

Israeli exports... Israel's ratio of defense exports to total exports is the highest in the world» (ibid).

While aggressive aims motivated the Israeli military build-up in the first place, this dynamic is self-perpetuating in part because war is seen as a solution to economic problems. In the mid-sixties, 'Israel' experienced its first recession. Reparations from Federal Germany were coming to an end; the gross national product had stagnated as had immigration. The 1967 war reversed this trend. The conquest of new territories provided both a captive labor force and new markets. In the same period, 'Israel' began to develop international markets for what would become the single largest sector in the economy -arms sales. Israeli performance in war has proven to be the most effective form of advertisement for its war products. Thus, the premise that aggression and occupation are profitable has deep material roots in Israeli thinking. It was never challenged until the 1982 occupation of almost one-third of Lebanon, and then not again until the current popular uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. While the invasion of Lebanon was a fiasco for 'Israel' in many respects, it did boost arms sales. Less than a year after the Israeli army withdrew from most of Lebanon, Mapam's newspaper, *Al Hamishmar* wrote in the midst of the Israeli economic crisis and threats to Syria: «A not-too-long war, one which would continue for two or three weeks, will solve most of the problems of the Israeli military and security industries.»

DEFORMATION OF THE WORKING CLASS

The Zionist state's militarization has decisively shaped the class structure of the settler society as well, leading to further deformation of the working class, in addition to that inherent in Zionism's colonial nature. Here, three factors have been determining: (1) imperialist aid, (2) access to cheap Palestinian labor, and (3) the army.

Half of all industrial workers are employed in military-related projects, and 70% of all US aid to 'Israel' over the years has been in the military field. The combination of these facts means that substantial cuts in the Israeli defense budget and/or in US aid would mean mass unemployment. Thus, willingly or not, the core of the Israeli Jewish working class had immediate material interests in the prevailing situation.

A corollary of this is that the contradiction between social and military spending, which serves as a focus of popular struggle in many capitalist countries, is almost absent in the Zionist state. The sole exception is the movement of a sector of the Oriental Jewish population which has second-class status compared to Jews of European origin.

While the creation of a Jewish proletariat figured among the stated aims of the early Zionists, the state's actual nature and its increasing militarization and expansion have produced quite the opposite phenomenon. In 1960, young men were 80% of the Israeli (Jewish) labor force, but only 63% in 1974. This is partly due to longer education, but mainly to the higher rate and longer period of military mobilization. The other side of this phenomenon is the increase in Palestinian Arab and Jewish

female labor: «Men are released for the front (army) when women take over the 'rear' economic activity,» writes Avishai Ehrlich in «Zionism, Demography and Women's Work» (*Forbidden Agendas*), which exposes the myth of the liberated Israeli woman.

Emmanuel Farjoun, writing on «Palestinian Workers in Israel: A Reserve Army of Labor» (*Forbidden Agendas*), adds to this: «The percentage of the total population employed or seeking employment is among the lowest in the world, just 33 per cent. By way of comparison: the corresponding figure for England is 46 per cent... Israel, in fact, is in the same category as countries like India (33 per cent)... quite low for an industrialized country. One reason for this is the size of the standing army... Also, in comparison with other industrialized countries, Israel has relatively few people engaged in agriculture, construction and industrial production.»

This gap is filled primarily by the labor of Palestinians from the 1967 occupied territories. Histadrut has actively contributed to this structural deformation of the work force, concentrating Jewish workers in white-collar and high-tech jobs needed by the military in particular. The only Histadrut company to employ Palestinian Arabs is Soleh Boneh, the construction firm. This corresponds to the deformation which became blatant after the 1967 occupation. Whereas in 1960, 70% of construction and manual workers were Jews, this percentage is now 30%, the remaining jobs being filled by labor from the territories (*Jerusalem Post*, June 10, 1986).

MILITARIZED SOCIETY

Aside from where he or she may work, the average Israeli citizen's life is permeated by the military in a variety of ways. Yigael Yadin, former chief of staff and later deputy prime minister, once said, «the civilian is a soldier on eleven months leave» (*New York Times*, May 28, 1986). Most Israeli men spend 47 days on reserve duty each year, while the average Israeli is taxed at a rate of 58% to maintain the state as the world's fourth-ranking military power. According to Martyn Halsham, writing in the British *Guardian*, May 12, 1987, «Every Israeli appears to listen to every hourly radio news bulletin, not just for traditional information, but in case their coded military signal is being broadcast. The whole nation is an army, capable of mobilizing within a few hours.»

According to Baruch Kimmerling of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Israeli army has not fulfilled original expectations as a tool for integrating immigrants from different countries, but it does serve as a «rite of passage for acceptance into the Israeli society... the symbolic differentiation between the 'old timer' and the 'immigrant' is not the number of years that the person has been living in the country, but whether he has lived in the country during a war or not... for all the other members of the population, participation in the armed forces grants a feeling of intense participation in the society» (*Israeli Society and its Defense Establishment*).

Whereas in many societies, higher education defers military service, the opposite is true in 'Israel' where «the Israeli draft