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Communist Deputies in Knesset Rebuff  
Wild Attack on Socialist Poland

Raid Against Jordan - Serious Damage  
to Interests of Israel

M. Vilner, T. Toubi and E. Habibi  
in Public Interviews

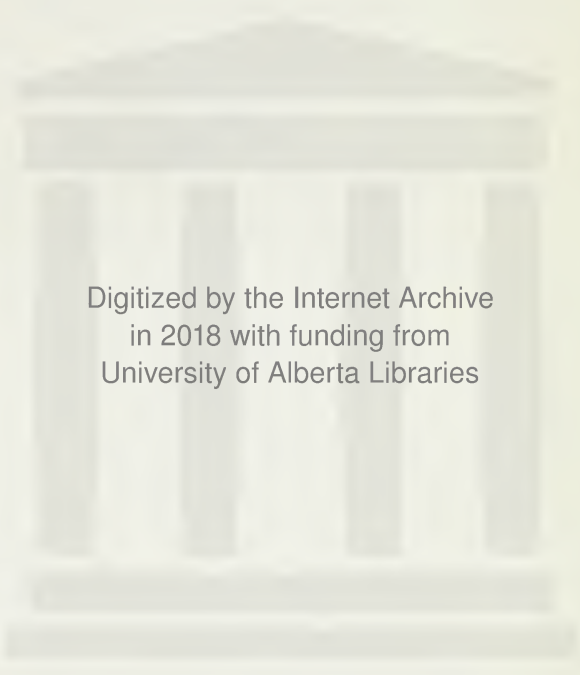
Review of the Book "Fighters Talk  
to Themselves"

Representatives of CP of Israel  
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**INFORMATION BULLETIN**

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THE COMMUNIST DEPUTIES IN THE KNESSET REBUFF A WILD  
ATTACK ON SOCIALIST POLAND AND ON COMMUNISM  
.....

In an unusual stormy session, the Knesset on 19.3.1968 was the scene of a wild unbridled attack on socialist Poland and its communist leaders, on communism and on the Soviet Union and also on the Communist Faction in the Knesset and particularly Member of Knesset MEIR VILNER, who opposed three motions to the agenda submitted by MK E. SHOSTAK (Free Centre), MK Z. ZIMMERMAN (Gahal-Liberals) and MK U. AVNERI (Ha'olam Haze) on what they outrageously called "danger to Polish Jewry resulting from growing anti-Semitism in Poland"... M. Shostak, a previous HERUT member claimed that the hammer and sickle of communism has replaced the swastika in oppressing Jews everywhere.

Leading the most hysteric reactionary anti-communist attack ever heard in the Israeli Parliament was Minister without portfolio MENAHEM BEGIN, who making his maiden speech in the name of the national coalition government, proposed to refer the motions to Foreign and Defense Affairs House Committee. Minister Begin launched a most poisonous attack on socialist Poland, on its communist leadership and even on the Polish people in general, accusing that they did nothing to save Jews murdered in Second World War, on communism and on the Soviet Union. In reply to the proposal of M. Vilner to strike the item from the agenda he attacked M. Vilner personally and the communist deputies. In a typical fascist attack on communism he said that "Gomulka and other Polish leaders are evoking anti-semitism and inciting against the Jews in order to divert their people from their internal troubles." Outpouring a torrent of slanders against communism he said that collectivisation in the Soviet Union was built on the blood of ten millions killed. M. Begin inciting against M. Vilner called him a functionary of the "Red Judenrat"...

M. Begin was heckled by the communist members of the Knesset M. VILNER, T. TOUBI and E. HABIBI. Comrade E. Habibi asked him ironically if all this slanderous anti-communist reviews of history was concluded by the government?... Socialism had stronger enemies and they failed... Comrade M. Vilner told M. Begin that his party (HERUT) collaborated with Mussolini who was Hitler's partner and his present slanders against socialist Poland and communism is a continuation of this collaboration. Comrade T. Toubi shouted that Menahem Begin has been and continues to be a well-known anti-communist instigator and a slave of the imperialists. Interrupting his incitement against M. Vilner, T. Toubi said: "You are inciting for another attempt of murder on M. Vilner's life".

Following-upon the motion of MK M. Vilner to drop the three other proposals to the agenda a vote was taken. Supporting of the motion to transfer the proposals of the three members of the Knesset to the committee, 62 members voted. The three communist members opposed this motion and supported the proposal of M. Vilner to strike-off the item from the agenda. S. MIKUNIS abstained and gave later a most shameful anti-communist statement.

#### M. Vilner condemns anti-communist slanders

When M. Begin finished his chauvinist anti-communist tirade, M. Vilner took the floor to oppose the motions to the agenda and the proposal of M. Begin and to ask to delete these motions from the agenda.

A most hysteric storm was raised by a number of members from the government benches who wanted to prevent MK M. Vilner from speaking. Outstanding amongst them was MK SURKIS and M. EREM from the Labour bloc.

E. Habibi and T. Toubi challenged the shouts of these members and an unprecedented row was raised.

There stood-up however some other members of the Knesset like MK AMOS DEGANI (a colleague of Surkis from RAFI) and MK TAYAR (Free Centre) who upheld the right of Vilner to speak although they strongly oppose his position.

Amongst continued interruptions M. Vilner was able within the few minutes allowed to him to say the following:

"Do you intend to shut my mouth?... During my life as a politician I heard already many such fascist talk and was not disturbed"...

Then also other members of Knesset from different factions interfered with the undemocratic behaviour of others and demanded: "Let him speak - he has a right to!" When quiet was restored at last M. Vilner said:

"Communist all the time and up to this very day had been and still are the staunchest fighters against racialism and antisemitism. Everything the Knesset was told today by the three members and by the Minister Begin and yesterday by the Prime Minister Eshkol against the People's Republic of Poland has nothing whatsoever to do with truth.

"Therefore, our Communist Faction proposes to strike the motions from the agenda. There is no grain of truth in those false charges as if socialist Poland is leading an antisemitic policy. I received already very recent papers from Poland. I read them and I am able to tell you, that there is not the

smallest shadow of all those talks heard here, as if there are slogans against Jews. The contrary is the truth. I shall cite two typical examples only. The one is from the speech by the First Secretary of the United Polish Workers' Party in Warsaw, Yosef Kempa, who said in the same speech, which was slandered in the Israeli press as being an antisemitic speech, the following: 'We the Polish communists always fought, and shall continue to fight consistently against any form of racialism and nationalism... We are absolutely against antisemitism.' An other leading figure, member of the Politbureau of the United Polish Workers' Party, the leader of the Polish Trade-Unions, Luge-Sobinsky, declared only the day before yesterday, that "We look upon Polish citizens of Jewish origin, who are faithful to Poland and connected with her culture, as our brethren.' This is what he said.

E. SHOSTAK (interrupts) "Read the first part of his speech too, when he attacked Zionism."

M. VILNER: "Zionism - this is something else - this is a political opinion, but not identical with Jews. .

"The main cause of the student troubles at the Warsaw universities, according to the Polish press, are connected with certain West-German and United States services, which all the time act there in order to undermine the socialist regime, to inflate anti-Soviet feelings and to prepare the soil for a revanchist war and to snatch away territories from Poland.

"Who head the Polish State today? From the speeches heard today in the Knesset the impression is, as if the people who lead Poland today are those who exterminated the Jews during World War II. But the truth is, that just these people fought an armed struggle against the Hitlerite invaders, they are those who gave brotherly help to the heroic insurrectors of the Warsaw Ghetto and they will commemorate the 25th anniversary of the insurrection of the Warsaw Ghetto by mass-rallies next month. These are the people who lead People's Poland.

"The heads of the Polish State are Vladislav Gomulka, who led the anti-nazi underground movement of Poland; Josef Cyran-kiewicz, who, together with our Jewish brethren was imprisoned as an anti-nazi fighter in the nazi death-camp of Auschwitz. The heads of the People's Republic of Poland, together with all anti-nazi forces, fight against the comeback of the nazis in Western Germany.

DAVID HACOEN (Labour) shouts and interrupts.

M. VILNER: "The leaders of the Polish people, who were slandered here in such an ugly manner, showed a special understanding and relation towards the small Jewish community in Poland, survivors from the barbaric nazi holocaust. According to the

wish of this small community a Yiddish daily is published, there exist a Jewish theatre and cultural institutions - and all these exist on the contribution from the State-Budget of Gomulka and Cyrankiewicz. Who believes your slanders? THERE IS NO ANTI-JEWISH DRIVE IN POLAND, BUT AN ANTI-POLISH, ANTI-SOVIET AND ANTI-SOCIALIST DRIVE HERE IN ISRAEL. And this is part and parcel of the general cold-war against the socialist states. I as a Jew...

M. EREM (Labour) "Do you tell us that you are a Jew?"

M. VILNER: "...whose whole family was killed by the nazis..."

D. HACOHEN (Labour) shouts and interrupts.

M. VILNER: "...and the head of the Polish State was in the nazi concentration-camp together with my father - I want to ask you: Why don't you propose to the agenda themes which are of real interest to the Jewish people, so for example, the affair of Lübke, the President of Western Germany who took part in building nazi concentration-camps. And you even became good friends with him! Why don't you propose to the agenda the visit in Israel of a military delegation from West-German Bundeswehr? Although, it is well-known, that the Bundeswehr is headed by Hitlerite Generals, who had a hand in exterminating Jews. Why do you invite such a military delegation of the West-German Bundeswehr? Did you ever propose a motion to debate the question of swastikas which were painted on Jewish tombstones in Western Germany? And when a Jewish Rabbi was murdered by racists in New York, you never thought of raising it in the Knesset!

"Therefore I look with concern upon your slanders against friends of the Jewish people who head the socialist Polish State.

Here the Chairman of the session called on M. Vilner to end his speech and he had to leave the rostrum before saying also the following passages which he intended to tell the Knesset:

"The Polish Government and the Polish United Workers' Party have a splendid record of struggle against racialism and antisemitism. May be there is someone who is interested in it that there should be an antisemitic policy in People's Poland. May be it would serve the political aims of somebody. But he never will rejoice at that.

"If you do not agree with the position People's Poland holds towards the war of June 1967, this does not give you the right to call antisemite those who oppose wars, conquests and annexations. Moreover, look upon the splinter in your own eyes. What is the policy the Government leads towards the Arab population in Israel through all those years, and now in the occupied territories? By which name should it be called?



"The whole of your policy is not to the advantage of our people, the people of Israel. You stand up against the true friends of the Israeli people, against anti-nazi fighters and you join forces with builders of nazi concentration-camps.

"For these reasons your motions have to be struck off the agenda and instead of them I motion to raise the most urgent problem - the absolute change of the official Israeli policy."

#### S. MIKUNIS joins the chorus of anti-communist slanders

S. Mikunis who formally abstained on the vote raised however his hand supporting an appeal by M. Begin "to show solidarity with the national demand to keep the issue on the agenda." S. Mikunis at the end of the debate made a statement. We give here a literal translation from the Knesset protocol of the statement of S. Mikunis.

"Yesterday on the occasion of the debate on the budget of the Prime Minister's office, I expressed my negative opinion on the anti-Jewish incitement being conducted nowadays in Poland by the ruling circles there. This evening I was not astonished to hear the representative of the Communist List (Rakah) proposing to drop the events in Poland from the agenda as far as they refer to Jews. The explanation for this proposal provided for us another evidence that the Communist List is opposed to the national interests of Israel, to the fate of Jewish communities in the world at a time of renewed growth of a neo-nazi antisemite and anti-Israeli wave, harming of the honour of socialism"... "To the Communist List it is not important if those who are trying to turn the Jews or the Zionists in Poland to a scape-goat for their failures are by this bismirching the banner of socialism. It is not important for them on whose side is justice: on the side of those youngmen demanding to widen and deepen socialist democracy for the interest of speeding-up socialist upbuilding or on <sup>the side of</sup> the party and government elite which is not ready to turn away from the old path and to heed the needs of time. What is determining for the Communist List, also in this case, is the fact that the anti-Jewish communist agitators in Poland, are those same people and circles who in opposition to the Polish interests have entangled socialist Poland in a one-sided position in the Israeli-Arab dispute, to the side of the Pan-Arabic anti-Israeli front and against Israel, have severed relations with our country and took upon themselves an astonishing campaign of hatred against Israel."

Here S. Mikunis explaining his abstention in the vote said that this is due to the explanations accompanying the proposal particularly by MK Shostak who made slanderous remarks on the socialist system in general. S. Mikunis ended his statement by saying:

"I am sure and certain that the workers of socialist Poland, the Polish communists, will find the suitable way chosen by them to remedy the evils and distortions in their house and to wipe off the shame of the disgusting anti-Jewish incitement which was imposed on socialist Poland by those government and party circles who lost the communist compass and the communist conscience"...

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We hereby publish excerpts from the JERUSALEM POST report on the Knesset debate of the 19.3.1968:

## THE JERUSALEM POST

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20, 1968

The Knesset yesterday overwhelmingly affirmed its solidarity with Polish Jewry, in the anti-Semitic campaign being waged against it by that country's leadership. The debate also led to the stormiest scenes the House has witnessed for many years, when the statements of New Communist Member Meir Wilner, whitewashing the Warsaw régime, provoked a general uproar that threw the plenum into pandemonium for many minutes.

For Minister without Portfolio Menachem Begin, who spoke for the Government, it was his maiden speech since Gahal joined the National Unity Cabinet last May (Mr. Begin himself was born in Eastern Poland, at Brest-Litovsk, now annexed to the U.S.S.R.). He replied to three urgent motions for the agenda moved by Messrs. Eliezer Shostak (Free Centre), Zvi Zimmerman (Gahal) and Uri Avneri (Ha'olam Hazeh), which were referred to the Foreign Affairs and Security Committee by 62 votes to three of the New Communists, with one Communist abstention.

### WILL TAKE STAND

Mr. Begin said that the Jewish State wished the world to know that it would take a stand on any matter affecting Jewry. "It will intervene, it will protect, it will defend, it will extend refuge. Wherever a Jew is oppressed or persecuted the Jewish State will stretch out a brotherly hand and give its fullest backing."

The Minister charged that Polish Communist Party Secretary Gomułka and other Polish leaders were currently following the well-known red-herring technique of incitement against the Jews to divert their people from their internal troubles. They were following the old catch phrase: "Smile to the Jews and save Russia" in a new form: "Smile to the Zionists and save Poland."

The pandemonium broke out after Mr. Begin's remark about the 10 million victims of Stalin's collectivisation policy drew an interjection from New Communist Emile Habibi. Mr. Begin suggested that "that faction" would do better to hold its peace, and talked of idolatrous subservience to Stalin, Khrushchev and Koyevin in turn. Mapam member Emma Talmi somehow thought the cut was aimed at Mapam, and so she unwittingly joined the chorus

of shouts from New Communists Habibi and Tewfik Toubl, before realising her mistake. Then she was so flustered, that she took out a cigarette, lit it, and began smoking in the plenum — until an usher came over and drew her attention to the unparliamentary behaviour. At which she retired from the chamber. "I'm not responsible for your thoughts," Mr. Begin said to her gently as she left her seat.

The storm subsided, to erupt in greater fury when New Communist Meir Wilner took the floor to move that the motions be struck off the agenda. The shouting from all sides of the House prevented him at first from getting a word in edgeways. While Messrs. Toubl and Habibi tried to back up their Jewish faction colleague, Mr. Mordechai Surkias (Labour) berated all three of them with a range of epithets which were not printed in the record later, such as "knave," "traitor," "informer" and more.

Eventually, after Labour members Amos Degani and David Hacohen urged that Mr. Wilner have his say, he managed to deliver his speech amid constant interruptions. He said there was not a single grain of truth in press reports about the anti-Semitic campaign, and claimed that the Polish Communists had suffered from the Nazis like the Jews, and that U.S. and West German agents had spread the anti-Semitism canard.

Availing himself of his optional right of reply, Mr. Begin described Mr. Wilner as a functionary of the "Red Judenrat" — the difference between him and the Jews who joined the Judenrat in the Holocaust period being that he had enslaved himself to serve the haters of Israel of his own free will.

After the vote, lone Communist member Shmuel Milkunis took the floor to explain his abstention. He condemned the Polish anti-Semitism, and attacked Mr. Wilner's support of the Polish leaders who linked anti-Semitism at home with pro-Arabism abroad. He said he could not vote for the motion, because of the anti-Socialist tenor of some of the speakers, notably Mr. Shostak who "besmirched socialism in general". We should welcome those Polish Jews who wish to come to Israel, he declared.

TAWFIQ TOUBI MK, IN THE KNESSET:

THE RAID - A SERIOUS DAMAGE TO THE REAL INTERESTS  
OF ISRAEL

On Monday, 25.3.1968, the Knesset debated the raid of the Israeli armed forces across the Jordan river on 21.3.1968 which was censured also by the U.N. Security Council. MK Tawfiq Toubi spoke on behalf of the Communist Parliamentary Faction. We publish herewith the speech of comrade T. Toubi which was also published by ZO HADEREKH and AL-ITTIHAD.

"Many people wonder today how long is the cruel slaughter between the two peoples going to continue; many people ask where this path of blood in the relations between Israel and its neighbours will lead to. We mourn the dead together with the bereaved parents, the widows and the orphans. Together with them we are grieved at the loss of their beloved sons, the victims of the cruel bloodshed that is occurring every day and devouring Jews and Arabs alike. The blood of the victims of Beer-Orah\*, of the Beisan Valley, of Karameh and Safi, and of any other shelled village, cries to us: STOP! Put an end to this terrible bloodshed. Whoever discriminates between the cry of the mother of a Beer-Orah victim and the outcry of a bereaved refugee mother from Karameh does injustice to his own people first and foremost.

Shattered illusions

The fifteen-hours war of last Thursday proved again that the war of last June has not solved and will not be able to solve - in spite of the military victory - any of the problems facing Israel in its relations with the Arab states. The illusions fostered by the architects of the second "preventive war" in the history of Israel, according to which a military victory will be followed by a political dictate - have again been shattered to pieces during the ten months that have passed since June, and the events of last Thursday have proved it all the more. Many people are now beginning to understand the warnings of the communists, that the June war and its results not only won't resolve the security problems of Israel - as the proponents of "Unified Palestine" assert - but on the contrary will expose it to additional dangers and will be an additional strain on its security situation. The sticking to the results

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\*Beer-Orah is the Negev settlement near which a mine exploded under a bus in which high-school pupils were travelling. Two of the teachers were killed.

of the June war, the preference given to annexations over peace - will only put off peace further.

The government tried to justify the June war by the need to prevent an allegedly threatening total war by the Arabs against Israel. The same way does the government reason today when trying to justify Thursday's attack on the Eastern Bank of the Jordan.

The Israeli government is misleading the people when asserting that the "preventive war", the raids and the punitive actions are warranted as a means of self-defense. That was and is a method stemming from the basic policy, to which all the Israeli governments were attached, a policy of creating accomplished facts and of trying to force these facts upon the Arabs, a policy of alignment with imperialism and its plans against the Arab peoples, with the aim of enforcing arrangements denying the Palestinian Arab people its basic rights.

This path is founded on erred calculations, even when it seems to be successful for a while. It is a dangerous path, a path only bound to put off peace and to strengthen the chauvinists among the Arabs, i.e. those people who are opposed to peace settlements based upon the mutual respect of the just rights of both our peoples.

The USSR - upholds the interests of all peoples in this region

Those who pour their wrath and venom on the Soviet policy in order to justify themselves and in order to cover up the real reasons for their failure will not succeed in deforming the image of the Soviet Union and its policy, a policy which at the time when supporting the foundation of the State of Israel and now when opposing the aggressive policy of the rulers was and still is a policy of peace and friendship between the peoples, a policy in favour of all the peoples in this region of the world, Arabs and Israelis alike.

The Thursday action was heralded by the Chief-of=Staff immediately after the air attack and the heavy shelling of the East-Jordanian villages, on February 15th, 1968. In an interview with military correspondents, as reported in "MA'ARIV" of February 19th, the Chief-of=Staff Bar-Lev said: "Israel's aim should be the enforcement of immediate settlements upon the Arab states, and particularly upon the troublesome ones. We shall be able to enforce a settlement on Jordan by using our military forces, in a way that will compell King Hussein to look for agreements with us. We have succeeded in imposing cease-fire on him by the blow delivered last week. He did it for lack of choice. We shall be able to force a political settlement on him if we compell him to demand it out of lack of choice - a thing that can be

done only when we are on the other side of the border". These are the words of the Chief-of-Staff and the Israeli government has acted according to this adventurous line.

### Serious consequences

What was the outcome of the military raid? And I do not want to refer to the military aspect of the matter.

a) It was argued that this "police action", as it is called, was necessary in order to stop the terrorist activities and the resistance to the conquest. And what do we realize now? We are thoroughly convinced, honourable members of the Knesset, that it is not through sabotage acts that the Palestinian Arab people will reach the solution of its problems. We object to it that innocent victims fall down. We do assert, however, that the continued occupation and the continued denying of the proper rights from the Palestinian Arab people are bound to strengthen, under the conditions of conquest, armed resistance.

b) It was argued that these punitive actions will lead to the formation of an obedient government in Jordan, a government that will sanction the Israeli government's dictate of perpetuating conquests and annexations and of denying the Palestinian Arab people its just rights. The outcome was a different one inside Jordan, too. Such military actions only deepen the enmity, complicate the problem further, and in addition bring to failure those efforts towards achieving peace settlements, that are presently being carried out in this region as well as in the international arena.

c) By such a military action, which was also aimed to test out Arab solidarity at times of war, it is intended here to weaken Arab solidarity; we realize now, however, that the result was a contrary one: The military action did not divide the Arab states, but is bound to rally them stronger together.

In addition to all this, the military action brought upon Israel a serious political failure in the world arena. It presents Israel before the whole world that it has no other language to talk with its neighbours other than the language of war and guns. This adventure brought serious harm to Israel's interests and showed to what extent such a policy damages Israel in the international arena. The unanimous condemnation by the UN Security Council does not honour this adventurous policy, carried by the "national coalition government", a policy which is without any perspective. Many people nowadays come to the conclusion that this military operation is in line with the government's position aimed at foiling the mission of Jarring (The UN General Secretary special envoy) for implementing the UN Security Council Resolution.

In these hard days, heralding a still more dangerous deterioration of the situation, we beg to make the following warning: There is another way. There is a way to peace, the way of implementation of the Security Council's decision, which - since it was adopted in November last - the Israeli government has acted in various ways to thwart it. Until this very day the Israeli government has not announced publicly that it accepts this resolution of the UN Security Council.

We call upon the Israeli government to make endeavours for the full and unreserved implementation of the Security Council's decision of November 22nd, 1967, which implies the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the occupied territories. Every ignoring and distorting of this decision is a folly that will further drive Israel upon a harmful path. The first command of the Security Council's decision is the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the occupied territories and the invalidation of any territorial gains as a result of the war. The decision demands, too, that together with the withdrawal of the military forces from the occupied territories, the state of warfare be abolished and the right of every state in the region for sovereign existence within agreed and secure boundaries be recognized.

The agreement to do this and an action in this direction will surely lead us - judged by the conditions prevailing today in the region and throughout the world - to the way of establishing peace, of resolving the refugee problem and the problem of navigation and Israel's rights in this respect. It will lead to a way guaranteeing peace to Israel and the Arab states in this region.

This is the way to be chosen today. It is essentially a way of recognizing the just rights of both partners, of both peoples. This is the way advocated by the Communist Party of Israel."

#### PROPOSAL OF THE COMMUNIST FACTION FOR CONCLUDING THE DEBATE

At the end of the parliamentary debate, comrade T. Toubi submitted in the name of the Communist Faction the following proposal for concluding the debate:

- "A) The Knesset decides that the military raid to Jordanian territory on 21.3.1968 brought grave damage to the State of Israel, did not reduce but rather widen the sabotage activities and bloodshed and undermined efforts for political solution in peaceful ways of the crisis in our region.
- B) The Knesset imposes on the government to announce its acceptance of the Resolution of the Security Council dated 22,11.1967 in full and act for its entire implementation."

Knesset government majority rejected the above proposal. S. Mikunis joined the government votes in rejecting the communist proposal.

LEAFLET AGAINST MILITARY RAID ISSUED AND DISTRIBUTED  
BY COMMUNIST PARTY

Following upon the adventurous military action against Jordan on 21.3.1968, the CC, CP of Israel issued a leaflet condemning the raid, pointing out to its damaging consequences to the cause of peace, and calling for an end to the policy of force and war, for implementing the resolution of the UN Security Council and for withdrawal of forces from the occupied territories as means of arriving at a peaceful settlement.

Members of the Party publicly distributed this leaflet of the Party in Hebrew and Arabic.

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"KOL HA'AM" SUPPORTS THE MILITARY RAID OF 21.3.1968  
AGAINST JORDAN

(We publish herewith translation of main extracts of a leading article by "Kol Ha'am" (22.3.68), the newspaper of Mikunis-Sneh group, commenting on the military raid of the Israeli forces against Jordan on 21.3.1968)

Under the headline: "THE OPERATION OF THE ISRAELI DEFENCE FORCES", Kol Ha'am of 22.3.68, wrote:

"It is not the Israeli side which caused the flare-up on the cease-fire lines with Jordan. The mining of the pupils' autobus on the road to Eilat was a climax in a series of terrorist infiltrations into Israeli territory for planting death and sabotage and more of it is still to come.

"The actions of the terrorist organizations are covered by the Jordanian authorities, and in these days also the Egyptian rulers joined in praising and supporting these organizations and their terrorist activities. Only a month ago when King Husein strongly criticised acts of terror which 'give Israel excuse to attack Jordan', he announced that he will not allow such acts and called upon those Arab countries which support such acts to do this in the future from their own territory"... Kol Ha'am goes on to say: "...But the internal developments in the regimes and policies in Egypt and Jordan in the last weeks brought about that King Hussein did not stick to his words, and did not prevent the

renewal of terror, but to the contrary, he allowed it to spread and to become stronger. The official organ of the Kingdom (Al-Destoor) even explained that it is not the business of the Jordanian Kingdom to prevent Palestinians from fighting. In fact the Jordanian Kingdom accepted upon itself the responsibility arising from covering-up and allowing "Al-Fateh" and other sabotage organizations.

"Since the 11 of June 1967, there exists a cease-fire agreement between the State of Israel and the neighbouring Arab States, and the honouring of this agreement is essential for the security of the peoples of the region. But it is clear to all that the cease-fire agreement binds on both sides of the demarcation lines, and if it is violated by one side it is innocent to expect that it will be upheld only from the second side. This is the meaning of the action of the Israeli defence forces which was directed against the bases of the terrorist organizations on the eastern shore of the Jordan.

"Immediately after the tension arising with the mining of the pupils' auto-bus we stressed the reservation that the peaceful population should not be hurt while fighting against terrorist aggressiveness. The Prime Minister in the Knesset and the spokesman of the Israeli Defence Army in Kol Israel (Radio) said that orders were given to Israeli Army units not to harm the population particularly women and children. Of course it is a duty to exert maximum effort not to hurt any innocent populace."

The editorial ends by stating that Israel's interest lies in a political settlement...

The editorial is in fact a repetition of the position of all organs of the official Israeli policy which while supporting the military raid excused it by presenting it as a punitive police measure against terrorist bases.

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M. VILNER, T. TOUBI AND E. HABIBI PUBLICLY

INTERVIEWED IN MASS MEETINGS

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MEIR VILNER IN A PUBLIC INTERVIEW IN NATHANYA

On Friday evening, 1.3.1968, Comrade Meir Vilner was interviewed in Nathanya by journalist IGAL LEV of the evening newspaper "MA'ARIV". The interview took place in the hall of Esther Cinema before an audience of 500 men and women. We hereby publish a digest of the questions and answers.

Interviewer: First of all a question on a current issue. What was the reason for quitting the meeting of the Communist Parties in Budapest by the Rumanian delegation?

M. VILNER: I shall give some preliminary words on the meeting itself held in Budapest. This meeting was preceded by two consultative conferences during the years 1957 and 1960 in Moscow. Now the Communist Parties have assembled for the purpose of preparing a new consultative convention which will probably take place at the end of the year. For the present Budapest meeting 81 parties out of 88 existing throughout the world were invited.

Interviewer: Have your own party, the New Communist List been invited?

M. VILNER: Yes - because our party - the Communist Party of Israel - participated in the consultations of 1960 and now all the participants of the conference of 1960 were invited. In Budapest it will be decided which other parties shall be invited for the consultations themselves. The Yugoslav Communist League, for instance, was not invited to Budapest for it did not take part in 1960 consultations. But perhaps a decision will be adopted now for inviting it for the coming consultations. I feel very sorry that the Rumanian delegation quitted the assembly. But I have not yet received a first hand report and so it is difficult to impart any judgement.

Interviewer: You feel sorry. I, from an Israeli point of view, do not feel sorry when an alliance around the Syrian attitude and around a cause directed against Israel, was disrupted.

M. VILNER: The case is not so. We have to be precise in our concepts. Those who are assembled now in Budapest, are not at all anti-Israelis. On the contrary, A. Kosygin, Prime Minister of the Soviet Union has again declared only one month ago, in an interview to "LIFE" magazine that the Soviet

Union was one of the initiators for the establishment of Israel and even today it upholds the right of existence and security of Israel.

Interviewer: What is the background of controversy between Rumania and Syria?

M. VILNER: It is not a question of two countries but of two Communist Parties. The Syrian Communists do not yet direct the state. They and also we do not concede to the line of certain Syrian ruling circles regarding Israel. The Syrian Communists uphold in principle the right of Israel to exist as a state. Moreover, they support as we do, political solutions by peaceful methods. In the meantime they condemn as we do condemn aggression and aggrandizement.

Interviewer: Is there any Israeli background for the controversy between the Rumanian and Soviet parties? Will you please explain what is the different between them?

M. VILNER: First of all let us see what is in common between the Communist Parties including the Rumanian, Syrian, Soviet and Israeli. The Communist Parties are united in their estimation that the crisis in the Middle East should be solved on the basis of the decisions of the UN Security Council - which stipulate the withdrawal of the Israeli forces, the abrogation of the state of war and the insurance of the right of existence for every country of the region. Also Rumania signed the declaration of the Ministres of Foreign Affairs of Warsaw pact which was of the same spirit. The Communist Parties are generally united in the appraisal of the war of June too - even though one party or two may have a somewhat another appraisal of the war.

Interviewer: How do you explain that after the split in your party the majority of the public have a sentimental sympathy with the second section whilst your isolation is greater?

M. VILNER: As regards "popularity" it is a matter of conscience. Had we wished to renounce what we consider as vital to Israel, to its existence and future we would have been able to be "popular", to acquire applause and even "funds". There are in the life of some nations moods of too much inflammation. Certain time should elapse before they become convinced who was right, who led the people to catastrophe and who accepted to suffer inconveniences and difficulties and renounced "popularity" on the account of the people. I tell you, sincerely, that the people of Israel have no other future but to find a common language with the Arab peoples.

Interviewer: The question is that if we want to live, how can we achieve that?

M. VILNER: We also want to live. But we do not rely on the United States. Those who relied on De Gaulle and

the Mirajes are now relying on the Sky-Hawks and Fantoms. De Gaulle ceased to support us and the Americans may forsake us too. We have to accept one thing: the security of Israel should never be dependant on whether the United States would supply us with planes. On the basis of the decisions of the Security Council it would be possible to reach a settlement with the neighbouring states.

M. Dayan said in an interview with HA'ARETZ (19.1) that with Egypt it is possible to reach settlement including the abrogation of belligerency, and free navigation on the condition that we withdraw from Ghaza and Sinai. But Dayan objects to this. We do support such agreement. The people of Israel is interested in such agreement. The withdrawal will anyhow be realized. There was a similar state in 1956 too. At first only we called in parliament for withdrawal. At last withdrawal did take place in contradiction to the wish of the government.

Interviewer: A last question, member of parliament Vilner. You were among those who signed the Independence Charter of Israel. Would you have signed it even today?

M. VILNER: It is true that I signed 20 years ago the Independence Charter and am proud of that. Even today I would have signed it because I and my party uphold the basis of the right of existence of the State of Israel as an independent state.

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#### TAWFIQ TOUBI IN AN EVENING OF QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS IN GIVATAIM

On Friday evening 1.3.1968, comrade T. Toubi appeared in an evening of questions and answers in Beit Ha'am in Givataim. He was publicly interviewed by the publicist Yehuda Harel before a large audience which filled the hall. We hereby publish a digest of questions and answers.

Question: Did the war of June advance peace?

T. TOUBI: Peace may be achieved not as a result of war between the State of Israel and of the Arab states, but on the basis of mutual respect of just rights. It was possible to reach peace in the past and it is possible yet to reach it now on this basis. The fulfilment of the decision of the Security Council of November last year is today the expression of mutual respect of rights. The Foreign Affairs' Minister himself admitted in an interview given to the "JEWISH OBSERVER" as far as April 1965, that it would have been possible to reach peace settlement with Arab states had Israel accepted the suggestion that United Nations decision of 1947 be the basis for solution. Israel is in need of peace and not of additional territories.

We categorically condemn the Shukeiry slogan of annihilating Israel. He however has not the decisive word among the Arabs.

Question: Did Husein respect the rights of the Palestinian people more than we do? Is it not even possible that just we may confer these rights on this people?

T. TOUBI: It is only just, that the Palestinian Arabs should themselves say their word. No Arab personality said yet that he is satisfied with Israeli occupation. The Palestinian Arab people did never express their aspiration to be occupied by Israel. Whenever any of them expressed the wish, they demanded the withdrawal of the Israeli occupation forces.

Question: The Arabs of Israel were occupied during 19 years? You yourself were occupied in 1948?

T. TOUBI: We and the comrades of our Communist Party supported in 1948 the decision of the United Nations because it fulfilled the just demands of both peoples and was destined to oust the British conquerer. 1948 is not 1967. An independent state - Israel - was then established. I supported the establishment of such a state in accordance with the decision of the United Nations. In side the Israeli State I fought for the independence of the country and for the rights of the Arab population.

Question: What about Acre? It was not destined to be included in the border lines of Israel in accordance with United Nations decisions of 1947. Did its population feel that they were occupied during 19 years?

T. TOUBI: You ignore an important and decisive difference. The establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 was a just act and the war of independence was then utterly different from the aggressive war of June. The lines of armistice were then the fruit of agreement between the parties and then too we demanded the replacement of the armistice lines by agreed-upon borders of peace based on the respect of the right of the two peoples for self-determination. Now there is violation of agreements and occupation which was a result of an unjust war. We, therefore, demand, now the withdrawal from the occupied areas and in accordance with the decision of the Security Council this will be combined with the abrogation of belligerency, recognition of the sovereignty of states and their independence. This will create the basis and conditions for the solution of the other problems such as those of refugees and of free navigation.

Question: Sneh and Mikunis allege otherwise. Are they agents of imperialism?

T. TOUBI: Our views differ and because of such positions they split the Communist Party and passed to positions of official nationalistic policy- whilst we do continue the path of the Communist Party of Israel and carry on its struggle.

Question: Are the Rumanians agents of imperialism too?

T. TOUBI: Whereas I did not call any person an "agent of imperialism", your question is out of place. But speaking on the position of Rumania I would like to tell you that it seems you have a mistaken position with regard to Rumania. Different points of view may come to the fore between fraternal parties. But like all the other Communist Parties, the Rumanian Communist Party also believes that the first condition for any peaceful settlement in our region is the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from the occupied areas. This position was well expressed by the speech delivered by comrade Ceausescu not long ago and also by the declaration on the Middle East which the Foreign Ministers of East Europe adopted in Warsaw lately and which was signed by Rumania too. There is no place to say, therefore, that Rumania supports the stand of Abba Eban or that of Sneh.

Question: Did you succeed to influence Ben Gurion when you met him late or were you influenced by him?

T. TOUBI: The meeting you mention did take place on the request of Member of Knesset Ben Gurion. I did not influence him nor was I influenced by him. The gist of our prolonged conversation was that our opinions remained divergent as before.

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EMILE HABIBI, M.K., IN A PUBLIC INTERVIEW IN KARKUR

In the "Tzavta" Hall in Karkur, comrade E. Habibi appeared on 22.3.1968, in an evening of public questions and answers. KOL ISRAEL radio correspondent, Igal Lossen, interviewed comrade E. Habibi before full house. The audience received comrade Habibi with applause a number of times. We publish hereunder a brief report on the answers of comrade Habibi.

"We live in a very sensitive world in view of the danger of a local war threatening to develop into a world war - said E. Habibi. Gigantic forces are fighting for peace, that is why the policy of conquest and territorial expansion will not succeed. It is an illusion to think that there is something between withdrawal and non-withdrawal. Withdrawal is something necessary. The alternative is between a withdrawal which would bring no just peaceful settlement in its wake similar to that after 1956, and a withdrawal which would be an important step towards a peaceful settlement. We are for the second alternative."

On another question comrade E. Habibi answered: "There is no difference of opinion between us and others on the right of Israel for free navigation in the straits of Tiran and the Suez Canal. We support this right. The difference is how to ensure this right: by a policy of strength and war, or by means of our recognition of the rights of the Palestinian Arab people. We the communists are of the opinion that there is no way to ensure the rights of Israel other than by means of ensuring the rights of the Arabs."

On a question concerning the closure of the straits of Tiran on the eve of the June war, he said:

"The facts proved, that the closure of the straits was an adventurous and a harmful act. But we are not of the opinion that this was the real cause of war. We are of the opinion that it was possible to arrange this problem without war."

On the question what is the difference between Hebron and Nazareth, comrade Habibi answered: "It is not worthwhile to make such a comparison. Those who make such a comparison do not care about the fate of Nazareth, but they want to disillusion the people, as if the fate of the occupied territories will be similar to the fate of Nazareth which during 20 years became a part of the State of Israel. This is an adventurous and dangerous illusion, because it does not take into consideration the stand of the world public opinion towards the June war and the position of the Arab countries which is different from their position in the 1948 war."

On a different question, comrade Habibi replied: "When we say that imperialism pushed towards the June war and exploited it, we do not by this say, that the youngmen who sacrifice their lives are imperialists, they are innocent persons who think that they went for a just war."

Defending the position of the Soviet Union concerning the Middle East crisis, he said: "We place facts in the face of incitement, irrefutable facts which prove that the Soviet Union did every effort before the war through its contacts with both sides, to prevent the war, and when it broke-out to stop it. Now the Soviet Union exerts all its efforts to bring about a peace-settlement."

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WHEN THE RENEGADE LOOSES HIS BALANCE

"MA'ARIV" CORRESPONDENT CALLS MIKUNIS

THE "RED-HAIRED BEGIN"...

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The Mikunis-Sneh group in their nationalist and chauvinist degeneration are becoming cheap mouthpieces of Israeli reaction in their incitement against the Communist Party of Israel, against the Soviet Union and other socialist countries inflaming anti-Soviet and anti-Arab chauvinist feelings.

Member of Knesset S. Mikunis, leaves no opportunity to fulfil the role of a deserter in order to attract attention and applause from government benches.

On 20.2.1968, the Knesset debated the law extending the war-tax imposed last June, for another two years. M.K. M. VILNER speaking in the name of the Communist faction opposed the bill and called upon the government to adopt a different course, one of peaceful settlement of the crisis. The Government members of Knesset, listened to his speech without interruption. It became apparent afterwards that the task of incitement against M. Vilner, against our Party, the Soviet Union and inflating anti-Arab chauvinist sentiments were left to S. Mikunis.

S. Mikunis spoke in a hysteric manner, shouting, and striking the rostrum with his fist drawing the attention of the House. Stewards and the workers of the Knesset restaurant (adjacent to the Knesset hall) began to run hither and thither asking: what happened!

Below is verbal translation of some venal, senseless hysterics which escaped the mouth of this renegade who lost his senses when his nature was divulged to the world.

"I support the six days war and do still support it. It was a war of national defence launched by the people of Israel in defence of its very bodily existence. The responsibility for lack of peace does not fall only on Israel and the Arabs, for others are also responsible. They are those who cause turmoil in the region (implying to the Soviet Union)."

Then this renegade asserted "Member of Knesset Vilner objected on levying defence taxes because he defends peace, Woe for this peace which Vilner defends, only that who is possessed of the impudence of a whore will refrain from seeing the threat of the annihilation of Israel which existed on the eve of the 5th of June. Vilner defended the all-Arab front-hostile to Israel. All the speech of Vilner was levelled against

Israel. He ignored what "Al-Fateh" gangs, this terrorist and fascist band, are perpetrating inside Israel and whose ring-leaders are sent by the nationalist socialist Syrians (the very name chosen by Hitler for his party in Germany) and by other Arab governments through Transjordan inside Israel in order to commit murders and devastation under the banner of Israel annihilation - which is the banner of Damascus and the banner of foiling the task of Jarring. All the criticism of Vilner was levelled against Israel whilst they... they are right." and, oscillating, he added "the Arab chauvinists are right whilst the criticism is levelled against Israel." He added "There are those who interpret the decision of the UN Security Council according to their despotic will - which interpretation was corroborated by Vilner - namely, that first and foremost withdrawal from the occupied territories, should be executed and then... let us see... Then the Arabs (in a theatrical shriek) will give us the third finger. Those who do the same are not interpreting the decision of the Security Council correctly. Is this the interpretation of those who aspire for peace between Israel and the Arab states or is it an interpretation of those who desire to frustrate peace and to mine such peace between Israel and the Arab countries? (an implication to the Soviet Union)

He then said "I demand not to level against Israel the guilt of escalating the war. Israel has no political interest to violate the cease-fire. Anybody who has sense in his mind will understand this. As for the Arab states they are interested to violate the cease-fire. They violate it by their added escalation of the war. It is not Israel who is busy in war escalation but the Arab devastating chauvinism". Then his oscillation and yelling increased "Meir Vilner warns us, but we are not afraid even when we are warned by those who are stronger and greater than Meir Vilner (he implies to the Soviet Union). Nothing will force us to capitulate and nobody is able to force us to accept conditions which will suffocate us in conditions of ghetto. We are fighting for the sake of the Jewish rights and for the equality of Israel inside the family of nations. Jewish history proved what would be the end of all those who begin with Jews. They will not be able to break our backbone. Israel should be the most righteous state throughout the whole world."

S. Mikunis concluded his hysterical harangue as follows: "That who aspires for Israeli-Arab peace and who wishes the safeguarding our national existence has to support peace not by words but by deeds in order to advance the day of negotiations between Israel and the Arab states in spite of "Al-Fateh", in spite of Meir Vilner, in spite of Husein, in spite of Atasi and in spite of all those who dig pits in order to prevent peace reaching this region (implication to the Soviet Union)."



Mikunis - Begin - Dayan

The speech of renegade Mikunis has aroused the enthusiasm of the press of the court from the extreme right of Herut to the leftist Mapam. Ha'aretz estimated it as a "first class nationalistic speech". Nevertheless this press could not conceal its bewilderment at the degradation to which this deserter of the cause of communism has deteriorated. Ma'ariv of 21.2.68 wrote "The red Mikunis deserves the nickname of Begin the red-haired"... (Begin - dark haired - is the leader of the extreme right nationalist party Herut and now a minister in the Israeli Government).

Al-Hamishmar of 20.2.1968 wrote that Communist Member of Parliament Toubi last week had called Mikunis in parliament a renegade and a deserter of communism and that his party is not a communist party, but a party of Dayan. The journalist of Al-Hamishmar, Shavit, commented that what Toubi said was not true and he quoted as evidence the organ of Mikunis "Kol Ha'am" of 15.2.68, which had criticized Dayan because... in his meeting with the Mukhtars of Hebron region he compared "Al Fateh" with the Haganah (Haganah is the military organization of the Zionist movement in Palestine, before the formation of the State of Israel. I.B.) and because Dayan said that he did not expect from the Arab Mukhtars to arrest the gangs. By this Dayan encourages the citizens of the Western Bank to elude their responsibility, and to render assistance to "Al Fateh" terrorists. The journalist of Al Hamishmar adds "Thus it is not true that Mikunis belongs to the party of Dayan because Dayan is not enough militarist in accordance to Mikunis."

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"IT IS SO FILTHY, THE WAR, SO DAMNED"\*

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By Joseph ALGAZI

(Abridged from "ZO HADEREKH", 28.2.1968)

"I felt like throwing down the "Uzi" sub-machine gun, cursing loudly, sitting down and saying 'Fuss, I don't play any longer.' I realized, however, at once that this would make no sense, that it wouldn't help at that state. Nevertheless it is perhaps this what I should have done first and foremost. I believe that one should fight against wars."

### I n t r o d u c t i o n

After the June war there happened to meet, or gathered, a group of young members of the Kibbutz movement (most of them witnessed four wars and had participated in two of them), in order "to clarify to ourselves and to our companions what we experienced in the short-long period of the six-day war and to talk about the feelings and thoughts we had afterwards". These young people arranged dozens of meetings, interviewed others and themselves with the result that outspoken meditations were gathered in a book, which will arouse debates... Truly, for the time being the book is "internal, not for sale", but for some months it has been passing from hand to hand, has been read eagerly, and thanks to its excellent chapters has impressed itself upon its readers.

With nine months gone since the war it might seem to one, that nothing has changed in the Israeli society: All this establishment, reared on ideas like power, Zionism, "You have chosen us from all the nations", the "Israeli Defense Army" (in whose ranks command - among others - types like Arik Sharon, Iska and Rabbi Goren), power politics, and looking at Arabs "through the rifle-sight", "thou shalt live on thy sword", "everything for ourselves, for the others nothing" - is holding well its ground. But when you read the book "FIGHTERS TALK AMONG THEMSELVES" (this was my impression anyway) with all in it - to the better or the worse - and with all that is missing - to the better or the worse - you are bound to get encouraged and to say: Here at last some breaches were driven in the wall, that separates us from our neighbours, from the much-desired

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\* "Fighters talk among themselves" - Chapters of attentiveness and contemplation, edited by young members of the Kibbutz movement.

peace, from the victims, that were offered - much to our grief - by both sides. "Fighters talk between themselves" is not a hallucination, borne in the imagination of some author, but the reality of our life involving the problems of this generation, a generation which was urged to prove its maturity and its very self in the battle field. This generation - it is mine, too - is asking: How long shall I have to kill or to get killed? How long shall we feel, that "we are going to spend all our life doing reserve service"? This generation is erring in a labyrinth of "Peace, peace and there is no peace" (Jeremia). A few small lights mereging here and there point to a way out of the impasse, but in order to reach it we have to abstain from some misconceptions. "Fighters talk among themselves" helps us to advance on the narrow, hard and cumbersome path. There is hope that the next stage will follow - the rebellion that is still lacking among these youngsters, the rebellion proceeding deeds, that are repented afterwards.

I should like to say beforehand, that boastful words about "Jewish arms" and expressions of nationalism and chauvinism are not absent from the book. However, since such expressions are very common in Israel there is nothing new in them; the novelty appeared to us in questioning and challenging the war and its horrors, and in the desire of the editors and initiators to have the book published.

"Fighters talk among themselves" expresses the innermost souls of the Jewish youth in Israel. Although we hear the voices of Kibbutz-members only, we should not attach too much importance to this fact. Youth remains youth, and soldiers remain soldiers.

W a s i t r e a l l y a w a r o f d e f e n s e ?

According to the official propaganda the June aggression was a war of defense; this propaganda availed itself of the savage war cries of Shukeiry, Ahmed Said and the "Voice of UAR in Hebrew". This belief in a war of defense is expressed throughout the book, whereas the foreign intriguing and instigating factor is completely obliterated, and the Zionist politics of expansion are blurred. Most of the contributors to "Fighters talk among themselves" agree with Shimon (Givat-Hayim Ihud) that "the war was a just one".

T h e d o u b t

Yigal (Givat Hashlosha) undermines a little the notion of a defense war, because of the threat of annihilation, by saying: "Maybe there was a danger of a war of destruction, but nobody believed for sure that this is what is going to happen. In my opinion nobody really believed in it or considered it tangible.

We knew that they did not have the power and ability to do it."

Tamar (Naan) expresses her doubts in stronger terms: "I don't know, it's really heresy, it is a thought... Sometimes in the shelter, when I was holding a two weeks old baby in my bosom, a thought befell me: Was it really necessary that this war should break out? Was it really a question of life and death, whether ships would pass the straits of Tiran or not? Now, when I am trying to find out things for myself it is clear to me that it was necessary and just, but if Giora had not come back I would not think this way."

"E a g e r t o f i g h t"

In "Fighters talk among themselves" one can find quite a few examples of the outcomes of militarist education.

Yossi (Mishmar Hasharon): "...If we look upon the army as our profession (I am talking about myself as a man who serves in the regular army) - then we desired war or desired fighting. The war - we did not know what it was like. First of all there should be a purpose to what we are doing throughout the year; secondly, we wanted to test ourselves. As for me I was always troubled by the thought: If I am such a fighter at training - shall I be one in the battle field?"

Says Shimon (Givat Hayim-Ihud): "On the first day to our mobilization we met smiling broadly. I dare say even that the chaps wanted the war to break out. I believe that many of them thought it to be a good opportunity to demonstrate their fighting ability after they had been doing for years as if..."

"...I personally know young members of 'Hashomer Hatzair', who were brought up by love of humanity and by... how do they, put it? ...'brotherhood of nations'. I heard them saying, too: 'I view the Arab problem through the rifle sight'."

Rokhke (Tel-Katzir): "After I had washed, Nir Dudu asked me: 'Tell me, mother, do the Arabs also have a mouth and hands?' He imagined the Arabs as some fanciful monsters. When I told him that they are human beings like ourselves - I don't believe it entered his mind."

## E d u c a t i o n

I was bewildered when I read the words of Yoske, a member of Kibbutz Naan and father of two soldiers. It is hard to believe that a father should speak like this:

"In those days, when you were not here I, a common Jew, took the floor at a meeting of the Naan-kibbutz and tried to convince the people that war should be opened at once and that every day of delay is a loss to us. Upon leaving the dining hall, I remember,

I heard a girl saying to an other: 'He has got two sons in the army, so why is he so eager to start a war'?"

"We received letters from both Koobi and Ofer. They wrote that they don't want war, under no circumstances do they want it. They feel there is not going to be a war, but if it breaks out nevertheless 'we shall fight it out properly'. I felt they did not desire to go for war, whereas the public - the more conscious and informed they were - did want it. They wanted it although they were parents knowing that - though not participating personally - the price would be a heavy one."

"Goory, for instance, told me after her son was killed: 'What do I want actually? What am I complaining about? Why am I crying? After all - what education did we give Nimrod? Towards which goals did we educate him? - Yitzhak Sadeh and Palmakh (the storm battalions of the "Haganah" in mandatory times) and Haganah and Hanna Szenes. After all we educated our sons to sacrifice themselves. What sort of parents are we? Didn't we educate our sons to be sacrificed like Isaac, the son of Abraham? So what do I want? Didn't we prepare him for the moment of trial? The moment of trial has come. We knew we would have to pay its price'..."

The sons do not want war, but the father does desire it?!

The slaughter and the shock

One can find in "Fighters talk among themselves" a long series of shocking descriptions of slaughter and of the shock the boys experienced at the sight of these horrors.

Amnon (Gath): "A man was killed... We saw it... I don't want to exaggerate, but we saw piles of dead people. We did it with our own hands. People are asking themselves, as it were: How was I capable, two weeks ago, to kill human beings like flies on a net?"

Eliyahu (Mishmar Hanegev): "Sometimes I saw the Egyptian soldiers running. Then I didn't feel anything against the soldiers. I fired at them and while firing I became terribly excited how I am shooting so calmly. They seemed to me like dolls in the Luna-park, such running ones, as if you were shooting with an airgun, and when you hit you are terribly happy about it. This was more or less the feeling I had when I fired at people of flesh and blood. All this romanticism about war and battles has gone forever. I don't believe any longer in any tale about the beauty of war, and how wonderful it is to fight and die. There is no such thing."

Says a divisional medical officer (Mishmar Hanegev): "I don't have to tell you horror tales - about smashed legs, smashed arms and whatever you like..." "I felt all the atrocity of war when I saw all the Egyptians killed by dozens. There were quite a lot of them."

Says an anonymous young soldier, who was deeply shaken:  
"There I killed my first one. Well, surely I killed others before, but for me he was the first, because I didn't see the former ones. Suddenly I saw this man walking out through the door. It was a huge Negro. For a while we looked at each other. I knew that I would have to kill him personally, because there was nobody else around me. Surely the whole matter didn't take more than a second, but I perceived it as if it were a slow movement in a motion picture."

"I fired at him from my waist. I can still see the bullets sprinkling the wall to my right. I shifted my "Uzi" submachine gun, very slowly, I believe, until I hit him finally in his belly. He fell on his knees, and then he lifted his head. His face was distorted with pain and hatred. I fired again and somehow hit his head. There flowed so much blood! I, too, vomited when the other fellows came. Most of them had participated in 1956 in the "Kadesh" operation and for them there was no novelty in it. They made me drink water and told me that it's always like this the first time. It proved that I had emptied a whole gun-magazine of bullets on him."

"I returned joylessly. Victory didn't mean anything to me. We weren't even able to smile..."

## T w o   f e e l i n g s

Following the terrible experience of slaughter a natural disgust at war arose in the hearts of many soldiers; each of them expressed his abhorrence in his own way.

Eilat (Naan): Every time this topic is broached upon I feel a terrible loathing and nausea, probably because of all the sights of horror we witnessed there, of all those killed and injured. If I see these things again on the screen I shall not be able to look at them. I shall really have to turn my head away."

R. (Naan): "Actually I had moments... Once I had a moment during one night, when such an amount of filth had accumulated, and I had seen it. Again I mounted my tank and was quite sure, that that's it. From now on I view the tank differently. Even if I climb on this tank in another twenty years I shall smell this stink, I shall have this taste in my mouth, the taste of filth... Afterwards I was astonished. A day or two later I again... It is so filthy, the war, so damned..."

Mucky: "Upon returning from the battles the fighters preferred at first to keep silent. Only their eyes were talking. The fear of death was still reflected in their faces and figures."

Nakhman (Geva): "All this war is a terrible phenomenon."

An outsider among all these is the pilot Shmuel (Mishmar Haemek): "Before the war we were yearning for battles... we were longing for them... We were waiting and waiting... I smelled the war."

What a fine smell!" "...Now I prefer war with these frontiers to any doubtful state of armistice, for these frontiers guarantee us a maximum of security."

## L i f e   a n d   D e a t h

From the words of many contributors to "Fighters talk among themselves" emerges the question of the value of life, wherein another question is involved: Has one the right to take another man's life?

Says Yoni (Mishmar Hasharon): "Nowadays it does not seem as valuable as before, the life. In the days of war, however, it seemed to you an altogether cheap matter. I myself felt it very strongly. What is it to kill a man? I open the safety-catch of my "Uzi", three volleys - and the man is dead. One second - and the man is dead. What is it to kill a man?"

Avinoam (Mishmar Hasharon): "However, you were granted permission to kill them. You were granted the experience of shooting..." "What right do I have to take the life of little Mohammed's father, of Fatma's husband? Won't they be orphans and widows for many years to come?"

Uri (Geva): "I, at least, don't believe that it be possible for you to kill a man and afterwards not to "trample down", with utmost indifference, a member of the Kibbutz you are quarrelling with, since you have become accustomed to "trample down" others, even they be Arabs."

## P r i s o n e r s ,   l o o t i n g   a n d   o c c u p a t i o n

All the chapters, where the young contributors to the book talk about prisoners, looting and occupation were submitted to careful "editing", and the censor's scissors are felt in every section. Although there was left something of this, too, it holds no proportion with the "noble deeds" of the conqueror, which are described in all length. Let us cite a few examples of "editing":

Menahem (Mishmar Haemek): "There are very negative phenomena. One can see how doors are broken ferociously with rifle-butts. Truly, nothing is taken away... Almost nothing is taken. Things are thrown and broken without purpose."

"There are additional matters, that degrade a human being and you, too... It is terribly unpleasant to you... terribly unpleasant..."

Raphael (Yifath): "We, too, took part in the war within Syria. Here we encountered a problem a little different from others. Within Jordan, I believe, we would not have reached this point, for it seems to me that the people of our unit - and I among them - did not hate the Jordanians. I had no... I mean to say - I acted upon orders, but not out of hatred. In Syria it was quite different."

The feeling of shame at being a conqueror is well expressed by Arieh (Givat Hayim-Ihud): "I reached a refugee camp - again resistance. Here and now a hand-granade is thrown. I felt like a Gestapo-man. We evacuated a family with a nice daughter. She stared at me with frightened eyes, that left an indelible sediment in my soul. We perceived each other's looks and felt that we are all human beings. I had no heart to do it. I was thinking about my home. I was fancying that my parents were being driven out."

#### The future of the occupied territories

The problem of the future of the occupied territories troubles the public opinion at large and the youth alike. There appear, here too, two opposed attitudes, and in addition an intermediary one: To give back, not to give back, to give back in exchange for something.

Says Peter (Givat Hayim-Ihud): "It was clear to me that this would be the price, that we would have to give back in exchange for peace..."

Gabi (Givat Hayim Ihud): "What, to give back again? In my opinion this is a matter of... People who have fought for this business personally, with their body, cannot permit this to happen, will not be able to give..."

Amos (Huldah): "I am prepared to go to the Wailing Wall as a tourist, in conditions of peace."

"We had a victim in Huldah - a parachutist. Maybe you knew him. He fell in the police school. He was a young boy and a reservist, too. Two classes younger than I, about 24-25 years old. When I came back from war I called on his parents. There were a few friends of him. His mother cried, and his father bit his lips. Someone of the older ones tried to comfort them by saying: 'Look, after all we have liberated Jerusalem. Your son did not fall in vain.' Upon hearing this the mother burst into tears and said: 'The whole Wailing Wall is not worth to me one little finger-nail of Mikha. When you say we fought for our existence - it is worth to me a finger-nail of Mikha, but when you say we fought for the Wailing Wall it isn't worth in my eyes a single finger-nail of him. You may kill me - I have no sentiments for these stones. They are nothing but stones, whereas Mikha was a human being. He was a man. If by blowing up the Wailing Wall with dynamite Mikha could be brought back to life I would say: Go and blow it up!'"

Amir (Mishmar Haemek): "You cannot talk of lasting peace as long as you are sticking to international frontiers that are not yours. You claim that El-Hamah is yours and the Baniyas is yours. These are international frontiers. You will stick to Tel-Aziziat, too... In my opinion, however, you will not be able to stick to



to all these perpetually. It is not only that you won't be able to stick to them; it is not proper either. Today you can stick to them as a means of pressure only."

## Z i o n i s m   u n v e i l e d

When the emotional shell is peeled off Zionism (especially when it is done by declared Zionists) its contents are revealed in all their nakedness. Let us read how young contributors to "Fighters talk among themselves" explain Zionism:

Nakhman (Geva): "You may consider the whole Zionism as a most tragic affair. From the very beginning... this coming in of the Jews, the return of this people to the land of its ancestors. The only possibility for this people to continue its existence involves the opposition of the native people, and its return to this country involves expropriation in this way or another. Expropriation... In our vicinity there were the Arab villages of Nuris, Mazaar and Koomi - they don't exist any more!"

"It all starts with Zionism. The existence of the Jewish people and its possibilities to return to this country involve the driving off of those who lived here before."

## T h e   r i g h t s   o f   t h e   A r a b s

According to Matityahu (Ramat Yohanan) the Arabs have no claim to this country. "Truly - every people lives in its own country. The Arabs have been living here for many generations. However, they have not been living here for thousands of years. They have not created any bible. They live here, but the Arab is lacking something that we do have, we that have not lived here for many generations. The Arab is actually a resident in this country, and that's all."

"Have they created here, in this country, a tradition of love and creation, a culture of their own? This country was merely a district to them, one of the many districts in this wide area."

These words of Matityahu are confuted by Shai (Huldah), who relates the following:

"When refugees arrive in order to receive their rations from UNRWA - they come according to districts. Every day another district gets its rations: One day the Beer-Seba quarter arrives to get food, the other day the Zarnugah quarter, the third day - the Rehovoth quarter. I remember that when asking one of them for the first time 'Where are you from?' he replied to me 'From Beer-Seba'. I asked another one: 'Where are you from?' His answer was: 'From Zarnugah'. I remember that I was indignant by this. I remember not having been able to understand; 19 years have passed since then. Now I do understand it..."

"Now I can understand them completely. Foremost - somehow they have kept the embers of hope to return burning slowly."

Whereas Shai only understood them Menahem (Ein Hakhohesh) went as far as identifying himself with them:

"If I ever had a clear cognition of the world war and the holocaust - then it was at that particular moment when I drove up the road to Jericho and the refugees walked down the road. It was an immediate and direct identification with them. When I saw those parents carrying their children on their arms I almost actually saw my father carrying me in his arms."

### S h a t t e r e d     i l l u s i o n s

Like most of the public all the young people were caught in the belief that the June war would prove to be the last one, but here comes reality, refutes them and proves there exists the danger of another war.

Says Yossi (Geva): "The most terrible thing for me was my belief that the war is over and that's it. Now we shall have peace, maybe for ten years, I said to myself, but when new shots were fired at the Suez Canal and more boys were killed I was truly shocked."

Avishai (Ein-Shemer): "We are holding on to territories where there is a pretty indigenous Arab population. In the next round, it seems to me, the Arab population will hate us much more seriously, much more abysmally. That means that the coming war will be much more cruel, and there will be many more victims."

"I feel that by annexing Jerusalem to the State of Israel the possibilities for true negotiations and for peace have actually vanished. In my eyes the blood of the boys is more important. I have a foreboding that we shall have to pay in the next war a price much dearer than Jerusalem, with all its holiness and holy places."

### T h e   f a t a l i s m     o f     w a r

There is no wonder that as a result of such reflections the youth is reaching the conclusion that "our spiritual world, I'm afraid, is becoming more and more encumbered with this experience of war" - as is the opinion of Aviezer. In another passage he says even more distinctly: "I know many Jews for whom the question does not exist at all. Let things be however they be, i.e.: Every ten years there is bound to be a war and we have to face it."

Shimon (Givat Hayim-Ihud): "Actually the war has been accompanying us from the moment of our birth until this very day."

Tamar (Naan): "now, too, you say every time 'the next war' and 'the next battle'. People realize that it is of no avail, that it is forced upon us and even compels us to want it. I remember that all of us mothers were in the infants home two weeks or a week after we had given birth to a baby. There were some girls

who regretted having given birth to a child."

Gili (Geva): "There is only one topic to the distress - that within a few years we shall have to fight again..."

Eli (Geva): "I can't see any solution at all to this problem... and these are our lives... This way we have to live and this way we have to educate our children. Maybe we have to beget more children - and there will be more wars... It isn't up to us..."

Nakhman (Geva): "A circularity of wars... The question is, if anybody is capable to offer something 'instead'... Very simply... I put it in a negative way: If not this - so what? We shall renounce everything... surrender, go to peace..."

Yigal (Givat Hashlosha): "Shall we be THE specialists for war?"

Aviezer: "Whoever participated in the war of independence prayed that it might be the last war, prayed again after Sinai and again after the last war, but now one does not believe any longer that this time was the last one."

E n o u g h ! " F u s s !"

From this stems the question: How long shall we be able to carry on like this?

Amram (Ein-Hakhoresh): "This is apparently our fate. There also was somebody who said: 'I would calmly go for war if I knew that this is to be the last one. I know, however, that I'm going to die for an endless affair.' I am convinced that after this war this feeling will be much more pronounced than following the former ones - the feeling that all this eternal wrestling does not make any sense."

I shall not cite again the motto, with which I have identified myself. This identification is based upon the insight 'Enough of war'! This insight is not the outcome of yearnings, but grows out of the certainty that it is possible to achieve peace. This deep longing for peace is expressed in the words of Haggai (Ein-Shemer):

"Some Jews believe, out of lack of confidence in any compromise, that the way of force is the only one. This is their main channel of thought. They don't think further, they don't consider whether it be possible to carry on like this throughout the years. Is it possible to live and advance like this in the coming years. According to them they are not troubled so much by the question whether this be possible, but mainly by the fact that they don't believe in any other way."

"In my opinion this is our central problem. This is not the concern of some party, but the concern of any young man who gives the matter a thought. If we succeed to instill in our-

selves, first of all, the belief that there is a possibility to achieve peace, that there is actually no other choice, that endless wars will not solve a thing, but on the contrary will aggravate matters successively, then... There are electronic devices that can be operated from Cairo, without any need to have the armies confronted, and with these they might be able to undo all our huge advantage. This very reflection is bound to make us seek a way that is not essentially based on coercion and forceful decisions. Many among us should become convinced of this - in my opinion it is an elementary basis. If we succeed in bringing large masses of young people to the conclusion that there is no other way but to make peace between these nations - then, I assume, we shall have passed already the first and main stage."

This appeal to ourselves is doubtlessly sincere. It is not sufficient, however. It would be only the "first stage", as Haggai put it. This is the first omen predicting the future upheaval in all our thinking, about our Arab neighbours. It is not enough, however, to desire peace; one has to be active in achieving it.

#### C o n c l u s i o n

"FIGHTERS TALK AMONG THEMSELVES" is an important and timely book. It serves as a stimulus to those who have been trying for many years, working like ants, to bring about a shift, however small, of public opinion in questions of war and peace. It represents a new effort giving the young generation an opportunity to express itself.

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF ISRAEL

DAVID KHENIN AND SALIBA KHAMIS

AT CONSULTATIVE MEETING IN BUDAPEST

Member of the Politbureau and Secretary of the CC of CP of Israel, comrade David Khenin and member of the Politbureau comrade Saliba Khamis, represented the Communist Party of Israel at the Consultative Meeting of the Communist and Workers Parties held in Budapest on 26th February - 5th March, 1968.

On behalf of the Communist Party of Israel, comrade David Khenin addressed the Consultative Meeting.

The delegation of the CP of Israel supported the statement of the Consultative Meeting and the call for an international conference of the Communist and Workers Parties to be convened on November-December, 1968, in Moscow.

The CC of the CP of Israel decided to take part in the work of the preparatory committee for the international conference and delegated comrades D. Khenin and S. Khamis to represent it at the work of the preparatory meetings.

J O I N T     C O M M U N I Q U E  
BETWEEN THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA  
AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF ISRAEL

On 21.3.1968 "RUDE PRAVO", organ of the CC, Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, published the following communique:

"The Secretary of the CC of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, Vladimir KOUTSKY held talks with the representatives of the Communist Party of Israel - member of the Politbureau and Secretary of the CC, David KHENIN and member of the Politbureau Saliba KHAMIS. Representatives of the two parties exchanged information on the activities of the two parties and exchanged opinions on the main points of the international problems. They concluded that the situation in the Middle East got more grave lately as a result of the annexationist and territorial expansionist designs of the Government of Israel towards the Arab occupied territory. In connection with this the representatives of the two parties stressed the necessity of a struggle for the implementation of the resolution of the Security Council dated 22nd November, 1967. This political resolution is in the interest of the cause of world peace and in the interest of the peoples of the region.

"The CP of Czechoslovakia and the CP of Israel positively estimate the conclusion of the Consultative Meeting of the Communist and Workers Parties of Budapest, and its contribution to the developing of the active unity and the consolidation of the world communist movement which now declares that it will exert combined efforts for the preparation of a world consultative meeting of the Communist and Workers Parties in Moscow.

"The talks were carried in a friendly atmosphere and mutual solidarity between the two parties was expressed."

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