

SLP Resolution on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The following is the text of a resolution on the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict adopted in June 2001 by the 45th National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party and subsequently approved by a general vote of the whole membership of the party.

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The 45th National Convention of the Socialist Labor Party unequivocally condemns the ongoing U.S. imperialist manipulation of events and alliances in the Middle East.

The goal of that manipulation is continued U.S. capitalist-class control over the production and distribution of oil. The crass material interests that lie behind U.S. imperialism's need for that control produced the economic and social conditions that fueled the recent renewal of armed conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. They also make peace a virtual impossibility in the Middle East and increase the risk of global conflagration.

Ensuring the uninterrupted flow of oil from the Middle East is a primary concern of U.S. imperialism, which remains heavily dependent upon imported oil to run domestic industry and power its empire. The political arrangements made in past decades with governments throughout the Middle East, and which are being cultivated by Colin Powell and the Bush administration, all support that objective.

The material and military support Israel receives from the United States government is an attempt to bolster a beachhead for U.S. capital and Western imperialism in the region. This beachhead was established not only to promote capitalist and imperialist economic interests, but also to counter the imperialist objectives of what was then the Soviet Union.

The Gulf War and its aftermath, the embargo and continued military actions against Iraq, the maintenance of a fleet in the Persian Gulf, air bases in Turkey and Saudi Arabia, and the Clinton and Bush administrations' overtures to the ruling classes of nearby African countries all attest to the ongoing commitment of the U.S. ruling class to maintain and secure their material objectives.

American foreign policy sorts out those governments that will conform to

capitalism's material objectives, those who do so reluctantly and those who won't. Military and other economic and strategic aid flows to those who toe the line for U.S. capital, regardless of whether the governments involved are nominally democratic, as in the case of Israel, or autocratic regimes like virtually every other nation in the region.

Unrest among the millions of impoverished working-class oppressed in every country in the Middle East has been largely channeled into nationalistic illusions and religious fanaticism. In none of those states has an expression of true working-class interests emerged.

Among the Israeli working class an incessant barrage of deceptive propaganda promotes reactionary irredentist visions of an Israel rooted in the biblical past to "justify" settlement expansion and continued encroachment on Palestinian lands in Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza. That propaganda promotes the destruction of Palestinian homes and a refusal to confront past ethnic cleansings by the Israeli state. It refuses to recognize the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes, or to other restitution.

Palestinian resistance and anger have become more intense in the face of Israeli intransigence and cavalier use of military force. Israel's response to Palestinian terrorism has been state terrorism, carried out under the governments of the Likud, Labor and coalitions of other parties. With few exceptions all are arrayed against a subjugated population and have indiscriminately trained Israel's superior instruments of war on Palestinian men, women and children.

Daily reports of this seething ferment, of reciprocal attacks and reprisals, have prompted the Bush administration to issue warnings to both sides and to repeat the admonitions tirelessly drummed by the Israeli government that the "violence must stop." But warnings and admonitions cannot bring a lasting peace.

The Bush administration's packing off of Colin Powell on tour of the region serves notice to the participants that U.S. capitalism is not seeking peace in the region so much as it is allies to enforce its imperialist will. Whether the Bush administration continues this tactic or promotes some new peace initiative, its main goal in the region is a continued "stability" in the region—forced or otherwise—that will allow the oil to flow.

The political subjugation of a population expressing legitimate

aspirations to national identity is inimical to international working-class unity. Therefore, the Socialist Labor Party of America condemns the continued occupation of the West Bank and Gaza by Israel and the brutal military force used to insure its continued dominion over those areas and to maintain the beachhead desired by U.S. capital.

The Israeli and Palestinian working classes face mutual oppression under the capitalist system. Therefore, the Socialist Labor Party of America calls upon them to establish mutual connections to oppose their common class enemy.

Ultimately, there can be no peace in the Middle East until the working classes of the world, first and foremost the U.S. working class, have dealt with their respective ruling classes and established a socialist world of peace, plenty and freedom.