

Editorial

International Food Crisis - an Indictment of Capitalism

According to the architects of neo-liberalism, the capitalist market is the most efficient method ever devised for the organization of production and distribution of commodities. Since at least 1989 monopoly capitalism has had a free hand to establish its markets over virtually the entire globe. Today, the real character of the capitalist market can be seen in fact that, while there is currently more than enough food to feed every man, woman and child on earth, hundreds of millions of people are starving because they cannot afford to buy that food. Food riots have broken out in numerous countries over the past several weeks and the situation is not expected to improve in the near future.

The U.S. Bush administration has suggested that the government of Myanmar is guilty of crimes

against humanity because it has refused to allow the U.S. marines into the country to feed victims of the recent cyclone. Yet, in Afghanistan, a country occupied by the U.S. armed forces and several of its allies, people cannot get enough to eat in the U.S.-controlled regions of the country. Similarly, hundreds of thousands of people in Haiti are suffering from malnutrition and severe hunger despite the fact that the U.S. and its allies have been occupying the country for several years under the auspices of the United Nations Security Council. Ironically, many of the countries of Asian, Africa and Latin America which are currently suffering the worst were, not too long ago, not only self-sufficient in food, but were

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CUPW Passes Historic Boycott Resolution Against Israeli Apartheid

At its April national convention, held in Ottawa from April 13-17, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) became the first national union in North America to pass a resolution against Israeli apartheid.

Resolution 338/339 reiterates CUPW's existing stand that Israel immediately end all military assaults as well as calling for the end to suicide bombings, military assaults and other acts of violence that take the lives of civilians. The resolution goes further than CUPW ever has in condemning Israeli apartheid, through supporting the global campaign of boycotts, divestments and sanctions (BDS) against Israeli apartheid. (*Modern Communism* is reprinting the text of the resolution below). The resolution was passed after almost an hour of debate with near

unanimous support, and CUPW has refused to soften its stand despite a national campaign of pressure and intimidation organized by pro-Israeli Zionist groups.

Modern Communism salutes CUPW for the stand it has taken against Israeli apartheid, a stand consistent with the spirit of international working class solidarity in opposition to all forms of colonialism, genocide and imperialist aggression.

Resolution 338/339

CUPW will:

- Continue to demand that Israel immediately end all military assaults and abide completely by the most recent and unanimous Security

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exporting vast quantities of agricultural commodities.

For most of human history food production was organized on the basis of satisfying the needs of the vast majority of the population. Trade in food was generally limited to those products which were surplus. In most countries famines struck only once or twice in a century after prolonged droughts. However, the internationalization of capitalism in the form of colonialism changed that situation as more and more agricultural production was geared toward serving the needs of the colonial masters for raw materials for production and food for their populations. The frequency of famines in countries like India increased to once every decade or two following the British conquest of that country.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the major capitalist countries such as the U.S., Britain, France, Germany and Canada declared that capitalist agriculture would stamp out famines once and for all. The “Green Revolution”, which emphasized modern, mechanized methods of agriculture and the use of large amounts of fertilizers and pesticides, was the capitalist alternative to the land reform and collective farming being offered by socialism. While the Green Revolution succeeded in increasing agricultural production many times, it did nothing to alleviate hunger in the colonial and neo-colonial countries. That is not because there is anything inherently wrong with scientific agriculture, but because the aim of the Green Revolution was not to eliminate hunger of the people but to fill the coffers of the capitalists.

During the first phase of the Green Revolution, vast areas of land in the developing countries which had been producing food crops for the local populations were converted to the production of cash crops for export – cotton, tobacco, sugar cane, etc. – which were needed by industries in the capitalist countries. During this period the need to import food into the capitalist countries of Europe decreased dramatically as scientific agricultural methods increased the amounts of food grown domestically in those countries. In the U.S. and Canada, which had historically been exporters of food, especially wheat and meat, during the 1980s and 1990s new crops were introduced which had previously been imported from developing countries, such as rice, soybeans, peas and various other legumes. In particular, the U.S. became one of the major exporters of rice and soybeans.

During the same period, agriculture in the U.S., and to a somewhat lesser extent in Canada, shifted from small-scale farming to large-scale capitalist farming,

increasingly dominated by huge agri-businesses such as Cargill and ADM. Today, these two American multinationals, plus the European monopolies Louis Dreyfus and Bunge collectively control over 80 percent of world grain sales and other food commodities are similarly controlled by a handful of monopoly capitalist corporations. This control over the markets also enables these monopolies to dictate the prices for food and to set them at the most profitable levels for the monopolies, levels which are unaffordable for hundreds of millions of people.

The real efficiencies of the capitalist market are not in the production and distribution of commodities, but rather in the extraction of maximum capitalist profits from the production and distribution of commodities, as well as the provision of various financial services. The policies of neo-liberalism adopted by the monopoly capitalists in the mid-1980s were designed to consolidate the stranglehold of the biggest monopolies over the entire world and to drive out any remaining vestiges of national or local economic autonomy. Various mechanisms, ranging from the economic and financial blackmail of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund to military intervention and occupation, were used to seize total control over all aspects of production, including agricultural production. Small countries were forced to open their borders to U.S. and European agricultural exports, while subsidies and tariffs were used to keep their products out of the U.S. and European markets. Even natural disasters have been used to consolidate the hegemony of the big monopolies. Rather than use aid money to buy local food commodities for distribution to victims of these disasters, the local markets are flooded with free commodities from the donor countries, thereby driving the already suffering local producers out of business. This latter practice is by no means accidental, but a deliberate strategy of the monopolies to exploit the misfortune of millions for the enrichment of a few.

The domination of the monopoly capitalist system has given rise to unprecedented wealth for the few in the midst of unprecedented misery for the many, to widespread hunger and starvation in the midst of food surpluses. Any system which is incapable or unwilling to feed its people is a system which has outlived its usefulness. Monopoly capitalism has proved that it is technically possible to feed every person on earth, but it refuses to do so because that would reduce profitability. Such a system has no logical or moral reason to continue and must be overthrown.

Zionism History, Theory and Practice

Part 2: Creating Jewish Migrants to Palestine

Migration of the Jewish population of Europe to Palestine prior to the Second World War was slow and somewhat sporadic. Many Jews living in Eastern, Central and Western Europe faced various degrees of open discrimination and anti-Semitism. However, they did find enhanced economic freedom to pursue trade and business in these countries. As a result, the Jewish communities prospered to a degree that had been impossible under the conditions their parents experienced before fleeing Czarist Russia.

Conditions for Jews had also changed in Russia following the overthrow of the Czar and the advent of the Soviet Union in 1917. The new Soviet state officially banned anti-Semitism and many leaders of the Communist Party came from Jewish backgrounds. Jews were therefore full participants in the building of the new socialist state.

The Jews who had left Russia for non-European countries, like their Soviet and European counterparts, felt little incentive to relocate to the Middle East. Jews in North America and Europe often faced discrimination and some degree of anti-Semitism. However, these conditions were not sufficiently serious to cause many to want to relocate to the Jewish settler communities being set up in Palestine during this period.

The Zionist project to establish a Middle Eastern Jewish state therefore had a problem attracting the Jewish migrants it needed. Without wholesale Jewish immigration the prospects for creating a Jewish state Palestine were quite dim. In 1931 the estimated Jewish population in Palestine was less than 175 thousand, less than one tenth of the Arab population of the area. By contrast, in the same period the Jewish population of Europe, including the Soviet Union was about eight to nine million. Jews living elsewhere, such as in North, Central and South America, numbered in the neighbourhood of six million. As the 1930s began, only a tiny fraction of Jews in the Diaspora had chosen to go to Palestine as settlers.

Before the rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party in Germany during the 1930s, Jews had by and large decided to stay where they were. There were likely a number of reasons for this. Some were obviously doing well enough economically and saw a better future by staying put. Most identified as citizens of these new countries and saw them as their new homes. For various reasons Zionism at this time was

not a majority trend among Jews in Europe and other western countries.

Nazism and the Second World War were responsible for completely changing this dynamic at least for European Jews. The attempted genocide of European Jewry by the Nazi regime killed almost three quarters of the Jews in the countries and areas occupied by the German army. By 1945 there were fewer than two and a half million Jews left in Europe. Most of those did not want to stay.

The Zionist theory that Jews could not live safely among nations of non-Jews seemed to have been borne out by the bitter experience of European Jewry. Some Jews concluded that they could not live in peace in the ethnically homogeneous countries of Europe. Others understandably did not want to live there any longer. The experience was too bitter. The result was a significant exodus of Jews from Eastern and Central Europe.

Many of these post-war Jewish emigrants simply chose to leave Europe. A large number ended up in North America. The US to this day has the largest Jewish population of any country, including Israel. However, a significant number of Jewish migrants from Europe went to the British mandated territory of Palestine. By doing so they became part of the Zionist project and in fact for the first time made that undertaking possible.

In 1931 prior to the war, the Jewish population in Palestine consisted of fewer than 175,000 people. Jewish immigration from Europe during the Nazi period and immediately following the war raised the Jewish population in Palestine by 1950 to 1.2 million. This represented a six-fold increase in the Jewish population in Palestine. Thus, the influx of Jews to Palestine during this period finally produced a situation where the Jewish and Arab populations in Palestine were almost equal. The Nazi persecution of the Jews therefore was the single event that created the conditions for the partition of Palestine into two states one for Jews and one for Palestinian Arabs.

The partition of Palestine by the United Nations in 1947 was proposed to be a solution to the problem of anti-Semitism. The anti-Semitism that produced the genocidal murder of three quarters of European Jewry, according Zionist theory, could only be solved through the physical removal of Jews from the society

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- Council resolution calling on them to do so.
- Call for and actively work towards an end to the suicide bombings, military assaults and other acts of violence that take the lives of innocent people and demand that the Israeli-West Bank barrier be immediately torn down.
 - Demand that the Israeli government immediately withdraw from the occupied territories and abide by UN Resolution 242.
 - Call on the Canadian government to increase humanitarian aid to Palestinians that have been affected by the ongoing conflict.
 - Support the international campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions until Israel meets its obligations to recognize the Palestinian people's inalienable right to self-determination and fully complies with the precepts of international law including the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes as stipulated in UN resolution 194.
 - With Palestine solidarity and human rights organizations, develop an education campaign about the apartheid nature of the Israeli state and the political and economic support of Canada for these practices.
 - Commit to research into Canadian involvement in the occupation and call on other Canadian unions to join us in lobbying against the apartheid like practices of the Israeli state and call for immediate dismantling of the wall.

We want to do this for these reasons:

BECAUSE no lasting peace can be created unless there is implementation of international law, United Nations resolutions and respect for the human rights of both Palestinians and Jewish-Israelis equally;
BECAUSE 35 years ago, the United Nations Security Council unanimously called for Israel to withdraw from territories it invaded in 1967 (West Bank, Gaza, East Jerusalem) in resolution 242;
BECAUSE Israel has refused to implement resolution 242 for 40 years and, moreover, has illegally established Jewish-only settlements in these areas in further violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention;

BECAUSE the Israeli Apartheid Wall has been condemned and determined illegal under international law;

BECAUSE over 170 Palestinian political parties, unions and other organizations including the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions issued a call in July 2005 for a global campaign of boycotts and divestment against Israel similar to those imposed against South African apartheid;

BECAUSE the barrier severely restricts the movement of and work possibilities for Palestinians, violates international law, is partially built on land confiscated from Palestinians and is not a way to create lasting peace and security;

BECAUSE CUPW has a constitutional policy in favour of peace and disarmament and has consistently worked within the Canadian labour movement to pressure the Canadian government to promote peaceful solutions in the face of war;

BECAUSE the Canadian government cut funding for the Palestinian Authority after Hamas was democratically elected.

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of non-Jews. The great powers that bullied the United Nations into creating an exclusionary Jewish state in Palestine bought into that theory. In doing so they by implication endorsed the Nazi point of view that coexistence of Jews and non-Jews in a single society was neither desirable nor possible. Over the next sixty years that theory would be tested both within the Jewish state and in the other societies that accepted post-WWII Jewish immigration.

Next: The failed experiment

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