favour of a different policy.

Menahem Begin (Gahal) heckles.

Meir Vilner : Inasmuch as a Left grouping will be formed and will show the working people a different road this will also be the way to forestall the danger from the Right.

The order of the day, then, is for a united workers' front and national democratic front to put an end to the government's catastrophic policy, save the national economy from disaster, protect it, safeguard the interests and the rights of the working people and the middle strata and thus promote Israel's real national interests.

The Government's policy is precondemned to failure. It would be a calamity for the broad masses to identify this bankrupt Government with the ideas of "labour movement", "Socialism", "Histadrut" etc. To avert such a possibility it is imperative for Mapam, Ahdut Ha'avoda and those members of Mapai who have close ties with the workers not to put up with the continuation of a policy that is already beginning to bear dangerous fruits in the political, social and moral spheres.

All these reasons prompt us to ask the Knesset to express no-confidence in the Government.

ESHKOL ANSWERS

In reply to M.K. Vilner's speech, the Prime Minister L. Eshkol said that the Government is anxious in its economic policy to encourage industrial exports and will therefore give new encouragements to the exporters. Eshkol asked to reject the no-confidence motion.

Representatives of other opposition groups made statements. Gahal (Herut-Liberals), Rafi (Ben Gurion) abstained. M.K. Mikunis and M.K. Uri Avneri (Haolam Hazeh group) voted no-confidence with the Communist group. The motion was defeated by the weight of the Coalition votes.

* * *

"Zu Haderech" 18.8.66

ON AN IMPORTANT POINT OF COMMUNIST TACTICS

In the course of the Knesset debate on the no-confidence motion tabled by the Communist group against the Government for its economic policy, M.K. Mikunis made a speech (10.8.66) in which he laid out his motives for not tabling a similar motion at that time, even though he was going to vote for the no-confidence motion.

In explaining his stand S. Mikunis came up with the following idea :

"The no-confidence motion seemed to us badly timed, one of the reasons being that it actually helps Sapir-Tzadok-Alon, enables them to obtain parliamentary unity of all coalition groups, in spite of Mapam's and Ahdut Ha'avoda's opposition to their plans" ("Köl Ha'am", 11.8).

This argument is part and parcel of a whole new conception; in the Knesset debate on M.K. Dayan's trip (to South Vietnam), too, S. Mikunis himself withdrew his own motion from the agenda "in order to avoid artificially distorting the Knesset opinion by a formal vote and also because the Foreign Minister's statement had satisfied him". ("Kol Ha'am", 18.6). This conception was, however, even more manifest on the issue of the no-confidence.

The partners in the Government Coalition are at present unanimously agreed on the necessity of taking immediate steps towards reducing production costs, by striking at existing wage levels. The various Coalition partners differ, on the other hand, as to the way the plan is to be carried out and on the various provisions for hitting at the workers' pockets, as well as on the necessity and the possibility of restricting capitalists' profits. There is, in other words, between the different Coalition parties complete unanimity on matters of principle although here and there disagreement does make itself felt, something especially noticeable with Mapam.

The question to be asked, then, is what tactics a Communist Party should adopt under these circumstances for the Coalition partnership to be shaken, the breaches widened and the attack on the working people repelled

This problem is far from being purely a parliamentary one and is certainly not something apart from the general class struggle. The members of parliament, in particular those of working-class parties must take public opinion into account. By focusing the public's attention to the burning topic of the day, a no-confidence motion helps to mobilize public opinion for struggle outside the walls of Parliament. Popular struggle coupled with parliamentary struggle creates pressure on the labour parties in the Coalition and can bring about shifts in the stand of certain sections of the public.

The breaches in the Coalition front in Israel around the new economic plan, like the differences of opinion over other issues, are neither accidental nor arbitrary. They stem from differences of approach towards social and economic problems, from different obligations to the electorate and from a varying degree of pressure on the part of the rank and file.

If the Communist Party keeps silent at a time when there are breaches in the unity of the governing Coalition, this actually en-

ables the Coalition partners to hammer out an agreed formula and plaster up the cracks and fissures. But if the Communist Party brings up for public debate the condition of the entire labour community and brands in the Knesset the Government's anti-working class plans, even though the Coalition votes together, there is a chance that the debate may serve to arouse the people, increase pressure from below, and thus widen the breach.

The Communist Party's role is not to stand idly by watching the spontaneous development of differences in the opponent's camp, but to carry on activity aimed at deepening these differences and achieving maximum unity of working people in defence of their interests.

THE ISRAELI NATIONAL PEACE COMMITTEE :* Launches Solidarity Campaign With Vietnam* Hears Report on Geneva Session W. P. C.Mapam, Ahdut Avoda and Mikunis-Sneh group majority decide opposition to W. P. C. Resolution on Middle East

The National Peace Committee of Israel held a meeting on 7/9/66 in Tel Aviv. The Committee discussed the continued American aggression against Vietnam, and in response to the call of the World Peace Council decided unanimously to launch a campaign for collecting medical aid in support of the people of Vietnam which will be handed to the representatives of the Front for National Liberation in South Vietnam.

The National Peace Committee of Israel heard reports from members of its delegation to the last Geneva World Peace Council session on the work and resolutions of this Geneva session.

Eliezer Halevi (Ahdut Ha'avoda), Ester Vilenska (Mikunis-Sneh group), and Y. Majus (Mapam) criticised the General Resolution presented to the council session by No. 2 Commission on the general struggle of the peoples of Asia, Africa, Latin America against imperialism and neo-colonialism, and the resolution on the Middle East because of the parts dealing with Israel and Israeli-Arab relations.

Ester Vilenska criticised these Geneva resolutions as anti-Israeli because as she said they did not call for peace between Israel and the Arab countries, they did not defend the right of existence of Israel while they stood by the rights of the Palestine Arab people and because of the way they criticised the policy of the Government of Israel. (see footnote)*

* Footnote : At the Geneva session, Mapam and Ahdut Avoda representatives voted against the Resolution on the Middle East, Ester Vilenska abstained and only Tawfiq Toubi supported it.

Kol Haam's editorial (23.6.66) strongly criticised "the anti-Israeli resolutions adopted at the Congress of the World Federation of Democratic Youth in Sofia and at the meeting of the

Tawfiq Toubi called for greater acts of solidarity with the Vietnamese people's struggle against American imperialism, and strongly condemned the declaration of David Hacohen, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Knesset Committee, who outspokenly expressed support of American aggression in Vietnam.

Tawfiq Toubi, member of the World Peace Council who took part at the Geneva session, explained the anti-imperialist content of its resolutions and their contribution as such to the general cause of peace. Tawfiq Toubi added that it is within the framework of condemning imperialist activities in the Middle East and its intrigues against the achievements of the national liberation movements and against peace in the region that the pro-imperialist activity of the Israeli rulers, as well as that of the Jordanian and Saudi rulers, was criticised. If the Israeli peace forces would struggle together and succeed in bringing about a change in the pro-imperialistic policy of the ruling circles of Israel, then a great national service would be done to Israel and to the cause of peace, also between Israel and the Arab countries. Tawfiq Toubi said that he voted for these resolutions at the Geneva sessions because they are in the general interest of the struggle for peace and against imperialism.

It is wrong to describe the just criticism of the pro-imperialist policy of the Israeli ruling circles as an attack on the sovereign rights or the national interests of Israel.

The Israeli Peace Committee adopted a resolution expressing its opposition to those resolutions of the Geneva session referring to Israel. Tawfiq Toubi, Ruth Lubitch and other members of the Peace Committee opposed such a resolution. Ester Vilenska and other members of her group together with Ahdut Ha'avoda, Mapam and other members supported this resolution. Some members announced their abstention.

(Footnote continued from previous page)

World Peace Council which do just as much damage to the essence, the good name and the prestige of these international conventions and the international organisations there represented as they do to Israel..." Kol Haam criticised the Communist representatives at these conventions who supported the resolutions and so "disassociated themselves from the rest of the Israeli delegation and voiced their support for these scandalous resolutions...."

AT THE HISTADRUTH GENERAL COUNCIL
A TACTICAL OR AN OPPORTUNIST STEP ?

During 17-18/8/66, the 80th General Council Session of the Histadruth (Trades Union Federation) was held. The Council was called to discuss certain amendments in the Histadruth Constitution concerning the appointment of a Controller instead of a Control Commission and concerning the method of elections to the workshop workers committees.

The Council postponed the vote on the amendments concerning the Controller. The Council approved by majority vote the "Alignment" proposal that proportional representation will be held for workers committees in factories where 300 and more workers work. The proposal of the Communist group together with the other four Histadruth groups was that proportional representation for workers committees shall be in factories where 200 and more workers work. Prior to the approved amendment, elections were held on the personal and majority basis.

* * *

During the Council session the Communist Group submitted the following points to the agenda : (1) The attitude of the Histadruth to the Sapir scheme which is contrary to the interests of the workers; (2) The Histadruth and the struggle against dismissals and unemployment; (3) The struggle for peace and against American aggression in Vietnam. Similar proposals to the agenda were submitted by Mikunis-Sneh group and Mapam.

By majority vote the proposals for agenda were rejected.

Comrades Yeshua Irge, David Henin, Jamal Musa, and Ruth Lubitz, addressed the Council session on behalf of the Communist group.

* * *

In presenting the proposal on the struggle for peace and American aggression in Vietnam, Y. Irge and M. Sneh spoke.

When M. Sneh took the floor, at the recent session of the Histadruth Council, to defend the motions to the agenda put forward by his group — including that calling for the cessation of the Vietnamese war — he also took up what Histadruth Secretary-General

A. Becker said about the situation on the Israel-Syria border.
M. Sneh said :

"We listened to A. Becker's opening words. I can't say that every single word he spoke had the agreement of each and every member of the Council, but those parts of his speech that voiced concern for quiet on the border and the maintenance of peace on the borders undoubtedly reflected the views of every single member of the Council. The desire for peace is the deepest longing of the Israeli people, the very breath of the Israeli working class" ("Kol Ha'am" 18.8.66).

That was M. Sneh's answer to A. Becker who had said, inter alia :

"The Council is convening at a time when the Israel Defence Forces have once again been compelled to use force to repel criminal aggression in the Sea of Galilee..."

"We earnestly seek peace, but we shall not attain peace till the Arabs have become convinced that the path of aggression is one that pays no dividends to the aggressor. Let us congratulate the Government on its vigorous policy of protecting the lives of working people in Israel..."

"We are certain the labour movements of the free world realize Israel is a peace-loving state, intent on resorting to its deterrent power only where there is no other way to put a stop to criminal provocation." ("Davar" 18.8.66).

A. Becker went on to say :

"There is not the slightest doubt in my mind that I shall be expressing the reaction and the feelings of every one of us when I say that the whole Histadruth backs the Government and its head in their policy of combining the use of deterrent power with measures of persuasion and explanation in the Arab world."

Is it really true that A. Becker's speech merely voiced concern for quiet on the border? Could A. Becker's words really unite all Council members, as claimed by M. Sneh? Had A. Becker really done nothing but express concern for quiet on the border and for the preservation of peace, this would have very probably had the unanimous support of Council members.

As for these words of A. Becker, in which he expressed the official stand of the Israeli Government which believes in a policy of dissuasion, reprisal raids and a "position of strength" policy, this was M. Sneh's response :

"I cannot say that every word he spoke had the agreement of every single member of the Council." However, M. Sneh did not take the trouble to clarify what exactly were the points he disagreed with.

What did M. Sneh's speech have to teach the Histadruth Council delegates on the Israel-Syria border dispute? The Council did hear the voice of political reason which might put an end to bloodshed, but it did not come from M. Sneh. The words were spoken by the representative of the Communist group Yehoshoua Irge, who expressed the people's desire for peace and its concern at the possibility of any military flare-up :

"We were all disturbed by the incident on the Israel-Syria border. We are shocked by the victims who fall in vain in these actions. Our people want peace — stressed Y. Irge. Israel, like any other sovereign state, has the right of self-defence. But the policy pursued these last 18 years by the Government has not, and indeed could not, bring us peace. Peace is more remote than ever and tension has been stepped up. We are against any disturbance of the peace on the border and reprisal raids. We are opposed to the use of threats, from whatever side of the border they issue. We are against the 'policy of dissuasion'. The only ones to profit by this policy are foreigners; it benefits American imperialism which seeks to aggravate conflicts in our part of the world.

"Peace will be attained not by a policy 'from positions of strength' but by a policy that will lead to reciprocal acknowledgment of the national rights of both peoples involved. We appeal for abstention from initiating — or being provoked into — actions that do not serve our country's national interest."

It is obviously regrettable that this stand of the Communist group is not yet popular in Histadruth bodies; it is also true to say that M. Sneh's stand is more popular. But Communists cannot let their policy be guided by the desire for popularity, their task being to uncompromisingly present their stand and fight for it. They have the duty of rallying the widest consensus of opinion possible and mobilizing opposition to those stands that might endanger Israel's very future.

Communists who fail to do this are not serving their people's class and national interest. Opportunism cannot cover up an alleged policy of "unity".

PARLIAMENTARY ACTIVITY AGAINST
NATIONAL OPPRESSION IN ISRAEL

(a) M. Vilner presents Private Bill for Abolishing Military Rule

Prior to the summer recess of the Knesset, the Communist group brought before the Knesset the private members bill initiated by Member of Knesset Tawfiq Toubi for abolishing the Military Rule imposed on the Arab population in Israel.

Member of Knesset Meir Vilner presented the draft bill before the Knesset in its session on 20.7.1966. Comrade Vilner strongly criticised the continued existence of Military Rule imposed on the majority of the Arab population in Israel for more than 17 years. Comrade Vilner said that under pressure of the struggle of the Arab population and Jewish democratic forces certain amendments have been introduced, but the unlimited powers for denying freedom of movement, for administrative imprisonment, banishment, compulsory reporting to police stations are still exercised against the Arab population. The military closed areas in the Arab districts still exist and large numbers of Arab citizens are included in the black-list prevented from the right of free movement.

Comrade Vilner demanded that the British Defense (Emergency) Regulations which are the legal basis for the Military Rule be abolished.

L. Eshkol, the Prime Minister, replying to the Communist proposal, rejected it and said "to speak about national oppression in Israel is a slander . . .". He also said that the government will continue to look for amendments in the military rule regime; he upheld its continued existence.

By the government coalition votes the proposal to abolish the military rule was voted down.

(b) T. Toubi says emigration of Arab youth due to anti-Arab discriminatory policy

Speaking in the Knesset on the subject of increased emigration of Arab youth from Israel, Member of Knesset Tawfiq Toubi said on 19.7.1966 that :

"The departure of Arabs from Israel, particularly the departure of young people, is due to the policy of discrimination against

the Arab population practiced by the Government in the fields of employment, education, and other social and economic fields.

The employment of young educated Arabs in government and public institutions is particularly difficult. Young people graduating from secondary schools cannot get suitable employment, and the majority have to resort to black physical labour in building trade or services for subsistence. In government institutions Arab employees are no more than one percent of the total employed (Arab population in Israel is 11% of total population).

Great difficulties face young Arabs who want to obtain university education, not only due to economic conditions, but also due to administrative limitations. From amongst the 20,000 university students in Israel, 300 were Arabs in the Academic year 1965/66, i. e. 1.5% only.

Arab intellectuals and academicians even find it particularly difficult to get suitable employment. There are Arab architects who cannot find public employment.

Comrade T. Toubi said that we Communists call upon the Arab youth and the Arab population to fight here in their homeland with the Jewish democratic forces for their rights and equality. The solution for their difficulties is not leaving the country but fighting for a change to the better.

(c) Emile Habibi condemns new step for intensifying confiscation of land of Arab peasants

Last July, the Government presented a draft bill, an amendment to the Land Ordinance (Settlement of Rights of Property). The purpose of the amendment is to cancel court proceedings for the ejection of peasants from land which is declared as government property.

Member of Knesset Emile Habibi objecting to this draft law and the amendment it proposes said that it is a further step for facilitating ejection of Arab peasants from land held and cultivated by them for years.

Comrade Habibi said that in 1958 the government forced the adoption of a law — "Limitation Law 1958" — which cancelled the right of possession acquired by thousands of Arab peasants in accordance with the land laws existing since the Turkish and British rule. Nevertheless, when the government obtained nowadays a

ruling concerning the ownership of the land, it had to resort to the court for exercising its right of possession if the occupier of the land disputes the action of the government for ejecting him. The new amendment is intended to deny the peasant the right of court procedure.

Comrade Emile Habibi pointed out to the large tracts of land confiscated from Arab peasants in accordance with these so-called "land settlement actions". He said that out of a total 702,000 dunams owned by 42 villages in the Galilee, the government claimed 400,000 dunams, i. e. more than half the area owned by these villages.

Comrade Habibi condemned these actions of the government which know no limit. He pointed out to the recent government claim for land in the village of Tamra, land on which 500 dwelling houses have been built by Arab refugees of neighbouring villages during the last 17 years. This land was bought by these refugees from the villagers of Tamra who owned the land and occupied it for generations. Now the government claims ownership of this land on which 3,000 people have built their houses; and letters of warning have been sent to these families warning them that their houses which they have built are not their houses, and the land they have bought is not their land and that they have to move out. Such people will be the victims of this new amendment to the land law. It was not sufficient that they were made refugees once; the government intends to turn them again to refugees We demand to put an end to this blind policy that is why we oppose this new draft law, said Member of Knesset Emile Habibi.

THE COMMUNIST GROUP IN KNESSET OPPOSES THE DRAFT
BASIC LAW ON THE STATUS OF THE GOVERNMENT

The Communist parliamentary group and the other opposition groups in the Israeli Parliament (Knesset), strongly criticised and voted against the draft Basic-Law on the Status of the Government brought for first reading at the Knesset session on 1st September 1966, on the occasion of the opening of the new premises of the Knesset.

The debate in the Knesset reflected the positions of the various Parliamentary groups, on this official function (the first Knesset session in the new premises) on various basic issues as Constitution, Civil rights, Knesset prerogatives, Government-Parliament relations, etc.

Member of Knesset Meir Vilner spoke on behalf of the Communist group. At the opening of his speech he said :

"On behalf of tens of thousands of Israeli citizens, Jews and Arabs, who elected us, I hereby welcome the construction of the new Knesset building. The Knesset symbolizes the sovereignty of the State of Israel, which was legally established in accordance with the will of the people and the U. N. resolution that recognized the right of self-determination for the two peoples of Palestine — Jews and Arabs.

"We Communists stood by the cradle of the newly-established State of Israel. I personally had the privilege of signing, on behalf of the Communist Party of Israel, the Declaration of Independence of the State of Israel. The right of the State of Israel to a sovereign existence of its own cannot be questioned, just as there is no questioning the national rights of the Palestinian Arab people. Mutual recognition of the national rights of both peoples of Palestine is the sole basis on which peace can be solidly founded and security assured.

"The building of a new, more appropriate home for the people's supreme elected body is a day of rejoicing for the entire Israeli people. Workers, architects, many artists put their best efforts and talents into the new building. The Knesset will now be put to the test in the social and political content of its laws and resolutions, by the extent to which it will show comprehension for the rights of the working people and the people's democratic liberties, strive for

peace with the Arab peoples and trace a fresh policy for Israel — one of non-dependence on the Western powers, neutralism and improved relations with the Soviet Union and all Socialist and neutralist states. The statement made last Saturday by Premier Levi Eshkol, that his party, Mapai, was working on a plan for altering the electoral system cast a gloom over the festive inauguration of the new building. We must repel this threat to the present electoral system, when it comes from the present Prime Minister, just as we repelled the same threat when it issued from the former Premier, Ben-Gurion.

"All these preparations now afoot to replace the present electoral system are but symptoms of the regime's weakness, of the growing discontent its policy is provoking among the workers and the broad masses."

M. Vilner went on to deplore the fact that, 18 years after its foundation, the State of Israel still has no constitution and he suggested that at the very beginning of its work in the new building the Knesset should set to work on a constitution for the State of Israel and have it ready within the year; it could then be endorsed still within the period of office of the Sixth Knesset.

Criticising the draft law on the Government, Comrade Vilner pointed out that it is a threat to the democratic rights. In the absence of a basic constitution guaranteeing the civil rights of the citizen, it practically gives the Government free hand of action in all fields.

That is why we shall propose, said M. Vilner, that the draft law shall specify the respect and equality of citizens and that no government action which is opposed to the principle of equality of citizens shall be considered legal.

M. Vilner likewise said in the absence of a constitution specifying the powers of the government, we shall propose that the draft basic law should make the declaration of war, the dispatch of Israeli troops beyond the borders, should be the prerogative of the Knesset (Parliament). The government likewise could not conclude any secret treaties. This is now an actual subject in view of the danger of conflagration on our borders. Let us learn from our national experience. In 1956 the government concluded secret agreements with Britain and France in accordance with which the aggressive war against Egypt was initiated. This agreement was made secret

from the public also from the Knesset, even from part of the government. We do not want that the sixth Knesset will be placed before such fait-accompli situations as was in the past. The basic constitution should as well make illegal government action for arming Israel with atomic weapons.

Comrade Vilner criticised a number of the undemocratic aspects of the draft law which was also strongly criticised by other opposition groups.

100 THOUSAND LIRAS COMMUNIST PARTY FUND

Party members, sympathisers, and progressive workers and intellectuals have actively responded to the urgent call of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel to contribute and mobilise financial support for the success of the 100 thousand liras fund (equivalent to 33,000 dollars) declared by the plenary session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Israel at its 11th plenary session (8-9th July 1966).

The campaign was launched to provide the urgent needs for the continued appearance of Communist Press and for the work of the Party.

Since the 1st of August, when the Party Fund was launched, the sum of IL24,385 was collected up to 10.9.66.

The contributions to the Party Fund are divided in accordance with the following table :

<u>Party district</u>	<u>Aim</u>	<u>Sum collected up to 10.9.1966</u>
1) Plain	IL 10,500	IL 3,448.50
2) Haifa	17,500	5,514.00
3) Triangle	10,000	2,822.00
4) South-Negev	2,500	610.00
5) Tel Aviv-Jaffa	25,000	6,051.00
6) Jerusalem	3,000	600.00
7) Nazareth	31,500	5,290.00
Sundries		50.00
Total :	IL 100,000	IL 24,385.50

The Campaign to the Party Fund will be carried on till the 1st December 1966.

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