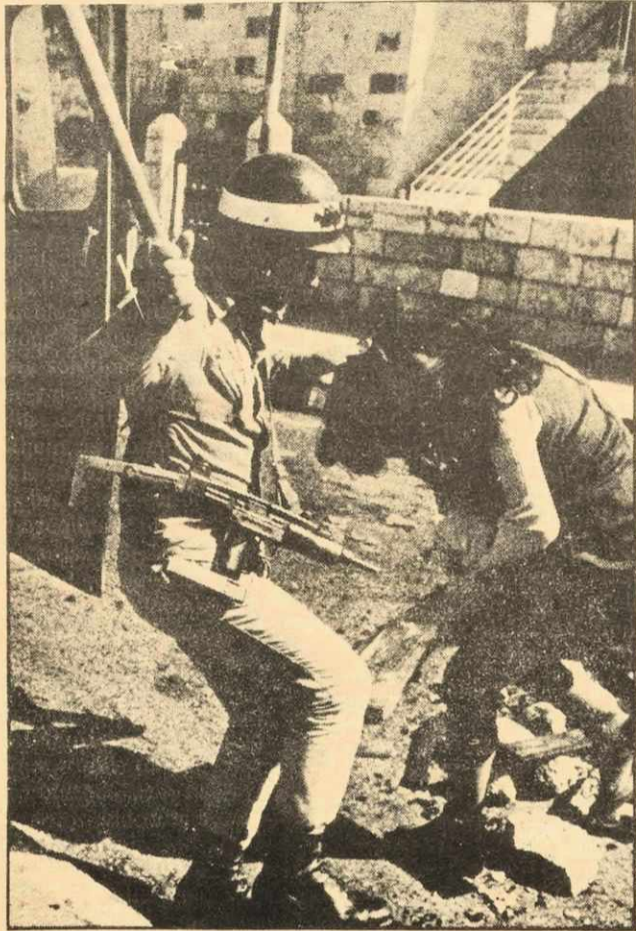


A JEWISH ALTERNATIVE TO ZIONISM



Israeli security police brutalizing Arab women during mass strike of Palestinians conducted in Israeli-occupied territory March 30.

(Historically anti-Zionism has been seen as anti-Semitism, the authors of this paper argue that this is a presumption. They feel once a can oppose anti-Semitism and yet still not support Zionism. **Editor's note**)

The alliance of Non-Zionist Jews, founded in Toronto last year, is critical of Zionism and has supported the rights of the Palestinian people.

Based at York University, the Alliance is comprised of student and non-student Jewish members. The following is their critique of Zionism, first published Nov. 11, 1974.

The central historic claim made by the Zionist movement since its inception until this very day is that the creation of the Jewish State in Palestine, would provide the only solution to the Jewish Question. Moreover, the left wing of the Zionist Movement claimed the implementation of the Zionist enterprise could lead to the social emancipation of the Jewish workers and farmer, both those who would emerge through the creation of the state.

Largely on the basis of these claims, the Zionist movement came to command the allegiance and active support of millions of well-meaning humanitarians, liberals and social democrats, both Jews and non-Jews, throughout the world.

The Zionist enterprise has also during its history gained the active support of many powerful institutions, governments, and states which commanded the concrete power to insure the establishment of Israel. In fact, without the support of these, the Zionist enterprise would have remained no more than a utopian fantasy.

Until the holocaust, Zionism had little basis to claim any kind of substantial support among the world dispersed Jewish population. The historically unparalleled, systematic attempt to physically annihilate the European Jewish population during the second world war was decisive in their stampede towards Zionism, even though the Zionist leadership refused to fight to open the doors of even one country (to Jewish refugees) except for Palestine.

In actuality this compliance with the anti-Semitic closed-door policy of Canada, of the US, and of Britain was the logic of their sectarian loyalty to Zionism and so their program could not serve the life and death needs of the Jewish people.

The establishment of the state of Israel and the worldwide activities of

Zionist institutions and organization have only now reached a high level of material power and historical maturity. The time has clearly come to subject these "achievements" to the test of critical analysis and evaluation, from the perspective of those deeply concerned with the liberation and social emancipation of the Jewish people, in particular, and with social progress in general.

It is evident to us that not only has the Zionist movement failed to advance the social goals it claims for its objectives, but moreover its practical effect has been to thwart them. Rather than providing a haven for Jews in Palestine, the Zionist movement has created a historic trap for the Jewish people.

The Israeli state now faces a perspective of continued war with people increasingly unified and organized, with mounting support throughout the world. The consequences can only be a tragedy, a tragedy which may likely involve the mutual use of tactical nuclear weapons.

What twist of logic considers that the solution to the Jewish question could be realized by the record of the Israeli state? That is:

- 1) The Israeli leaders have turned their state into a military fortress at war with all the nations surrounding it.
- 2) The material costs of Israel's war policy have been increasingly loaded on to the backs of Israeli workers (through an inflation rate of about 35 percent and the mid 1974 devaluation of 43 percent which resulted in the current crises) while at the same time a new generation of millionaires has risen to prominence and political power.
- 3) Israel's "black-skinned" Jews are suffering from oppression and misery in the white-dominated social structure.
- 4) Despite Israel's claim to be democratic, it still has in force a series of emergency regulations imposed in its time by British imperialism and characterized by Zionist leaders at the time as "fascist laws".
- 5) The Israeli state, since its inception, has been allied with most reactionary forces on a world scale.

(The Zionist Organization of America can quite correctly state in its open letter to Nixon published in the July 30, 1974 New York Times that "A secure and strong Israel is vital to our country's global interests. Your administration, Mr. President, has consistently recognized this to be true. What was true before October 1973, remains true

today, Israel still remains the only reliable friend and ally of our country in the Middle East. The de facto alliance between the United States and Israel remains the firm bedrock of our position of the Eastern Mediterranean").

6) Israel was and remains a militant supporter of US imperialism in southeast Asia and was among the first to extend diplomatic recognition to the brutal military dictatorship of Chile.

For the past period, all Jews have been identified with the Israeli state simply because they were Jews. In fact, a Jew who did not identify with the interests of the Israeli state was considered to be a selfhater.

We reject the slander of the Zionist establishment which equates critics of Zionism with anti-Semites. We consider the fight against anti-Semitism not to be identical with Zionsim.

By reducing the role of Jews in the diaspora to that of surrogates for Israel

and as such scurrying to cultivate friends in high places; Zionism cuts across the perspective and desire of Jews to combat anti-Semitism in their countries of residence.

The present predominance of Zionist thought among Jews is a substitute for the recognition of this necessity and in fact Zionism can be an escapist diversion from fighting anti-Semitism as shown by the fact that Israel's ally, ex-president Nixon, turns out to be an overt anti-Semite (as revealed in the Nixon tapes) and America's highest ranking military officer, General George Brown publicly affirmed anti-Semitism recently.

The reason that critical Jews are considered selfhaters is based upon the belief, in Zionist ideology, that all non-Jews are conscious or potential anti-Semites. Thus any solution to the Middle-East crisis that rejects the view that non-Jews are in evitably anti-Semitic but accepts them as potential allies in our struggle against anti-Semitism is labelled as being a rejection of Jewishness. As a consequence of this sectarian attitude towards non-Jews, Zionism removes the need to consider the national rights of the Palestinians and in fact engenders a racist attitude towards Palestinians and Arabs in general.

While seeking a path to Jewish self-determination, Zionists have denied that very same right to the Palestinians. In place of the "law of return" for every Jew, we would rather seek a solution to the continual war in the Middle-East by supporting the "right to return" for every Palestinian instead.

It is for the purpose of further discussion these evaluations among ourselves and in the community that the endorsers have come together. Although we may not have all the same evaluations as contained in this entire statement, we do agree on the general approach to the questions involved.

We are all Jews and non-Zionists who generally approach these questions from the point of view of those within the labour and progressive movements and the intellectual milieu. We include among us participants in a broad range of social struggles, and so we all bring to these particular concern as deep and abiding interest in human progress and social justice.

Alliance of Non-Zionist Jews

(Reprinted from the Charlatan)

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IT CAN HAPPEN HERE

by MARGARET ATWOOD

I don't belong to very many organizations, especially international ones. I do belong to this one, for a very simple reason: I'm glad it exists, and I realize it's poor enough and small enough so that its existence isn't a forgone conclusion. I'm glad it exists because I think I might need it someday.

It may seem paranoid for a Canadian citizen to be worrying about political imprisonment and deprivation of human rights. We look at the events in Chile and Russia and parts of Africa and say, "it can't possibly happen here." But it has happened here, and more than once. It will happen wherever a government decides that its own power is more important than its responsibility to and for the people; that is own power places it above the law; that is own power makes it unnecessary to answer for its acts or apologize for them. Governments do have these unfortunate tendencies, and the government of Canada is not exempt.

I was out of the country at the time of the imposition of the War Measures Act in October, 1970, and what little I could learn was from foreign newspapers. Allowing for distortion and sensationalism, it still seemed to me most alarming that the Canadian government was arresting people without warrant and

imprisoning them without charge or trial. To give the army and the police powers of this kind is to make the people subject to the mere whim of those doing the arresting and to leave them without protection of law. The other thing that alarmed me was that so few people were speaking out against this. Were the Canadian people really so susceptible to government propaganda? We tend to forget that though the so-called crisis was soon over, the War Measures Act remained in effect until April of the following year.

The experiences of October '70 may seem tame in comparison to what goes on in other countries. Not such physical torture, no long term imprisonments, no murders by the authorities; just a little intimidation and harassment here and there, and a few unpleasant and humiliating weeks in jail for a lot of people who didn't have the faintest idea why they were there. Maybe we should shrug it off and be thankful for small mercies. But once a government is able to assume this kind of power with so little protest from a people, the rest is no longer inconceivable.

Amnesty International has no temporal power. It has little money, it depends on volunteers, it represents no governments or political interests, and it is able to achieve what it does by moral pressure alone. In the face of the massive fascist techniques being

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