

TWO YEARS
SINCE THE
JUNE 1967 WAR

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TWO YEARS SINCE THE JUNE 1967 WAR

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Two years have passed since the June 1967 War. It has been named the Six-Day War. In reality this war is in its third year. On the Israeli side the number of victims after the "Six-Day War" is already greater than the number of victims of that war itself. The bloodshed continues and even becomes intenser. There exists the danger of a new full-scale war.

In Israel the discussion about the character of the June War continues, as vital information is still kept top secret, so that the people might not know the truth. Yet, from time to time new facts are coming to light, which shock public opinion. But under the pressure of the authorities and the censorship in their hands, those facts are silenced - till the next shock.

THE 1956 WAR

At the time of the Sinai-Suez War of 1956 and till a considerably later time, the fact was strictly concealed from the people, that before that war the Prime Minister of those days, David Ben-Gurion, had gone to Europe. Following the nationalization of the Franco-British Suez Canal Company, he met there with the French and British Governments, and together they planned in detail the aggression against Egypt. When in those days rumors about that fateful meeting infiltrated the press, the "authoritative" and "informed circles" hastened to deny them. According to their notoriously cynical behavior they used to declare that those were fabrications of Israel's enemies... But not much time elapsed before everything became known in full detail. Thus the people came to know, though belatedly, that indeed there had been a plot between the Ben-Gurion Government and the French and British Governments resulting in the staging of a "defensive war!"

THE REVELATIONS OF M.A. GILBOA

Today the details are emerging at a slower tempo: The presentation of the official version continues. But there appear impediments, which originate precisely in the official circles themselves, in result of their internal contradictions. Against this background it is possible to comprehend the present revelations of the journalist M.A. Gilboa. Gilboa is the head of the Department of Academic Workers in the Labour Party. He revealed that the report delivered to the Government by Moshe Dayan and the head of the Intelligence Department in the General Staff, General I. Yariv, on the eve of the June War had not been accurate. This refers to the movements of the Egyptian army in Sinai on the eve of the War. According to the revelations of M.A. Gilboa these acts were in response to the movements of the Israeli army and not a sponsored action. The aim of the inaccurate report was to influence the "doves" within the Government to vote for the opening of the War.

These revelations shocked the public opinion. Typical of the reactions to M.A. Gilboa's publications referring to the exaggerations in the matter of Egyptian troop movements, on the eve of the 6th of June 1967, was S. Offer's article in "Davar" (14/5/69):

"If there was an exaggeration in the assessment of the Egyptian danger on the eve of the Six-Day War, it means that the War was superfluous." This correspondent of "Davar" continues: Either the June War was, as he believed and still believes, a defensive war - "or there was an exaggeration in order to push the Government into action." If so, what, in fact, are we doing here? Do we continue defending the territories we conquered only because someone had found an opportunity for 'acting'?"

The discussion is indeed most serious. In the end they will not be able to hide the truth. Already now doubts are gnawing at the hearts of many.

THE HARVEST OF THE OCCUPATION

But, what is today almost not at all controversial in Israel is the fact that the War did not resolve any of

the grave problems that had confronted Israel, but only aggravated them further; that the War shook still more the security of Israel and did not strengthen it, as was promised by the rulers. The continuation of the crisis in our region only multiplies the victims on both sides. The number of killed and wounded, of widows and orphans is increasing on a frightening scale. We have arrived at a military budget, which, in the end cannot but lead to a new economic crisis. Already now, though we are on the eve of the Knesset elections, the Government decided to raise the taxes and prices. And this in spite of all its solemn promises that stability of taxes and prices would be maintained, at the time when the wages were frozen. From all these promises, what was kept, was only the policy of frozen wages. Now the toilers can realize more clearly, that if the Government permits itself already now to raise taxes and prices, it is not difficult to imagine what is to be expected after the elections.

The continuation of the present situation also multiplies the attacks on the democratic freedoms and threatens the very existence of the remnants of the democratic freedoms in Israel.

THE POSITIONS OF THE SOVIET UNION AND THE U.S.A.

The crisis in our region has become so dangerous as to imperil the peace of the entire world. Therefore the representatives of the four great powers have convened in order to reach a mutual agreement on the ways of implementing the Security Council Resolution from November 22, 1967, and thereby to prevent a new war in our region and the danger of a collision between the great powers.

Of course, the various powers do not have identical motives. The Soviet Union starts from a principled, Leninist point of view, and conducts all the time a consistent policy of defending peace in our region for the benefit of all peoples, the people of Israel and the Arab peoples alike. The Soviet Union has never conducted an anti-Israeli policy. On the contrary: by its policy it protects the true interests of the people of Israel as well as of the Arab peoples. The Soviet Union opposes the policy of war and annexations of the

Israeli Government. Yet this policy evokes a growing and expanding opposition in Israel itself, for the awareness is growing that this policy is liable to bring disaster on the State of Israel. The Soviet Union opposes the anti-national policy of the rulers of Israel and at the same time appears against the positions of the extreme circles in the Arab world, whose aim is not only the liberation of the occupied territories, but the liquidation of the State of Israel.

The American imperialists have come to the four-power talks because their Middle East policy has failed not less completely than in Vietnam, and their positions in Vietnam, and their positions in the Arab world are breaking down. The global aim of the June War - the overthrow of the anti-imperialist regimes - was not achieved. The situation is such, that the pro-Western regimes in the Arab countries are in danger of collapsing, in result of the USA Government's support to the June War and occupation.

Hence the differences of interests and attitudes between the rulers of Israel and the new rulers of the USA. The former are interested in territorial expansion and still hope that the continuation of the occupation and the military pressure from the side of Israel, will lead to the collapse of the anti-imperialist regimes in in Egypt and Syria. As against this, the circles of President Nixon's administration seriously doubt this, and seek for themselves a way out from the adventure of the June War and its reflections.

THE AGGRESSIVE LINE OF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT

Whereas the ruling circles in the USA are calculating anew their interests, the Israeli Government is galloping to the abyss. Prime Minister, Golda Meir, has just declared that Israel will not even discuss the proposals of the four great powers. The Defense Minister, Moshe Dayan, declares precisely in these days that "there is no commitment at all that our war will be a defensive one...the Arabs know that we can in one breakthrough reach Damascus and Amman," ("Yedioit Ahronot" - 13/5/69)

Such aggressive and rigid line brings in its wake an intensification of armament in a measure which makes

even the expenditures of the June War seem insignificant. In Israel itself the Government intensifies the persecutions of fighters for peace and opponents of the occupation, particularly of leaders and activists of the Communist Party of Israel and the Young Communist League, and particularly in the Arab districts.

In the occupied territories oppression is growing and with it the resistance to the occupation. The experience of the two years has proved that the brutal oppression, the mass arrests and the tortures in prison, the demolishing of houses, the collective punishments imposed on towns and entire districts, the economic policy directed towards the "encouragement of emigration" - - all these have not brought the Arab people in the occupied territories to reconciling themselves to the occupation, but to rally in an even intenser mass struggle against the occupation. This is expressed in strikes, mass demonstrations and other forms.

All efforts to find serious collaborators failed.

But all this has not changed up till now the policy of the Government, in spite of the contradictions within itself. It seems that very rarely in history have governments acted so devoid of any sense of reality, as does now the "Government of National Unity" of Golda Meir-Dayan-Begin.

THE PROSPECT OF A PEACEFUL SOLUTION

And all this occurs at a time when there exist real prospects of a peaceful solution of the crisis in our region, of turning over a new leaf in Israeli-Arab relations, by implementing the UNO Security Council Resolution from 22/11/67.

The Governments of Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon have most authoritatively expressed their agreement to implement the Security Council Resolution in its entirety. But the Government of Israel refuses to implement those parts of the Resolution referring to the withdrawal and to the refugees. It demands territorial annexations under the pretext of security needs and creates faits accomplis in the occupied territories.

The Government could not continue its obdurate policy,

were it not for the encouragement given to it by certain circles in the USA, West Germany and Britain. This truth which two years ago was acknowledged only by the Communist Party of Israel, has been acknowledged in the course of time, by many additional sections of the Israeli public.

THE OPPOSITION TO THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY IS EXPANDING

The contradictions within the Israeli society are becoming more acute. Side by side with the aggravation of the official political line, following the setting-up of the Golda Meir Government and the increasing influence of the extreme right of Gahal on the governmental policy, there is a continued and more distinct process of opposition to the Government's policy. The widening of the opposition to the Government's policy is both direct and indirect and is expressed by:

1. More numerous public appearances of personalities and public circles against the obdurate line of the Government.
2. A greater number of expressions of popular opposition to the continuation of the present situation of incessant bloodshed and of the shameful status quo of a people of occupants.
3. A sharpening of the class struggle, which the Government and the majority in the leadership of the Histadrut unsuccessfully try to break under the demagogical pretexts of 'security' and 'national unity'.
4. More attention is being paid by the Israeli public to the policy of our Communist Party of Israel.

THE APPEARANCE OF PROFESSOR LEIBOVITCH

There is an increasing number of intellectuals who appear against the policy of national arrogance and the cult of force conducted by the government, and also against reliance on the force of imperialism. The first swallow was Professor Yeshayahu Leibovitch from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, who said in his interview to "Yediot Ahronot", inter alia:

Annexation?! A catastrophe! I do not see in the territorial achievements of the six-day war any lever

-for a positive development... Today we blow up houses, tomorrow we shall be compelled to set up concentration camps and perhaps gallows too... This is a clear process of escalation. Tomorrow we may have to invade Amman. After tomorrow, perhaps beyond. In such a process, the Napoleonic, or if you wish the crusader-like, end is inevitable. Maybe we shall have to dig our graves with our own hands."

And further he said: "During 19 years we did not make any serious attempt at coming to terms with the Arabs..... The oligarchy ruling here thought that it was not necessary, and the prevailing situation suited it. The affair of the Sinai campaign will prove this. That was an unpardonable historical crime. Israel appeared as a sword for hire of western imperialism, and without any rhyme and reason, without any advantages accruing to itself..... The Arabs know that our existence depends on the thin thread connecting us with the White House..."

And summing up, he said: "What our leadership can propose is, as I have said, a withdrawal, as De-Gaulle did in Algiers. This would be a deed of greatness."

THE APPEARANCE OF PROFESSOR TALMON

Now, as two years have passed since the war, as the isolation of the official Israeli policy in the international arena is growing, as the four-power talks are progressing, as the resistance to the occupation is intensified in the occupied territories, there are more personalities in Israel who raise their voices against the Government's policy. One of them is the well-known historian, Professor Ya'acov Talmon. In an "open letter to the Minister Israel Galili", published in the "Ma'ariv" on 16/5/69, Prof. Talmon exposes the political and moral abyss to which the people of Israel is being lead by the ultra-chauvinist policy of the Government. Professor Talmon angrily revolts against the speech of the Minister, Israel Galili in the Conference of the Kibbutz Hameuchad (which previously belonged to the Ahdut Ha'avoda Party and is today a part of the Labour Party). He said no more and no less than: "we do not consider the Arabs of this country as an ethnical category, a group that possesses national distinctiveness

in this country." Professor Talmon chastised the Minister of Information, Galili:

"Thereby you say that they are 'natives', creatures without any human semblance, without any identity, that is, without any rights as a group. Then why do you wonder if Arabs and others call you 'colonialists' and claim that there is no possibility of a peace settlement with you, since you do not recognize the principle of reciprocity and your intentions are toward expansion?"

No wonder, says Prof. Talmon, that the Government is accused of wishing to set up a state of the Rhodesian type. He revolts against the "slogan which has almost become an axiom, which says that the Arabs understand only the language of force", against the slogans "Force, force, strength and power!" - "The main thing is that we have a strong army and that the world know it." Prof. Talmon warns:

"If matters develop in direction of deification of force and that exclusive mission for which a neighboring people is nothing but the function of our interests, this will be a much graver 'Munich' than the act of giving up Jenin or Jericho." And further he said: "I see two completely contradictory positions: One which is fundamentally defeatist, and those others who to it say that one has to wring from the Arabs the maximum, assuming that the Arabs will never make peace with us, or that it is not worth while to make peace with them. This is a defeatist position as it accepts, in my opinion, general unlimited killing and destruction. Those who take up the second position, believe that this hour has to be the hour of conciliation, because it might be the last hour left for conciliation."

This is a clear reply to the boastful declaration of the Prime Minister, Golda Meir in the Knesset on May 5 of this year, when she defined as defeatism the opinion that demands a peace settlement which includes the withdrawal from the occupied territories.

Prof. Talmon sees clearly that the cult of force fostered in Israel is connected with the policy of serving the global interests of American imperialism and is

not just a local product originating in the Israeli-Arab conflict. He writes:

"Little is spoken here - and we are the sons of a people of refugees - about the urgency of the problem of the refugees, but it is repeatedly said in the voice of an old and most experienced realpolitiker that really we are the best garrison for America, which needs us more than we need her; that we know the interests of that power better than itself (and they still get shocked by the reaction of Russia and the 'new left' to this boastfulness)."

RECOGNITION OF THE RIGHT OF PALESTINIAN ARAB PEOPLE

This is indeed a true, scientific analysis of the situation, of the official Israeli policy. We, the Communists, have always said that the policy of relying on imperialism and the policy of repudiation of the national rights of the Palestinian Arab people, and even of its very existence, are interconnected. Therefore we have always maintained that an Israeli policy according with the cause of national independence and peace must include these two elements: stopping the dependence on the imperialist powers and recognition of the just national rights of the Palestinian Arab people, and in the first place of the right of the refugees to choose between return to their homeland and receipt of compensations. It is possible to solve the Palestinian question on the basis of the right to self-determination of the peoples. Prof. Talmon writes on this subject:

"In the eyes of the world, and in my eyes too, recognition of non-recognition of the Palestinian Arabs as a group entitled to self-determination is the basic question. It is the criterion which will determine if our intentions are towards respecting the rights of others, or towards ignoring them. This is the measure for ascertaining the democratic character and the moral essence of our state. Those who claim that by recognizing the rights of the Palestinian Arabs, we call in question our own right to live in this country and to constitute a state in it, do not know what they are talking about. The truth is diametrically opposed: the recognition of the rights

of others gives unshakable moral validity to our claim, and their negation deprives us of any moral right, at least in the eyes of the gentiles, who cannot be told that we have a 'kushan' (certificate of registration of immovables, according to imperial Ottoman law, still applicable in Israel - transl.) from God, blessed be He, entitling us to Jenin and Nablus."

These principles were correct and have remained correct till this day. Life has proved that negating or ignoring them has brought nothing but new wars. These principles of a patriotic Israeli policy, which are capable of leading to an Israeli-Arab peace, to the recognition of Israel by Arab states and to a joint Israeli-Arab front against the common imperialist enemy, should not be confounded with the overt and covert colonialist plans of founding a "Palestinian representation" or even a "Palestinian state" under Israeli military occupation. As long as the occupation continues, all talk about recognition of the right to self-determination for the Arab people of Palestine are nothing but deception, at least objectively, although some honest persons mistakenly adhere to that idea.

The Palestinian Arab people, suffering from Israeli military occupation, from cruel oppression, has absolutely clearly proved during the two years that have passed since the June war what it desires. Despite the efforts exerted by the authorities, sometimes using a seemingly lenient policy, and mostly following a policy of the big stick, the population of the occupied territories not only has not cooperated with the occupation authorities but the mass struggle of the entire population against the occupation has in the last year become a permanent reality, which has buried all expectations and hopes on part of the authorities to subdue the population and force it to reconcile itself to the occupation, to accept a diktat that would liquidate the Palestinian question. The population in the occupied territories, irrespective of political concepts and social status, expresses its clear opinion against the occupation and for restoring the occupied territories to Jordan, Egypt and Syria.

AWAKENING AMONG THE YOUTH

Despite the fact that the occupation has a corruptive moral influence on many young people (there has been a considerable increase in criminal activity after the June war) there are many, among them soldiers too, who express their disgust with the occupation. Typical of this youth and of the feelings of many are the words of one born in a kibbutz, Moshe Oren, who came back to his farm after serving three years as a paratrooper in the Israeli army. In an interview to the "The Week in the Kibbutz Ha'artzi", organ of the Kibbutz Hashomer Hatzair, number 852, dated 24/4/69, he says:

"We celebrate the Independence Day as occupants. This is a fact... I think it is important not to forget that there rises no nice smell from this; the opposite is true: it stinks; yes, precisely so... When one goes to their towns or villages, there is no difference whether those are French paratroopers in Algiers or Israeli paratroopers in the West Bank or the Gaza Strip - it turns out that the whole matter is just beginning to stink. Just beginning. And whoever believes that this has no influence that soils the soul, only deludes himself, in my opinion, especially (this influence applies) to us soldiers, people who carry out things in the field, day after day."

And especially do the occupation and the actions carried out day after day stink, when "already on your way you need another pair of eyes in order to guard your back against anyone walking on two legs, irrespective of age and sex; this could take out the desire to travel even of a Buffalo Bill, that's what stinks. And it is impossible to get accustomed to a stink of that kind, as long as you have the aspect of a normal human being."

So, this is the real situation in the occupied territories. The Arab people in the occupied areas has so clearly defined its will and its hatred for the occupation, that every soldier has to beware of "anyone walking on two legs, irrespective of age and sex."

Our Communist Party, and all people in Israel who have not lost "the aspect of a normal human being," consider as the only solution of the crisis in our region "the

liquidation of the occupation in the framework of the implementation of the Security Council Resolution. The fundamental solution of the Israeli-Arab conflict and the Palestinian problem lies in the recognition of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian Arab people, and first of all the right of the Arab refugees to choose either to return to their homeland or receive compensations, according to the decisions of UNO. The solution of the present crisis by peaceful political means will pave, in the course of time, the road to a full and thorough solution within the framework of peace treaties.

THE APPEARANCE OF PROFESSOR ARELI

The expanding opposition to the governmental policy is also testified to by the fact that even in the semi-official organ "Davar" articles are lately published, especially written by intellectuals, who remonstrate against the rigid line and against trailing after the nationalist fanatics of the "Movement for a Complete Land of Israel."

Thus Professor Yehoshua Arieli published a series of articles in Davar (the fourth and last one on 22/5/69), on the general subject "The future of democracy and the territories" (meaning the occupied territories - transl.). In these articles he warns against the dangers stemming from the domination of the nationalist egoism over the Israeli society.

Prof. Areli warns that the continuation of the present situation "will bring with it a trend towards insulating ourselves from any criticism coming from outside, and will develop a tendency towards national fanaticism and self-righteousness, a tendency which refuses to see any alternatives and to listen to the voice of doubt. A mental system will be created, made up entirely of values and norms of national unity and national identification. A strange mixture of a narrow-minded, tribal religious and hysterical-fanatical nationalism will be created. Such is the social mixture growing up today in South Africa and Rhodesia... Finally Israel will turn into a type of state, called by the American sociologist Harold Laswell 'garrison state'."

Prof. Areli does not consider the continuation of the occupation as realistic. "Even though the annexationists claim", he writes, "that it is possible that there will arise allies who will wish for the presence of a great and strong Israel and will support it."

But even if the occupation were to last long, this would have catastrophic consequences for the Israeli society.

"I have to draw attention - writes Prof. Areli - to the the danger to democracy stemming from the moral and intellectual attitudes and positions of the 'Movement for a Complete Land of Israel' and those close to it... You daily meet people who were and still are leaders in the Israeli working class movement, builders of kibbutzim and people bred in kibbutzim and moshavim. And these admit in public and joyfully, as if they had rid themselves of a burden that had long oppressed their hearts, that all the ideas about brotherhood of peoples, about obligatory humanist morality had been untrue and deceptive; that a people has to rely only on its own strength and to listen only to its inner voice... They will tell you with real real joy: There is no justice, no conscience, no reward and punishment. There exists only the force of the strong and the slyness of the weak."

Prof. Areli is worried by this grave turn to the right, towards ultra-nationalism in the Israeli society and warns against the development of a "nationalist world outlook, which fosters a concept of sanctity of national egoism and of a self-righteousness that does not permit any criticism and self-restraint. These attitudes confine us, darken our judgment and our capability to live in this world of the 20th century, in the reality of the 20th century. They prevent us from determining in a rational form our aims and needs, to try our strength with the many dangers that lie in our way, in a well-considered manner. They are liable to place us into an impasse and to imperil all our achievements and creations because of images which contain no truth and no life."

THE APPEARANCE OF PROFESSOR SIMON

"Mahanayim", the organ of the army chaplaincy, published an article written by Shraga Gafni, which calls for the expulsion of the Arabs from the country and even for their annihilation; the writer bases himself on verses from the Bible.

There were many retorts to this article; one of them was the article "Thou shalt not utter the name of peace in vain", which was published in "Davar" on 22/5/69, written by the veteran pedagogue professor E. Simon from the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, who himself is a religious person.

The conclusion of that article reads:

"The increasingly strengthening unholy alliance between our clerical establishment and the expanding political chauvinism has driven some of our Bible preachers so crazy, that they are 're-arranging the language' and calling war by the desecrated name of peace."

Professor Simon has here given an exact definition of the situation created in the last two years, when the ruling circles conduct a pronouncedly warlike policy to foil any effort directed towards a peaceful settlement, announce openly and resolutely that they will not consent to any settlement which does not include territorial annexations - and all this in the name of peace. Such a 're-arranging of the language' can be made only by extreme demagogues who call war - peace, and peace - war. But it is not the clerical and chauvinist demagogues belonging to all levels who express the interests of the people, and it is doubtful if today they express its will.

THE VOICE OF THE DRIVER OFRI

The real interests of the people of Israel are correctly expressed by Prof. Ya'acov Talmon in his letter to the Minister Galili, where he says categorically:

"It is my profound conviction that your declaration constitutes a grave harm to the prospects of peace, to the good name of Israel, to the real interests of the State, to the position of the Jews in the world;

it is a sin against morality, good taste, wisdom and intellectual honesty, and stands in strident contradiction to the lessons of history and to the sense of justice of the best sons of mankind."

The will of the people is truly expressed by a forty-five year old taxi driver from Holon, who fell while serving in the army reserve, leaving behind a wife, three children and an old father.

In a reportage published in "Yedoit Ahronot" on 19/5/69 we read as follows:

"The smiling and jolly driver Yitzhak Ofri who fell in an attack of saboteurs on an Israeli army position near Damia, was a well-known figure in Holon, having been a taxi driver of the Tel-Aviv-Holon line for 16 years. When Ofri used to hear news about frontier incidents, he always said: 'I am ready to return everything, so as to win peace and quiet'."

Are these feelings and words of the taxi driver Yitzhak Ofri not typical of many people like him in present-day Israel, after two years of occupation, of innumerable victims, of ceaseless bloodshed?

Does not our Communist Party express the will of the people in Israel, when it calls for the implementation of the Security Council Resolution? This resolution says indeed what the deceased Ofri used to say: To return all occupied territories in the framework of a peace settlement which will exclude war from the complex of Israeli-Arab relations!

On the occasion of the second anniversary of the June War the Communist Party of Israel calls for the rallying of all circles of national responsibility, of political intelligence and political realism in Israel in the struggle for changing the Government's policy, for preventing a new war, for a peaceful settlement of the crisis in our region by implementing the Security Council Resolution.