

Criticizes Paper's Editorial

Dear Editor:

Allow me to join in the lament on your "editorial tragedy" entitled "Palestine Tragedy."

The slogan of "Cease Fire" is an excellent one and one that fits the situation. It is, however, overshadowed by the mass of the editorial that is contradictory, contains errors in theory and above all is full of abstractions and does not give us a guiding line for action to meet the PRESENT situation.

How achieve a "Cease Fire"? The editorial states (by the Jews making) "elaborate and scrupulous assurances to the Arab people and to make the greatest number of reasonable concessions." I don't ask for a blueprint but pray, comrade editors, please give us a hint as to what kind of "assurances" and "concessions." Should not a demand for "cease fire" appeal to the Arab workers as well?

After allowing any ordinary reader to study the editorial, I am sure that nine out of ten wouldn't answer the question "Does or does not LABOR ACTION and the Workers Party accept partition." By accepting partition, I mean not hailing it but accepting it in the same sense that LABOR ACTION accepted the partition of India.

Let's look at India. A religious group—the Moslems—demanded the right to separate from the nation or nationalities that exist in India. Nobody, not even Ali Jinnah, claimed the Moslems were a nation. Yet the Workers Party and LABOR ACTION, while deploring the situation, came out CLEARLY for their right to separation, and with no long sermons on majority rule.

RIGHT OF SEPARATION

Palestine, on the other hand, it is universally conceded, IS inhabited by TWO NATIONS. No matter what should have been or is the better course of action, socialists who believe in the right of self-determination must allow the smaller nationality the right to separate itself from the larger (majority) nationality and constitute its own unit.

Lenin never tired of repeating that the essence, the very heart of the right of self-determination is the right of a nationality not to be counted as part of a larger unit but to separate, secede and form its own unit within which majority rule will operate. The editorial counterposing majority rule to partition was an error in principle. Whatever can be said against partition, majority rule has no place in the discussion.

Where a smaller nationality wants to separate itself, Lenin point out that the first responsibility of upholding this right fell on the revolutionists of the majority nationality;

in this case, the Arab labor movement. The editorial should have mentioned that fact.

In case of open warfare to prevent a minority nationality from separating, from seceding, the position of a revolutionary is obvious, unless the defensive struggle of this nation is subordinated to a larger imperialist war. At present open warfare can be avoided by the proper political steps. Emphasis should be put on the "Cease Fire" and the political attempt of isolating the elements both amongst the Jews and the Arabs who feed the flames of war and irredentism. This means above all the Mufti.

In my opinion, the most effective way, POLITICALLY, to minimize bloodshed is by **immediate independence for both the Arab and Jewish states**. As long as the possibility exists of destroying the two states, so long will there be a premium on violence. Immediate independence will not eliminate bloodshed but in the long run will keep it to a minimum. The probable pattern that the violence will take is continued guerrilla fighting until independence, a flare-up of large-scale fighting, tapering off to zero as the two states establish themselves finally.

In addition we must call for the reunion of the country into a voluntary federation of the two sovereign states. The braided geographical borders, the close interconnection of the economy of the two countries makes federation a practical slogan, appealing to the need of both the Jews and Arabs. Only federation can guarantee the maintenance of the present living standards of the Arabs and Jews or provide for the economic basis for large-scale immigration. Justified Arab labor opposition to partition, should be directed away from "irredentism" to re-unification by voluntary federation.

With national feelings at their height, federation of two sovereign states is the only form that re-unification can take. Even where national feelings are normal, as in post-revolutionary Russia, a federation was established by the Bolsheviki, until destroyed by the Stalin dictatorship. To speak of re-unification in general and of a single Constituent Assembly is philosophy and not politics.

Slogans of the day are: Immediate Independence—Abolish British and UN Transitional Rule—Re-United Palestine by Voluntary Federation.

Yours truly,

Al Findley.