

THE ZIONIST WARS

**A HISTORY OF
THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT
and
Imperialist Wars**

**BOOK BY
YOSSI SCHWARTZ**
Internationalist Socialist League
(Israel / Occupied Palestine)

**PUBLISHED BY
REVOLUTIONARY
COMMUNIST
INTERNATIONAL
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A History of the Zionist Movement and Imperialist Wars

By Yossi Schwartz

This book is dedicated to all those who devote their lives to the working class' liberation struggle and to the building of the revolutionary world party without which this liberation struggle can not win.

Published by the

Revolutionary Communist International Tendency (RCIT)

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The *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency* has sections and activists in Nigeria, Kenya, Pakistan, Kashmir, Sri Lanka, Yemen, Israel / Occupied Palestine, Brazil, Mexico, Russia, Britain, Germany, and Austria.

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Introduction

The Jewish Zionist movement that appeared at the last part of the 19th century was shaped by two processes. The first one was the growing of the new form of anti-Semitism among the European bourgeoisie and the petit bourgeoisie. The other one was the *Scramble for Africa* by the European imperialists.

The new form of anti-Semitism was based on the pseudo-science of social Darwinism that saw the Jews as an inferior parasitic and dangerous race. It was a different form than the Christian Anti-Semitism that saw the Jews as the killers of the son of god. The Jews could redeem themselves by converting to Christianity according to Christian theology. In contrary, racist, pseudo-scientific, social Darwinism does not offer similar solutions of (forced) assimilation but concludes that Jews must be excluded and in consequence killed.

The *Scramble for Africa* offered the Jews a seemingly better solution, acting as settler colonialists in one of the colonies, both in a military and political role. This was clear already in 1903 when British imperialism offered the Zionist movement an autonomous territory in Kenya to guard the railways (The Uganda plan).

The Zionist ideology emphasized the new role of the Jews as *Muscular Judaism*, a term coined by Max Nordau at the turn of the twentieth century. The concept of the 'muscle Jew' represented a dominant current of Jewish Zionists identity reformulation.

*"At the Second Zionist Congress in 1898, Herzl's chief lieutenant, the Parisian physician, Max Nordau, made a speech in which he called for the need to develop what he called "muscle Judaism". It was a subject to which he returned in subsequent years, and in so doing he contributed greatly to the idea of the development of the New Jew as a total transformation of the frightened Jew of the ghetto"*¹.

The Zionist movement founded by Herzl was a petit-bourgeois, Jewish-nationalist movement that adopted the anti-Semitic tenet that the Jews are a foreign body in the European countries they lived in. During WWI, the Zionists offered their military role to the British imperialists by organizing the Jewish Legion established by Zabortinsky and Trumpeldor: *"Maxwell, commander of the British force in Egypt, told a delegation of the volunteers that an offensive on the Palestine front was doubtful and that regulations prohibited the admission of foreign nationals into the British army. He suggested that the volunteers serve as a detachment for mule transport on some other sector of the Turkish front. His proposal was rejected by most members of the Legion Committee, including Jabotinsky, but Trumpeldor's position was that any anti-Turkish front would "lead to Zion." ..."* Together with Lieutenant Colonel John Henry Patterson, delegated by the British military authorities, Trumpel-

1 <http://archive.jewishagency.org/sports/content/26559>

dor succeeded in forming the 650-strong Zion Mule Corps. 562 of its members were sent to the Gallipoli front under Patterson, with Trumpeldor as second in command."²

Thus, the Zionists were able to demonstrate to the British imperialists that the Zionists can function as a military force for the empire.

The Zionists love to speak of Balfour Declaration letter to Lord Rothschild, dated November 2nd 1917, which states: "*His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.*"

For the Zionists, this letter is a proof that Palestine belongs to them. There are many things to say about the value of this letter, one of it being: what kind of right did British imperialism had over Palestine anyway? As the Palestinian-American academic Edward Wadie Saïd, wrote "*it was an obvious example of the blueprint of imperialism, (a) by a European power, (b) about a non-European territory, (c) in flat disregard of both the presence and the wishes of the native majority resident in the territory, and (d) it took the form of a promise about this same territory to another foreign group, so that this foreign group might, quite literally, make this territory a national home for the Jewish people.*"³

British imperialism promised a national home for the Zionists to guard the Suez Canal which led to India, the most important British colony.

"The Balfour Declaration of 1917 and the final confirmation of Britain's Palestine Mandate in 1923 within the context of national imperial concerns: in particular, anxieties over the security of the Suez Canal and the country's sea-route to its economic and military power-base in India. In 1917 strategic issues were paramount in the progressive annexation of Palestine by the Lloyd George coalition, this the essential territorial precondition for the pursuit of the Zionist project. In 1923 these global considerations were again to the fore when the new Conservative administration, less Zionist than its predecessor, decided finally to accept and implement the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine and the obligation therein to advance the cause of a Jewish national home. And throughout this period there was a widespread sense in official circles that Zionist settlers might perform as direct agents of Empire, acting as grateful, loyal, and developmental servants of the British imperial interest".⁴

In addition, the British imperialists did not want to open the gates of Britain to Russian Jews and preferred to settle them down in a colony. They also hoped to use the influence of the Jews in the USA to keep it in the war and intervene

2 Jewish virtual Library: the Jewish legion <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jewish-legend>

3 Edward Saïd: *The Question of Palestine*, Chapter 3

4 William M. Mathew (2013) The Balfour Declaration and the Palestine Mandate, 1917–1923: British Imperialist Imperatives, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 40:3, 231-250

against the Bolshevik revolution of 1917.

Thus, the Zionists backed by British imperialism set the stage for the Zionist military role against the native Palestinians and the Arab-national, anti-imperialist movement.

A major theme of the Zionist propaganda is that Israel has been forced to fight because its Arab enemies want to destroy Israel and kill the Jews of Israel. Today, in the Zionist propaganda, Iran and its allies have nearly replaced the Arab states.

Yet, in most wars of the Zionists, Israeli leaders brag that Israel is rolling back or will roll back its enemies to the Stone Age. For example, Benny Gantz, who was the chief of the army, bragged in 2019 that he bombed Gaza to the Stone Age⁵. Yisrael Katz announced that Lebanon will be blown back to the 'Stone Age'⁶. These statements are not empty words. In each war the Zionist army destroyed the infrastructure of the other side. To maintain its position as the major power in the service of other imperialists, Israel will do whatever it can to prevent the development of the Arab countries and Iran socially, economically, and militarily.

This is the connection between the Balfour Declaration letter and the fact that Israel has been able to build the fourth strongest army in the world with the aid first of Russian Stalinism, and later British, French, American and German imperialism.

That does not mean that Israel is an enclave of imperialism. Israel has become a junior imperialist due to the aid it received, and it relies on stronger imperialism for its own expansionist interests. It goes to wars not only for the interests of the other imperialist states but for its own reactionary dreams of greater Israel.

No other than Vladimir Ze'ev Jabotinsky wrote in *"The Iron Wall"*:

*"There can be no voluntary agreement between ourselves and the Palestine Arabs. Not now, nor in the prospective future. I say this with such conviction, not because I want to hurt the moderate Zionists. I do not believe that they will be hurt. Except for those who were born blind, they realized long ago that it is utterly impossible to obtain the voluntary consent of the Palestine Arabs for converting "Palestine" from an Arab country into a country with a Jewish majority."*⁷

"But an agreement with Arabs outside the Land of Israel is also a delusion. For nationalists in Baghdad, Mecca and Damascus to agree to such an expensive contribution (agreeing to forego preservation of the Arab character of a country located in the center of their future "federation") we would have to offer them something just as valuable. We can offer only two things: either money or political assistance or both. But we can offer neither. Concerning money, it is ludicrous to think we could finance the development of Iraq or Saudi Arabia, when we do not have enough for the Land of Israel. Ten times

5 <https://electronicintifada.net/blogs/ali-abunimah/israeli-election-ad-boasts-gaza-bombed-back-stone-ages>

6 <https://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-5087166,00.html>

7 Vladimir Jabotinsky *The Iron Wall (We and the Arabs)* (1923)

more illusionary is political assistance for Arab political aspirations. Arab nationalism sets itself the same aims as those set by Italian nationalism before 1870 and Polish nationalism before 1918: unity and independence. These aspirations mean the eradication of every trace of British influence in Egypt and Iraq, the expulsion of the Italians from Libya, the removal of French domination from Syria, Tunis, Algiers and Morocco. For us to support such a movement would be suicide and treachery. If we disregard the fact that the Balfour Declaration was signed by Britain, we cannot forget that France and Italy also signed it. We cannot intrigue about removing Britain from the Suez Canal and the Persian Gulf and the elimination of French and Italian colonial rule over Arab territory. Such a double game cannot be considered on any account. Thus we conclude that we cannot promise anything to the Arabs of the Land of Israel or the Arab countries. Their voluntary agreement is out of the question. Hence those who hold that an agreement with the natives is an essential condition for Zionism can now say "no" and depart from Zionism. Zionist colonization, even the most restricted, must either be terminated or carried out in defiance of the will of the native population. This colonization can, therefore, continue and develop only under the protection of a force independent of the local population – an iron wall which the native population cannot break through. This is, in toto, our policy towards the Arabs. To formulate it any other way would only be hypocrisy."⁸

In this book we trace the different stages of the development of the Zionist military force and its reactionary role. The first stage was the formation of the *Hashomer* (watchman) under the Ottoman Empire. In this stage the Zionists formed a force to guard the lands (colonies or Moshavots in Hebrew) they established by removing Arab peasants and turning Arab villages to Zionist settlements. This was followed by forming the *Hagana* (defense) in 1920. The next stage was acting as a military junior partner of the British to crush the Arab rebellion of 1936-39. This was followed by the removing of 900,000 Palestinians in the war of 1947-49.

In 1956, the Zionists acted as a partner to the French and British imperialism in the Suez war. In 1967, the Zionist army reached its peak in the war aimed at the defeat of the Arab revolution and at the same time occupied the Sinai, the West Bank and Gaza. In 1973, the Zionist military power began its decline. In the wars against Lebanon and Gaza, the Zionists were unable to win the wars. Even though it is still an imperialist state with the fourth strongest army in the world, acting as the spearhead of the imperialist control of the region, those last wars were the beginning of the decline of Israel as a military force.

*"Hanit is the Hebrew word meaning spearhead. That word explains why Israel is a vital strategic asset not just to Great Britain, but to the West as a whole."*⁹

"Israel is the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. foreign assistance since World War II. To date, the United States has provided Israel \$142.3 billion (current, or non-inflation-adjusted, dollars) in bilateral assistance and missile defense funding. Almost

8 Ibid

9 Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs Israel as a Strategic Asset of the West

*all U.S. bilateral aid to Israel is in the form of military assistance, although from 1971 to 2007 Israel also received significant economic assistance. In 2016, the U.S. and Israeli governments signed a new 10-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on military aid, covering FY2019 to FY2028. Under the terms of the MOU, the United States pledges to provide \$38 billion in military aid (\$33 billion in Foreign Military Financing grants plus \$5 billion in missile defense appropriations) to Israel. This MOU replaced a previous \$30 billion 10-year agreement, which ran through FY2018. Israel is the first international operator of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, the Department of Defense's fifth-generation stealth aircraft, considered to be the most technologically advanced fighter jet ever made. To date, Israel has purchased 50 F-35s in three separate contracts."*¹⁰

However, the USA that stands behind Israel is also in decline and so is the European Union. It is unlikely that Israel will be able to offer the new Eastern imperialists, Russia and China, the same service. Ironically, the sale of the F35 to the UAE (already the new ally of Israel), is an indicator of the awareness of US imperialists that Israel alone can't provide the military service it used to perform.

The reactionary local rulers in the Arab countries are weak, and the Arab revolutions are not only challenging them but will end them sooner or later. Furthermore, the future Arab revolution will also end the Zionist settler state, this racist, colonialist project that is rotting from within. The protest movement in Israel sees Netanyahu as the malice, while he only reflects the crisis and decline of the Israeli state as such.

Part I:
The Rise of Zionism

Chapter 1: Marxism and Wars

The 20th century marked the beginning of capitalism's epoch of decay. Capitalism, just like any other socio-economic system which preceded it, has reached a stage in which it is no longer a system that develops the forces of production further, but the very system that stands in the way of their development. The wars of this epoch reflect this characteristic in a terrifying manner.

Marxists do not believe that the capitalist system marks "the end of history" nor do we believe that capitalism has not yet outstretched its full potential. We support its overthrow and its replacement by the revolutionary workers' states, leading the transition to a higher socio-economic system which would enable humanity to elevate its forces of production and standard of living into levels which as yet, are unimaginable: Communism – the highest stage of socialist society.

Like other socio-economic systems before it, capitalism had to fight itself into existence and must be fought out of existence. The revolutionary violence of its birth will be the major tool for its overthrow, unfortunate as it may be.

Marxists strongly oppose all pacifist, idealist notions, which fundamentally reject all forms of violence and make no distinction between oppressors and oppressed – a distinction, which is key in Marxist thought. We hold those pacifist, reformist ideas as historical non-possibilities that serve as a mask for those who serve imperialism. Or to those who are merely spreading illusions about the capability of capitalism to conduct itself rationally and without contradictions or antagonisms resulting in acts of violence.

It must be said, however, that capitalism did not invent wars. Armed bodies of people fought each other and within themselves for control over resources ever since humanity can remember itself. The difference between ancient wars and capitalist wars is the essential motive behind them – scarcity. Prior to this period, there simply were not enough resources to allow humanity to prosper and develop its means of production farther.

Capitalism, however, has allowed the development of the means to abolish scarcity and has thus given humanity the potential to live in "world peace". However, the capitalist relations of production themselves stand in its way.

The highest and final stage of capitalism is characterized by imperialism – an epoch in which the boundaries of the old-fashioned, nation-states are too small to contain the forces of production. As in the period of the primitive accumulation of capital, today the capitalists force themselves on underdeveloped nations for the purpose of extracting more surplus value by super-exploitation of "Third World" workers.

With the creation of a world economy, each imperialist state and bloc struggles to become the only power which super-exploits, and thus they turn against

one another with brute force resulting in what history calls a *World War*, but which is, in reality, an inter-imperialist war, with the “world” as its victim.

The 20th century witnessed two such major inter-imperialist wars that resulted in a holocaust unimaginable even by the most ruthless and bloodthirsty of medieval barbarians, causing the death of close to 90 million human beings!

It is possible that the imperialists did not want a World War to happen; they all spoke of diplomacy, reasoning, and most of all, of peace. But in such an epoch of decay, the enchanted broom does not act any more upon the sorcerer’s commands. Instead of peace, diplomacy, and reason, we got weapons of mass destruction, capable of ending human existence as we know it.

Instead of progress and development, we got devastation, hunger, and epidemics with entire major cities and industrial complexes reduced to rubble and dust, artifacts of technology and knowledge lost to be dug out, as if they were archeological relics.

In 1914, it was clear that capitalism had outgrown itself and changed from a mechanism of building into a mechanism of destruction, eating away at itself in a vicious cycle of destroying and rebuilding without any regard to the costs, humanity must pay as a result of this senseless psychopathic behavior.

In this epoch, humanity stands at the crossroads, having to choose between the overthrow of the social-economic system which no longer serves its needs, and facing its own extinction. A well-known phrase was coined by Rosa Luxemburg: “*Socialism or Barbarism*”, or as Lenin said: “*In order for humanity to survive, imperialism must die.*” So, for anyone who wants humanity to survive, the question at hand is: Who, how and what will kill imperialism?

Theorists like Karl Kautsky have envisioned that, in a world in which the tendency of value is to centralize into the hands of fewer and fewer capitalists, eventually a global society will be created and ruled by a tiny elite of capitalists. He envisioned “*a holy alliance of imperialists*”, joined together by their fear of global war. Those who observe reality through the glasses of idealism and formal logic will find it hard not to agree with this, and why not? On a primitive basis, it seems perfectly logical.

But dialectical materialists know that reason and human consciousness can change reality only if material conditions allow it. The first and second world wars have taught us, at a terrible cost, another lesson in the seemingly irrational workings of history. As Lenin had predicted, the very conditions laid out by the capitalist system did not allow the imperialists themselves to put an end to war; the opposite – the enhancement of wars – would prove to be true.

However, capitalism itself contains the means for its abolition. Along with the bourgeoisie as a ruling class, it has created the working class, whose interests are inherently antagonistic to it. All other classes – like peasants, professionals, or artisans – are constant factors of any class society since the start of agriculture. They are not a unique phenomenon of the capitalist system. Therefore, if bourgeois ruling classes of some nations have managed to climb up and become imperialists, the only class which has the interest and the ability to stop

them from tearing this world apart is the working class. Imperialists with their destruction of the environment and epidemics, with their inter-imperialist wars can only be overthrown by the working class, by their revolution against the bourgeoisie, by the smashing of the capitalist state apparatus, and by replacing it with a working-class state. All this are necessary steps in leading humanity on its way to a classless, stateless society with no basis for wars.

The Correct Working-Class Policy Regarding an Inter-Imperialist War

So, what should the working class do in the event of an impending world war, knowing that the power to stop it lies exclusively in its own hands? The leaders of the international working-class party, the Second International, on the eve of the First World War, advised their supporters to defend their own bourgeoisie, claiming that the bourgeoisie on the other side of the border were much worse. This is the classic "lesser evil" argument which continues to be the flagship of reformist arguments to this very day. It occurs often in history that following 'lesser evil' logic leads to much greater evil.

From a Marxist point of view, knowing that the interests of the bourgeoisie (as a whole) are antagonistic to those of the working class, supporting either side in an inter-imperialist war seems senseless and is indeed senseless. In case of an inter-imperialist war, the working class must act internationally, not only by not supporting either side, but rather by actively opposing all sides. Marxists call this policy "Revolutionary Defeatism", named after the phrase, coined by Lenin regarding imperialist Russia's involvement in World War I: "Defeat is the lesser evil". While this phrase has been open to much interpretation and misinterpretation, we agree with Trotsky's understanding of the defeatist policy: *"In those cases where it is a question of conflict between capitalist countries, the proletariat of any one of them refuses categorically to sacrifice its historic interests, which in the final analysis coincide with the interests of the nation and humanity, for the sake of the military victory of the bourgeoisie. Lenin's formula, "defeat is the lesser evil," means not defeat of one's country is the lesser evil as compared with the defeat of the enemy country but that a military defeat resulting from the growth of the revolutionary movement is infinitely more beneficial to the proletariat and to the whole people than military victory assured by "civil peace."*

Karl Liebknecht gave an unsurpassed formula of proletarian policy in time of war: *"The chief enemy of the people is in its own country." The victorious proletarian revolution not only will rectify the evils caused by defeat but also will create the final guarantee against future wars and defeats. This dialectical attitude toward war is the most important element of revolutionary training and therefore also of the struggle against war.*"¹¹

11 Leon Trotsky, "War and the Fourth International," June 10, 1934.

The ultimate goal of the proletariat, should it fail in preventing the war to begin with, is to turn the world war into a worldwide civil war aimed to overthrow the bourgeoisie and capitalism. This policy is called by Marxists “the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war”. As in any war under capitalism, the bourgeoisie rely heavily on the cooperation and support of the working class – it must work much more and much harder in order to feed the wasteful bourgeois war machine, and more importantly, it must outperform the workers of the “enemy nation”. A working class internationally conscious of its historical role in bringing down capitalism would then have the perfect opportunity to do so, since without the cooperation of the workers, not even a single bullet would fly, let alone an H-Bomb. The workers’ revolutionary opposition can result in a civil war that would bring about the end of bourgeois rule, and thus the capitalist phase of human history.

Revolutionary War

Revolutionary wars are wars waged between a progressive side, whose interest is in the overthrowing of an oppressive rule respectively an outdated mode of production, and a reactionary side, whose interests are in preserving it. Socialist revolutionaries would give their support to victory of the progressive side.

This position could be easily learned from Marx’s own position on the civil war in the United States between the free labor North and the slaveholding South:

*“The present struggle between the South and North is, therefore, nothing but a struggle between two social systems, the system of slavery and the system of free labour. The struggle has broken out because the two systems can no longer live peacefully side by side on the North American continent. It can only be ended by the victory of one system or the other.”*¹²

And further, Marx stated: *“He [Lincoln] errs only if he imagines that the “loyal” slaveholders are to be moved by benevolent speeches and rational arguments. They will yield only to force. So far, we have only witnessed the first act of the Civil War — the constitutional waging of war. The second act, the revolutionary waging of war, is at hand.”*¹³

Once all outdated modes of production have been smashed out of existence by capitalism, it has concluded its revolutionary role. Today, when free competition has long ago given way to monopoly, and the struggle to create a global market of commodities has long ago given way to imperialist super-exploitation; Marxist revolutionaries’ support should lie with those elements which would hasten the fall of capitalist imperialism.

As we have established before, the working class should rise to become the

¹² Karl Marx, *The Civil War in the United States*, 1861.

¹³ Karl Marx. *A Criticism of American Affairs*, 1862

leader and spearhead of the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist resistance. Should the working class of any nation succeed in overthrowing its own bourgeoisie and form a workers' state, Marxists will defend it from any attack from the outside or inside of the given country and support its victory in any war against any class enemy – imperialist or not. The workers' interests lie in battling the laws laid down by the current reactionary social production system, capitalism, and creating a new social mode of production which would operate without the need for states or classes – socialism. Therefore, the working class, in any armed conflict, is the progressive side, and therefore should be receiving our unconditional support.

The only country in history that, through revolution, managed to become a workers' state was the Soviet Union in 1917. It managed to stay a workers' state up until 1939 when the Stalinist counterrevolution finally completed the process of turning it into a completely degenerated form that cannot be reformed but needs another revolution. The young workers' state of 1917 was instantly attacked by several bourgeois imperialist armies, namely the Russian bourgeoisie (the White Army), Austria-Hungary, Germany, the Ottoman Empire, the far-reaching armed tentacles of imperialist countries like the U.S., the UK, France and Italy, and non-imperialist reactionary bourgeois army and petty-bourgeois forces. Marxist revolutionaries have supported the workers' state despite any bureaucratic deformations which plagued it at that time, and which were eventually the cause of its internal demise.

World War II and the Rise of Fascism

World War II was marked by the rise of a new enemy to the working class, a political enemy whose main target is the working class. By use of brute force, it would try to deny it its most basic democratic rights, attempting to seal off any possibility of a working-class revolution. This enemy, so fierce it would strike fear even in the hearts of the bourgeois ruling class, would receive the notorious name 'fascism', after the Italian Fascist movement – the first of its kind to rise to power.

Naturally, fascism has terrified the workers throughout the world; millions of them were willing to take arms in hands and smash the fascist serpent. The bourgeoisie of the other imperialist countries, in turn, would naturally pounce on this opportunity, when the eyes of the workers are focused elsewhere, and cynically demand "civil peace" from the working class – which means far-reaching capitulations. The worst results were those misled workers who followed the Hitler-Stalin agreement of collaborating with the fascist enemy respectively those who willingly subordinated themselves under the war mobilization of the Western powers.

Marxist revolutionaries know that fascism is nothing but the uglier side of the same capitalist face, and that its rise to power is just a symptom of a bour-

geois ruling class so intimidated by the strong working class and its impending revolution that it is willing to give the keys to the country to right-wing militants rather than give its place away to a more advanced mode of production of which it will no longer be the master.

Once again, as in any other imperialist war, regardless of the political character of the rulers of the different imperialist countries, our position would be both defeatism and the transformation of imperialist war into civil war. If anyone should make capitulations to save its skin from the fascists, it should be the bourgeoisie and not the working class. After all, it was they who gave it control. Overall, the imperialist characteristic of a country is overwhelmingly more significant to us than the character of its state form. It is obvious that Marxists have to defend any attack against (bourgeois-) democratic rights, but class independence is crucial.

Trotsky writes aptly about the possibility of an inter-imperialist war and the correct proletarian attitude towards it:

*“If the proletariat should find it beyond its power to prevent war by means of revolution – and this is the only means of preventing war – the workers, together with the whole people, will be forced to participate in the army and in war. Individualistic and anarchistic slogans of refusal to undergo military service, passive resistance, desertion, sabotage are in basic contradiction to the methods of the proletarian revolution. But just as in the factory the advanced worker feels himself a slave of capital, preparing for his liberation, so in the capitalist army too he feels himself a slave of imperialism. Compelled today to give his muscles and even his life, he does not surrender his revolutionary consciousness. He remains a fighter, learns how to use arms, explains even in the trenches the class meaning of war, groups around himself the discontented, connects them into cells, transmits the ideas and slogans of the party, watches closely the changes in the mood of the masses, the subsiding of the patriotic wave, the growth of indignation, and summons the soldiers to the aid of the workers at the critical moment.”*¹⁴

For a working class which would live in a country plagued by fascism, here is a summary of the correct tactics to counter fascism without forfeiting the class struggle:

1. The working class can trust no one to defend it from its political or class enemies. Therefore, in case of an armed onslaught upon it, revolutionaries would call the workers to arm themselves for the purpose of self-defense against the fascists. Furthermore, while Marxists defend democratic rights by any means, to fulfill this task is only possible if the working-class independence is preserved.

2. A workers' revolutionary party must send an infiltration force of propagandists into the army in order to win the support of as many soldiers as possible (many of them come from the ranks of the poor peasantry and the crisis-battered petty-bourgeoisie) to the proletarian revolution.

3. A united front of military action, temporary and tactical only, should be formed with all anti-fascist elements without political subordination. The work-

14 ¹ Leon Trotsky, *ibid*

ing class should strive to rise to the leadership of any united front, win as many anti-fascists as possible to its side in the class war, and steer this movement towards the socialist revolution. Under no circumstances should the working class make any capitulations of its class interests to alien class elements, nor fall under their control. Keeping the working class an independent, self-emancipating fighting force is key to eliminating both the fascist threat and the capitalist ruling class responsible for its very emergence.

The Lessons of the Spanish Revolution

An example of a civil war involving fascism is the Spanish Revolution of 1936-1939. In this war a fascist army backed by Nazi Germany attempted to take over Spain. Unlike in Germany, the working class in Spain was not yet weakened by its traitorous leadership to the point where it had lost all will to fight fascism. A "popular front" consisting of many different and contradictory political and class elements was formed to fight fascism.

Trotsky wrote on this "popular front":

"A bloc of divergent political groups of the working class is sometimes completely indispensable for the solution of common practical problems. In certain historical circumstances, such a bloc is capable of attracting the oppressed petty-bourgeois masses whose interests are close to the interests of the proletariat. The joint force of such a bloc can prove far stronger than the sum of the forces of each of its component parts. On the contrary, the political alliance between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, whose interests on basic questions in the present epoch diverge at an angle of 180 degrees, as a general rule is capable only of paralyzing the revolutionary force of the proletariat."

*Civil war, in which the force of naked coercion is hardly effective, demands of its participants the spirit of supreme self-abnegation. The workers and peasants can assure victory only if they wage a struggle for their own emancipation. Under these conditions, to subordinate the proletariat to the leadership of the bourgeoisie means beforehand to assure defeat in the civil war."*¹⁵

Trotsky was right, and the popular front tactic proved to be disastrous to the working class and its revolution. Understanding that bourgeois "democracy" and totalitarian fascism stem from the same class interest in prolonging the death agony of capitalism helps Marxist revolutionaries to see right through all sorts of class enemy propaganda, be it bourgeois-liberal, reformist or centrist, and exposes its role in blocking the revolutionary power of the working class. The only way to win an anti-fascist campaign is to free the proletariat from the leadership of the bourgeoisie.

¹⁵ Leon Trotsky. "The Lessons of Spain: The Last Warning," 1937.

Wars and the “Third World”

Not all bourgeois countries have succeeded in becoming imperialist. The bourgeois classes of these exploited nations possess the same class interests as their imperialist counterparts and wish they could increase their own value beyond all bounds. Not having the military power and resources to exploit weaker countries, these bourgeois ruling classes would face very unfavorable options for achieving their interests of expansion.

One of those options would be to try and increase the exploitation rate of their own already super-exploited workers – a hard task, since super-exploited workers already receive just enough wages for mere survival, and to push them harder might result in a working-class united fight for survival, or even a revolution. The correct position to take by Marxist revolutionaries is obviously to support the workers against the bourgeoisie.

A second option, which will be discussed in this pamphlet, is made possible by the fact that many of those exploited nations live within territories whose borders were hand-drawn by the imperialists themselves, creating significant national minorities. These minorities are either castes who act as a ruling elite or are, as in most cases, an oppressed respectively discriminated national minority, perhaps refugees from neighboring war-torn “Third World” countries, and generally politically weaker than the ruling majority. The ruling bourgeoisie would have to exploit every opportunity to eat away at the remaining rights of these minorities, who happen in many cases to sit upon some valuable natural resources.

In such cases Marxists would take the side of the oppressed minority against the oppressors even if the class nature of its leadership is not proletarian. This position means joint tactical actions against a common enemy. However, and most importantly, Marxists would give no political support to any leadership whose interests are antagonistic to the working class, and under no circumstances should the working class surrender its own interests or capitulate any achievements to the bourgeoisie, nor give up on its military or organizational independence from it once achieved.

Marxists would also call for the working class of the oppressor nation to turn its arms against its own bourgeoisie and protect the rights of the oppressed nation, turning the national civil war into a revolutionary civil war.

A third option which the ruling class of an exploited nation has is to try to get a bigger piece of their own nation’s exploitation pie from their imperialist overlords. A refusal by the imperialists sometimes results in an armed conflict, or an ‘anti-imperialist war’. This turn of the bourgeoisie against imperialism may also be a result of inner pressures created by the dissatisfied super-exploited working class and peasantry. The ruling classes would then hope to succeed in diverting the anger of the masses from themselves to the imperialist nations. Any resulting capitulations by the imperialists would then be used to pacify the angry masses.

A non-imperialist nation engaged in a war against imperialism would be re-

garded by Marxists in the same manner mentioned above concerning an oppressed national minority, i.e., support for the victory of the oppressed, regardless of the class nature of their leadership, and without supporting any bourgeois, petty-bourgeois respectively reactionary policies. Once again, the workers who live in the imperialist nation would be called to support the revolutionary defeat of their own bourgeoisie and the victory of the "Third World" nation against it.

Such support would be given even to the most hated ruling characters and regimes. For example, Trotsky had supported the Kuomintang, led by the butcher Chiang Kai-Shek, against the attacks of imperialist Japan:

"In order to arrive at a real national liberation it is necessary to overthrow the Kuomintang. But this does not mean that we postpone the struggle until the time when the Kuomintang is overthrown. The more the struggle against foreign oppression spreads the more difficulties the Kuomintang will have. The more we line up the masses against the Kuomintang the more the struggle against imperialism will develop.

*"At the acute moment of Japanese intervention the workers and the students called for arms. From whom? Again from the Kuomintang. It would be a sectarian absurdity to abandon this demand under the pretext that we wish to overthrow the Kuomintang. We wish to overthrow it but we have not yet reached that point. The more energetically we demand the arming of the workers the sooner we shall reach it."*¹⁶

While our anti-fascist strategies and tactics would apply regardless of the imperialist or non-imperialist character of any given country, we would support a non-imperialist country against an imperialist country, even if the former is ruled by fascists – as long as the semi-colonial country is not operating as a puppet for another imperialist power.

Trotsky has explicitly expressed this position in an interview with Mateo Fossa in 1938:

*"In Brazil there now reigns a semifascist regime that every revolutionary can only view with hatred. Let us assume, however, that on the morrow England enters into a military conflict with Brazil. I ask you on whose side of the conflict will the working class be? I will answer for myself personally—in this case I will be on the side of "fascist" Brazil against "democratic" Great Britain. Why? Because in the conflict between them it will not be a question of democracy or fascism. If England should be victorious, she will put another fascist in Rio de Janeiro and will place double chains on Brazil. If Brazil on the contrary should be victorious, it will give a mighty impulse to national and democratic consciousness of the country and will lead to the overthrow of the Vargas dictatorship. The defeat of England will at the same time deliver a blow to British imperialism and will give an impulse to the revolutionary movement of the British proletariat. Truly, one must have an empty head to reduce world antagonisms and military conflicts to the struggle between fascism and democracy. Under all masks one must know how to distinguish exploiters, slave-owners, and robbers!"*¹⁷

16 Leon Trotsky. "The Lessons of Spain: The Last Warning," 1937.

17 Leon Trotsky Anti-Imperialist Struggle Is Key to Liberation An Interview with Mateo Fossa (September 1938)

Imperialist Involvement in Third World Warfare

All of the above may seem like a well-worked scheme. However, in many cases the situation at hand is far from clean cut. The imperialists are well aware of the antagonism felt towards them in exploited countries. They would use a wide range of tactics to keep these nations fighting within and amongst themselves for scraps falling off their table.

In many situations where “Third World” countries are engaged in warfare with each other, there is one imperialist country or more involved in a direct or indirect manner, attempting to capitalize on the war and turn it to their own interests in the given region.

When no imperialist is involved, a war between two “Third World” countries will be regarded by us in the same manner mentioned above regarding an inter-imperialist war. We would call the working classes of both countries to unite against their own bourgeoisie and fight for the establishment of a workers’ state federation in the region, which would grant every oppressed nation the right to self-determination. However, we would take side for one semi-colonial country against another if it is nationally oppressed respectively discriminated. This includes to defend the right of becoming completely independent as it was the case with several countries during the Balkan Wars in the 1990s. We supported the right of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and all other countries to become independent after the fall of Yugoslavia. All countries who opposed staying in a forced nation with Serbia have been attacked by the latter and we took the side of defending the right for independence and for the defeat of Serbia. This did not stop us from defending Serbia against the imperialist NATO bombings on Beograd. As Marxists we have to take a very close look on the situation at hand and always follow the rule: Side with the oppressed.

However, a non-imperialist nation that turns against an imperialist one often gives neighboring non-imperialist ruling classes an excellent opportunity to show their loyalty to imperialism and offer to do imperialism’s ‘dirty work’ for it by engaging in direct warfare against the rebellious country, hoping to expand its influence in the region and get a more favorable treatment from the imperialist bourgeoisie. The imperialists may get involved either directly by sending their own forces to aid their “Third World” allies, or indirectly by supplying arms and/or military consultation. A rival imperialist may like to get involved and aid the other side to further its own interests and/or weaken the former.

A war in which rival countries use other countries as an indirect way to fight each other is referred to as a ‘proxy war’. In such cases the magnitude and depth of imperialist involvement would determine which side, if any, would gain our support. A proxy war is meant to benefit one imperialist or the other, and so under no circumstances would Marxists prefer the interests of one imperialist to the other – we support none and oppose all. Therefore, any ruling class

which ties its interests directly to the interests of imperialists would obviously get no support from Marxists who would rather see it defeated.

The key question regarding imperialist involvement is to what extent the imperialist country directly controls the "Third World" army, and to what extent does the latter act on its own will. Furthermore, it is the nature of imperialists to try to interfere in the political developments of any semi-colony. This doesn't mean that their interference automatically gains enough influence and impact to change the progressive character of a cause. Trotsky gave a rather extreme hypothetical example to demonstrate his position, with which we completely agree:

*"If Hitler tomorrow were forced to send arms to the insurrectionary Indians, must the revolutionary German workers oppose this concrete action by strikes or sabotage? On the contrary they must make sure that the insurrectionists receive the arms as soon as possible."*¹⁸

In this hypothetical scenario, Hitler does not directly control the armed force to which he sends his military aid.

The 2008 South Ossetia Conflict

An excellent case study which would help demonstrate the ISL's position on this matter is the 2008 South Ossetia conflict. Georgia, which is a non-imperialist country politically supported by the imperialist U.S., has invaded the territories of the Ossetian and Abkhazian national minorities, which are politically backed by imperialist Russia. As retaliation, the Russians invaded Georgian territory.

Our position, in short, was to support the Ossetians and Abkhazians against the Georgian attack, but once the Russians invaded Georgia, we supported the defeat of imperialist Russia, without withdrawing our support from the right of the Ossetians and Abkhazians to self-determination and separation from either Georgia or Russia. We called for the working class of the region to unite and fight for a socialist federation of the entire Caucasus.

Most leftist groups around the world regarded this war as a proxy war between the U.S. and Russia, and opposed both, taking a pacifist position condemning all sides. These wrong positions resulted from the confusion over standing with the oppressed and giving political support to its leadership, and the confusion over direct and indirect military involvement; they also resulted from an inability or unwillingness to even tell the oppressor from the oppressed.

In our opinion, the political and indirect military support Georgia got from NATO and also from Israel, in the form of selling arms and military consultation, was not enough to label Georgia as a country acting in the interests of its imperialist supporters. Rather, our impression was that this war was an act of defiance by the Georgian ruling class against its imperialist neighbor, Russia.

¹⁸ Leon Trotsky, *In Defense of Marxism: A Petty-Bourgeois Opposition in the Socialist Workers Party*. December 1939.

Of course, we did not think this act should be conducted on the expense of the rights of national minorities, hence the consistent support we gave the oppressed nations.

Our Position on Guerilla Warfare, Guerillaism and Terrorism

As Marxist revolutionaries, we do not oppose guerilla warfare as a tactic in the service of proletarian revolutionary warfare, and as a section of the 'regular workers' army consisting of armed workers' militias. We do, however, strongly oppose guerrilla-ism, which is the idealist belief that guerilla warfare could or should replace the proletarian army and achieve victory on its own.

The working class, especially under monopoly capitalism, is organized, in masses, more than ever before, with single factories employing hundreds and even thousands of workers. Breaking them all down into small semi-independent units makes no sense. Calls of guerrillas' warfare nature usually arise in countries where the working class constitutes a minority of the general population (i.e., less developed "Third World" countries), and are usually propagated by elements outside the working class, such as peasants and the urban petit bourgeoisie.

Should elements from these classes express an interest in overthrowing the bourgeoisie, they must be led by the only revolutionary class under capitalism – the working class, no matter how small. The very core of Marxist thought stresses the centrality of the self-emancipating working class (with its own strategies and tactics) in overthrowing capitalism. Revolutions led by any other class just lead back to capitalism from the back door.

Regarding terrorism, the general definition of which is politically and emotionally charged and therefore disputed, Marxists define it as an aspect of psychological warfare whose aim is to instill fear and intimidation among both civilians and the military/police through the use of limited but concentrated violence.¹⁹

Terrorism is roughly divided into two kinds – state terrorism and individual terrorism. State terrorism is practiced by the ruling class against political and military rivals. State terrorism, like any other kind, does not distinguish between armed combatants and unarmed civilians, its goal being to create a smokescreen of illusions in the invincibility of the given state, its 'all knowing, all seeing' abilities through secret police and army intelligence, and its zero tolerance of any verbal or physical attack against it.

The use of state terrorism by a given state signifies its relative weakness and its own fears for its survival, since both guerilla warfare and terrorism are the

19 From the Marxist Encyclopedia in: The Marxist Internet Archive -<http://www.marxists.org/glossary/terms/t/e.htm#terrorism>

tactics of those who feel that their backs are against the wall. Our opposition to capitalist and imperialist states is regardless of the tactics they use against their enemies. In the same manner, when a workers' state is forced to use state-terrorist tactics, we will not withdraw our support from it.

However, we categorically oppose the tactic of individual terrorism. Trotsky aptly explains this position:

*"In our eyes, individual terror is inadmissible precisely because it belittles the role of the masses in their own consciousness, reconciles them to their powerlessness, and turns their eyes and hopes towards a great avenger and liberator who some day will come and accomplish his mission. The anarchist prophets of the 'propaganda of the deed' can argue all they want about the elevating and stimulating influence of terrorist acts on the masses. Theoretical considerations and political experience prove otherwise. The more 'effective' the terrorist acts, the greater their impact, the more they reduce the interest of the masses in self-organisation and self-education. But the smoke from the confusion clears away, the panic disappears, the successor of the murdered minister makes his appearance, life again settles into the old rut, the wheel of capitalist exploitation turns as before; only the police repression grows more savage and brazen. And as a result, in place of the kindled hopes and artificially aroused excitement comes disillusionment and apathy."*²⁰

Having said that, we must also clarify that the support we give to oppressed nations includes desperate or delusional individuals who decide to take part in such an activity, and regardless of the damage they cause for their own nation's struggle. Let us take for example the episode of Herschel Grynszpan, a German Jew who assassinated the German diplomat Ernst vom Rath as an act of revenge against the German government, which at that time deported German Jews of Polish origin from Germany, among them Grynszpan's family.

This attack, which could be labeled as individual terrorism, was later used as a pretext for the German government to issue the famous pogrom called "Kristallnacht" against the German Jews in 1938. Grynszpan was then attacked by both the bourgeois and Stalinist press as a collaborator with Hitler, having served to him on a silver platter the pretext for the pogrom.

Trotsky however, though condemning individual terrorism, chose to defend Grynszpan:

"We Marxists consider the tactic of individual terror inexpedient in the tasks of the liberating struggle of the proletariat as well as oppressed nationalities. A single isolated hero cannot replace the masses. But we understand only too clearly the inevitability of such convulsive acts of despair and vengeance. All our emotions, all our sympathies are with the self-sacrificing avengers even though they have been unable to discover the correct road. Our sympathy becomes intensified because Grynszpan is not a political militant but an inexperienced youth, almost a boy, whose only counselor was a feeling of indignation. To tear Grynszpan out of the hands of capitalist justice, which is capable of

²⁰ From the Marxist Encyclopedia in: The Marxist Internet Archive -<http://www.marxists.org/glossary/terms/t/e.htm#terrorism>

*chopping off his head to further serve capitalist diplomacy, is the elementary, immediate task of the international working class!"*²¹

Trotsky ends his article with the following paragraph, which would be the best expression of our message to guerrillas and individual terrorists who act upon the burning desire to fight oppression, capitalism and imperialism:

*"In the moral sense, although not for his mode of action, Grynspan may serve as an example for every young revolutionist. Our open moral solidarity with Grynspan gives us an added right to say to all the other would-be Grynspans, to all those capable of self-sacrifice in the struggle against despotism and bestiality: Seek another road! Not the lone avenger but only a great revolutionary mass movement can free the oppressed, a movement that will leave no remnant of the entire structure of class exploitation, national oppression, and racial persecution. The unprecedented crimes of fascism create a yearning for vengeance that is wholly justifiable. But so monstrous is the scope of their crimes, that this yearning cannot be satisfied by the assassination of isolated fascist bureaucrats. For that it is necessary to set in motion millions, tens and hundreds of millions of the oppressed throughout the whole world and lead them in the assault upon the strongholds of the old society. Only the overthrow of all forms of slavery, only the complete destruction of fascism, only the people sitting in merciless judgment over the contemporary bandits and gangsters can provide real satisfaction to the indignation of the people. This is precisely the task that the Fourth International has set itself. It will cleanse the labor movement of the plague of Stalinism. It will rally in its ranks the heroic generation of the youth. It will cut a path to a worthier and a more humane future."*²²

21 Leon Trotsky. "For Grynspan: Against Fascist Pogrom Gangs and Stalinist Scoundrels," 1939.

22 Leon Trotsky. "For Grynspan: Against Fascist Pogrom Gangs and Stalinist Scoundrels," 1939.

Chapter 2: The First Wave of Zionist Settlers

Armed with this presentation, we will deal with the Zionists wars against the Palestinians and the Arab states. Unlike various reformists and centrists who attack or ignore Islamists who fight the imperialists like in Syria (against Assad, the butcher) or Hezbollah in Lebanon against Israel, we stand in the military front on the side of the freedom-fighting Islamists without giving them political support.

We stand in the tradition of the Communist International, at the time when it was a revolutionary International supporting the Rif Islamic republic against Spanish and French imperialism, as well as the Syrian revolt in 1925 led by the Druze al-Atrash.

“On September 11th 1924, l’humanité (the newspaper of the French Communist party) published a telegram sent the day previous by Pierre Sémard, General Secretary of the Parti communiste français (PCF) and Jacques Doriot, leader of the Federation des jeunesses communistes, to the leader of the Republic, Muhammad bin ‘abd al-Karim al-Khattabi a salafi Islamist.”

It read: *‘We hope that after the definitive victory over Spanish imperialism, it [the Republic] will continue, with the French and European proletariat, the struggle against all imperialists, including the French [français y compris], until the complete liberation of Morocco’s soil’* on the 2nd December 1922, days before the end the fourth World Congress, Trotsky wrote that:

‘Congress invites the French party and its Central Committee to pay far more attention and allot far greater forces and resources than it has up till now to the colonial question and to propaganda in the colonies.’²³

Working with the Confédération générale du Travail unitaire (CGTU), the PCF organized a 15,000-strong protest against the war on May 16th in Paris, and over the spring and early summer of 1925 encouraged the crews of half a dozen cruisers to mutiny (100 sailors were court martialled in late July). Between May and October there were over 250 meetings against the war across France, all building towards the 12th October 24-hour strike, involving 500,000 workers.’²⁴

This is only a reminder from history that proves the importance of avoiding sectarianism towards forces who lead anti-imperialist struggles without giving any political concession.

23 Trotsky’s *The First Five Years of the Communist International* (Vol. II

24 <https://avalancheofdust.wordpress.com/2017/09/10/the-republic-of-the-rif-and-the-french-communist-party-part-i/>

The Zionist Colonization of Palestine

There is no doubt that Jews suffered in different periods in history from Anti-Semitism. However, this does not justify the conquest of Palestine and the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians.

The Zionists like to argue that the Arabs opposed the Jewish settlers even before the war of 1948 and the Nakba as a proof that the Palestinians are genuine Anti-Semites. Zionists argue that the Palestinians are responsible for the wars of Israel, which is only acting in self-defense. What a nonsense!

“In the Beginning There Was the No.” The pro-Israel camp often traces the history of the conflict to 1947, when the Arabs said No to the UN partition plan, or to 1948, when the Arab countries said No by launching a war against the recently declared Jewish state. The underlying assumption is that the Arabs had no good reason to reject Zionism or the idea of Jewish self-determination in Palestine: rather, their rejection is interpreted as a consequence of their inherent anti-Semitism, natural tendency toward violence, or self-destructive intransigence. Recently this credo was succinctly articulated by Prime Minister Netanyahu: “The Palestinians’ lack of will to recognise the state of Israel as the national state of the Jewish people is the root of the conflict.”²⁵

Another manipulative Zionist argument is that the Zionists are the people in exile who return to their homeland and the Palestinians are the settler colonialists.

“The concept of “settler colonialism” has been applied with almost unique vehemence against Israel. But the fact that Jews are the indigenous population of the Southern Levant can be proved with ease. In contrast, historical and genealogical evidence shows Palestinians descend primarily from three primary groups: Muslim invaders, Arab immigrants, and local converts to Islam. The Muslim conquest of Byzantine Palestine in the 7th century CE is a textbook example of settler-colonialism, as is subsequent immigration, particularly during the 19th and 20th centuries under the Ottoman and British Empires. The application of the concept to Jews and Zionism by Palestinians is both ironic and unhelpful.”²⁶

Before dealing with the first argument, we will deal with the second argument.

The Zionists were Europeans who settled in Palestine from the end of the 19th century. The Moslems have lived in Palestine since the 7th century, for 1,300 years. With the arrival of the Moslems, the majority of the local Jewish population that remained in the country after the Romans exiled the Jewish upper classes, converted to Islam.

Even the founders of modern Israel, David Ben-Gurion and Yitzhak Ben-Zvi,

25 Natasha Gill *The Original “No”: Why the Arabs Rejected Zionism, and Why It Matters* Middle East Policy Council <https://mepc.org/commentary/original-no-why-arabs-rejected-zionism-and-why-it-matters>

26 Begin Sadat center for Strategic Studies *“Palestinian settler –Colonialism”* <https://besacenter.org/perspectives-papers/palestinians-settlers-colonialism/>

insisted that Palestinian peasants - then most of the Palestinian population - were the descendants of ancient Hebrews. They wrote that most people at the time of the Arab conquest of the country were mainly Christian, but of Jewish origins, and that during the Crusaders' conquest they were mainly Muslim. Thus, the Muslim fellaheen in Palestine in modern times are descendants of those Christians who were the descendants of the Jews and had turned to Islam prior to the Crusaders' conquest.²⁷

The sane argument of Ben Gurion can be found in Hebrew under the title "The origin of the Fellahin."²⁸

In comparison, the Boers (white settlers in South Africa) claimed that they are the Chosen People, that South Africa is the Promised Land, and that the British are the Pharos. The Protestants who settled in North America claimed that this is the Promised Land.

Unlike the Zionists of today, who deny that Israel is a society of settler colonialists, the founders of the Zionist movement did not try to hide this fact.

Herzl the founder of Jewish Zionism wrote in 1896, in his elaboration "Der Judenstaat": "If His Majesty the Sultan were to give us Palestine, we could offer to resolve Turkey's finances. For Europe, we would form part of a bulwark against Asia there, we would serve as the advance post of civilization against barbarism".²⁹

In other words, Herzl said that for the imperialists to support the Zionist colonial endeavor, the Zionists will serve their interests.

He also wrote: "We want to carry culture to the East. And once again, Europe will in turn profit from this work of ours. We will create new trade routes - and none will be more interested in this than England with its Asiatic possessions. The shortest route to India lies through Palestine."³⁰

That Herzl looked to Rhodes as a colonial mentor is clear from a letter, recorded in his diaries, that Herzl intended to send to Rhodes:

"You are being invited to help make history. [...] It doesn't involve Africa, but a piece of Asia Minor, not Englishmen, but Jews. How, then, do I happen to turn to you, since this is an out-of-the-way matter for you? How indeed? Because it is something colonial, and because it presupposes understanding of a development which will take place over twenty or thirty years."³¹

Herzl also wrote:

"When we occupy the land, we shall bring immediate benefits to the state that receives us. We must expropriate gently, the private property on the estates assigned to us"³²For

27 Gil, Moshe. [1983] 1997. A History of Palestine, 634-1099. Cambridge University Press. pp. 222-3

28 מיחלפה אצומ רוריבל ויירוג גב דוד , http://the-engagement.org/files/ben_gurion_papaer_0609.pdf

29 Judenstaat, 34

30 Herzl, 'Dr. Herzl in London', 5

31 Collective Diaries III p 1193

32 Theodor Herzl, Handwritten Diary entry 12 June 1895, The Complete Diaries of

the remainder of the population, he wrote in his diary on the same day: "... "We shall try to spirit the penniless population across the border by procuring employment for it in the transit countries whilst denying it any employment in our own country."³³

Ruppin, a leading Zionist who was involved with buying lands in Palestine reflected in his book *The Building of the Land of Israel* a clear understanding that the Zionist project is of settler colonialism.

"the uniqueness of the Zionist project in terms of its distinctly national character: [...] the Jewish colonisation is also a matter "of a very special kind", because, unlike other colonisations, it does not pursue economic but national aims, and because it does not want to use and exploit the already resident population as a "working mass", but it wants to realise the entire colonisation from the basis to the top with new Jewish immigrants".³⁴

History of Zionism proves today's Zionist claims to be wrong. As to the first Zionist argument it is an even cheaper and more stupid argument. We already referred to Zabotinsky in the iron wall, who explained that no native people will accept the colonization of their country.

"It is utterly impossible to obtain the voluntary consent of the Palestine Arabs for converting "Palestine" from an Arab country into a country with a Jewish majority."³⁵

The conflict between the settler colonialist Zionists and the native Palestinians did not begin with the war of 1948 nor during the Arab revolt of 1936-9. It began with the emigration of Zionist colonialists at the end of the 19th century. It was the result of the Zionists' policy of conquering lands where Arab villages existed for many generations. It was further the result of the removal of the peasants from the lands they cultivated for centuries. To protect the Zionist settlements (colonies) from these peasants, the Zionists organized a paramilitary force that evicted the peasants. Not so different from the role of the American cavalry that protected the white settler who stole the Indian's lands. The Kibbutzim that were characterized by the imperialist mass media as an example of socialism were the forts of the Zionist colonization, similar to the American forts.

"During the presidential election in the USA in 2016,"as mainstream media outlets struggled to define Bernie Sanders's avowed socialism, many latched onto his time volunteering on a Jewish kibbutz in Israel. "Bernie Sanders's Kibbutz Found. Surprise: It's Socialist," read headline in the New York Times.³⁶ "Kibbutzim served as leaders in national undertakings, even prior to the establishment of the State, including areas such as: youth instruction and guidance, assisting in the absorption of new immigrants, and most notable, service in the different branches of the armed forces – from the time of the British Mandate, as defense fighters in the "Hagana"

Theodor Herzl, trans. Harry Zohn, (New York, 1960), (henceforth Herzl Diaries), vol.1, p.88

33 Ibid

34 p.110

35 V. Zabotinsky the iron Wall <http://en.jabotinsky.org/media/9747/the-iron-wall.pdf>

36 <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/06/us/politics/bernie-sanders-kibbutz.html>

and serving as "hosts" for "Palmach" bases, to full enlistment in the Israel Defense Forces, since the establishment of the State, with a high percentage volunteering to serve in prestigious units. Kibbutzim have also excelled in creative, cultural innovation, combining Jewish tradition with a new, original perspective enhanced by the unique traits and "aroma" of the Land of Israel."³⁷

Before the 16th century few Jews lived in Palestine. Following the expulsion of the Jews and the Moslems from Andalusia with the victory of Spanish Christian kingdoms in 1492, more Jews began to settle in Palestine. Palestine was occupied by the Ottoman Empire in 1517. This wave of Jewish immigration to Palestine stopped when Egypt freed itself from the Ottomans and was ruled by Muhammad Ali's dynasty from 1805 to 1840. From 1840 on, the Jewish communities in Palestine began to grow again. At the end of 1880, approximately 25,000 Jews lived in the country, mainly in four cities: Jerusalem, Hebron, Safed and Tiberias.³⁸ The Arab population in Palestine did not have any problem with these Jews as these Jews in general (except what is now Petah Tikva) did not buy lands and did not expel the villagers living on these lands. They had no aspiration to form a Jewish state and remove the Arabs from Palestine. In short, they didn't have a Zionist agenda.

This began to change with the first Zionist immigration to Palestine in 1882. The Zionist settlers established agricultural colonies in historical Palestine, and their representatives in 1897, attended the first Zionist conference, in Basel, Switzerland. They established the colonies. The first stage of this wave lasted from 1882 to about 1884 and established seven agricultural colonies by Hibbat Zion ("Love of Zion"). In contrast to the myth of working on no-man's lands, these lands were purchased from the rich Arabs living outside the country, removing the Arab Fellahin (peasants) and settling them with European colonialists. These settlements reached a crisis point and turned for help to wealthy individuals, such as Baron Edmond de Rothschild of Paris. The stage of the baron lasted from about 1885 to 1900. The Zionist settlers established more colonies and were the administrators for the baron super exploiting the Arab workers – the former villagers.

To understand how the Zionists were able to buy lands it is important to grasp the changes that took place in the Ottoman Empire. Until the 19th century Turkey's mode of production was what Marx called the Asiatic mode of production where all the lands belonged to the Sultan. Until the Turkish Land Registry Law in 1858, there were no official deeds. Families worked the lands according to their capacity. The situation of the peasants became worse with the land registry. The peasants were exploited by the local sheikh and strong men with close relation to the administration, by the Government tax-collector and the moneylenders. They become tenant-farmers on lands owned by the absentee landlords. New debts incurred to pay off the old. Most of the lands which the Zionists bought, belonged to absentee owners. For example, the western part of Jezreel Valley belonged to the richest banker in Syria, Sursuk "the Greek".

37 <http://www.kia.co.il/infoeng/kibbutz.htm>

38 CJPME Jewish immigration to historical Palestine

Chapter 3: The Second Wave of Zionist Immigration to Palestine

This wave began in 1904 and continued until 1918. This wave was the result of the pogroms and the failure of the 1905 revolution in Russia. These colonialist settlers saw themselves as socialist Zionists i.e., social colonialists. They fought to remove the Arab workers employed by the settlements of the first Zionist immigration. They used the nationalist slogans: "Hebrew labor", "redeeming' the land" and "Hebrew products." They established the first armed forces to protect the colonies from the Arab peasants that were removed from their lands. Yisrael Shochat, Yitzhak Ben Zvi and Alexander Zeid, met in Jaffa in 1907 and founded a secret society called Bar-Giora (named after Simeon Bar Giora, the Jewish military leader in the war against Rome, (66-70 C.E.), with the aim of getting the role of guarding the settlements as well as developing Jewish colonies in new areas. In 1909, Bar Giora merged with a new armed body, Hashomer ("The Watchman"). Members of Ha-Shomer were prominent in the life of the new Zionist settlers (yishuv) and instrumental in settling new colonies (settlements) on lands of the Arab peasants.

During the first world imperialist war, this organization joined the Zion Mule Corps established by Yosef Trumpeldor in support of British imperialism. They believed that by serving the British imperialists, the British Empire will realize that it can rely on the Zionists against the anti-imperialists in the region and this will open the gate of Palestine for further Zionist immigration.

Hashmer and the Jewish Mule Corps were replaced in 1920 by a larger underground paramilitary forces Hagana (defense) subordinated to the Histadruth (the trade union for the Hebrew workers) that would become in the 1948 war the official Zionist army (IDF). While it called itself an organization of self-defense, it was an arm of defending land theft. While it called the military formations of the Zionist right wingers Lehi and Etzel terrorist organizations, it used the method of terrorism many times itself.

In 1920 members of the Hagana were sent to Vienna to organize the consignment of arms (revolvers and ammunition) to Palestine by various means (in beehives, refrigerators, steamrollers, etc.). The first course for Haganah instructors was given by an ex-Legionnaire, Elimelekh Zelikovich ("Avner").

During the events of August 1929, that we will deal with later on, the Hagana clashed with the Palestinians together with the British army.

During the Arab uprising 1936–39, the Jewish Agency declared that the *yishuv's* response to Arab acts of terror would be "restraint" (*havlagah*). The British cooperated with the Jewish Agency by establishing a large body of Jewish auxiliary police (*ghafirs*) dressed in special police uniforms and provided with arms (rifles, and, after a time, light machine guns). This force served as a cover

for the activities and training of members of the Haganah. In 1937 field squads (Peluggot Sadeh) were established under the command of Yitzhak Sadeh and Elijah Ben-Hur that were engaged together with the Special Night Squads (SNS) under the command of Orde Wingate, a British captain in terrorist acts against the Palestinian civilians. Beside them, the revisionists carried out terrorist acts against Arab civilians on the roads and in markets.

In 1937 an agreement was reached between the emissary of the Haganah, Yehudah Arazi, and the Polish government whereby the Poles would supply the Haganah with arms (rifles, ammunition, and machine guns) that would be transported to Palestine in steamrollers and various types of machinery.

The Hagana did not hesitate to use bombs against Jews as part of their actions against the *White Paper* of 1938. This was a paper that restricted Zionist immigration to Palestine and promised independence within 10 years that meant a Palestinian state. For example, in the case of the ship "Patria":

"The Patria Affair" started with the arrival of three passenger ships: The Pacific, The Milos and The Atlantic, loaded with illegal immigrants, unto the Haifa shore. The British implemented the White Paper policy, that is, harsh limitations on the immigration of Jewish refugees into Israel. The British gathered all passengers unto one large old ship called "Patria" (homeland in Latin) in order to deport them all to a detention camp in Mauritius in the Indian ocean. Commanders of the Haganah, whose motto was "fight the White Paper like there is no World War, and help the British like there is no White Paper", wished to prevent the deportation, and their idea was to slightly damage the ship's side in a small blow, in order to earn some time during the repairs, and thus to cancel the trip to Mauritius.

However, amateurism, negligence and perhaps even an inherent subconscious disrespect for the refugees, blinded their eyes. The Haganah commanders acted against experts' advice and placed the bomb in the rickety side of the old ship, rather than under the machines area, where there would be no passengers. The Patria disaster was largest catastrophe in which Jews caused the death of other Jews".³⁹

On March 8, 1948, the correspondent of the New York Times cited an example of what the Hagana and the Jewish Agency are doing. The correspondent, Dana Adams Schmidt, said: *"The Hagana claims the right to mobilize even United States citizens if they are of military age and reside in Palestine, a spokesman of the Jewish Agency declared today. Jews holding [United States] passports complained recently that they had been threatened with violence if they attempted to return to the United States. When 200 Jewish Americans were about to sail for the United States in the Russian ship Rossiya from Haifa at the end of February, a party of Hagana men invaded the pier and threw some of the passports into the harbor before being removed by British marines...."*

39 Ushi Derman: The Patria Disaster: Forgotten Zionist Mass Tragedy, 26. November 2018, <https://www.bh.org.il/blog-items/the-patria-disaster-forgotten-zionist-mass-traged>

How Many Land?

*“By the end of the Ottoman State in 1918, the Jews had acquired about 420 thousand dunams (or 1.5%) of the land of Palestine, which they bought mainly from Lebanese feudal landlords, most notably the families of Sursock, Tayyan, Tueni and Medawar, or from the Ottoman administration through public auction in which the lands of Palestinian peasants who are unable to pay their taxes are sold, or from some Palestinian landlords who belong to feudal families like the Ruk and Kassar families. These purchases covered 93% of the land the Jews acquired.”*⁴⁰

In line with the Zionist myth of an empty land, the German Zionist author Cheskel Zvi Klötzel described the way the Zionists conquered Palestinian lands as follows: *“In reconstructing the Jewish National Home in the land of their ancestors, the Jews “collected” deserts, marshes, rocky mountains, places that nobody wanted or inhabited, and they turned them into fields, gardens, vineyards, and orchards, thus creating “living space” for thousands of their brothers. This was in line with the Zionist slogan of Zangwill’s a “land without a people for a people without a land.”*⁴¹

The late left Zionist Dan Leon was more honest and he wrote: *“‘redeeming’ the land before the establishment of the State of Israel was often at the expense of Arab fellahin. The British Hope Simpson report in 1930 said that ‘the Arabs gradually were being driven off the soil by Jewish land purchases and by the JNF not allowing Arab employment on Jewish tracts.’”*⁴²

The sale of lands of the village of al-Fula to the Jewish National Fund was a turning point in the Palestinian resistance before First World War. The lands of al-Fula were owned by Ily Sursuq, the banker, and landowner from Beirut, who in 1910 made a deal on their sale with the Zionists. However, this transaction led peasants petitioned to Turkish Sultan in May 1910 to stop the sale. The peasants refused to leave their village.

Force was used in order to occupy the lands of the village before the settlers-colonialists would move in. This was the first time that the Zionist paramilitary organization Hashomer was used to evict the peasants from their lands.

In a June 1911 report, Albert Antébi, a prominent representative of the Sephardic Jewish Community wrote that Arab peasants were familiar with the content of the addresses delivered by the Arab deputies in parliament and that these speeches had negatively influenced their attitude toward Jews. *“In all eyes the Jew is becoming the anti-patriot, the traitor prepared to plunder his neighbor to take possession of his goods. The Christian excels in these accusations, but the Muslim fol-*

40 Ibid

41 Élisabeth Mortier “The heroic figure of the Zionist pioneer: The appropriation of the marshlands in Palestine (from the end of the nineteenth century to the 1950s), In *Études rurales* Volume 203, Issue 1, 2019

42 Dan Leon “The Jewish National Fund: How the Land Was ‘Redeemed’ Palestine –Israel journal Vol 12 No 4 2005

lows on his heels.”⁴³

According to Dan Leon, “the JNF’s land acquisition before the establishment of Israel were 22,363 dunams by 1920, 516,000 dunams by 1940, 936,000 by May 1948... altogether the Zionists held 7% of the lands by 1947⁴⁴. The Jewish National Fund was founded more by the fifth Zionist Congress at Basle in 1901 for the purpose of land purchase. The JNF (Hebrew: Keren Kayemeth Leyisrael, KKL)”

As of April 1st, 1943 the Zionists held:

Category of land (Fiscal categories)	Palestinians & others	Jews	Total
	Dunums (1000 sq. meters)		
Urban	76,662	70,111	146,773
Citrus	145,572	141,188	286,760
Bananas	2,300	1,430	3,730
Rural built-on area	36,851	42,330	79,181
Plantation	1,079,788	95,514	1,175,302
Cereal land (taxable)	5,503,183	814,102	6,317,285
Cereal land (not taxable)	900,294	51,049	951,343
Uncultivable	16,925,805	298,523	17,224.328
Total area:	24,670,455	1,514,247	26,184,702
Percentage	94.22%	5.8%	100%
Roads, railways, rivers, and lakes			135,803
Total Area including roads, railways, etc.			26,320,505

Source: *A Survey of Palestine*⁴⁵ prepared by the British Mandate for the UN, p. 566.

43 Mandel, Arabs and Zionism in: Emanuel Beška “Political Opposition to Zionism in Palestine and Greater Syria: 1910–1911 as a Turning Point, The Jerusalem quarterly Summer(59), pp. 54–67 January 2014

44 Dan Leon “The Jewish National Fund: How the Land Was ‘Redeemed’ Palestine –Israel journal Vol 12 No 4 2005

45 A Survey of Palestine <https://www.palestineremembered.com/Acre/Books/Story831.html>

By the end of the Mandate: Land Area according to ownership, by Acres is as follows:

Arab individually-owned	Jewish-owned	Others	State Domain
3,143,693	372,925	35,512	3,028,625
47.79 %	5.67%	0.54%	46.00%

Source: Sami Hadawi land ownership in Palestine

According to the Palestinian Academic society-PASSIA, *“In December 1947, Jewish landholdings totaled 1,734 km², or 6.6% of the total territory.”*⁴⁶

According to Zionist sources by 1930, *“PICA (Palestine Jewish Colonization Association) had amassed 5,200 hectares (one hectare is 4 dunums) in various parts of the country, on which it established 50 settlements. The JNF, through the PLDC, purchased more than 70,000 hectares during the Mandate period, chiefly in the valleys -Jezreel, Zebulun, Jordan, Beit Shean, Huleh and Hefer- in the Haifa bay area and in the northern Negev. By May 1948, when the Mandate expired and Israel was about to proclaim its statehood, land redemption had placed nearly one-tenth.”*⁴⁷

Whether less than 6% to 7% as the Palestinians say or even close to 10% as the Zionists claim, in fact in 1948 more than 90% of the land in Palestine was owned by the Palestinians.

⁴⁶ <http://www.passia.org/maps/view/14>

⁴⁷ Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Redeemers of the Land

Chapter 4: The Uprisings in 1920-21

The resistance of the Palestinians to the Zionist colonization was manifested already in 1920. The Zionists narrative, told from colonialist outlook is that the resistance and the uprising of the Palestinians in 1920 and 1921 against colonialism were riots and a pogrom incited by the Mufti of Jerusalem Haj Amin Al Husseini and other leaders. According to the Zionists:

*“Palestinian-Arab leaders openly declared that they incited riots with the sole purpose of killing Jews in British Mandate Palestine. This violence took place before the state of Israel was established. Therefore, the argument that the Palestinian-Arabs are violent solely because of Israel is false, seeing as the violence started long before the establishment of Israel. Hatred of Jews has always been one of the roots of the conflict, even since before Israel became a state.”*⁴⁸

*“There was no occupation when the 1921 intifada erupted on May 1. On that hot day the British police permitted a group of Labor-Zionists to hold a May Day parade in then-tiny Tel Aviv, but denied the same privilege to Jewish communists, who rallied anyway in Neveh Shalom, the second-earliest Jewish neighborhood adjacent to Jaffa. The two groups of leftist Jews collided and exchanged a few blows. But while the Brits energetically chased several communists through Neveh Shalom’s winding narrow lanes, they doggedly turned a blind eye to the thousands of Arabs massing in Jaffa, all brandishing clubs, knives, hatchets and metal pipes and hysterically chanting “itbach el-Yahud (slaughter the Jews).” With no British presence to cool their ardor, rioters began attacking Jewish passersby. The only representatives of the law were members of Jaffa’s Arab constabulary. But rather than quell the rampage, they helped turn it into “a full-scale pogrom.”*⁴⁹

In the real world the Palestinian rebelled against their oppression and the Zionist plan to turn Palestine into a Zionist state and to ethnic cleansing of the native people. This is clear even from imperialist sources.

“On 28 August 1919 a United States commission, the King-Crane Commission, appointed by President Woodrow Wilson, published its report criticizing Zionist ambitions and recommending ‘serious modification of the extremist Zionist of making Palestine distinctly a Jewish State. (...) Winston Churchill, then Secretary of State for War, and with ministerial responsibility for Palestine, took a more cynical view of Zionist ambitions. On October 25, in a memorandum for the Cabinet, he wrote of ‘the Jews, whom we are pledged to introduce into Palestine and who take it for granted that the

⁴⁸ The Zionist organization of America “Violence against Jews Before the Rebirth of the State of Israel” <http://campus.zoa.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/08/FACT-SHEET-Violence-against-Jews-Before-the-Rebirth-of-the-State-of-Israel-Final1.pdf>

⁴⁹ Sarah Honig: Another Tack: The May Day massacre of 1921 Jerusalem post April 30, 2009

local population will be cleared out to suit their convenience.”⁵⁰

“Palestinians, who were already resentful because of the increasing number of immigrant Jewish settlers, demonstrated in Jerusalem in February 1920. Approximately 1,500 people came on to the streets after the British general, Louis Bols, declared the enforcement of the Balfour Declaration”. A month later a second demonstration was followed by bloody outbursts, with Arabs attacking Jewish interests. Bols banned all demonstrations...But in May 1921 an anti-Zionist riot broke out in Jaffa. Dozens of Arabs and Jews were killed in the confrontations.⁵¹

“They [Palestinian Arabs, Ed.] were met with shooting by the armed British security forces and Jewish militias. Overall, 47 Jews and 48 Arabs were killed during the riots. The Haycraft Commission was established in order to investigate the riots, with its conclusions leading to the publication of the 1922 White Paper.”⁵²

“According to the White Paper, British stood by the terms mentioned in the Balfour Declaration and that this declaration, which was approved at the San Remo Conference and in the Treaty of Sevres, would not change. The White Paper recognized the progress that the Zionist community was making but made it clear that they do not support the idea of a Jewish national home and would like to see it as only a community within Palestine. Moreover, in July 1922, the British made a partition in the Palestine mandate by separating the territory lying east of the Jordan River from the Jewish populated area and renaming it Transjordan, giving it to Emir Abdullah to rule.”⁵³

The Zionist account is false for various reasons. First of all, to call the resistance of the Palestinian a pogrom as the Zionist do is to deny the nature of the real pogroms in Russia. The pogroms in Russia against the Jews were organized by the Tsar using the “Black hundreds”, a racist force to divert the anger of the masses against a scapegoat. In the case of the Palestinians, it was resistance against the colonization of their country and land thefts. The Palestinian resistance was similar to rebellions of black slaves against white slave masters. The white slave masters called the rebellions riots by blood thirsty fanatics not uprisings.

Secondly, the British army with Zionists armed militia killed 48 Arabs and thus it was more of a small civil war between colonialist armed settlers assisted by the British army and native colonized people than a riot and pogrom.

Thirdly, as we already said the oppression and the removal of the Palestinians from their lands did not begin in 1948 but from the arrival of the Zionists to Palestine. Thus, the events of 1920-21 took place almost 40 years after the beginning of the oppression of the Palestinians by the white European settlers.

50 Martin Gilbert: “An Overwhelmingly Jewish State - From The Balfour Declaration To The Palestine Mandate.” JCPA, <http://www.jcpa.org/text/israel-rights/kiyum-gilbert.pdf>

51 Al Jazeera The history of Palestinian revolts <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2003/12/9/the-history-of-palestinian-revolts>

52 1921 Palestine Clashes, <https://ecf.org.il/issues/issue/1350>

53 Palestine facts White Paper of 1922, http://www.palestinefacts.org/pf_mandate_whitepaper_1922

Chapter 5: The Events of 1929

Similar distortion of the Zionist account is of the events of 1929. According to the Zionists: *“The first of the hostilities began in mid-August 1929, with an assault by an Arab mob on the Western Wall plaza following incitement by the Supreme Muslim Council. Jewish worshippers were expelled from the site and their Torah scrolls were set on fire. In the days that followed the floodgates of hatred and violence were opened. By the end of the week of riots, 67 Jews lay dead in Hebron and dozens of others had been killed in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, Safed, Hulda and Be’er Tuvia.”*⁵⁴

The Western Wall is a holy place for the Moslems and the Orthodox Jews. In September 1928, Zionist Jews decided to change the status quo and for their Yom Kippur prayers at the Western Wall, they placed chairs and erected (screens) between the men and women present. The Muslims saw it, and rightly so, as a provocation and a move by the Zionists to control the Wall and turn it into a synagogue. The Mufti of Jerusalem turned to the British and demanded that the government keep its obligation, according to Balfour’s declaration, to protect the religious rights of the Moslems. The Zionists indeed violated the status quo that had existed during the Ottoman rule that forbade Jews from making any construction in the Western Wall area. The Commissioner demanded the removal of the screen and the chairs. When the Zionists refused, police officers were sent in, and a scuffle took place between the Zionist and the police.

Haj Amin al Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem who was elected to this position by the First High Commissioner, and the Zionist Herbert Samuel believed, and for good reason, that the Zionist Jews were planning to take over the Western wall as a step towards taking over al Aqsa Mosque. On 15 August 1929, during the Jewish fast of Tisha B’Av, several hundred members of the right-wing Revisionist Joseph Klausner’s movement and of the Betar youth organization, modeled after Mussolini Blackshirts, assembled at the Wall shouting “the Wall is ours.” They raised the Zionist flag and sang Hatikvah, the Zionist anthem. The British authorities had been informed by the Mufti of the march in advance and provided a heavy police escort in an attempt to prevent any incidents. Rumours spread that the youths had attacked local residents. On Friday, August 16, a demonstration organized by militant Muslims ignored the Mufti attempts to pacify the Muslims, marched to the Wall and beat Jewish worshippers and returned to attack the next day. The next day a young Jew named Abraham Mizrachi kicked his ball into an Arab peasant woman’s home and without permission entered the garden to get the ball. He was stabbed by an Arab man, and died the evening of the following day. His funeral was turned into a political demonstration demanding the Western wall, and was suppressed by the police.

⁵⁴ Chen Malul: Banned by the British: Caricatures of the 1929 Palestine Riots, https://blog.nli.org.il/en/banned_drawings/

On August 20, Hagana organized 600 armed Jews. The next day thousands of Arab villagers armed with sticks and knives streamed into Jerusalem from the surrounding countryside to pray on the many. Harry Luke, the local Commissioner, telephoned the Mufti to come and calm a mob that had gathered under his window. The Mufti attempt to pacify the crowd failed. Inflamed by rumors that two Arabs had been killed by Jews, Arabs started an attack on Jews in Jerusalem's Old City. The violence quickly spread to other parts of Palestine. British authorities had fewer than 100 soldiers, six armored cars, and five or six aircraft in the country. The British police had 1,500 men, the majority of whom were Arabs. Militant Muslims killed unarmed Non-Zionist Jews in Hebron and Safed while many other Jews were saved by their Muslim neighbors. In the clashes 133 Jews and 116 Arabs were killed.

Show Commission

A commission of inquiry headed by Sir Walter Shaw published its findings on these events in 1930. The British politically supported the establishing of a Zionist national in Palestine but they had to calm the Arab masses and the report reflected these two aims.

It stated: *"The outbreak in Jerusalem on the 23rd of August was from the beginning an attack by Arabs on Jews for which no excuse in the form of earlier murders by Jews has been established.*

The outbreak was not premeditated. A general massacre of the Jewish community at Hebron was narrowly averted. In a few instances, Jews attacked Arabs and destroyed Arab property. These attacks, though inexcusable, were in most cases in retaliation for wrongs already committed by Arabs in the neighborhoods in which the Jewish attacks occurred.

In his activities (connected to the dispute over the Holy Places) the Mufti was influenced by the twofold desire to confront the Jews and to mobilize Moslem opinion on the issue of the Wailing Wall. He had no intention of utilizing this religious campaign as the means of inciting to disorder.

In the matter of innovations of practice (at the Wailing Wall) little blame can be attached to the Mufti in which some Jewish religious authorities also would not have to share....no connection has been established between the Mufti and the work of those who either are known or are thought to have engaged in agitation or incitement.... After the disturbances had broken out the Mufti co-operated with the Government in their efforts both to restore peace and to prevent the extension of disorder.

The fundamental cause... is the Arab feeling of animosity and hostility towards the Jews consequent upon the disappointment of their political and national aspirations and fear for their economic future.... The feeling as it exists today is based on the twofold fear of the Arabs that by Jewish immigration and land purchases they may be deprived of their livelihood and in time pass under the political domination of the Jews.

In our opinion the immediate causes of the outbreak were:

*The long series of incidents connected with the Wailing Wall... These must be regarded as a whole, but the incident among them which in our view contributed most to the outbreak was the Jewish demonstration at the Wailing Wall on the 15th of August, 1929. Next in importance we put the activities of the Society for the Protection of the Moslem Holy Places and, in a lesser degree, of the Pro-Wailing Wall Committee.”*⁵⁵

Trotsky, when asked on his views about the events of 1929, said the following in an interview: *“Question: The official Communist Party characterized, without question, the Jewish-Arab events in 1929 in Palestine as the revolutionary uprising of the oppressed Arabian masses. What is your opinion of this policy?”*

*Answer: Unfortunately, I am not thoroughly familiar with the facts to venture a definite opinion. I am now studying the question. Then it will be easier to see in what proportion and in what degree there were present those elements such as National Liberationists (Anti-imperialists) and reactionary Mohammedans and Anti-Semitic Pogromists. On the surface, it seems to me that all these elements were there.”*⁵⁶

Trotsky was right as the attacks on the Jews of Hebron who were not Zionists were unjustified. Yet essentially it was an anti-imperialist uprising even when the masses that attacked the Zionists were Islamists.⁵⁷

55 Wikipedia: Shaw Commission, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shaw_Commission

56 Leon Trotsky: On The Jewish Problem (1934)

57 See on this also <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/israel-s-war-of-1948/>

Chapter 6: The Uprising of 1936-39

According to the Zionist narrative on April 19, 1936: *“Nine Jews are killed in an attack by Arabs from Jaffa. This constitutes the beginning of the bloody riots that come to be called the 1936-39 riots or the Arab Rebellion, during which some 400 Jews are killed and thousands injured.”*⁵⁸

This narrative reflects the outlook of the settler colonialists. A very different narrative is held by the Palestinians who fight for their liberation. Ghassan Kanafani— a leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, who was assassinated by the Mossad – provided a clear understanding of the uprising in his in his book on the revolt. He wrote:

“Between 1936 and 1939, the Palestinian revolutionary movement suffered a severe setback at the hands of three separate enemies that were to constitute together the principal threat to the nationalist movement in Palestine in all subsequent stages of its struggle: the local reactionary leadership; the regimes in the Arab states surrounding Palestine; and the imperialist-Zionist enemy”.... This was due primarily to two related factors:

1. *The existence and effectiveness of the Zionist movement, which gave the national challenge relative predominance over the social contradictions. The impact of this challenge was being systematically felt by the masses of Palestinian Arabs, who were the primary victims of the Zionist invasion supported by British imperialism.*

2. *The existence of a significant conflict of interests between the local feudal-religious leadership and British imperialism: It was consistently in the interest of the ruling class to promote and support a certain degree of revolutionary struggle, instead of being more or less completely allied with the imperialist power as would otherwise be the case. The British imperialists had found in the Zionists “a more suitable ally.”*⁵⁹

He continued: *“The change from a semi-feudal society to a capitalist society was accompanied by an increased concentration of economic power in the hands of the Zionist machine and consequently, within the Jewish society in Palestine. It is significant that Palestinian Arab advocates of conciliation, who became outspoken during the thirties, were not landlords or rich peasants, but rather elements of the urban upper bourgeoisie whose interests gradually coincided with the expanding interests of the Jewish bourgeoisie. The latter, by controlling the process of industrialization, was creating its own agents.*

In the meantime, the Arab countries surrounding Palestine were playing two conflicting roles. On the one hand, the Pan-Arab mass movement was serving as a catalyst

58 <http://archive.jewishagency.org/israel/content/23391>

59 Ghassan Kanafani. The 1936-1939 Revolt in Palestine, published in English by Committee for a Democratic Palestine, New York, 1972 and by Tricontinental Society, London, 1980, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/kanafani/1972/revolt.htm>

for the revolutionary spirit of the Palestinian masses, since a dialectical relation between the Palestinian and overall Arab struggles existed, on the other hand, the established regimes in these Arab countries were doing everything in their power to help curb and undermine the Palestinian mass movement. The sharpening conflict in Palestine threatened to contribute to the development of the struggle in these countries in the direction of greater violence, creating a revolutionary potential that their respective ruling classes could not afford to overlook.

The Arab ruling classes were forced to support British imperialism against their counterpart in Palestine, which was in effect leading the Palestinian nationalist movement.

Meanwhile, the Zionist-Imperialist alliance continued to grow; the period between 1936 and 1939 witnessed not only the crystallization of the militaristic and aggressive character of the colonial society that Zionism had firmly implanted in Palestine but also the relative containment and defeat of the Palestinian working class; this was subsequently to have a radical effect on the course of the struggle. During that period, Zionism, in collaboration with the mandatory power, successfully undermined the development of a progressive Jewish labor movement and of Jewish-Arab Proletarian brotherhood. The Palestine Communist Party was effectively isolated among both Arab and Jewish workers, and the reactionary Histadrut completely dominated the Jewish labour movement. The influence of Arab progressive forces within Arab labour federations in Haifa and Jaffa diminished, leaving the ground open for their control by reactionary leaderships that monopolized political action.

The issue of Jewish immigration to Palestine was not merely a moral or national issue; it had direct implication on the economic status of the Arab people of Palestine, affecting primarily the small and middle-income farmers, workers and certain sectors of the petty and middle bourgeoisies. The national and religious character of Jewish immigration further aggravated the economic repercussions.

Between 1933 and 1935, 150,000 Jews immigrated to Palestine, bringing the country's Jewish population to 443,000 -or 29.6% of the total -from 1926 to 1932 the average number of immigrants per year was 7,201. It rose to 42,985 between 1933 and 1936, as direct result of Nazi persecution in Germany. In 1932, 9,000 German Jews entered Palestine, 30,000 in 1933, 40,000 in 1934 and 61,000 in 1935, nearly three quarters of the new immigrants settling in cities. If Nazism was responsible for terrorizing the Jews and forcing them out of Germany; it was "democratic" capitalism, in collaboration with the Zionist movement, that was responsible for directing comparatively large numbers of Jewish migrants to Palestine, as illustrated by the following: of 2,562,000 Jews that fled Nazi persecution, the U.S.A. accepted only 170,000 (6.6%), Britain 50,000 (1.9%), while Palestine received 8.5% and 1,930,000 (75.2%) found refuge in the U.S.S.R. The severe economic impact of the immigration into Palestine can be realized when it is considered that a comparatively large percentage of Jewish settlers were basically capitalists: In 1933, 3,250 of the latter (11%) were considered as capitalists, in 1934, 5,124 or 12%, and in 1935, 6,309 or 10%.

According to official statistics, of the Jewish immigrants who entered Palestine between 1932 and 1936, 1,370 (with 17,119 dependents) possessed PL 1,000 or more:

and 130,000 were officially registered as seeking employment, or dependents of previous immigrants. In other words, the immigration was not only designed to ensure a concentration of European Jewish capital in Palestine, that was to dominate the process of industrialization, but also to provide this effort with a Jewish proletariat: The policy that raised the slogan of "Jewish labor only" was to have grave consequences, as it led to the rapid emergence of fascist patterns in the society of Jewish settlers.

Another result was the development of a competitive struggle between the Palestinian Arab and Jewish proletariats and between Palestinian Arab peasants, farmers and agricultural laborers and their Jewish counterparts. This conflict also extended to higher classes, in as much as the Palestinian Arab small landowners and urban middle bourgeoisie realized that their interests were being threatened by growing Jewish capital.

In 1935, for example, Jews controlled 872 of a total of 1,212 industrial firms in Palestine, employing 13,678 workers, while the rest were Palestinian Arab-controlled and employed about 4,000 workers: Jewish investment totaled PL 4,391,000 compared to PL 704,000 Palestinian Arab industrial investment; Jewish production reached PL 6,000,000 compared to PL 1,545,000 by Palestinian Arab firms: In addition, Jewish capital controlled 90% of the concessions granted by the British Mandate, which accounted for a total investment of PL 5,789,000 and provided labor for 2,619 workers.

An official census in 1937 indicated that an average Jewish worker received 145% more in wages than his Palestinian Arab counterpart: (As high as 433% more in textile factories employing Jewish and Arab women, and 233% in tobacco factories. "By July 1937, the real wages of the average Palestinian Arab worker decreased 10% while those of a Jewish worker rose 10%.

The situation resulted in an almost total collapse of the Arab economy in Palestine, primarily affecting Palestinian Arab workers. In his report to the Peel Royal Commission, George Mansour, the Secretary of the Federation of Palestinian Arab Workers in Jaffa, indicated that 98% of Palestinian Arab workers had a "well below average" standard of living. Based on a census covering 1,000 workers in Jaffa in 1936, the Federation had found that the income of 57% of Arab workers was less than PL 2.750 (the average minimum income required to support a family being PL 11); 12% less than PL 4.250, 12% less than PL 6, 4% less than PL 10, 1.5% less than PL 12 and 0.5% less than PL 15.9

When the Mandatory Government refused to allow nearly 1,000 unemployed Jaffa workers to hold a demonstration on June 6, 1935, the Federation of Workers issued a statement warning the Government that unless their problems were solved, "the government would soon have to give the workers either bread or bullets." With the conditions of workers continuing to deteriorate, an uprising seemed imminent.

George Mansour (who had been previously a Communist Party member) came out with striking illustrations in his report to the Peel Commission: by the end of 1935, 2,270 men and women workers were unemployed in the city of Jaffa alone, with a population of 71,000. Mansour pointed out five reasons for the high unemployment rate, four of which were directly connected with Jewish immigration: 1) the settling of new immigrants; 2) urban migration 3) dismissal of Arab workers from their jobs; 4) the deteriorating economic situation; 5) the discriminatory policy of the Mandatory Gov-

ernment in favor of Jewish workers.

In a period of nine months, the number of Histadrut workers increased by 41,000. According to an Article published in the issue No. 3460 of the newspaper *Davar*, Histadrut workers numbered 115,000 at the end of July 1936; the official 1936 government report (p. 117) had showed their number at the end of 1935 to be 74,000.

The policy of dismissal of Palestinian Arab workers from firms and projects controlled by Jewish capital initiated violent clashes. In the four Jewish settlements of Malbis, Dairan, Wadi Hunain and Khadira, there were 6,214 Palestinian Arab workers in February 1935. After six months, this figure went down to 2,276, and in a year's time, went down to 617 Palestinian Arab workers only. Attacks against Palestinian Arab workers also took place. On one occasion, for instance, the Jewish community forced a Palestinian Arab contractor and his workers to leave their work in the Brodski building in Haifa. Among those who were systematically losing their jobs were workers in orchards, cigarette factories, mason's yards, construction, etc.

Between 1930 and 1935, Palestinian Arab pearl industry exports fell from PL 11,532 to PL 3,777 a year. The number of Palestinian Arab soap factories in Haifa alone fell from 12 in 1929 to 4 in 1935. Their export value fell from PL 206,659 in 1930 to PL 79,311 in 1935. It was clear that the Arab proletariat had fallen 'victim to British colonialism and Jewish capital, the former bearing the primary responsibility.'" ⁶⁰

The anti-imperialist movement was brutally suppressed by the British and Zionists military forces.

"A total of 415 Jewish deaths were recorded during the whole 1936-1939 Arab Revolt period. The toll on the Arabs was estimated to be roughly 5,000 dead, 15,000 wounded, and 5,600 imprisoned." ⁶¹

During the Palestinian uprising the SNS (Special Night Squads) composed of British and Zionists was formed by the British to assault Palestinian villages on hit-and-run raids. The commander was Capitan Orde Wingate, a Christian Zionist and an eccentrically ruthless British officer who tried his murdering tactics on the Palestinians. Moshe Dayan and other Israeli generals in 1948 like Yegal Alon were trained by Wingate in the SNS. Thus, the British built the Zionists military force. By early 1939 the JSP (Jewish Settlement Police), led by the British, totaled about 14,000. The SNS was trained in counterinsurgency methods that targeted civilians and villages. This terrorist organization fought a 'dirty war', a method used by the Zionist soldiers serving under British command.

Tom Segev, an Israeli historian, said in "March 1999, in reviewing Yigal Eyal's *The First Intifada, a study of the Arab Revolt*, Segev described Wingate as "quite mad, and perhaps a sadist, too," and reproved Eyal for "turn[ing] a blind eye to the war crimes committed by Orde Wingate and his men." In his own book published a few months later, *Days of the Anemones: Palestine During the Mandatory Period*, Segev portrays Wingate as delusional and homicidal, "a madman" who "employed terror

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Jewish Virtual Library Pre-State Israel: The Arab Revolt, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-1936-arab-riots>

against terror.” Though he does cite praise for Wingate from David Ben-Gurion, Chaim Weizmann and Moshe Sharett, Segev refuses to grant him any redeeming qualities, even as a military commander.”⁶²

The Peel Commission

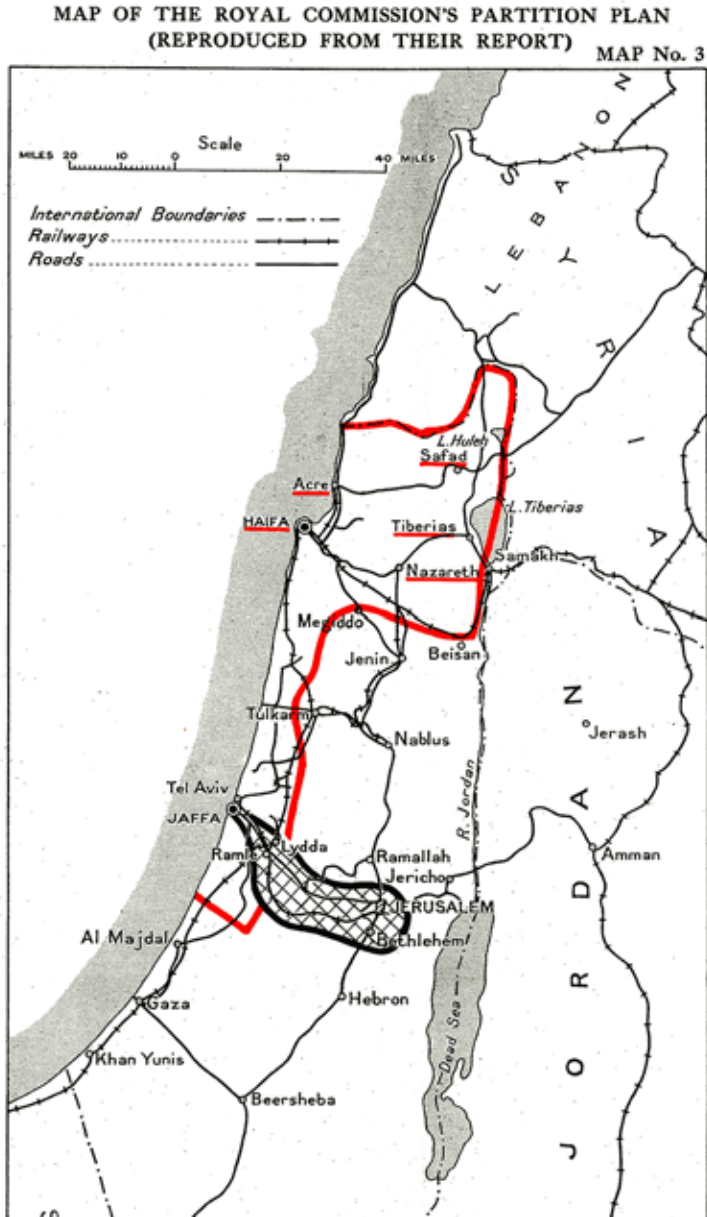
As a result of the Arab revolutionary uprising the British government appointed a commission of inquiry headed by Lord Peel to investigate the cause of the Arab. In July 1937, the Peel Commission recommended a partition of the land into a Jewish state and an Arab state. The Peel Commission recommended transfer of close to a quarter of a million Palestinians from the area located for the Jewish state. Naturally the Arab rejected the plan and while Ben Gurion was ready to accept it as a first step for occupying later on the rest of the country, other Zionist leaders rejected it as well. In 1938, the British declared the plan not implementable. The following is a part of the Peel’s report:

*“The political aspect of the land problem is still more important. Owing to the fact that there has been no census since 1931 it is impossible to calculate with any precision the distribution of population between the Arab and Jewish areas; but, according to an approximate estimate, in the area allocated to the Jewish State (excluding the urban districts to be retained for a period under Mandatory Administration) there are now about 225,000 Arabs. In the area allocated to the Arab State there are only about 1,250 Jews; but there are about 125,000 Jews as against 85,000 Arabs in Jerusalem and Haifa. The existence of these minorities clearly constitutes the most serious hindrance to the smooth and successful operation of Partition. If the settlement is to be clean and final, the question must be boldly faced and firmly dealt with. It calls for the highest statesmanship on the part of all concerned. A precedent is afforded by the exchange effected between the Greek and Turkish populations on the morrow of the Greco-Turkish War of 1922. A convention was signed by the Greek and Turkish Governments, providing that, under the supervision of the League of Nations, Greek nationals of the Orthodox religion living in Turkey should be compulsorily removed to Greece, and Turkish nationals of the Moslem religion living in Greece to Turkey. The numbers involved were high—no less than some 1,300,000 Greeks and some 400,000 Turks. But so vigorously and effectively was the task accomplished that within about eighteen months from the spring of 1923 the whole exchange was completed. The courage of the Greek and Turkish statesmen concerned has been justified by the result. Before the operation the Greek and Turkish minorities had been a constant irritant. Now Greco-Turkish relations are friendlier than they. Now Greco-Turkish relations are friendlier than they have ever been before.”*⁶³

62 Michael B. Oren: Orde Wingate: Friend Under Fire. The new historians take aim at the father of the IDF. Azure no. 10, Winter 5761 / 2001

63 The Peel Commission <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/text-of-the-peel-commission-report>

Map 1: The Peel Commission Plan 1937⁶⁴



64 Source: Wikipedia, <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/aa/PeelMap.png>

Part II:
On the Eve of the Nakba

Chapter 7: Zionist Terror Prior to the 1948 War

The Zionist narrative is that the Arabs used terror against innocent Jews. Yet the Zionists military organization carried out terrorist actions against Arab civilians in 1936-9 and even before November 1947. The following is only a sample of Zionists' terrorist actions.

“On July 22, 1946: The ETZEL collaborating with the Hagan blew up of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. Ninety-two persons lost their lives in that stealthy attack, and 45 were injured.

On August 15, 1947 at about 1:20 A. M. between 15 and 20 Zionist terrorists, armed with machine guns and pistols, entered the orange grove of Haj Rashid Abu Laban, situated between Jaffa and Mulabis. They approached a house in the said grove where a family of 7 were sound asleep inside and there were 9 other laborers asleep nearby. The terrorists threw mines around the building and exploded them with electric wires found on the scene of the crime. The building was razed to the ground. Four of the laborers who were sleeping nearby were caught and shot.

On October 9-10, 1947 a group of Zionist , armed with bombs and automatics, attacked two Arab tents in the lands of Majdal Sadek and killed two Arabs and wounded four. Among the latter were a woman and her young son.

October 20, 1947, a band of Zionists disguised in British military uniforms, near Raanana called out Shaykh Ahmed Salameh Shobaki and four young men related to him, pretending to search for arms. On coming out in response to what they thought was an official military mission, the five men were shot in cold blood.

On December 30, 1947 the occupants of a Jewish pick-up car threw two milk cans containing bombs at a group of about two hundred Arab laborers standing at the gate of the oil refinery waiting to register for work. The explosions that rocked the city of Haifa killed six Arab laborers and wounded forty six, twenty-five seriously.

On January 1, 1948: At about one o'clock in the morning the villagers of Balad El-Sheikh and Hanasa were asleep. Hagana men disguised in British uniforms made a surprise attack bombing and demolishing houses, shooting and killing the villagers indiscriminately, men, women and children. Among those killed were a pregnant woman, 35 years old, and a child eleven years old, and five other men, while thirty-two were wounded, twenty-five, seriously, among them many women and children.

On January 5, 1948 Hagana terrorists made a most barbarous attack at one o'clock in the early morning of Monday, January 5, 1948, at the Simiramis Hotel in the Katamon section of Jerusalem, killing innocent people and wounding many. The Jewish Agency terrorist forces blasted the entrance to the hotel by a small bomb and then placed bombs in the basement of the building. As a result of the explosions the whole building collapsed with its residents. As the terrorists withdrew, they started shooting at the houses in the neighborhood.

February 18, 1948: At 2:30 in the afternoon, an Irgun Zvai Leumi terrorist disguised

*as an Arab and riding a donkey, arrived at the Ramleh vegetable market. The terrorist started to bargain for some vegetables from a woman vendor, paid her the price and asked her to look after his donkey and the basket on its back, while the terrorist left, saying he was going to buy some meat from an adjacent market. In less than ten minutes the mines and high explosives in the basket exploded killing 12 and wounding 43 persons. Among the killed were 4 children less than ten years of age and four less than fourteen.”*⁶⁵

65 : Memorandum to THE UNITED NATIONS DELEGATIONS Submitted by the ARAB HIGHER COMMITTEE DELEGATION FOR PALESTINE, N.Y. 12th March 1948

Chapter 8: The War of 1947-49

In November 1947, the UN announced its support to the two-state solution, granting the Zionists 55% of Palestine even though they were outnumbered by a 3 to 1 ratio. As it could be expected it was rejected by the Arabs, but the Zionists, including the previously anti-Zionist communist party already a Stalinist party, supported the partition plan and a new violent episode would quickly ensue. Jewish and Arab militias had begun campaigns to seize control over the entire territory of Palestine.

In 1948, with the withdrawal of the British forces from Palestine, leaving behind the military bases to the Zionists, neighboring Arab troops from Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Saudi Arabia entered Palestine, to aid the Palestinian people. In turn, the Zionist militias had already begun a massive occupation and ethnic cleansing campaign against the Palestinian Arab population.

In this war, as in 1936-1939, Marxists would have supported the Palestinians against the Zionists, once again without giving any political support to the reactionary Palestinian leadership. The Communist Party, however, sided with the Zionists, mimicking the Stalinists in the Kremlin and claiming that the neighboring Arab armies were controlled by British imperialism, and that the Zionists were actually fighting an anti-imperialist war.

The timing and magnitude of the Arab armies' invasion does raise some suspicions at the motives behind it. They were obviously partially controlled by the British, but so were the Zionist militias who already collaborated with them in the suppression of the Arab revolt in 1936-1939, and who now also enjoyed the aid of US nationals as pilots and other volunteers. Furthermore, these armies conducted themselves in a manner which was not designed to defeat the Zionists, but one which perfunctorily adhered to the pressure of the masses by perhaps carving out additional pieces of land from the would-be Arab Palestinian state they allegedly protected. Evidence for this can be found in the fact that whatever territory these armies have managed to keep was not given back to the Palestinians but rather kept in the hands of the respective countries that invaded them.

Nevertheless, regarding the Arab invasion of Palestine, working class revolutionaries would have welcomed any aid given to the Palestinians from outside. Should Marxists had comrades in the region, they would have sided with the Arab armies for the purpose of most effectively defending the Palestinians. They would also have worked to expose the Arab regimes' traitorous schemes to the Palestinians and the Arab masses, and attempted to turn this war into a revolutionary war which would have created a Palestinian workers' state from the river to the sea – a state where Jews and Arabs would be able to live together without discrimination and violent ethnic tensions.

In the first phase of the war from November 1947 to 1 April 1948 the Palestinian guerrilla forces, with help from volunteers from neighboring countries had many victories. The Palestinians were twice as large as the Zionists, they occupied the higher altitudes. But isolated and outnumbered as they were, the Zionists were far better organized, financed, equipped and trained than the Palestinians, who were fragmented by geography and tradition and clan.

From 1 April 1948 until the declaration of independence of Israel on May 14 1948, the Zionist military force the "Haganah" captured several major Palestinian towns including Tiberias and Haifa. According to the crude Zionist propaganda: *"The Palestinians left their homes in 1947-48 for a variety of reasons. Thousands of wealthy Arabs left in anticipation of a war, thousands more responded to Arab leaders' calls to get out of the way of the advancing armies, a handful were expelled, but most simply fled to avoid being caught in the cross fire of a battle. Had the Arabs accepted the 1947 UN resolution, not a single Palestinian would have become a refugee and an independent Arab state would now exist beside Israel."*⁶⁶

In the real world in this period, the Zionists terrorized the Palestinian civilian. The most infamous event was the massacre of the Arab village of Dayr Yāsīn on April 9, 1948 killing tens of unarmed Palestinians. According to Benny Morris, Jewish forces were responsible for 24 massacres during the war. However, according to the Historian Saleh Abdel Jawad: *"For the time period between the beginning of the war, December 1947, and January 1949 at the end of the war, I documented nearly 70 massacres."*⁶⁷

According to Al Jazeera: *"Between 1947 and 1949, at least 750,000 Palestinians from a 1.9 million population (including 650,000 Jews) were made refugees beyond the borders of the state. Zionist forces had taken more than 78 percent of historic Palestine, ethnically cleansed and destroyed about 530 villages and cities, and killed about 15,000 Palestinians in a series of mass atrocities, including more than 70 massacres."*⁶⁸

The Zionist propaganda is false for various reasons. First of all, as we have seen already in 1919 it was clear even to the American and the British imperialists that the Zionists plan to turn entire Palestine to a Zionist state. Secondly the Peel commission in its recommendation to create two states recommended a transfer of the Arabs living in what would be a Zionist state.

In 1937, David Ben Gurion wrote to Amos his son who was upset because Ben Gurion supported Peel's plans. *"Of course the partition of the country gives me no pleasure. But the country that they [the Royal (Peel) Commission] are partitioning is not in our actual possession; it is in the possession of the Arabs and the English. What is in our actual possession is a small portion, less than what they [the Peel Commission]*

66 Mitchell Bard: The Palestinian Refugees: History & Overview The Jewish Virtual Library

67 Saleh Abdel Jawad: Zionist Massacres: the Creation of the Palestinian Refugee Problem in the 1948 War

68 Al Jazeera The Nakba did not start or end in 1948, May 23 2017, www.aljazeera.com/features/2017/05/23/the-nakba-did-not-start-or-end-in-1948/

are proposing for a Jewish state. If I were an Arab I would have been very indignant. But in this proposed partition we will get more than what we already have, though of course much less than we merit and desire. The question is: would we obtain more without partition? If things were to remain as they are [emphasis in original], would this satisfy our feelings? What we really want is not that the land remain whole and unified. What we want is that the whole and unified land be Jewish [emphasis original]. A unified Eretz Israeli would be no source of satisfaction for me—if it were Arab.... We must expel Arabs and take their place. Up to now, all our aspirations have been based on an assumption – one that has been vindicated throughout our activities in the country – that there is enough room in the land for the Arabs and ourselves. But if we are compelled to use force – not in order to dispossess the Arabs of the Negev or Transjordan, but in order to guarantee our right to settle there – our force will enable us to do so.”⁶⁹

In 1937, the Zionists owned no more than 6 percent of the land, but were offered 20 percent of Palestine; and, in 1947, Jews (one third of the population) owned approximately 7 percent of the land and were offered 55 percent of the country. In 1937, the new Jewish state was to contain 396,000 Jews and 225,000 Arabs, with a proposition that those Arabs would be transferred, forcibly if necessary, to the new Arab state. In 1947, almost half of the Arab population was to come under Jewish state, and it was impossible to create a Zionist state with Jewish majority without an ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians. Thus, the UN partition plan could not but leads to Arab rejection of the plan to a war and to ethnic cleansing.

Following the first cease fire the Zionist received massive military weapons from Stalinist Czechoslovakia and as result they were able to crash the Arab armies that in spite of their numerical superiority, were ill-equipped, inexperienced and unprepared. They went to fight in Palestine because of the anger of the Arab masses that learned about the massacres of the Palestinians by the Zionist. The local Arab rulers held to power, did not dare not to go to a war they could not win.

“As far as the military balance is concerned, it was always assumed that the Arabs enjoyed overwhelming numerical superiority. The war was accordingly depicted as one between the few against the many, as a desperate, tenacious, and heroic struggle for survival against horrifyingly heavy odds. The desperate plight and the heroism of the Jewish fighters are not in question. Nor is the fact that they had inferior military hardware at their disposal, at least until the first truce, when illicit arms supplies from Czechoslovakia decisively tipped the scales in their favour. But in mid-May 1948 the total number of Arab troops, both regular and irregular, operating in the Palestine theatre was under 25,000, whereas the Israel Defence Force (IDF) fielded over 35,000 troops. By mid-July the IDF mobilized 65,000 men under arms, and by December its numbers had reached a peak of 96,441. The Arab states also reinforced their armies, but they could not match this rate of increase. Thus, at each stage of the war, the IDF outnumbered all the Arab

⁶⁹ Ben Gurion: letter to his son, October 5, 1937, <https://jewishvoiceforpeace.org/the-ben-gurion-letter>

*forces arrayed against it, and, after the first round of fighting, it outgunned them too. The final outcome of the war was therefore not a miracle but a faithful reflection of the underlying military balance in the Palestine theatre. In this war, as in most wars, the stronger side prevailed.”*⁷⁰

This war came to an end with the Armistice agreements signed under the aegis of the UN in 1949 with Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt. In accordance with these agreements, at that time the Israeli territory extended over 20,000 km, almost four fifths of former Palestine under the British mandate. At the same time, no more than approximately 130,000 Arabs remained within the Israeli borders.

The Zionists claim that Israel accepted the UN partition plan. This is another lie. On the eve of the declaration of the state of Israel, the Zionist leadership debated whether to declare the borders of Israel according to the UN plan in the “declaration of independence”.

Felix Rosenblueth (later Pinhas Rosen) was a member of the People’s Administration (who would later become Israel’s first minister of justice). *“In the May 12 session, Rosenblueth insisted that the state be declared “in the framework” of the UN partition plan and that its borders be defined accordingly. As a matter of law, he contended, “it is impossible not to treat borders.” He had also distributed in advance a proposed draft in which the People’s Council “declares a free, sovereign Jewish state in the borders set forth in the resolution of the UN General Assembly of November 29, 1947.”*

Ben Gurion opposed him saying on May 12, 1948: *“Why not mention [borders]? Because we don’t know [what will happen]. If the UN stands its ground, we won’t fight the UN. But if the UN doesn’t act, and [the Arabs] wage war against us and we thwart them, and we then take the western Galilee and both sides of the corridor to Jerusalem, all this will become part of the state, if we have sufficient force. Why commit ourselves?”*⁷¹

70 Avi Shlaim: Israel and the Arab Coalition in 1948, <http://users.ox.ac.uk/~ssfc0005/Israel%20and%20the%20Arab%20Coalition%20in%2019481.html>

71 Martin Kramer: “The May 1948 Vote that Made the State of Israel” April 2nd 2018, <https://mosaicmagazine.com/essay/israel-zionism/2018/04/the-may-1948-vote-that-made-the-state-of-israel/>

Map 3: Israel in 1949⁷³

73 Source: Wikipedia, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/13/United_Nations_Palestine_map_showing_Armistice_Agreements_between_Israel_%26_Lebanon%2C_Syria%2C_Jordan_%26_Egypt_1949-1950.jpg

Chapter 9: The Right of Return

Following the war Israel would prevent the return of the refugees in spite of the fact that the United Nations General Assembly adopts resolution 194 (III), resolving that *“refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible”*.⁷⁴

Yet because Israel is in the front line of the imperialists in the region the UN Security Council has never acted to enforce this resolution. The simple truth is that *“without expelling the Palestinian population that was present in areas set aside for the establishment of a Jewish State by the U.N. Partition Plan it would not have been possible to establish a state with a distinct Jewish character and political culture. Jews were only a slim majority of the population (55 percent Jewish vs. 45 percent Palestinian) in the area proposed for the state. They also owned less than 10% of the land in the area set aside for the new Jewish state and were clear demographic minorities in both the northern (Eastern Galilee) and southern (Negev) sectors of the proposed state where they constituted approximately 30 percent and 1 percent of the population respectively. The Jewish population was only a majority in the middle (coastal) section of the proposed state, but even here 65 percent of the Jewish population lived in the two cities of Tel Aviv and Haifa meaning that Palestinians were the majority population in nearly all of the area set aside for the new Jewish State.”*⁷⁵

After the war of 1948, many Palestinian refugees tried to return to their homes fields and trees and were killed by the Zionist army and police. *“The Palestinian refugees constituted the national movement’s core constituency and main political leaders. Through armed resistance, Palestinian factions sought to liberate their homeland and obtain the return that refugees in other conflicts were routinely allowed, and that was guaranteed under international law. Israel met that resistance with violence of its own, killing thousands of refugees as they tried to sneak home under cover of darkness in the years following the war.”*⁷⁶

Stalinist Russia supported not only the creation of Israel and provided it with weapons including tanks and airplanes but voted in the UN against the right of return of the Palestinian refugees. *“Moscow also supported Israel in another aspect of its demographic battle: the homogenisation of its population, which led to the departure — mainly through expulsion — of over 700,000 Palestinian Arabs. The USSR*

⁷⁴ UN General Assembly resolution 194 (III)

⁷⁵ American Friends Service Committee “Palestinian refugees and the right of return <https://www.afsc.org/resource/palestinian-refugees-and-right-return>

⁷⁶ Nathan Thrall: How the Idea of Return Has Shaped the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict for 70 Years, Time, May 14, 2018

*absolved Israel of responsibility and blamed the British. In 1948 the Soviet Union voted against UN resolution 194 on the possible return of Palestinian refugees.”*⁷⁷

Even today, you can find some left-wingers in Israel and other countries who try to reconcile the creation of the Israeli settler state with the mass expulsion of the Palestinian masses. After so many years they still think that a better partition, one that could have been fairer to the two peoples was possible.

In reality, the partition of Palestine – like the partition of Ireland, India and Cyprus – was a device used by the big powers, the imperialists and the Stalinist bureaucracy to divert the class struggle in order to restore the imperialist order that had been shattered after the war.

The lie that partition, including partition along ethnic lines, could bring peace between different nations and ethnic or religious groups was no more than crude propaganda aimed at hiding the real aims of the imperialists. A review of a few historical examples will show that they all brought the same result, blood baths, ethnic cleansing and hatred that served to put many millions of workers and peasants under the control of a handful of rich imperialists.

After World War I, Ireland was divided by the British imperialists into the Catholic South and the North which had a Catholic-Protestant divide, with a Protestant majority. This led to many years of conflicts.

The island of Cyprus is another example. After the invasion by Turkey in 1974, evidently with the approval of the U.S. imperialists, the island was divided. In the ethnic cleansing that took place 20,000 Turks went north while ten times that number of Greeks went south. The island is now divided.

After World War II, the British divided India into a Muslim section and a section for the remainder who were mostly Hindu. As a result, some 17 million people were forced out of their homes and became refugees and countless others were killed in the pogroms. More Muslims remained in India, however, than went to Pakistan, which declared itself a Muslim country. Later, East Pakistan, aided by India, broke away from Pakistan. The Moslem majority in Kashmir are oppressed by India.

The problem with those who adopted the line that the Zionists have the right of self-determination is that they fail to grasp the nature of the Zionists as settler colonialist-oppressors. Marxists support the right of self-determination only of oppressed people.⁷⁸

The Zionists from the very beginning of the colonization of Palestine ignored the fact that Palestine had native population. At the time the Zionists used the phrase “*land without people for a people without land*”, Palestine was already home

⁷⁷ Michel Réal: The forgotten alliance Le monde Diplomatic September 2014

⁷⁸ See on this Michael Pröbsting: On some Questions of the Zionist Oppression and the Permanent Revolution in Palestine. Thoughts on some exceptionalities of the Israeli state, the national oppression of the Palestinian people and its consequences for the program of the Bolshevik-Communists in Palestine, May 2013, www.thecommunists.net/theory/permanent-revolution-in-palestine

to 700,000 Palestinians as the census of 1919 showed. Out of these 700,000, only 10% were Jews and half of them were not Zionists.

The hypocritical Zionist argument that the local Arab opposition to their own self-destruction constituted a form of anti-Semitism has been contradicted not only by the direct victims of Zionism, and not only by the Marxists, but by many progressive Jews.

Albert Einstein said: *"I should much rather see reasonable agreement with the Arabs on the basis of living together in peace than the creation of a Jewish State."*⁷⁹

Erich Fromm, a noted Jewish writer and thinker, stated: *"In general, international law, the principle holds true that no citizen loses his property or his rights of citizenship; and the citizenship right is de facto a right to which the Arabs in Israel have much more legitimacy than the Jews. Just because the Arabs fled? Since when is that punishable by confiscation of property, and by being barred from returning to the land on which a people's forefathers have lived for generations? Thus, the claim of the Jews to the land of Israel cannot be a realistic claim. If all nations would suddenly claim territory in which their forefathers had lived two thousand years ago, this world would be a madhouse... A Jewish Home in Palestine built upon bayonets and oppression [is] not worth having, even though it succeed, whereas the very attempt to build it up peacefully, cooperatively, with understanding, education, and good will, [is] worth a great deal even though the attempt should fail."*⁸⁰

Since the 1980s some of Israel's new historians have refuted the myths of the founding of the state. Those "new Israeli historians" such as, Tom Segev or Ilan Pappé, have shown that the departure of the refugees was largely caused by the attitude of the Israeli army acting with impunity (expulsions, harassment, and massacres especially that of Deir Yasir but also in Lydda, Ramleh, Dawimiyya, Sa'sa, Ein Zietun and other places).

These new historians concurred with their Palestinian counterparts that the program of Zionism was carried out as a pure colonialist act against the local population: a mixture of exploitation and expropriation.

The Zionist justification for the ethnic cleansing of 1947-1948 is the myth of annihilation. The new historians like, Ilan Pappé ("The Link", January, 1998) challenged the official history that says the Jewish community faced possible annihilation on the eve of the 1948 war. Archival documents expose the fact that the Arab rulers controlled by the British masters had no intention of stirring up the Arab masses. They feared the Arab masses more than they feared the British masters or a Palestinian nation, which possessed no military ability with which it could fight the strong Jewish army that had been armed with the help of the Soviet bureaucracy.⁸¹

79 Sheldon Kirshner Einstein's ambivalent relationship with Zionism The Canadian Jewish News January 1, 2013

80 Rabbi Judah L. Magnes, first president of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, quoted in "Like All The Nations?" ed. Brinner & Rischin.)

81 Ilan Pappé: "The Link", January, 1998

The Jewish military advantage was translated into an act of mass expulsion of 700,000 to one million Palestinians. Many of them were expelled long before the Arab states invaded Palestine. These mass expulsions began shortly after the UN declaration of November 29, 1947.

Some hypocritical supporters of the creation of the Israeli state were very surprised to discover that as a result of the partition 900,000 Palestinians became refugees. But they cannot deny that the idea of partition included from its very first beginning the plan of ethnic cleansing. The Peel Commission of 1937, sent to investigate the causes of the unrest, resulted in a report and the *White Paper*. Their major recommendations were the partition of the land into two unequal states, as well as a population transfer.

After considerable debate, the Zionist executive accepted the Peel plan. Berl Katznelson, an influential leader of the Mapai party favoured a population transfer, including a "compulsory" transfer. However, the "compulsion" was to come about as the result of agreement, and not through war or violent action. He wrote: *"The matter of population transfer has provoked a debate among us: Is it permitted or forbidden? My conscience is absolutely clear in this respect. A remote neighbour is better than a close enemy. They [the Palestinians] will not lose from it. In the final analysis, this is a political and settlement reform for the benefit of both parties. I have long been of the opinion that this is the best of all solutions... I have always believed and still believe that they were destined to be transferred to Syria or Iraq."*⁸²

The PKP (the Palestine Communist Party – under its Stalinist leadership) and Mapam (a left wing Social Democratic Zionist party) were in the beginning opposed to the idea of the partition of Palestine. To understand the reason for the shift in their position we must understand the role of the Social Democrats and the Stalinists in helping to restore the imperialist order after the Second World War.

The Zionists Aim in the 1948 War

If Israel was a progressive society and if it was fighting a revolutionary anti-imperialist war in 1948 as the Stalinists claimed at the time, the outcome in the region would be the weakening of the imperialist control over the region. In the real world the opposite happened.

It is sufficient to read the articles, diaries, speeches of the leading Zionists including of the left-wing Zionists, to realize that the Zionists aim in the war of 1948 was to crash and force the Palestinian to flee their homeland. It also demonstrates that the Zionists were made in the same mold of the South African Afrikaners. This becomes evident from the leading Zionists own words. Let us

⁸² At the World Convention of Ihud Po'alei Tzion, August 1937. Al Darchei Medinyutenu: Mo'atzah 'Olamit Shel Ihud Po'ali Tzion (c.s.)-Din Vehesbon Maleh, 21 July-7 August [1938], [Full Report of the World Convention of Ihud Po'alei Tzion, C.S.] (Tel Aviv: Central Office of Hitahdut Po'alei Zion Press, 1938).

quote first Vladimir Jabotinsky, the leader of the Revisionist Zionists:

“Zionist colonization, even the most restricted, must either be terminated or carried out in defiance of the will of the native population. This colonization can, therefore, continue and develop only under the protection of a force independent of the local population – an iron wall which the native population cannot break through. This is, in total, our policy towards the Arabs. To formulate it any other way would only be hypocrisy.”

83

Later Jabotinsky proclaimed the *“iron law of every colonizing movement, a law which knows of no exceptions, a law which existed in all times and under all circumstances. If you wish to colonize a land in which people are already living, you must provide a garrison on your behalf. Or else – or else, give up your colonization, for without an armed force which will render physically impossible any attempts to destroy or prevent this colonization, colonization is impossible, not “difficult”, not “dangerous” but IMPOSSIBLE!... Zionism is a colonizing adventure and therefore it stands or falls by the question of armed force. It is important to build, it is important to speak Hebrew, but, unfortunately, it is even more important to be able to shoot – or else I am through with playing at colonialization.”*⁸⁴

Joseph Weitz, head of the Jewish Agency’s Colonization Department, said: *“There are some who believe that the non-Jewish population, even in a high percentage, within our borders will be more effectively under our surveillance; and there are some who believe the contrary, i.e., that it is easier to carry out surveillance over the activities of a neighbor than over those of a tenant. [I] tend to support the latter view and have an additional argument (...) the need to sustain the character of the state which will henceforth be Jewish (...) with a non-Jewish minority limited to 15 percent. I had already reached this fundamental position as early as 1940 [and] it is entered in my diary.”*⁸⁵

David Ben Gurion, future Prime Minister of Israel, already wrote in 1937 in a letter to his son about the Zionist plans for the expulsion of the Palestinian people: *“We must expel Arabs and take their places.”*⁸⁶

Other quotes from Ben Gurion underline the Zionist expansionist plans: *“We should prepare to go over to the offensive. Our aim is to smash Lebanon, Trans-Jordan,*

83 Vladimir Jabotinsky: *The Iron Wall (We and the Arabs)*, 1923; reprinted in Lenni Brenner: *The Iron Wall. Zionist Revisionism from Jabotinsky to Shamir*, London 1984, p. 148

84 Vladimir Jabotinsky: *The Iron Law, Selected Writings (South Africa)*; quoted in Lenni Brenner: *The Iron Wall. Zionist Revisionism from Jabotinsky to Shamir*, London 1984, p. 56

85 Quoted in Uri Davis: *From Israel: an Apartheid State*, p.5., http://www.historyofisrael.info/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=74&Itemid=47

86 Letter from David Ben-Gurion to his son Amos, written on 5 October 1937, Obtained from the Ben-Gurion Archives in Hebrew, and translated into English by the Institute of Palestine Studies, Beirut, <http://mondoweiss.net/2012/03/we-must-expel-arabs-and-take-their-place-institute-for-palestine-studies-publishes-1937-ben-gurion-letter-advocating-the-expulsion-of-palestinians.html>

*and Syria. The weak point is Lebanon, for the Moslem regime is artificial and easy for us to undermine. We shall establish a Christian state there, and then we will smash the Arab Legion, eliminate Trans-Jordan; Syria will fall to us. We then bomb and move on and take Port Said, Alexandria and Sinai".*⁸⁷

Yitzhak Rabin reported in his memoirs: *"We walked outside, Ben-Gurion accompanying us. Allon repeated his question, What is to be done with the Palestinian population?" Ben-Gurion waved his hand in a gesture which said 'Drive them out!'"*⁸⁸

Later Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin would express Zionist racism in its most brutal frankness in a speech to the Knesset (Israeli Parliament): *"Our race is the Master Race. We are divine gods on this planet. We are as different from the inferior races as they are from insects. In fact, compared to our race, other races are beasts and animals, cattle at best. Other races are considered as human excrement. Our destiny is to rule over the inferior races. Our earthly kingdom will be ruled by our leader with a rod of iron. The masses will lick our feet and serve us as our slaves."*⁸⁹

⁸⁷ David Ben-Gurion, May 1948, to the General Staff. From Ben-Gurion, A Biography, by Michael Ben-Zohar, Delacorte, New York 1978; quoted at <http://rense.com/general77/disturb.htm>

⁸⁸ Yitzhak Rabin, leaked censored version of Rabin memoirs, published in the New York Times, 23 October 1979; quoted in Steven A. Glazer: The Palestinian Exodus in 1948, in: Journal of Palestine Studies (JPS), Volume 9, Issue 4, 1980, p. 103

⁸⁹ Quoted by Amnon Kapeliouk, "Begin and the Beasts," New Statesman, June 25, 1982, <http://www.countercurrents.org/lamb010709.htm>

Chapter 10: The Use of Biological Weapons

In the years prior to the war of 1967 the Zionist propaganda was that former Nazi scientists were developing rockets programmed to use radioactive waste for Nasser Egypt.⁹⁰

In the real world Israel recruited the head of the Nazi commando Otto Skorzeny. *“Otto Skorzeny was one of the most outstanding military men of the 20th century. His specialty was daring, guerrilla-style, commando raids. He was an unrepentant Nazi, a senior SS officer, who remained involved in right-wing causes his whole life. And now it’s emerged that he was also an agent and hitman for Mossad, the Israeli intelligence service.”*⁹¹

*“The Israelis had made stopping the Egyptian project a top priority and were threatening the scientists and considered killing Skorzeny. Instead, the Mossad decided to recruit him to allow them to get closer to the scientists. According to journalists Dan Raviv and Yossi Melman, an Israeli agent and a female helper met Skorzeny and his wife at a bar in Madrid. The two couples ended up at Skorzeny’s villa where the German pulled a gun out and threatened to kill the others because he believed they were Israeli agents sent to kill him... The Israelis said they wanted to hire him, not kill him. Skorzeny said he didn’t want any money, but would help in exchange for the Israelis convincing Simon Wiesenthal to remove Skorzeny from his list of outstanding war criminals. The Israelis agreed and later made the request to Wiesenthal. The Nazi hunter refused, so the Mossad forged a document they presented to Skorzeny saying that he had been removed from Wiesenthal’s list.”*⁹²

Not only this, but Israel used biological weapons already in the war of 1947-9. The opening of archive material clearly demonstrates that Israel used biological weapons against the Palestinian population back in 1948. Israel to this day does not abide by internationally recognized agreements on the use of such weapons. The US imperialists turn a blind eye to all this, as they have their own “weapons of mass destruction”.

The Palestinian historian Salman Abu-Sitta has written a very interesting article under the title: *“Israel’s Dark History revealed”*, that deals with an unknown episode of the 1948 war. This article proves that the Israeli ruling elite used biological weapons even before the state of Israel was created, under the nose of the British imperialists in the last days of the mandate. The Zionist ruling class of course denies this. However, the shooting of over 4 million exploding bombs on the civilian population during the war in Lebanon has revealed the extent of

90 Morris, Benny (1992). *Israel’s Secret Wars: A History of Israel’s Intelligence Services*.

91 <https://www.pri.org/stories/2016-03-30/how-famous-former-nazi-officer-became-hitman-israel>

92 Jewish Virtual Library Otto Skorzeny (1908 -1975)

the barbarism of the rulers of the Israeli state and what they are capable of. The following is a summary of this article.⁹³

“Poisoning Acre’s water supply

Israel’s use of biological weapons in 1948 in the wake of Haifa’s occupation on 23 April 1948 by the Zionists, under the nose of the British Mandate forces commended by General Stockwell, Acre was attacked. The Zionists besieged the city from the land side, and started showering the population with a hail of mortar bombs day and night. Famous for its historical walls, Acre could stand the siege for some time. The city water supply came from a nearby village, Kabri, about 10kms to the north, through an aqueduct. The Zionists injected typhoid into the aqueduct at some intermediate point which passed through Zionist settlements.

The story can now be told, thanks to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) files which have become available, 50 years after the event. A series of reports, under the reference G59/1/GC, G3/82, sent by ICRC delegate de Meuron from 6 May to about 19 May 1948, describe the conditions of the city population, struck by a sudden typhoid epidemic, and the efforts to combat it.

Of particular importance are the minutes of an emergency conference that was held at the Lebanese Red Cross Hospital in Acre on 6 May, to deal with the typhoid epidemic. The meeting was attended by Brigadier Beveridge, Chief of British Medical Services and Colonel Bonnet of the British Army, Dr Maclean of the Medical Services, Mr de Meuron, ICRC delegate in addition to other officials of the city. The minutes stated that there were at least 70 known civilian casualties; others may not have been reported. It was determined that the infection was “water borne”, not due to crowded or unhygienic conditions as claimed by the Israelis. It was decided that a substitute water supply should come from artesian wells or from the agricultural station, just north of Acre [see map], not from the aqueduct. Water chlorine solution was applied, inoculation of civil population started, movement of civil population was controlled (lest refugees heading north towards Lebanon might carry the typhoid epidemic with them, as intended by the Zionists).

In his other reports, de Meuron mentioned 55 casualties among British soldiers, who were spirited away to Port Said for hospitalisation. General Stockwell arranged for de Meuron to fly on a military plane to Jerusalem to fetch medicine. The British, who left Palestine in the hands of the Jews, did not want another embarrassing incident to delay their departure.

Brigadier Beveridge told de Meuron that this was “the first time this happened in Palestine”. This belies the Israeli story, including that of the Israeli historian Benny Morris, that the epidemic was due to “unhygienic conditions” of the refugees. If that was so, how come there was an almost equal number of casualties among British soldiers? Why did such conditions not cause epidemics in such other concentrations of refugees, under far worse conditions, in Jaffa, Lydda, Nazareth and Gaza?

93 Salman Abu Sitta: Traces of Poison–Israel’s Dark History Revealed, *Ahram Weekly*, Cairo, February 27–March 5, 2003, <https://www.plands.org/en/articles-speeches/articles/2003/traces-of-poison%E2%80%93israels-dark-history-revealed>

ICRC delegate, de Meuron admired greatly the heroic efforts of the Arab doctors, Al-Dahhan and Al-Araj from the Lebanese Red Cross hospital in Acre, Dr Dabbas from Haifa and Mrs Bahai from Haifa.

The city of Acre, now burdened by the epidemic, became easy prey to the Zionists. They intensified their bombardment. Trucks carrying loudspeakers proclaimed, "Surrender or commit suicide. We will destroy you to the last man."

Chapter 11: The War of 1956

After WWII, the Western imperialists' fear of the possible expanding influence of Stalinist Russia viewed the Middle East as an important element in the containment of the Soviet Union. Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden saw the Suez Canal as a lifeline for the Empire. When the Egyptian Prime Minister Nuqarshi demanded in December 1945 that the British army evacuate Egypt, Britain under the Labor government refused. This led to large demonstrations of workers and students in Egypt that clashed with the British army. This could have led to a revolution. In the negotiation of the new Egyptian Sidiqi with the labor government led by Clement Atlee Britain agreed to remove the British army in 1949.

This led to further strengthening of the anti-imperialist movement. The Moslem Brotherhood called for Jihad against British imperialism and newspapers called for guerrilla war. The defeat of the Arab armies in the 1948 war intensified the anger of the masses against British Imperialism. The big landowners were afraid of any change and the small capitalist class was too afraid of losing control of the mass movement. The brotherhood gained popularity because members of this movement fought against the Zionist state. However they also could not lead a revolution and the Egyptian government detained in concentration camps thousand members of the Brotherhood and members of the Stalinist party that was weak because of their support for the creation of Israel.

In 1952, the masses were in the streets to fight against the British and the government. Riding on the revolutionary movement that lacked a revolutionary working-class leadership a group of young "free officers" led by Gamal Abdul Nasser with general Nagib as a symbolic figure disposed of king Faruk and his Wafdist bourgeois government in a military coup on July 26, 1952. After the coup, the Free Officers asked Ali Mahir, a previous prime minister, to head the government. The Free Officers formed the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) that dictated policy to the civilian government. Nasser was Anti-British and he wanted to free Egypt from Britain and to modernize Egypt. However in the first years of his rule he had a pro-American orientation. In August 1952 his government crushed a strike of 10,000 workers of the textile factories in the Delta region. The army shut the workers and a military tribune convicted some of the leaders of the strike, two of them were hanged and others were sent to prison. Then he arrested 30 members of the Stalinist party, the CPE. At the same time the military government passed the Agrarian Reform law that limited the landholding to 200 feddans. Poor farmers were able to buy two to five feddans. Nasser established a public industry. The government raised the minimum, wages and created more jobs. It spent more money on education. In 1953, all political parties were banned. Thus Egypt under Nasser was a form of state

capitalism with a Bonapartist regime.

The western imperialists pressured Nasser to join the Anti-Soviet Bagdad pact. He refused and joined the Nonaligned Movement with Tito and Nero's India. While it was neither pro-Soviet nor pro-West, the West was hostile to this movement. While Nasser joined this movement he kept a friendly attitude towards the USA.

*"To Dulles (secretary of state) and Eisenhower, it was always the Russian specter that made Nasser a force to contend with. Arab nationalists, like nationalists throughout the Third World, could be expected to seek help where they might find it. If aid were unavailable from the West, they would undoubtedly look to the Soviet bloc. In much of the Third World, American leaders sought to keep countries on the side of the West through economic and military aid. It would have been natural for Eisenhower and Dulles to apply a similar policy to Egypt. To a certain degree, they did."*⁹⁴

In the first years after the coup, the the Russian Stalinists were unfriendly to Nasser. They asserted that the revolution was the work of reactionary officers. The Stalinist propaganda was: *"The military coup d'état carried out by General Naguib in Egypt, which forced King Farouk to abdicate, aimed at establishing a fascist military dictatorship to stifle the growing anti-imperialist movement in Egypt. General Naguib's bloody reprisals against the working class show his fear of the growing power of the Egyptian masses."*⁹⁵

At that time, the Soviet Stalinists called him Gamal Abdel Dulles. In October 1954, Nasser signed an agreement with British imperialism providing for the withdrawal of the British army from the Suez Canal within 20 months. He also supported the Algerian national liberation movement and the Palestinian struggle. He also prevented Israeli ships from using the canal as it was Egyptian and Egypt did not sign a peace treaty with Israel. Israel was worried about Nasser's friendly relation with the USA and decided to sabotage that relationship.

A ring of Egyptian Jews working as spies for Israel were activated: *"On July 2, 1954, they went into action. They first blew up some post offices and a few days later, the American libraries in Cairo and Alexandria. These operations were to "make it clear to the whole world that Egypt's new rulers were nothing but a group of foolhardy extremists, unreliable and unworthy of taking charge of an asset as important as the Suez Canal. Furthermore, it was to be demonstrated that their grasp on power was uncertain, that they faced powerful internal opposition, and, consequently, they were unworthy of being counted upon as a dependable ally."*⁹⁶

They were discovered and stood a trial. Two of them committed suicide. In response, Israel raided Egyptian military posts in Gaza in February 1955 and

94 Middle East Policy Council "What Eisenhower and Dulles Saw in Nasser: Personalities and Interests in U.S.-Egyptian Relations"

95 Mohrez Mahmoud El Hussini "The USSR and the Egyptian Revolution", 1952 Soviet-Egyptian Relations, 1945-85 pp 44-64

96 <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/the-lavon-affair>

killed 37 soldiers.

Nasser sought Western aid in the form of weapons. When the Western imperialist turned down his request he turned to the Soviet Stalinists and Czechoslovakia provided him with modern weapons.

When the U.S refused to finance the Aswan High Dam, the Soviet Stalinists built it for Egypt. All of this led to the invasion of Egypt by France, Britain and Israel. The plot was that Israel would cross the desert and reach the Canal. France and Britain will issue an ultimatum to Israel and Egypt to withdraw from the canal and take it over.

Ben Gurion who was the Prime Minister of Israel intended to annex Sinai and declared that Israel is becoming the Third Israeli kingdom. This should not surprise anyone who is aware of the map the Zionist delegation presented to so-called "Peace Conference" of 1919 in France. Please see the map below.

The US and Stalinist Russia for their own reasons forced Israel, Britain and France to withdraw from Egypt; the USA, because it would not allow the declining old imperialist powers to gain control of the region and the Soviet Stalinists because of their growing influence in Egypt.

Map 4: Palestine claimed by World Zionist Organization at the "Peace Conference" in Paris 1919⁹⁷



97 Source: Wikipedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Palestine_claimed_by_WZO_1919.png

Chapter 12: The 1967 War

More than 53 years of the horrors of the repression of the Palestinians, of the many other barbaric wars Israel has launched since then and the defeat of the Israeli war machine in the wars in Lebanon, have passed since the 1967 war known as *Naksa* (The Setback) by the Arabs and the Zionist call it the Six-Days War.

In the years prior to 1967, Palestinian's guerrilla groups recruited from the refugees based in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan entered the 1948 occupied lands with the aim of liberating their country. This was not a very effective method as Palestine could be liberated only by a working-class led revolution. Israel replied with state terrorism. In November 1966 an Israeli strike on the village of Al-Samū in the Jordanian West Bank left 18 dead and 54 wounded. According to the UN report:

"In the village and the vicinity of the village of As Samu (approximate MR 1563-0899) the investigating United Nations Military Observers saw that 125 houses) the village medical clinic, a 6-classroom school and a workshop had been completely demolished. In addition, one mosque and 28 houses had been damaged. Twenty Jordanian army trucks, 2 Jordanian army jeeps and one civilian, bus were totally demolished. One Jordanian army truck had been damaged by machine-gun fire. In a flour mill, 2 explosive charges were found which had failed to detonate.

Many tracks of tanks and armored personnel carriers were seen in the area by the investigating United Nations Military Observers. They also noted several positions where tanks had apparently been deployed to cover the roads leading to the village and especially the As Samu-Adh Dhahiriya road where the demolished Jordanian army trucks were observed.

In the area (at approximate MR 1959-0900) the United Nations Military Observers saw the dead body of a woman. A large area of blood shed the ground in front of the house where the woman was found dead. The house adjacent to it was marked by 20 bullet-impact points.

*The United Nations Military Observers also observed in the area, one bedouin dwelling tent and 3 Jordanian army tents completely destroyed. They counted 20 domestic animals which had been killed either by explosions or by small arms fire."*⁹⁸

*..." The witness said that at approximately 1030 hours LT (0830 GMT) he took an ambulance to Rujm El Madfa'a to evacuate casualties and that Israel troops who were still on the ADL fired at the ambulance, wounding one of the injured persons who was being evacuated. He also said that 5 aircraft strikes were directed against the village of As Samu and 3 on the road."*⁹⁹

⁹⁸ <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/auto-insert-180254/>

⁹⁹ Ibid

In April 1967, six Syrian fighter jets were destroyed by the Israeli air force. In the wake of the April air battle, the Soviet Stalinists provided Nasser with intelligence that Israel was moving troops to its northern border for a full fledged invasion of Syria. To support his Syrian ally, Nasser ordered Egyptian forces to advance into the Sinai Peninsula. An Egyptian delegation went to Moscow to ask military aid but the Stalinists because of their policy of *Détente* turned them down.

“From May 25–28, 1967, a high-level Egyptian delegation visited Moscow to discuss the evolving crisis in the Middle East with the Soviet leadership. The Egyptian delegation was headed by Shams Badran (Minister of Defense) who was accompanied by Amin Howeidy (Minister for Cabinet Affairs), Ahmed Hassan Elfiki (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs), Salah Bassiouny (Diplomat) and several military officers. Nasser’s trusted Ambassador to Moscow, Mourad Ghaleb, accompanied the delegation to their meetings. Egyptian sources provide a corroborated and detailed picture of what went on during that visit....” The Egyptian delegation realized that, despite rhetorical support, the Soviet military wanted to avoid confrontation with the US.”¹⁰⁰

The Israeli ruling class won the war within the first four hours of the first day of conflict, when the Israeli air force destroyed the Egyptian air force on the ground. The rest of the war was devoted to the expansion of Israeli borders. It was in fact the continuation of the 1948 War. On the eve of the war the Israeli propaganda machine, with the help of the other imperialist propaganda machines, were able to convince many that the Jews in Israel were facing a real threat to their existence.

On June 5, Jordan shelled Israeli positions in Jerusalem. This gave Israel the opportunity to occupy East Jerusalem and the West Bank. It is estimated that some 20,000 Arabs and 800 Israelis had died in just 132 hours of fighting.

Not only Israel’s propaganda about the relationship of forces in the 1967 war was a lie; so too was the occupation of the West Bank, Gaza, Sinai and the Syrian Golan. The Zionist leaders, while claiming that the occupation supposed to be temporary have never intended to return the new occupied lands.

Even liberal historians understood that Israel was eager to begin a war that would lead to occupation of more territories. Guy Laron, an Israeli historian who published *“The Six Day War: The Breaking of the Middle East”* revealed that *“the long-held Israeli plans for expanding its borders, Laron goes significantly beyond William Roger Louis and Avi Shlaim’s important edited collection The 1967 Arab-Israeli War.”*¹⁰¹ . . . Laron shows the extent to which Israel’s General Staff were *“eager to use the next war to expand Israel’s borders”* and conquer new territories

100 <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/did-the-soviet-union-deliberately-instigate-the-1967-war-the-middle-east>

101 Thomas Ehrlich Reifer: Review: The Six-Day War: The Breaking of the Middle East, by Guy Laron, in: Journal of Palestine Studies (2017) 47 (1): 110–111, <https://doi.org/10.1525/jps.2017.47.1.110>

such as the West Bank and Gaza.¹⁰²

Donald Neff in *“Warriors for Jerusalem: The Six Days That Changed the Middle East”* (1984) wrote that Israel was no longer seen simply as an innocent victim of Arab aggression. A group of Israeli generals had sought to involve Israel in a war they were confident of winning. Washington allowed Israel to launch the Six-Day War only because Lyndon Johnson had been under enormous pressure from the Israeli lobby.

It is clear that Nixon, the US president, backed Israel. *“Quandt shows how Johnson’s position shifted as the crisis tightened. He started out flashing a red light. But he switched. Prevented by Vietnam-born constraints from taking unilateral action to break Nasser’s blockade of Israeli shipping at the Strait of Tiran, he came to see that there also would be no multilateral action. This led him to accept the burden of Eisenhower’s 1957 commitment to Israel granting Israelis a right to act with force if the strait were closed. He passed on to an anxious Israel the word that he would not do what Ike had done in 1957 -- force Israel out of captured Arab land before it could bargain for peace. With this “yellow -- but not quite green” light, Israel went to war.”*¹⁰³

One question is whether at the 1967 war the USA provided Israel with weapons. Officially the USA in the first half of the 1960s, sought a regional arms limitation in the Middle East. However, in early 1965 it was disclosed that the U.S. indirectly supplied weapons to Israel via West Germany since 1962.¹⁰⁴

One of the most well-known Israeli historians, Tom Segev, wrote in *“1967: Israel, the War, and the Year That Transformed the Middle East”*: *“Six months prior to the Six-Day War, the heads of the Mossad, Military Intelligence and the Foreign Ministry explored the possibility of Israel occupying the West Bank. Various scenarios that might lead to such an outcome were discussed, such as the fall of King Hussein’s regime in Jordan, an Iraqi invasion of Jordan or a Palestinian uprising. At the end of the deliberations, all were in accord that the occupation of the West Bank would be contrary to Israel’s national interest. They concluded that Israel would reap nothing good from ruling over the Palestinians, only bad - including an erosion of the country’s Jewish majority and a violent uprising against the occupation... But what was dictated by sound thinking six months prior to the war was quickly forgotten that morning.”*¹⁰⁵

Thus the war had nothing to do with the claims of the Israeli ruling class that they were fighting for the survival of the Jews and had everything to do with their drive to destroy the relatively progressive regime of Nasser, the economic crisis in Israeli, as well as the drive to become the “strategic asset of the West” in the Middle East.

102 Guy Laron: *The Six Day War: The Breaking of the Middle East*, Yale University Press, New Haven 2017, p. 106

103 Quandt *“Lyndon Johnson and the June 1967 War: What Color Was the Light?”* (Middle East Journal, spring 1992)

104 Mitchell Geoffrey Bard, *The Water’s Edge and Beyond: defining the limits to domestic influence on U.S. Middle East policy*. Transaction Publishers, 1991

105 Tom Segev: *1967. Israel, the War, and the Year That Transformed the Middle East*, Metropolitan Books, New York, 2005

Chapter 13: The Yom Kippur War, 1973

The war began on October 6, 1973, which was Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the year for the Jewish people. Egypt's forces swiftly crossed the Suez Canal and overran the Bar-Lev line. Syria moved into the Golan Heights and nearly reached the 1967 border with Israel (overlooking the Hula Basin). Israel was outnumbered in the Golan nearly 12 to 1 (there were 1400 Syrian tanks against 157 Israeli tanks). Therefore, the first few days of the war saw Israeli counterattacks fail as Israel suffered hundreds of casualties and lost nearly 150 planes.

The Syrians could have inflicted major blows against Israel but they stopped their advance rather than take the Golan Heights and move on to Galilee. This allowed Israel to regroup its forces and begin a counter-attack. Since the Syrians had Soviet advisers it is most likely that they halted their advance due to the policy of détente. Defeat for Israel would not have been acceptable to the US!

The author of these lines wrote in an essay about this war published 16 years ago: *"The tide of the war began to turn on October 10. The Syrians were pushed back and Israel advanced into Syria proper. In light of the possibility that Israel would occupy Damascus, the government of the Soviet Union responded by sending airlifts to Damascus and Cairo. Israel's requests for airlifts from the US were not answered before October 12 and 13, after which massive US airlifts to Israel started arriving. The US official line was that it was impossible to send arms and ammunition to Israel prior to October 12. However, it was Kissinger who explained that he wanted Israel to be softened up.*

Israeli forces crossed the Suez Canal and surrounded the Egyptian Third Army on October 21. To prevent unwanted results, the Soviet Union responded to a plea from Egypt to save its Third Army by threatening to send troops to assist Egypt. Henry Kissinger, the US Secretary of State, on his part went to Moscow to negotiate a cease-fire. The result was UN Resolution 338, an immediate cease-fire that reinstated Resolution 242, which "aimed at establishing a just and durable peace in the Middle East". This cease-fire was broken and again the Soviets threatened to intervene. However, the US pressured Israel into accepting a second cease-fire on October 25, 1973. The war was over, and both Israel and Egypt claimed victory.

The process continued with the First Sinai Disengagement Agreement in January 1974. This called for Israel to withdraw its forces back across the Suez Canal and for the UN buffer zone to be restored. The Israeli-Syrian Disengagement Agreement in June 1974 caused Israel to withdraw to the 1967 cease-fire line on the Golan Heights. A UN Disengagement Observer Force occupied a buffer zone between Israeli and Syrian forces. The Second Disengagement Agreement between Israel and Egypt was signed in September 1975. It widened the buffer zone and ensured a further Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai passes.

The war's repercussions were far-reaching. An estimated 15,000 Arab soldiers were killed, and economic losses were one year's GNP. Approximately 6,000 Israeli soldiers

were killed or wounded in 18 days, and Israel's losses were equivalent to their annual GNP.

The government of Israel knew about the coming attack and yet did nothing to prevent it. The daily *Yediot Haranot* came out with many stories and interviews with reserve Generals. On September 19, 2003, it published an interview P.M Sharon gave to a local magazine "Alohem", where he stated that, based on aerial map provided by the military intelligence, he already knew that the war was going to begin on the Friday morning, a day and a half before it actually began. Not only this, but no other than Ze'ev Schief, the most important military correspondent in Israel, wrote an article that contradicts Mordechai Gazit, the adviser to Prime Minister Golda Meir, who claimed that she did not receive any information regarding the coming war from King Hussein of Jordan shortly before the war.

This kind of warning is a luxury rarely found in intelligence work. Hussein's warning, incidentally, was accompanied by advice: only a political move could prevent the war that Syria and Egypt were planning.

The more important response in this context was that of an intelligence officer who had been party to the situation as early as the night of Golda's meeting with Hussein. The officer had heard the same words as Mordechai Gazit, but reached a different conclusion. The message, he believed, was an unequivocal warning that war was imminent. The man was Lt. Col. Zusia Kniazzer, head of the Jordanian desk at Military Intelligence. Kniazzer, a veteran intelligence expert, took an unusual step, one which, in fact, constituted a breach of orders, since he had been instructed to treat the meeting with Hussein and its contents as highly classified material. Late at night, he called the head of the Syrian section, Lt. Col. Avi Ya'ari, and advised him to put the Northern Command on alert. Ya'ari indeed called the head of intelligence at the Northern Command, who alerted Northern Command Head Maj. Gen. Yitzhak Hofi. When news of this reached Brig. Gen. Aryeh Shalev, head of research at the Intelligence Branch, he summoned Kniazzer and Ya'ari and reprimanded them, the former for disobeying orders and divulging information about Hussein's meeting with Golda, the latter for alerting the Northern Command without consulting with his supervisors.¹⁰⁶

We should keep in mind what Kissinger explained to his colleague, the chief of U.S Naval Operations, Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr. that it was his intention to see Israel "bleed just enough to soften it up for the post-war diplomacy he was planning."¹⁰⁷

Why is it then that the Israeli government was ready to allow a partial defeat? By 1973 the government was not in a position to return the lands it had occupied in 1967 without a major political crisis. Since 1968 the Labor government had been using the occupied lands to establish Jewish settlements. The only way that they could convince the Israeli population of the need to return the Sinai for "peace" with Egypt was through a partial defeat. This indeed led to the "peace" agreement with Egypt but it would not save the Labor party from political defeat. In 1977 the Likud was to come to power."¹⁰⁸

106 Ze'ev Schiff: Was There a Warning? *Ha'aretz*, June 12, 1998

107 *The New York Times*, March 17, 1976

108 Yossi Schwartz: Thirty years on from the Yom Kippur war, <https://www.marxist>.

What were the motivations behind the War?

It is impossible to understand the war of 1973, its causes and results simply by analyzing this war from Israeli or Egyptian perspective. This war was the outcome of U.S interests and the interest of the Stalinist bureaucrats, the policy of the Détente and the world economic situation.

1973 in many aspects was the beginning of a turning point in history. It was the year of the so-called "oil crisis" and the beginning of the first serious, simultaneous world recession since the end of the Second World War. A new balance of forces was emerging worldwide. The US was losing their grip on Vietnam. There was a general movement to the left internationally and the U.S organized a military coup against the popular front government of Allende in Chile. The two main superpowers, the USA and the USSR, were jostling for control over their respective "spheres of influence".

In the Middle East the balance of forces was also shifting. The US gained more control over the Middle East at the expenses of the Soviet Union and at the expense of its imperialist competitors. This was clearly the case with the shifts taking place in Egypt. The architect of this US "victory" was Henry Kissinger whose hands were dripping with blood. That didn't stop him from winning the 1973 Nobel Prize for ... peace.

The Economic Turning Point

In the period from 1948 to 1975, world capitalism had temporarily succeeded in overcoming its central contradictions through the development of world trade, the super-exploitation of the semi-colonies, and to some extent, through the application of Keynesian policies. By 1973 however, it was already clear that the boom of the post-war "Golden Age" was coming to an end. By the end of 1973, productivity in the West was advancing at around 2.2% a year. This was still very high by the standards of our days, but it was slowing down, and already capitalism on a world level was unable to restore the full employment of the years after World War II.

The first generalized crisis of the system that emerged after WWII took place in 1973-74. This was not an "oil crisis", as it was labeled by the media. This was a way of hiding the fact that the system as a whole was at an impasse. Every time there is a recession, they always find an excuse for it, rather than accept that it is in the nature of the system to enter such crises. The sharp rise in the price of oil over just a few days prior to the October 1973 war was an important element of it that merely precipitated an already critical situation.

In the same period the economy of the USSR was also in decline. Capitalism recovered from the biggest crisis it had ever experienced (that of the 1930s)

in the period following the Second World War. It managed to achieve annual growth rates of 5 to 6% in the USA and Western Europe, and even more in Japan. But in that same period, the Soviet economy managed to achieve even higher rates of 10 or 11%, without recessions, unemployment or inflation. This was thanks to the nationalized planned economy of the Soviet Union. However, the economy in the Soviet Union was not run by the workers. It was in the hands of a privileged bureaucratic elite and the system of a bureaucratically controlled planned economy had reached its limits by the mid-1960s and the rates of growth in the USSR declined continually throughout the 1970s.

Trotsky always showed the dialectical relationship between the rise of Stalinism in Russia and the development of world capitalism. He explained that the Thermidorian reaction in Russia would lead to the restoration of capitalism, if capitalism had not shown itself to be exhausted on a world scale. In 1973, the historical clock was ticking. One of the two systems had to give in. As we know it was the Soviet Union that was to collapse. The policies of the Soviet "misleaders" in the Middle East contributed further to the crisis of the Soviet Union and to its collapse, and the collapse of the Soviet Union was to give capitalism a further lease of life, albeit a temporary one.

In 1933, Trotsky wrote: *"Against the assertion that the workers' state is apparently already liquidated there arises, first and foremost, the important methodological position of Marxism. The dictatorship of the proletariat was established by means of a political overturn and a civil war of three years. The class theory of society and historical experience equally testify to the impossibility of the victory of the proletariat through peaceful methods, that is, without grandiose class battles, weapons in hand. How, in that case, is the imperceptible, "gradual," bourgeois counterrevolution conceivable? Until now, in any case, feudal as well as bourgeois counterrevolutions have never taken place "organically," but they have invariably required the intervention of military surgery. In the last analysis, the theories of reformism, insofar as reformism generally has attained to theory, are always based upon the inability to understand that class antagonisms are profound and irreconcilable; hence, the perspective of a peaceful transformation of capitalism into socialism. The Marxist thesis relating to the catastrophic character of the transfer of power from the hands of one class into the hands of another applies not only to revolutionary periods, when history sweeps madly ahead, but also to the periods of counterrevolution, when society rolls backwards. He who asserts that the Soviet government has been gradually changed from proletarian to bourgeois is only, so to speak, running backwards the film of reformism."*¹⁰⁹

Trotsky was right at his time that in 1933 the social counter revolution in the Soviet Union could not win without a civil war. However, the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. From a theoretical perspective it is clear that the Stalinist system can collapse and turn to capitalism without a civil war while to replace the capitalist system with a socialist system a workers-led revolution is neces-

109 Leon Trotsky: The Class Nature of the Soviet State October 1, 1933, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1933/10/sovstate.htm>

sary. This causes real problems for those “Trotskyists” that repeat Trotsky’s argument from 1933 in order to deny that Russia and China are imperialist states. What they fail to grasp is that the degeneration of Stalinist Russia by 1991 reached a point that it simply collapsed. In the same article Trotsky wrote: *“If the dictatorship of the proletariat does not become European and worldwide, it must head towards its own collapse.”*¹¹⁰ The Marxist revolutionary method is dialectical not mechanical repetition. In the case of the collapse of the Soviet Union the law of quantities changes in the level of degeneration turned out to be qualitative in 1991.

Coming back to the war in 1973, it is important to recognize the geopolitical interests of the different powers at that time. We noted on this in the above-mentioned essay: *“It is common knowledge that controlling oil resources and access to them in the Middle East is a key question for the stability of American imperialism. The US is committed to controlling oil in the Gulf, although only small quantity of oil used in the US is actually imported from the region. US strategy has been primarily aimed at ensuring that Middle East oil does not fall into the hands of its competitors, neither European nor Japanese imperialism, nor the new Easter imperialists like Russia and China. Middle East oil was and remains important because of its impact on the global economy. The US’s competitors in Europe and Japan depend much more on this oil than the US.*

The Gulf Cooperation Council states (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain), together with Iran, and Iraq jointly possess 64% of the world’s proven oil reserves. The most important among the Gulf States is Saudi Arabia, which alone controls 27% of the world’s oil supplies. Saudi Arabia’s light crude is particularly sought after in the market by U.S. industries for sophisticated uses such as production of airplane fuels.

Following the 1973 OPEC embargo, the ruling class of the US became further convinced of the need for their companies to have direct control of the oil of the region. If In 1972, the per-barrel price of Saudi light crude was \$2.41, with the oil embargo it was quickly raised to \$10.73. As a result Washington has focused on military-strategic efforts to ensure dominance in the oil region ever since.

The lesson the US rulers also learned from their debacle in Vietnam was to rely on local policeman rather than to send their own army. For years they feared the consequences any further major wars would have on the American people. This lesson however had been forgotten by 1991 and 2003. However, back in 1973 the consequences of the war in Vietnam were very much present in the thinking of the US imperialists.

The emergence of strategic nuclear parity between the US and the USSR in the late 1960s led to the policy of so-called détente. The US and the Soviet Union signed the first strategic arms limitation agreement (SALT I) in Moscow in May 1972, and in late June 1973 they reached an agreement on a “code of conduct” that stipulated that the two powers should coordinate their actions in the event of contingencies that threatened the stability of world order. The agreement on the prevention of war signed in June 1973

stated that the two powers "agree that they will act in such a manner as to prevent the development of situations capable of causing a dangerous exacerbation of their relations, as to avoid military confrontations, and as to exclude between countries not parties to this agreement [that] appear to involve the risk of nuclear war." It also stated that "if relations between countries not parties to this agreement appear to involve the risk of nuclear war...(the two Powers) shall immediately enter into urgent consultations with each other and make every effort to avert this risk."¹¹¹

There were many illusions in détente at the time. Some believed it was a genuine step towards lasting world peace and end to the threat of nuclear war. The problem with it was that it went far beyond this. Behind it lay a policy of class collaboration. The Soviet Union was consciously holding back the revolutionary movements. This led to the defeat of the struggles of the working class and the poor masses. It was a policy that in the end was to contribute to the collapse of the Soviet Union itself.

The US imperialists however were prepared to accept the more or less equal relations of military power between themselves and the USSR. The American Administration developed a clear perspective to defeat the USSR and the struggle of the masses, especially in the former colonial countries, and this was based on the more advanced productive forces at their disposal and the higher levels of productivity of the working class in the imperialist countries. It was a policy aimed at the destruction of the USSR but by different means. The American strategists knew that the Soviet economic system was suffering from enormous deficiencies.

According to these experts, the Soviet economy suffered from "erratic growth rate, chronic shortages in agricultural and consumer goods." It had "little or no chance to compete with the West in the much-advertised scientific-technological revolution".¹¹²

They decided to capitalize on the Soviets' economic growth problems to gain a political advantage. In their own words: "to translate the power asymmetries which it enjoyed vis-à-vis the Soviet Union into political advantage - that is, a favorable balance of power as opposed to mere equilibrium".¹¹³ In his memoirs Kissinger remarked that détente was not a favor the USA did the Soviets. It was partly necessity; partly a tranquilizer for Moscow as the USA sought to draw the Middle East into closer relations with us at the Soviets' expense; partly the moral imperative of the nuclear age. US policy to contain Soviet influence in the Middle East was in fact making progress under the cover of the détente,

. The same objectives can be applied to Soviet policy. The Soviet bureaucracy wanted to expand their influence in the Middle East region under the disguise of détente. They aspired to an equal status with their rival in dealing with the problems of the region. They sought joint collaboration with the US to solve the Israeli-Arab conflict. Such a

111 Garthoff, L. Raymond. *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan*. Washington D.C: The Brookings Institution, 1994.p.435

112 Gati, Charles & Gati T. Trister. *The Debate over Détente*. New York: Foreign Policy Association. Headline Series, No. 234, February 1977 p.9

113 Litwak, S Robert, ed., *Détente and the Nixon Doctrine: American Foreign Policy and the Pursuit of Stability, 1969-1976*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984 at p.90).

role would bolster their position in the region and would certainly elevate them in the eyes of their client states.

The US, however, wanted to thwart any Soviet attempt to fortify its position in the region. Any deal struck under the auspices of the two powers would have raised the status of the Soviet bureaucracy in the Middle East, and this was unacceptable to the US. Coexistence to us," Kissinger warned Moscow in the midst of the 1973 war in the Middle East, "continues to have a very precise meaning: we will oppose the attempt of any one country to achieve a position of predominance either globally or regionally"¹¹⁴

Leonid I. Brezhnev said that "the struggle to assert the principles of the lives of peaceful coexistence, for lasting peace and détente and, in the long term, to prevent the risk of a new world war has been and still is the main element in our relations with capitalist states."¹¹⁵

Brezhnev may well have believed in his statement. In any case he acted upon it. In the June 1973 summit meeting between the leaders of the two superpower, Brezhnev warned of the gravity of the Middle-Eastern problem and called for a joint American-Soviet coordinated action to find a peaceful settlement to the problem. Kissinger and Nixon avoided any discussion of the issue. They did not want to negotiate the matter with the Soviets. Kissinger wrote, "We were not willing to pay for détente in the coin of our geopolitical position."¹¹⁶ The Soviets nevertheless continued to call for urgent intervention of the two powers to subdue the tensions in the region right up until the war erupted. In his address to the UN General Assembly on September 25, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko warned, "that the fires of war could break out at any time and who would tell what consequences would ensue."¹¹⁷ There is, furthermore, evidence that the bureaucrats in the USSR did use their influence in the Middle East to restrain Syria from defeating Israel during the war. The same could not be said for the US. The US had used the war to gain more and more leverage, to get more control over the bloody treasure of the region – the oil reserves. As is candidly stated by Kissinger in his memoirs, the US manipulated the war in such a way as to prevent the Arabs from scoring any real gains on the battlefield, while trying to win Arab confidence that the USA could both emerge as mediator and demonstrate that the road to peace led through Washington.

This could only be achieved by a war that would "restore self-respect on the Arab (i.e. Egypt) side and a new Israeli recognition of the need for diplomacy."... The US goal was designed to start the Pax Americana process, "with the Arabs on the proposition that we had stopped the Israeli advance and with the Israelis on the basis that we had

114 Serfaty, Simon. *American Foreign Policy in a Hostile World Dangerous Years*. New York: Praeger, 1984 at p.245

115 Gromyko, Andrei. Address to the Twenty-Eighth Session of the U.N. General Assembly. Pravda, 26 September 1976 at p.16)

116 Kissinger, Henry. *Years of Upheaval*. Boston: Little, Brown, c1982 at 299 at 885

117 Gromyko, Andrei. Address to the Twenty-Eighth Session of the U.N. General Assembly. Pravda, 26 September 1976 at 366

been steadfastly at their side in the crisis”¹¹⁸

The pursuit of the policy of “co-existence” made the Arabs furious with the Soviets’ role in the crisis. Anwar al-Sadat became convinced that he could not rely on Soviet military, economic and political backing to help Egypt recover its territories occupied by Israel since 1967. The Soviet presence in Egypt, as William Quandt stated, “prevented Sadat from dealing with the United States, it worried the conservative Saudis, and it exposed Sadat to severe domestic criticism, especially from within the army.”¹¹⁹ The Egyptian’s despair at Soviet policy reached its peak in July 1972 when Anwar al-Sadat decided to expel Soviet military advisors and technicians from Egypt. The Soviets were seen as incapable of solving Egypt’s grievances. Anwar al-Sadat came to the conclusion that only the US held the keys to a solution to the Egyptian-Israeli conflict. The US did indeed welcome his move. Kissinger was elated by Sadat’s act for it served, and seemed to confirm, his objectives of making the US the key to the situation in the Middle East. “Time was working in our favor; nothing could happen without our cooperation; those who relied on Soviet support were bound to become progressively disillusioned. The way to an increased and more balanced American role was beginning to open.”¹²⁰ However before the US could pressure Israel, the people of Israel had to be terrorized and scared to death and be convinced that without the US and its diplomacy they were doomed.

Immediately after his assumption of office as Secretary of State, Dr. Henry Kissinger called in the ambassadors to the UN of thirteen Arab states and told them that he understood the Arab states could not resign themselves to a perpetuation of the status quo in the Middle East. He promised them that the United States would work for a solution to the problem.¹²¹ 11 days later the war began.”¹²²

Thus the real winner of the 1973 war was the US imperialism. It won over Egypt and reduced Soviet influence in the region.

118 Kissinger, Henry. *Years of Upheaval*. Boston: Little, Brown, c1982 at pp 468,470,471,476,487

119 Quandt, William B. *Soviet Policy in the October 1973 War*. Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corporation, 1976 at pp 5-6

120 Kissinger, Henry. *Years of Upheaval*. Boston: Little, Brown, c1982 at 205

121 . Haaretz, Tel-Aviv, September 26, 1973

122 Yossi Schwartz: Thirty years on from the Yom Kippur war, <https://www.marxist.com/israel-yom-kippur-war151003.htm>

Part III:
The Decline

Chapter 14: The Two Wars in Lebanon (1982 and 2006)

To understand the causes the duration and the outcome of the first Zionist war against Lebanon it is necessary to understand the socio-ethnic and political structure of Lebanon and the short- and long-term plans of Israel for Lebanon.

Lebanon under the Ottoman rule was part of Syria. It became a separate state under the French occupation at the end of WWI when Syria and Lebanon were under the French mandate. Lebanon became formally independent in 1943 but actually remained a French colony. Imperialist France intervened in Lebanon already in the 19th century as a protector of the Christian Catholic Maronites living on Mount Lebanon. This intervention encouraged sectarianism in Lebanon already under the Ottoman rule. When France occupied Syria and Lebanon it could rely on the Maronites to rule Lebanon. France created greater Lebanon by incorporating Sunni Muslim from the Bakaa valley and the Shia Moslem majority of south. Under the French rule the Maronites became the local elite and thus the policy of divide and rule created animosity between the divided people of the Lebanese republic that was established in 1926. This was the foundation for the civil wars in the 1970 and the 1980s.

Among the Maronite a fascist party modeled after Franco's Spain the Phalanges was formed and they developed close relations with the Zionists. The Zionists as we have seen saw South Lebanon as part of greater Israel and the Phalanges as close allies while Syria under Assad the father saw Lebanon as part of greater Syria. Following the Black September 1970 in Jordan, where the king was able to crush the Palestinian guerrillas, the PLO had to leave Jordan and camped in south Lebanon which led to conflicts between the PLO and the local population.

The Zionist propaganda about the first war of Israel against Lebanon is: *"Tension along Israel's northern border increased in the course of 1981 following the lobbing of Katyusha rockets at Israeli settlements by terror organizations in southern Lebanon. A ceasefire declared in July 1981 was broken: the terrorists continued to carry out attacks against Israeli targets in Israel and abroad, and the threat to the northern settlements became unbearable. On June 3, 1982 terrorists shot Shlomo Argov, Israel's Ambassador to Britain. Three days later, on June 6, 1982, the IDF launched Operation Peace for the Galilee."*¹²³

In reality, the seeds of the 1982 war were planted already in the 1976 civil war in Lebanon when Israel assisted the Christian militias and in particular the Phalanges of Bashir Gemyel against the PLO. In 1978 Prime Minister of Israel Menachem Begin stated that Israel would not allow genocide of Lebanese Christians. Israel trained Maronites Militias in Israel. It was known already then,

¹²³ The Lebanon War: Operation Peace for Galilee (1982) Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs

that Sharon contemplated a Christian government in Lebanon subordinated to Israel. In 1978 during what Israel called Operation Litani it occupied part of South Lebanon and formed the South Lebanese Army subordinated to Israel.

According to reports by the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, from June to December 1980 the Israeli army incursions into Lebanon increased, using minefields, establishing gun posts and violating the skies and sea of Lebanon. This is proven by United Nations Security Council Resolution 425. No similar provocations were made by the PLO.

From 29 May 1981 until 10 July the border was quiet. This ended when Israeli airplanes struck PLO targets in southern Lebanon which led to exchanges of heavy fire between Israel and the PLO, and Israel and the Christian Militia fire on the PLO. On 13 and 14 July, 1981 Israeli air-strikes continued and Palestinians used rocket and artillery fire on northern Israel. This pattern continued in the coming days.

Thus the Zionist propaganda that Israel was forced to defend North Israel from terrorist attacks and therefore it was forced to go to war was simply a lie. Israel provoked the Palestinians to return fire in self-defense in order to crash the Palestinian resistance.

*“On June 6, 1982, 40,000 Israeli troops, with hundreds of tanks crossed the border of southern Lebanon. Israeli seaborne commandos landed at Sidon and the Israeli air force continued with the bombing of Palestinian camps in the south and around Beirut. In the camps around Tyre and Sidon, pockets of resistance continued for days while bombarded from land, sea and air. In four days of very heavy fighting, the IDF had seized the southern quarter of Lebanon. The Israeli air force was used to wipe out Syrian anti-aircraft missiles in the Bekaa, and destroyed more than 60 Syrian jet fighters in 48 hours. The Syrians did not commit themselves to block the advance on Beirut. The pressure on the Palestinian-Lebanese Joint Forces fighters in the south, numbered around 10,000 with light weapons, was very heavy and Israel used the ceasefires arranged by US mediator Philip Habib to bring more forces and closed on Beirut. The siege of the capital began. It was a war between David and Goliath but the Goliath was the Israeli army. Israel’s invading force by late June included nine armored divisions, 1,300 tanks 3,500 ambulances; 300 buses and hundreds of 107 and 155 millimeter cannons, rocket-firing warships, and the most advanced warplanes.”*¹²⁴

This by itself raises a question why such a large mobilization of military force against 10,000 fighters armed mostly with rifles? Clearly Israel did not plan only to crash the Palestinian resistance in order to ease the annexation of the West Bank but to occupy Lebanon and we should keep in mind the map the Zionist presented in the Paris “Peace Conference” in Paris after WWI.

*“While Israel attacked Lebanon Egypt under Sadat did not intervene. “Behind the victory in Lebanon,” states former Israeli military intelligence chief Shlomo Gazit, “there is the peace treaty with Egypt.”*¹²⁵

¹²⁴ <https://merip.org/1982/09/the-war-in-lebanon/>

¹²⁵ Yediot Aharonot, June 18, 1982,

Against the lies of the Israeli government that claimed that the PLO had 500 tanks, Left Zionist Knesset member Yossi Sarid disputed the government's claim. The number of PLO tanks captured, he said, was 90, not 500. These were old T-34s, "most of which could shoot but not move."¹²⁶

The Israeli bombing of Tyre and Sidon turned many buildings to heaps of debris and rubbles.

Israel claimed that the invasion was in response to the shooting of Shlomo Argov a diplomat in London on June 3 by the organization of Sabri al-Banna (a.k.a Abu Nidal) that split from PLO in 1974. However the invasion was planned long before with the nomination of Ariel Sharon as Defense Minister in August 1981 as he himself said.¹²⁷

Sharon was known for unit 101 he commanded that killed Palestinian refugees in Jordan in the 1950s. He was responsible for Qibya massacre that took place in October 1953 when Israeli troops under Ariel Sharon attacked the village of Qibya in the West Bank. At least sixty-nine Palestinian villagers were killed.

"On June 16, 1982 Sharon provided a list of Israeli objectives: to crush the PLO, to get the Syrians out of Lebanon, and to facilitate a strong central Lebanese government with which Israel could sign a peace treaty".¹²⁸

This war as we pointed out was part of the plans to annex the West Bank by breaking the backbone of the resistance of the PLO. If Arafat believed the Russian Stalinists and the local rulers of the Arab states would help the Palestinians he was wrong.

After a summer of carnage during which 20,000 Lebanese and Palestinians died 31,000 were maimed and wounded, eighty-four percent of them civilians came the notorious massacres of possibly 2,000 Palestinians refugees in Sabara and Shatila refugee camps

"President-elect Bashir Gemayel died in a bomb blast at his Phalangist party Headquarters in a bomb blast at his Phalangist party headquarters. That provided the pretext for the Israeli Army to move. On September 15, West Beirut was stormed. The Lebanese National Movement militias were disarmed, eliminating the last source of protection to the civilian population. Massive arrests followed. Then the "refugee camps"4 of Sabra and Shatila were ringed with Israeli armor, and the Israeli chief of staff and minister of defence ordered the most fanatical and bloodthirsty of Lebanon's right-wing paramilitary forces to march in. On September 18, after Israeli forces stationed outside Sabra and Shatila botched a hasty cover-up job, the world discovered what had transpired inside for the previous forty-eight hours. The Israeli political leadership spent some puzzled days wondering what all the fuss was about, and then ordered another cover-up a commission of inquiry. Five months later, Justice Yitzak Kahan of the Israeli Supreme

126 Jerusalem Post, June 13, 1982

127 Yediot Aharonot, June 18, 1982

128 Time, June 21, 1982.

Court deliver it to them the white washed report."¹²⁹

*"London Intelligence Digest, a usually pro-Israeli publication, and one well fed by various national intelligence agencies, asserts: Although the general blame for the mass murder at the two West Beirut Palestinian refugee camps has been placed on Israeli-armed and controlled Lebanese Christian Falangist militia units, some well-informed observers believe that an IDF Special Unit wearing Falangist militia uniforms may have actually perpetrated the massacre to wipe out PLO remnants and stampede other Palestinians out of West Beirut. These observers point out that Menachem Begin used the same tactic in 1948 at the Deir Yassin massacre, which was almost identical in its methods of operation. Furthermore, an intelligence observer commented, Defence Minister Sharon formerly commanded IDF Special Force 101, which carried out covert retaliatory terrorist missions for the Israeli government."*¹³⁰

Israel remained in Lebanon for 18 years. During this occupation it jailed thousands of Lebanese and tortured many of them. In 2000 Israel had to escape from Lebanon with its tail between the legs because of the fighters of Hezbollah. The fact that Israel remained in Lebanon for 18 years proves that the War of Lebanon was part of the reactionary Zionist dream of greater Israel that includes South Lebanon.

The Second Lebanon War of 2006

Operation Change of Direction, Israel's name for the war against Hezbollah in Lebanon in 2006, the second time Israel could not win against Hezbollah fighters in spite of Israel being the fourth military power in the world. During the 34 days of combat the Israeli army was unable to stem the daily barrage of the Katyusha rockets that Hezbollah fired on northern Israel.

The fact that Israel with all its might could not defeat Hezbollah was a victory for the small guerilla Lebanese force. So too was the fact that Israel could not retrieve the two Israeli soldiers captured by Hezbollah that was the alleged reason Israel attacked Lebanon. Hezbollah captured these two soldiers in Sheba'a Farms, a land bordering Israel, Syria and Lebanon, which Israel occupied but Hezbollah says it is Lebanese. The soldiers were captured in order to release Lebanese and Palestinian political prisoners jailed by Israel. Israel's military actions targeted Lebanese infrastructure and Hezbollah bases and also widely damaged civilian areas resulted *"in at least 1,109 Lebanese deaths, the vast majority of whom were civilians, 4,399 injured, and an estimated 1 million displaced. Hezbollah's indiscriminate rocket attacks on Israel, the subject of a separate Human Rights Watch report, Civilians under Assault: Hezbollah's Rocket Attacks on Israel during the 2006 War, resulted in the deaths of 43 Israeli civilians and 12 Israel Defense Forces*

129 T. Naylor Bloodbath to Whitewash: Sabra-Shatila and the Kahan Commission: Arab Studies Quarterly, Fall 1983, Vol. 5, No. 4 (Fall 1983), pp. 337-361 Published by: Pluto Journals

130 Time, October 20, 1982.

(IDF) soldiers, as well as the wounding of hundreds of Israeli civilians."¹³¹

The predecessor organizations of the ISL and the RCIT unambiguously stood on the side of the Palestinian and Lebanese forces in these wars against Israel. The position of Marxists could only be one based on consistent anti-imperialism. In 1982, we fully supported the heroic Palestinians and their resistance against the Zionist invaders. *"The thousands who have fought, arms in hand, to defend Tyre, Sidon and Beirut, the Palestinians of the squalid refugee camps of Lebanon, have been standing in the front line of the battle again against Imperialism and its agents in the Middle East. We salute their struggle. It is the task of the international workers' movement to solidarise with their Palestinian brothers and sisters by actively struggling to undermine and destroy the Zionist state that threatens the Palestinian Arabs with genocide."*¹³²

Likewise, we stated during the Second Lebanon War in 2006: *"The progressive forces worldwide cannot simply stand by and call impotently for a ceasefire, nor even just cheer on the Hezbollah fighters. We must do all in our power to help them to defeat the Bush-Blair-Olmert axis of terror. The urgent task of the anti-imperialist, antiwar and anticapitalist movements worldwide is to speed the day of their defeat by coming to the aid of the Lebanese and Palestinian resistance now."*¹³³

131 "Why They Died: Civilian Casualties in Lebanon during the 2006 War," Human Rights Watch, September 2007. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2007/09/05/why-they-died/civilian-casualties-lebanon-during-2006-war>

132 Workers Power: Zionist Holocaust, in: Workers Power No. 34 (July/August 1982), p. 4

133 LFI: Declaration on the US-UK backed Israeli invasion of Lebanon, 11 August 2006

Chapter 15: Israel's Wars on Gaza

Since 2007 the people living in Gaza, many of them refugees, live under siege that turned Gaza into a ghetto. Life in Gaza is characterized by limited access to educational, medical care, clean water and electricity for the nearly 2 million Palestinians who live there. Eighty percent of Gaza's population depends on humanitarian aid.

Since the siege on Gaza Israel fought three to four times against Gaza. While Hamas and other Palestinian organization used inaccurate missiles that in general damaged properties and hardly kill any Israeli, the Israeli army shoot to kill.

Israel launched Operation *Double Challenge* on November 4, 2008. On December 27, 2008 Israel launched Operation *Cast Lead*. On November 11, 2012, it launched Operation *Pillar of Defense*. Israel launched Operation *Protective Edge* in July 2014.

Between 27 December 2008 and 18 January 2009, Israel killed 1391 people in Gaza, 344 minor Palestinians and 110 women, 759 civilians that were not armed and 350 fighters while 5 Israeli soldiers were killed.¹³⁴

In operation Pillar of Defense, according to B'Tselem's investigation, 167 Palestinians were killed by the Israeli military during the operation. This number includes 62 Palestinians who took part in the hostilities and seven other who were targets of assassination.¹³⁵

1,391, or 63%, of the 2,202 Palestinians killed by Israeli security forces in Operation "Protective Edge" did not take part in the hostilities. Of these, 526 – a quarter of all Palestinians killed in the operation – were under eighteen years of age.

"The high number of civilian fatalities – including women, children, and the elderly – casts doubt on Israel's claim that all the targets were legitimate and that the military adhered to the principle of proportionality during the attacks and took precautions to reduce harm to civilians. While the fighting was still in progress, B'Tselem already cautioned against the predictable lethal consequences of the military's open-fire policy, which included air strikes on homes that killed many civilians who were not taking part in the hostilities (see B'Tselem report Black Flag). Decision makers continued to apply this policy, in spite of these results. Of the Palestinians killed who did not take part in the hostilities, 180 were babies, toddlers, and children under the age of six. Another 346 were children from age six through seventeen, and 247 were women between the ages of

134 Btselem: Fatalities during Operation Cast Lead, <https://www.btselem.org/statistics/fatalities/during-cast-lead/by-date-of-event>

135 https://www.btselem.org/press_releases/20130509_pillar_of_defense_report

18 and 59. Another 113 were men and women over the age of sixty.”¹³⁶

Clearly the Zionist leaders are war criminals that are protected by other imperialist state and first among them is the USA. This butchering of the Palestinians will continue until the Arab revolution achieving socialist revolution will win.

The Palestinian refugees of Gaza have the right of return and are ready to live with the Israelis in one democratic state. In 2018 the people of Gaza began the march of return. *“Between March 30 and November 19, 2018 the Israeli army killed 189 Palestinian demonstrators, including 31 children and 3 medical workers, and wounded more than 5,800 with live fire. Demonstrators threw rocks and “Molotov cocktails,” used slingshots to hurl projectiles, and launched kites bearing incendiary materials, which caused property damage to nearby Israeli settlements built on the lands of the Palestinian refugees, and, in at least one instance, fired towards soldiers. Officers repeatedly fired on protesters who posed no imminent threat to life, pursuant to expansive open-fire orders from senior officials that contravene international human rights law standards.”*¹³⁷

*“Israeli forces killed 34 Palestinians and, according to Gaza’s Health Ministry, injured 1,883 with live ammunition during these protests in 2019 as of October 31.”*¹³⁸

*“As of November 11, lethal force by Israeli forces resulted in the killing of 71 and injuring 11,453 Palestinians in Gaza, OCHA reported. An additional 33 were killed and 114 injured, according to al-Mezan, during escalated fighting between November 12 and 14. Many of the killings took place in the context of protests.”*¹³⁹

*“The Israeli army also launched intermittent air and artillery strikes in the Gaza Strip, killing 37 Palestinians between March 30 and November 19, including at least five civilians. Palestinian armed groups fired 1138 rockets and mortars indiscriminately toward Israel from Gaza as of November 13, according to the Meir Amit Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center, a major increase over previous years, killing one person and injuring at least 40, including civilians.”*¹⁴⁰

The ISL and the RCIT unconditionally sided with the Palestinian people in these wars. We said: Defend Gaza! Defeat Israel! In a statement at the beginning of the war in 2012, we said:

““The international workers movement and all progressive organizations must rally to the support of the Palestinian people who heroically defend themselves against the Israeli killing machine. We need solidarity actions all over the world – demonstrations, strikes, direct actions against Israeli and US symbols, boycott actions etc. The RCIT calls for:

** Defend Gaza! Victory to the Palestinian resistance! Defeat the Israeli aggression!*

** Egypt must immediately open the border to Gaza! It must terminate all relations*

136 https://www.btselem.org/press_releases/20160720_fatalities_in_gaza_conflict_2014

137 Human Rights Watch Israel and Palestine Events of 2018

138 Human Rights Watch Israel and Palestine Events of 2019

139 Ibid

140 Ibid

with Israel, including its ongoing gas deliveries to Israel.

* For unconditional material and military support for the Palestinian people and the armed resistance to fight the Israeli army!"¹⁴¹

It was in such spirit that militants of the RCIT participated in building an international movement in solidarity with the Palestinian resistance.¹⁴² We did the same during the war in 2014.¹⁴³

141 RCIT: Defend Gaza! New Wave of Israeli terror against Gaza: Support the Palestinian Resistance! Defeat the Zionist killing machine! 15.11.2012, <https://rcitarchive.wordpress.com/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/defend-gaza/>; see also ISL: The Zionist State Tries to Break Gaza Again – and Fails Again, December 2012, <https://rcitarchive.wordpress.com/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/isl-statement-on-gaza-war/>. On the war in 2008/09 see e.g. *The ISL Position on Wars*, August 2009, <http://www.the-isleague.com/wars>.

142 Those interested can find on the RCIT website a number of reports with videos and our pictures of our solidarity activities. See e.g. <https://rcitarchive.wordpress.com/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/report-gaza-demo-23-11-2012/>; <https://rcitarchive.wordpress.com/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/report-gaza-rally-16-11/>; <https://rcitarchive.wordpress.com/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/report-gaza-demo-19-11/>; a video of a speech by Michael Pröbsting, the RCIT's International Secretary, at a demonstration can be viewed here: <https://www.rkob.net/multimedia/video-und-bilder-gaza-23-nov-2012/>.

143 Joint Statement of RCIT and ISL: Israel Starts Ground Offensive: Defend Gaza! Defeat Israel's War! Support the Palestinian Resistance! For a Workers' and Popular International Campaign to Boycott Israel! Down with the Regimes which Collaborate with Israel! For a Free, Red Palestine!, 22.7.2014, <https://rcitarchive.wordpress.com/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/joint-statement-defend-gaza/>; see also Yossi Schwartz: Israel's New War. Down with Israel's New War 9.7.2014, <https://rcitarchive.wordpress.com/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/israels-new-war/>; for a report about solidarity activities see e.g. <https://rcitarchive.wordpress.com/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/demo-for-palestine-20-7-2014/>.

Part IV:
Marxism and Anti-Zionism

Chapter 16: On the Anti-Zionist Left in Palestine

The war of 1948 between the Zionist armed forces against the Palestinians and the Arab states was a war not between an imperialist state (Israel was not yet an imperialist state) and colonies or semi-colonies. It was a war between Israel that was a semi-colony built by settlers colonialists on one side while the Palestinians who were an oppressed colonized people and the Arab states that were colonies on the other side. For those who use formal logic it was not easy to choose a side. Today most people that support the Palestinians would agree that it was necessary to stand in the war with the Palestinians and the Arab states. However they will have some difficulties to explain why to side with the Arab states that were “ruled” by kings who clearly were serving the British and French imperialist masters.

The argument that many supporters of the Palestinians cause advance that it was necessary to stand against Israel in the war because Israel was an oppressor settler colonialist society has a flaw. When Britain fought against the 13 American colonies in the American war of independence (1775–1783), the progressive and revolutionary part of humanity were on the side of the American settler colonialists even when these colonialists oppressed the native Indians. It was necessary to defend the Indians against the white settlers and to defend the colonialist settlers against the British Empire because the British Empire was the worst enemy. No one can think that the British Empire fought on the side of the Indians. Those who refused to stand with the American colonialist against imperialism did not help the Indians but the “imperialists”.

The question whether to support or oppose Israel in 1948 relates of course to the question: Do Marxists support the right of self-determination for the Israelis?

Only the working-class internationalist outlook that sees the unity of the world through the revolutionary perspective of the workers in the unequal but combined parts can offer the theoretical answer to the war of 1948.

The war of 1948 was situated in the epoch of decay of capitalism. Thus while the American war of independence was the first stage of the democratic revolution that would be completed with the victory of the North against the South in the Civil War of 1861–1865, Israel, even though it is an imperialist state, never went through nor can it go through a democratic revolution because of the nature of this period and the nature of Zionism. Israel cannot give the Palestinians equal rights because it would not be a state with Jewish majority of citizens any more. It would lose its legitimization for existence and its whole political and military state apparatus would be threatened. This is the reason why the demand of one democratic state from the river to the sea cannot be achieved without a socialist revolution.

Origins of Palestinian Communism

Unfortunately, communism in Palestine was born deformed. There was no Communist Party (PCP) until 1924, when supporters of the Soviet Union split from the left-Zionist Socialist Workers Party of Eretz Yisrael (known by its Hebrew initials as MOPSI). The PCP thus when it was born faced two major obstacles on its development and its need for a correct political line for the many struggles facing the Palestinian masses.

Between 1924-1928 the Communist International under the Stalin-Bukharin block took a right-wing turn. *"The policy of the most important communist parties, attuned to the fifth congress, soon revealed its complete inefficacy. The mistakes of pseudo-"leftism", which hampered the development of the communist parties, gave an impetus to a new empirical zigzag: namely to an accelerated sliding down to the right."*¹⁴⁴

For Stalin, the Comintern was essentially an instrument of Russian foreign policy. However, he could not openly yet run it himself. He needed a prominent 'old Bolshevik', with some genuine qualifications, to lead a rightist orientation. He found it in Nikolai Bukharin. Lenin had written of him, in his 'testament' just before his death, that Bukharin's *"theoretical views can only with the very gravest doubts be regarded as fully Marxist, for there is something scholastic in him (he has never learned, and I think never fully understood, the dialectic."*¹⁴⁵ (Bukharin was an ultra-left in the first years after the Russian revolution. However, in 1924 he was, rightist in his views on the situation inside Russia and internationally.) Under Stalin's regime the Comintern underwent a further degeneration. These were the years of the 'right-centre bloc' in the USSR, the alliance between Stalin and Bukharin; the years of *"socialism in one country"*. The years of calling on the peasantry 'enrich yourselves'. The years in which planned industrialization was rejected as 'adventurism'. The corresponding policies in the Comintern were those of making unprincipled alliances with 'left' union bureaucrats, 'left' labor politicians, and bourgeois and petty-bourgeois nationalists. This was the period of supporting politically the Chinese nationalist party - the Kuomintang.

The other person in the Troika was Zinoviev whose fear of working-class revolution was exposed already in 1917. Thus the Stalin-Zinoviev-Kamenev troika was already in control of the Russian Communist Party, while the Communist International (CI) was under Zinoviev's tutelage. Though born as an international revolutionary party, by 1924 the CI had already begun to zigzag left and right in the interests of the bureaucracy that was growing in Russia. In these circumstances, the Communist Party in Palestine (PCP) cadre had even less opportunity to learn the real lessons of the Russian Revolution and Bolshevism than most CI sections, instead having it interpreted for them by Lenin's epigones in an ever-shifting manner.

144 Leon Trotsky: *The Third International After Lenin* (1928), Pioneer Publishers, New York 1936, p. 125

145 Quoted in E.H Carr, *Interregnum*, p. 267

The problems of the leadership of the International and the problem of the Zionist origin

Further, the PCP was marked by its origins in MOPSI. Its initial membership was composed entirely of Jews who turned to Soviet Union and had no problem with the right turn which kept them within the Jewish settler milieu. They came to Palestine as Zionist colonists, and this changed very little in the first years after the founding of the Party. While its composition was largely working-class, in a country characterized by communal division, its isolation in the higher-paid, colonial-settler portion of the working class not only hampered its ability to find a hearing among the impoverished Arab masses, but also posed a danger that the PCP's revolutionary, anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist program would be corroded from the inside.

In these circumstances, it is not surprising that, when the struggle between the Stalinists and Trotsky's Left Opposition became more widely known in the CI at the end of the 1920s, there is no known trace of it having had much of an impact upon the PCP's small membership of the struggle of the left opposition in Palestine.

The right turn led to the defeat of the working class in Great Britain in 1926 and to the defeat and the massacre of the Communist party in China by the Kuomintang in 1927. A similar policy to China was pursued by the Palestinian Communist Party between 1924-28. The PCP had an orientation toward labor Zionism. While officially "*the Palestinian Communist Party objected up to 1943 to Jewish immigration and the interdiction of purchase of land by Jews*"¹⁴⁶, it took on itself the task to organizing the Arab and Jewish workers in the struggle against imperialism, claiming that the interests of all the Jewish workers in no way were in contradiction with those of the Arab workers. It criticized the British mandatory governments of "*helping to give immigrants work and bread, still less land.*"¹⁴⁷

The activity of the communists, in the first years was mainly in the trade union field, among Jewish workers. Its attitude with regard to the Histadrut ("General organization of the Hebrew laborers in Eretz Yisrael" constituted in 1920) was an attempt to change its character. They established within the Histadrut their own faction in November 1922. The faction demanded that the unions affiliated to the Histadrut be dissociated from the economic and cooperative functions linked to the Zionist colonization, and that it opens itself to Arab members. The "Fraktzia" based itself on the participation in Zionist organizations' and it demanded that the Histadrut, be transformed into an industrial federation of

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.marxists.org/subject/jewish/communist-movement-palestine.pdf>

¹⁴⁷ Yosef Berger-Barzilay, member of the Party secretariat, in a text of 1926. Musa Budeiri, The Palestine Communist Party 1919-1948

trade unions open to Jews and Arabs.¹⁴⁸

In 1919 the 'Railway Workers Association' (RWA), was formed organizing only Jewish workers. The railway was controlled by the British and Jews and Arabs worked there. In January 1922, the Histadrut Council confirmed the affiliation of the RWA to the Histadrut. Towards the end of 1923, militants of the Poalei Tziyon Smol took over this union, which changed its name to "Union of Railway, Postal and Telegraph Workers" (URPTW). They declared the unions as international open both to Arab and Jewish workers, and demanded that the Histadrut adopt the same policy. In April 1924, a meeting of the leadership of the Histadrut decided to exclude communists. The only opposition came from a delegate of the workers of the Jerusalem railways, member of the Poalei Tziyon Smol. In May 1924 a meeting in common with some Arab trade union leaders engaged in negotiations with this union. At this meeting was present Moshe Ungerfeld, member of the PCP and, besides, member of the Central Committee of the URPTW and the special committee charged with the question of the common organization (between Jews and Arabs). This event brought about the decision taken by the Histadrut direction to exclude from the URPTW seven communist members. The direction of the URPTW did not expel the communists, but it voted for the suspension of M. Ungerfeld as a member of the Central Committee of the union. The URPTW recruited Arab workers and in November 1924 it was decided that all the elected organs had to be composed in equal number of Jewish and Arab members, each of the two groups choosing its own representatives. Arabs were co-opted to the Central Committee. In February 1925, at Haifa, the URPTW Council held a meeting, which comprised the nine members of the Central Committee with, furthermore, nine Jews and seven Arabs representing the branches. Three of the main leaders of the Histadrut (David Ben-Gurion, Yitzhak Ben-Tzvi and Chaim Arlosoroff) were present. By a majority of 18 against 7 it was decided on the creation of international trade union open to all railway as well as post and telegraph workers, regardless of their ethnical belonging, religion and nationality. The nine Jewish members of the Central Committee all voted in favor. The delegates unanimously confirmed the exclusion from the Central Committee of M. Ungerfeld. Until spring of 1925, the communists continued to call on the Arab workers to join the URPTW. For example in December 1924, articles in Haifa (Arabic biweekly of the Party, appearing since autumn of the year) emphasized that both Zionists and Arab nationalist effendis were upset that Arab workers had joined the URPTW and that they campaigned for the unity and solidarity between workers.¹⁴⁹

148 <https://www.marxists.org/subject/jewish/communist-movement-palestine.pdf>

149 See on this Zachary Lockman: *Comrades and enemies. Arab and Jewish Workers in Palestine, 1906-1948*, Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 1996; The communist movement in Palestine 1919-1949, <https://www.marxists.org/subject/jewish/communist-movement-palestine.pdf>

In the spring of 1925, most of the Arab workers left the URPTW when they realized it served the Zionists' aims. In August, the URPTW expelled 13 communist militants. Poalei Tziyon Smol supported the expulsion. In summer of 1925, the "Palestinian Arab Workers Society" ("al-Jamiyyah al-Umal al-Arabiyya al-Filastiniyya") was formed. In the next years, the PAWS extended its sphere of influence, beyond Haifa, to Jaffa and Jerusalem. In 1926, a strike was organized, uniting in action Arab and Jewish workers. After its members had been expelled from the Histadrut, the Party established a trade union movement called "Ihud" in Hebrew ("Union") with the declared aim of promoting unity of Jewish and Arab workers. In it participated, in addition to the communists, members of the Histadrut as well as members of Gdud Haavoda (left wing Zionists). The Tel Aviv branch of Ihud was led by Leopold Trepper (the same one who organized the "Red Orchestra"). In December 1926, a conference of Ihud, was held with 85 delegates, of them Arab, among them two Arab communists, Rafiq Jabbour and Abd al-Ghani al-Karmi. However, the movement disappeared not long later because of the lack of unity between communists and Jewish nationalists who supported the creation of a Jewish state and hoped that Arab workers would assist this goal. The PAWS solely recognized the membership of Arabs. Yet, among its leaders was Farid Kamil, who had been a member of the Central Committee of the URPTW and who spoke for an apolitical union and demanded to accept the Jews as fully qualified members. At first, he did not succeed and he left the PAWS, but he returned to the PAWS that showed a favorable attitude towards the perspective of unifying all the workers of the railways, on the condition that it will be independent from the Histadrut. Thus clearly the work of the PCP in 1924-8 was not very fruitful because it oriented itself mostly to the labor Zionists and to collaboration with left Zionists.

In 1929-35 the CI took a bureaucratic pseudo ultra-left turn. Anyone who was not with them was declared a fascist. This prevented the formation of a united front of the workers parties in Germany against the Nazis and Hitler took power.

The adventurist leftism gave way to an open class collaboration known as the Popular Front. Nevertheless, the CI's changes of line in 1929-1935, had an effect upon the PCP that was not entirely for the worse. Like all other Communist in the "Third Period," it labeled the existing workers organizations "social fascist." The impact of this line in Palestine was less significant, since at that point, outside of the Zionist Yishuv (settlements), there were practically no workers' organizations in Palestine.

In the colonial and semi-colonial countries, this was combined with a putschist attitude which, in rhetoric if rarely in practice, placed emphasis on the need for "workers' and peasants'" "democratic" revolutions. Behind this anti-Marxist conception of a revolution led by two classes was an attack on Trotsky's conception of permanent revolution, in which the working class, leading the peasantry and other oppressed strata, carries out the necessary bourgeois-democratic de-

mands in the course of making its own socialist revolution. In counter-posing to this, the Stalinists had to revise the basic Marxist understanding of the nature of the state. This stage-ist misconception has weighed like a nightmare on the brains of the left internationally, and the state of today's Palestinian left is dreary testimony to its long-term negative effects.

However, in the short term, the CI's verbal campaign had some salutary results in the PCP. If one were to have a "workers' and peasants' revolution," one first needed workers and peasants. And since the majority of both the working class and the peasantry in Palestine were Arabs, this would require a decisive reorientation by the PCP, which until 1929 did not even have an Arabic-language press! At CI instructions, the PCP set about trying energetically to recruit Palestinian Arabs and to build non-communalist trade union organizations--which, since the bulk of Jewish workers were in the Zionist Histadrut, effectively meant trade unions for Arab workers. As a result of these efforts, a layer of Palestinian workers and intellectuals soon became communists, some of whom would play important roles in later political developments.

In January 1930, the PAWS (Palestine Postal workers Services Union) organized in Haifa a congress of Arab workers in Palestine, the first of this kind. 61 delegates were present, affirming that they spoke in the name of approximately 3000 workers.

Another impetus to the PCP's turn came from the Palestinian rebellion of 1929. The CI declared this uprising to be unequivocally an "anti-imperialist" revolt. Even so, under its reactionary and clerical leadership, much of the rebellion was characterized by attacks on individual Jews and their property, including religious orthodox Jews who, at that time, were opposed to Zionism and played no role in its aggressive encroachment on Arab lands. On this basis, all segments of the Zionist movement denounced it as a "pogrom," in an early example of Zionism's practice of rhetorically tarring any and all opposition to it as "anti-Semitic."

Like the rest of the Communist parties, the PCP followed the line of the popular front which in Palestine meant political support for the Arab High Committee and the Mufti of Jerusalem, e.g. the subordination of the working class to the reactionary elite.

On April 10, 1936, representatives of various sectors of the Arab workers' movement in Palestine met in Haifa, to lay the foundations of an Arab trade union federation for the whole of Palestine. Sami Taha, was the main leader of the organization, was murdered by the order of the Mufti, who hated the communists because of his own class interest. In spite of this, the PCP continued to support politically the reactionary elite which prevented the mass movement of workers and peasants from winning the struggle against the British and the Zionists. The Palestinian elite like all the bourgeois and semi-feudal was more afraid of losing control over the masses than they have the will to fight the imperialists. Under such leadership the British and the Zionists were able to crash the revolt.

Stalinism Supported Israel's Reactionary War in 1948

At the time of the 1948 war the Stalinists presented the Zionist war as an anti-imperialist war and thus the creation of Israel as a progressive event. In reality it was a victory for the imperialists and a counter revolutionary event.

Already in 1943 the *Palestinian Communist Party* was moving toward integration within the organized Jewish *Yishuv*. While opposing partition and calling for an independent democratic state, it increasingly upheld a bi-national vision, based on “*the principle of equal rights of Jews and Arabs for free national, economic and cultural development, without artificial interruptions and in mutual cooperation and brotherhood of nation.*”¹⁵⁰ This motion toward political support for Zionism caused a split of the PKP and the left wing that consisted more of Palestinian patriots known as the *National Liberation League* emerged in opposition to the motion of the PCP.

Despite their differences, both factions agreed on one core principle of the bi-national approach: the need to treat members of both national groups equally, whether as citizens in a joint state or as members of national collectives enjoying the same rights within a federal state, or as groups entitled to the right of national self-determination.

The Soviet Stalinists recognized the right of self-determination for the Zionists for the first time in May 1947 in a speech delivered by the USSR's ambassador at the United Nations, Andrei Gromyko:

*“It is essential to bear in mind the indisputable fact that the population of Palestine consists of two peoples, the Arabs and the Jews. Both have historical roots in Palestine. Palestine has become the homeland of both these peoples, each of which plays an important part in the economy and the cultural life of the country. (...) Thus, the solution of the Palestine problem by the establishment of a single Arab-Jewish State with equal rights for the Jews and the Arabs may be considered as one of the possibilities and one of the more noteworthy methods for the solution of this complicated problem. Such a solution of the problem of Palestine's future might be a sound foundation for the peaceful co-existence and co-operation of the Arab and Jewish populations of Palestine, in the interests of both these peoples and to the advantage of the entire Palestine population and of the peace and security of the Near East. (...) “If this plan proved impossible to implement, in view of the deterioration in the relations between the Jews and the Arabs--and it will be very important to know the special committee's opinion on this question--then it would be necessary to consider the second plan which, like the first, has its supporters in Palestine, and which provides for the partition of Palestine into two independent autonomous States, one Jewish and one Arab.”*¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ Quoted in Ran Greenstein: *Class, Nation and Political Organization: The Anti-Zionist Left in Israel/Palestine*, in: *International Labor and Working-Class History* No. 75, Spring 2009, p. 93, http://www.academia.edu/1016229/Class_Nation_and_Political_Organization_The_Anti-Zionist_Left_in_Israel_Palestine

¹⁵¹ UN Debate Regarding the Special Committee on Palestine: Gromyko Statement at

It is interesting to read the account of the Stalinists support for the creation of Israel by Norman Berdichevsky, a fanatic supporter of Israel:

“The most famous and colorful personality of the Spanish Republic in exile, the Basque delegate to the Cortes (Spanish Parliament), Dolores Ibaruri, who had gone to the Soviet Union, issued a proclamation in 1948 saluting the new State of Israel and comparing the invading Arab armies to the Fascist uprising that had destroyed the Republic. Just a few months earlier, the hero of the American Left, the great Afro-American folk singer, Paul Robeson had sung in a gala concert in Moscow and electrified the crowd with his rendition of the Yiddish Partisan Fighters Song...

The leaders of the Yishuv (Jewish community in Palestine), already in the summer of 1947, intended to purchase arms and sent Dr. Moshe Sneh (the Chief of the European Branch of the Jewish Agency, a leading member of the centrist General Zionist Party who later moved far leftward and became head of the Israeli Communist Party) to Prague in order to improve Jewish defenses. He was surprised by the sympathy towards Zionism and by the interest in arms export on the side of the Czech Government. Sneh met with the Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Clementis, who succeeded the non-Communist and definitely pro-Zionist Jan Masaryk. Sneh and Clementis discussed the possibility of Czech arms provisions for the Jewish state and the Czechs gave their approval,

In January, 1948 Jewish representatives were sent by Ben-Gurion to meet with General Ludvik Svoboda, the Minister of National Defense, and sign the first contract for Czech military aid. Four transport routes were used to Palestine all via Communist countries; a) the Northern route: via Poland and the Baltic Sea, b) the Southern route: via Hungary, Yugoslavia and the Adriatic Sea, c) via Hungary, Romania and the Black Sea, d) by air, via Yugoslavia to Palestine.

At first, a “Skymaster” plane chartered from the U.S. to help in ferrying weapons to Palestine from Europe was forced by the FBI to return to the USA. By the end of May the Israeli Army (IDF) had absorbed about 20,000 Czech rifles, 2,800 machine-guns and over 27 million rounds of ammunition. Two weeks later an additional 10,000 rifles, 1,800 machine-guns and 20 million rounds of ammunition arrived. One Czech-Israeli project that alarmed the Western intelligence was the, so called, Czech Brigade, a unit composed of Jewish veterans of “Free Czechoslovakia”, which fought with the British Army during WWII. The Brigade began training in August 1948 at four bases in Czechoslovakia.

Czech assistance to Israel’s military strength comprised a) small arms, b) 84 airplanes — the outdated Czech built Avia S.199s, Spitfires and Messerschmidts that played a major role in the demoralization of enemy troops; c) military training and technical maintenance. On January 7, 1949, the Israeli air-force, consisting of several Spitfires and Czech built Messerschmidt Bf-109 fighters (transferred secretly from Czech bases to Israel), shot down five British-piloted Spitfires flying for the Egyptian air-force over the Sinai desert causing a major diplomatic embarrassment for the British government.

Even with Czech weapons and Soviet aid, Israel would undoubtedly have been unable to halt the Arab invasion without a massive inflow of manpower. The United States, Canada and Europe provided no more than 3000 volunteers, many of them combat hardened veterans from both the European and Pacific theaters of war plus a few score idealistic youngsters from the Zionist movements with no combat experience or training.

But their numbers were a drop in the bucket compared to more than 200,000 Jewish immigrants from the Soviet dominated countries in Eastern Europe, notably, Poland, Bulgaria (almost 95% of the entire Jewish community) Romania, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, the former Baltic States and even the Soviet Union who emigrated to Israel arriving in time to reach the front lines or replenish the depleted ranks of civilian manpower. Without both the arms and manpower sent from the "Socialist Camp", to aid the nascent Israeli state, it would have been crushed.

In 1947, when Stalin was convinced that the Zionists would evict the British from Palestine, the Party Line turned about face. Following Soviet recognition and aid to Israel in 1948-49, both the Daily Worker and the Yiddish language communist daily in the U.S. Freiheit (Freedom) outdid one another to explain the new party line in that....

'Palestine had become an important settlement of 600,000 souls, having developed a common national economy, a growing national culture and the first elements of Palestinian Jewish statehood and self-government.'

A 1947 CP-USA resolution entitled 'Work Among the Jewish Masses' berated the Party's previous stand and proclaimed that 'Jewish Marxists have not always displayed a positive attitude to the rights and interests of the Jewish People, to the special needs and problems of our own American Jewish national group and to the interests and rights of the Jewish Community in Palestine'.

The new reality that had been created in Palestine was a "Hebrew nation" that deserved the right to self-determination. Remarkably, the Soviet propaganda machine even praised the far Right underground groups of the Irgun and "Stern Gang" for their campaign of violence against the British authorities."¹⁵²

As a result the Soviet Union was the first country to legally recognize de jure, the Israeli state. This Stalinist counter-revolutionary policy of giving the Zionist political as well as military support determined the outcome of the war. It enabled Israel to expel most of the Palestinian people from their country while the Zionist robbed their properties. Stalinism – despite its "communist" rhetoric – proved to be a major counter-revolutionary force and an enemy of the international working class and the oppressed masses. It discredited communism for decades in the whole Middle East. It is in the same reactionary logic that most Stalinist forces sided with the Assad regime in Syria which is waging a counter-revolutionary civil war against the rebellious popular masses. An authentic revolutionary working-class party as part of the Fifth International will have to fight relentlessly against the Stalinist policy.

152 Norman Bedichevsky: Who did what for Israel in 1948? America did nothing: <http://www.sullivan-county.com/islam/israel1948.htm>

Chapter 17: The Position of the Fourth International on the 1948 War ¹⁵³

Hitler's rise to power in 1933 had a cataclysmic effect on the workers' movement, both in Germany itself and internationally. The social-democrats' failure to combat it seriously, combined with the Stalinists' stubborn refusal to use united front tactics to defend against the fascist danger, resulted in a tremendous defeat. After this defeat the CI turned to Popular front class collaboration strategy and in response, Trotsky declared the CI dead.

Such class-collaborationist policy resulted in the creation of alliances of the USSR with Great Powers (first Western imperialist like France and Britain in 1936-39, then Hitler-Germany 1939-41 and then, again, the Western imperialist 1941-47). Consequently, the Stalinist parties all over the world saw these imperialist allies of the USSR as political partners and subordinated the class struggle and the anti-colonial liberation struggle against them to the superior interest of the alliance. This resulted in the repeated betrayal of numerous class struggles and popular uprisings. This resulted in a situation after World War II which was characterized by a combination of sharp class struggles and an extraordinary crisis of revolutionary leadership.

The Zionist war in 1948 took place a few years after the end of the Second World War. Towards the end and following the end of WWII, the imperialists ruling classes feared a new revolutionary wave like the one which spread across Europe and beyond, including in Egypt following World War I. It was a wave that opened the doors for the possible victory of Bolshevism. A leading conservative politician in Britain, Quintin Hogg, expressed the capitalist's fear and their readiness to do everything possible in order to contain the working class revolution, in 1943 in the following words: *"We must give them reforms or they will give us revolution."* ¹⁵⁴

Indeed a working class revolutionary wave erupted in Europe and in the colonies and semi-colonies in Africa and Latin America at the end of WWII. The revolutionary Fourth International understood the contradictions and difficulties of the revolutionary struggle in Europe. Such wrote George Novack, one of the leading US-Trotskyists:

"The final stage of the war gave rise to a mighty offensive of the masses beginning in

153 This chapter as well as the next one is largely based on a pamphlet which we published some years ago. See Yossi Schwartz: Israel's War of 1948 and the Degeneration of the Fourth International, <http://the-isleague.com/1948-war-5-2013/> and <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/africa-and-middle-east/israel-s-war-of-1948/>

154 Quoted in Sabby Sagall: Democracy: Their System, Our Fight; in Socialist Review, January 2005, <http://www.socialistreview.org.uk/article.php?articlenumber=9191>

Italy and extending to all the occupied countries. The workers of Italy, France, Belgium, Greece, Holland acquired arms and created their own military formations; took possession in many places of the factories, means of transportation, etc.; established popular control over the distribution of food, the dispensing of justice, the administration of local affairs. These embryonic elements of dual power, if coordinated, developed and expanded, could have provided the basis for the complete overturn of capitalist rule and the institution of the sovereignty of the toiling masses in these countries.

Three main factors prevented the victorious consummation of the uprising of the workers. First, the full weight of the preponderant military forces of the Anglo-American invaders in counter-revolutionary alliance with the Kremlin was flung against the insurgent masses to arrest their struggles. The Big Three conspired to set up puppet regimes obedient to their will. Second, the Stalinist and Socialist parties which commanded the allegiance of the working masses worked hand in glove with the Allied powers to save capitalist rule by disarming the workers militarily and politically. Third, the Trotskyist groups and parties were too weak and immature to intervene as a decisive force and head off this disaster.

For these reasons the first wave of revolution fell short of its goal throughout Western Europe. The bloody crushing of the ELAS-EAM in Greece, combined with the cowardly capitulation of its Stalinist leadership before the British-backed capitalist monarchist counter-revolution, marked the close of this first period. Since then a marked recession in the revolutionary tide has set in. The repulse of the proletarian offensive has afforded the capitalist rulers a breathing spell and enabled them to regain a transitory and precarious equilibrium.

Aided by Anglo-American imperialism and the complicity of the Stalinist and Socialist misleaders, the Western European bourgeoisie are utilizing this pause to strengthen their shaken positions, to further undermine the power of the proletariat, and to prepare for the launching of their own counter-offensives. The capitalists, the church, the army are mobilizing their forces to fortify and reestablish their dictatorial rule. In Belgium they are plotting to bring back King Leopold. In France they support de Gaulle's drive to legitimize and buttress his Bonapartist aspirations. Under British tutelage in Italy and Greece the monarchists and other reactionaries are displaying growing impudence and activity." ¹⁵⁵

The repression of the revolutionary uprisings in the colonies and the semi-colonies was very severe. In some cases the imperialists managed to defeat the working class revolutionary uprisings. In other countries like in China they were able with the help of the Nationalists and the Stalinists to prevent a working-class revolution but could not totally defeat the revolution and this explains the victory of the Stalinist peasantry-based revolution with the active participation of the working class in 1949. The victorious revolution in China led to

155 George Novack (under the pseudonym William F. Warde): Revolutionary Policy in Western Europe: An Answer to Comrade Morrow, in: Fourth International, New York, January 1946, Volume VII, No. 1, <http://www.marxists.org/history/etol/document/fi/1938-1949/ww/1946-ww01.htm>

the formation of the degenerated workers state. This means a state where it was necessary for the working class to overthrow by a political revolution the Stalinists in order to open the road to socialism. As this did not happen China today is a capitalist-imperialist state.¹⁵⁶

The reactionary results of the war of 1948 in Palestine were part of the defeat of the revolutionary tide in the “Third World”. Any attempt to understand this war in isolation and outside the historical context is a blind alley.

Shachtmanite Right-Wing Centrism supports Israel’s reactionary War in 1948

The political programs of some of the centrists who call themselves Trotskyites on the question of the socialist revolution in Palestine are rooted in the positions of the Fourth International (FI) and of the Shachtmanites split from the FI in that period. The FI was already making one centrist failure in 1941, conducted by the SWP during the Minneapolis trial in October 1941 when Cannon expressed concessions to Defensiveness and Social Patriotism. Although the Fourth International followed by and large a revolutionary course during the WWII, its degeneration developed later on to the extreme. This degeneration process towards centrism became strongly apparent – in addition to the shameful failure in the Israel-Palestine War in 1948 – in the “Open Letter” to Tito and the political support to Mao Zedong, while denouncing the Chinese Trotskyists in 1948. The position of others who call themselves Trotskyists is influenced by the Shachtmanites who stood to the right of the FI.¹⁵⁷

The FI did not take a position on the war when it broke out. This by itself is a symptom of degeneration. It took months before the FI came up with a political position and it was wrong. Clearly as a fast degenerating organization, an organization transforming into a centrist organization, it was already unable to examine the war from the perspective of the revolutionary international working class. It defended the right of self-determination of the Israelis though it opposed the partition and it took the position of revolutionary defeatism both for Israel and the Arab states.

In the real world it is impossible to support the right of self-determination for both the Israelis and the Palestinians. One has to choose a side either for the

156 On China’s transformation into an emerging imperialist power see chapter 10 in our book Michael Pröbsting: *The Great Robbery of the South. Continuity and Changes in the Super-Exploitation of the Semi-Colonial World by Monopoly Capital. Consequences for the Marxist Theory of Imperialism*, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/great-robbery-of-the-south/>.

157 On the degeneration process of the Fourth International see *Workers Power (Britain): The Death Agony of the Fourth International*, London 1983, Chapter „The epigones destroy Trotsky’s International, 1940-1953”, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/death-agony-of-the-fourth-international-1983/>

settler colonialists or for the oppressed colonized Palestinians. To support the right of self-determination means to support the right to set up a state. A Zionist state even in parts of Palestine could be formed only by the stealing of Palestinians lands. Not only this but any Zionist state with a majority of Jews meant to expel most Palestinians from the Zionist territory. This was clear already in 1937 with the recommendation of Peel Commission calling for the partition plan that at the same time called for the removal of a quarter of million Palestinians. Those who support today the existence of Israel oppose the full right of the return of the Palestinian refugees whom Israel expelled in 1947-48.

The Shachtmanites, who split from the FI in 1940, elaborated their position on the emerging Zionist state in their theoretical journal *New International* (which they appropriated after the split with the Fourth International in 1940). They supported the right of self-determination for Israel and opposed the Arab states in the war. The FI on the other hand opposed the partition and took the position of revolutionary defeat for the Zionists and the Arab states.

Let us examine more closely the positions of the FI, the Trotskyists in Palestine – the Revolutionary Communist League (RCL) – and of the Shachtmanites.

Hal Draper, a Shachtmanite, wrote in July 1948 in the *New International*, which by then was already a right wing centrist organ, that it would be better if the partition plan was rejected. However since it was not rejected, Draper continues, it is necessary to defend Israel's right to exist as a reflection of the principle of the right of self-determination to all nations. In light of this right it is necessary to defend Israel against the reactionary Arab states that want to prevent the implementation of this right. This was – according to the Shachtmanites – also the Bolshevik policy in the case of Finland. Then he turned against the FI and writes:

“What, however, shall we say of self-styled socialists who do not make even this beginning? We are thinking of the Socialist Workers Party group (Cannonites), which finally had a few words to say about the Palestine situation in the May 31 issue of its Militant. They argue for supporting neither side. The result is pitiful and is worthwhile taking up only for the purposes of a Marxist lesson on how not to approach the question.

This lesson is simple enough: Marxists do not decide to support or oppose a war merely on the basis of whether they like or do not like the politics of the leaders of the state. Marxism has made this clear often enough: in supporting China's war against Japan, the Spanish loyalist government's war against Franco, the Negus' war against Mussolini.

The question which we have asked, following Lenin's method, was: What politics does this war flow from? War – so goes the platitude – is the continuation of politics by other, forceful, means. In the case of every concrete war, we try to analyze concretely the politics of which that war is the continuation. The Spanish loyalist government was an imperialist government; it exploited Morocco and oppressed the peasants (and shot them down when they revolted!). But when the Franco fascists sought to overthrow even this miserable government, we called for its defense – in our own way, by revo-

lutionary means, and without giving the slightest political support to the bourgeois People's Front leaders – because our analysis of the concreteness of events showed that the anti-Franco war did not flow from the loyalist government's imperialist character but from the fascists' attack upon its democratic base.

This was ABC once. But the Cannonites' views seem to be founded solely upon an easy proof of the reactionary character of the Zionist leadership of the Jews: it "threatens to provoke new pogroms against the Jews and involve them in new calamities," it "must inevitably become a tool of American imperialism," it "solidifies the position of the reactionary Arab rulers and enables them to pervert the social struggle in their own countries into a communal struggle between the Arab and Jewish peoples." All very true, and precisely the reason why defense of the Jews' right to self-determination cannot mean support to these Zionist leaders or their policies. It was just as true that Chiang Kai-shek's war against Japan was used by him to try to gloss over and sidetrack the social struggle behind his own lines.

But don't the Jewish people have "the right to self-determination and statehood as other peoples?" Their full answer:

Yes – but even if we abstract this question from its aforementioned social reality, the fact remains they cannot carve out a state at the expense of the national rights of the Arab peoples. This is not self-determination, but conquest of another people's territory.

A dishonest reply. (1) It means that the Jews have a right to self-determination but no right to exercise it. This does not make sense. One may, as we said, advise against its exercise in favor of a different course; but it is pure fakery to grant the right and in the same breath denounce its exercise as "conquest of another people's territory." (2) If the Jews have the right to self-determination, what territory can they "self-determine themselves" in without infringing upon the national rights of the Arab people? Is there any? Obviously none, it appears from the argument. What then does the "Yes" mean?

The only honest answer would be to deny that the Jews have any right to self-determination in Palestine – and to explain why they thus differ from other peoples. The SWP cannot do the latter and so they wisely, if hypocritically, refrain from asserting the former.

If the setting up of the Jewish state was "conquest of another people's territory" and an attack on the "national rights" of the Arab peoples, there can be only one conclusion: it is the Arab peoples, then, who have the right to defend themselves against this unprovoked aggression. How can this conclusion be avoided? Certainly not by arguing that the leaders of these (attacked) Arab peoples are no-goods! Yet this is exactly how our subjects evade the responsibility of coming out four-square for the Arab invasion:

They (the Arab rulers), are, by their anti-Jewish war, (what? isn't it a war of defense against an unprovoked attempt at conquest? – H.D.) trying to divert the struggle against imperialism, and utilizing the aspirations of the Arab masses for national freedom, to smother the social opposition to their tyrannical rule.

Of course, of course – but in a war of defense against conquest by "tools of American imperialism," it would be the duty of socialists to fight the Arab rulers by demanding, not merely prosecution of the war, but consistent, uncompromising prosecution of the

war ... opposition to a rotten compromise with the Israelis, for example, opposition to any cessation of the conflict short of complete reconquest of the whole territory of Palestine, war to the bitter end ... just as our Chinese comrades advocated, as against the compromising bourgeois leaders, in the war against Japan. Our subjects shrink from this conclusion, for unaccountable reasons. This, however, is the only consistent alternative to our own consistent policy." ¹⁵⁸

The question to ask people who argue along the line of Hal Draper is very simple: Where do you take the lofty absolute principle of defense of the right of self-determination to all nations from? Can you find it in Marx? Of course you cannot. Marx is on the record for opposing the demand for self-determination of the Slave owners in the South during the American civil war. In 1848, Marx and Engels refused to support the right of self-determination of the Southern Slaves because it would have served the interests of the Russian Tsar that with British imperialism were the pillars of reaction. Did you take it from Lenin? Of course you cannot. Lenin was for smashing the independence of Poland under the right wing nationalists who joined the imperialist attack on the Russian revolution in 1920. Marxists do not defend the right of self-determination of the imperialists that oppress nations but only of oppressed nations. ¹⁵⁹

Once we remove the nonsense about holy principles and look at every question from the perspective of what policy advances the interest of the international working class we must conclude that the right position in 1948 was for revolutionary defeat for Israel and for revolutionary defense of the Arab states. "Support them in the military confrontation without giving them any political support as we could not trust them to lead the struggle against the imperialists and against the Zionists!" This would have been the correct slogan. Only the revolutionary working class can be trusted to carry out this task. This is also the position which both the ISL and the RCIT always took.

Draper was right of course to argue that the only answer to his pro-Zionist position was a revolutionary position that denies the right of self-determination to the reactionary side and that the Cannonites were unable at that time to hold to revolutionary perspective and position.

158 Hal Draper: How to Defend Israel. A Political Program for Israeli Socialists; in: New International, Vol.14 No.5, July 1948, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/draper/1948/07/israel.htm>

159 See on this Michael Pröbsting: On some Questions of the Zionist Oppression and the Permanent Revolution in Palestine. Thoughts on some exceptionalities of the Israeli state, the national oppression of the Palestinian people and its consequences for the program of the Bolshevik-Communists in Palestine, May 2013, www.thecommunists.net/theory/permanent-revolution-in-palestine. In this document we analyze a number of theoretical questions concerning the perspective of Permanent Revolution in Palestine including the attitude of Marxism towards the right of national self-determination.

The Increasingly Centrist Fourth International Remains Neutral in the 1948 War

Only more than a year later Munier (Gabriel Baer) of the RCL and the FI replied to Draper. He insisted and correctly so that it is an illusion to think (1) that imperialism was defeated by the creation of a new independent state in an anti-imperialist struggle; or (2) that the existence of this Jewish State has a progressive influence on the working-class and the labor movement in the Arab countries of the Middle East; and (3) that it is important to make clear to every socialist in the world that without the support of Anglo-American imperialism the State of Israel could not have been founded. He writes:

*“Had not the US delegation to the UN influenced and bribed a certain number of delegations of small states, Haiti, Philippines and others; had not the US government allowed Israel, to be supplied with money and materials so it could pay in dollars for Czechoslovakian arms; had it not given the new state recognition within a few hours of its creation; had not the British army tolerated the opening of the road to Jerusalem by conquest and evacuation of the Arab villages along this road (on March 2, 1948, British troops joined the Hagana to break up an Arab block at Bab al Wad, then early in April it failed to intervene when military actions along the road began, then on April 6 the British brought some supply trains into the city, etc.); had the British army not come to the rescue of the Jewish settlements Dan and Kfar Szold in Upper Galilee on the 9th of January; and last but not least, had not the first truce which was imposed by the UN in June 1948 saved Jewish Jerusalem from starvation and military collapse – had not all this happened the State of Israel could not have come into being.”*¹⁶⁰

Yet, instead of pointing to the military role of Zionism that acts to terrorize the Arab masses to force them to submit to imperialism, he argues a strange and weak argument that reflects the pressure of Zionism on the RCL: Instead of seeing the hate of the Arab masses against the Zionist state as a form of anti-imperialist resistance, he saw it as misdirected chauvinism manipulated by the imperialists:

“The aim of Anglo-American imperialism was to create a force which would play the same role in the framework of the Middle East as a whole that Zionism had played for 30 years in Palestine. As a focus for chauvinist hate it would serve to divert the revolutionary struggles of the Middle Eastern Arab masses from anti-imperialist into racial or religious channels.”

He continues and he points out to the anti-imperialist mass pressure in the Arab states: *“But something went wrong with the plan in its initial stage in most of the Arab countries: demonstrations were directed mainly against foreign companies*

¹⁶⁰ This and the following quotes from Gabriel Baer (under the pseudonym S. Munier): Zionism and the Middle East. The Aftermath of the Jewish-Arab War; in: Fourth International, Vol.10 No.9, October 1949, <http://www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/fi/vol10/no09/munier.htm>

and establishments, including the Soviet Union because of its support of partition, and the Communist Party, whose offices in Damascus were wrecked."

This pressure of the Arab masses was the reason the rulers of the Arab states went to war with Israel. Today this is even recognized by Zionist historians like Benny Morris:

*"The massacre and the way it was trumpeted in the Arab media added to the pressure on the Arab states' leaders to aid the embattled Palestinians and hardened their resolve to invade Palestine. The news had aroused great public indignation – which the leaders were unable to ignore."*¹⁶¹

To avoid this conclusion Munier argues: *"Only where they ruled directly did the British succeed at the time in turning these riots against the Jewish minority, e.g., in the British Crown-Colony of Aden anti-partition demonstrators killed 75 Jews and wounded many more."*

He goes on and claims that the Arab states were tools of imperialism against Israel:

"The fighting between Jews and Arabs in Palestine early in 1948 showed clearly that, on the Palestinian scale, the Jews were militarily stronger. The cause for Arab weakness was not only because of the feudal structure of Arab society in general, but also the reactionary Arab leadership which had deliberately prevented the growth of any mass movement similar to that of 1936-39 in fear of the working class which had emerged during World War II. The question was now: Will the Arab governments of the surrounding countries intervene?"

On January 12, 1948, British diplomatic sources in London confirmed the report that Great Britain was supplying arms to Egypt, Iraq and Trans-Jordan according to "treaties," but still the will and ability of these governments to invade Palestine remained doubtful. They needed new encouragement which came in the form of the American declaration at the UN in March 1948 renouncing partition and favoring trusteeship. This declaration, together with the conspicuous helplessness of the UN apparatus to implement its own decision, induced the governments of the Middle East to make a bid for the position of sole agent of Anglo-American imperialism in the Middle East to the exclusion of the Zionist leadership."

Then to avoid the full implication of his narrative which leads to the defense of Israel against the Arabs, he turns around and argues: *"But in the course of their invasion, after May 15, when the Trans-Jordan Arab Legion threatened to defeat Jewish Jerusalem and the Egyptian army reached the southern Jewish colonies on the gateway to Tel Aviv, the first truce was imposed giving the Jews a needed respite to organize their army, to import weapons and to supply Jerusalem. The aim of the truce was to create a balance of power, not to create the opportunity for a decisive military victory of the Jews over the Arab armies. British officers continued to serve with the Arab Legion, and Egypt and Syria continued to buy arms in several European Marshall Plan countries. New truces were imposed as the need arose to maintain this balance of power."*

161 Benny Morris: *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, New York 2004, p. 239

The last one was imposed when Israeli forces moved into Egyptian territory and threatened the annihilation of the whole Egyptian force in Palestine, whose collapse would have had serious social repercussions in Egypt. In the meantime the creation of the Arab refugee problem, together with quarrels over boundaries, resulted in enough tension between Israel and the Arab countries for American diplomacy to undertake the "pacification" of the Middle East for the time being by the conclusion of a "permanent truce" in Rhodes."

As a result of this wrong analysis, the RCL in Palestine had a wrong perspective and a program, and as result, had the wrong strategy and tactics from its inception. If prior to WWII there were forces within the FI that opposed their pro-Zionist line the FI was unable to do so in 1948.

Chapter 18: The Birth of Palestinian Trotskyism

For Jewish workers, the impact of the rise of Nazism to power on their physical well-being and their political consciousness was especially sharp. The defeat helped the Zionist nationalist propaganda that most politically conscious Jews had rejected: that anti-Semitism among non-Jews was inevitable and futile to confront. For a much smaller number, Trotsky's prescient prediction of the catastrophe that would result if the Communists failed to correct their methods resulted in a greater interest in and sympathy for Trotskyism.

Both trends had an impact within Palestine. On the one hand, among left Zionists, whose sympathies for the Soviet Union had previously inclined them towards Stalinism, it became increasingly common to read Trotsky's writings. Within parties such as the Left "Poale Tsiyon" (Workers of Zion), it was not unusual to find youth who proclaimed themselves Trotskyists one moment, and loyal, though questioning, Zionists the next. Yet, alongside this leftward polarization, Jewish immigration and Zionist settlement increased dramatically during the 1930s.

Of course, not all Jewish immigration to Palestine in this period was voluntary and Zionist in character. For all but the wealthiest and most famous refugees from Nazi terror, imperialist countries such as the U.S. and Britain offered only a closed door. For many desperate Jews, immigration to Palestine was an unfortunate necessity. From among these numbers, a small number of Trotskyist Jews from Germany settled in 1933. These exiles engaged in modest ventures, printing Trotsky's writings in German and Yiddish, and making the first attempts to translate them into Hebrew.

Among the young left-Zionists who were won to Trotskyism, the most significant was Ygael Gluckstein. In English-language publications of the FI, he was known as "L. Rock," and later in life he would be known as Tony Cliff, founder and leader of the British SWP. Cliff himself participated in the Chugim Marxistim (Marxist Circles), a youth organization led by Zeev Abramovitch and Yitzhak Yitzhaki, associated with the Poalei Tziyon Smol. His writing of that period reflects this fact. When the Communist Party took their ultra-left turn after 1929 while the RCL continued with their politics reflecting the Zionist pressure on the organization, their road to the Arab workers was blocked. The Communist Party politics of the Popular Front, which led them to politically supporting the reactionary leadership of the revolutionary Palestinian mass uprising in 1936-39, was an open betrayal of the working class.

However, the RCL was incapable of challenging the PKP influence amongst the Arab workers because it did not possess a revolutionary understanding and program for Palestine. It was blinded by a superficial understanding of the "Jewish-Arab conflict" as a confrontation between two equally reactionary

nationalist camps. They failed to see the colonial settler nature of Zionism, the subsequent real national oppression of the Arabs by the Zionists and hence the justified national liberation struggle of the Arab masses against the Zionists (which was betrayed by the Arab bourgeoisie and landlords).

This programmatic failure of the Trotskyists in Palestine – which reminds us of Lenin’s polemics against “imperialist economism” – became completely evident in an article by the RCL leader Tony Cliff in November 1938. In a chapter entitled “The Jewish-Arab conflict”, Cliff wrote:

“What are the causes of this conflict? Two answers are advanced in Palestine. The Zionist groups say that the conflict is simply the collision of feudalism and reaction with the progressive forces of capitalism. The Arab nationalists and their Stalinist supporters claim that the collision is between the Arab liberation movement and Zionism.

But the first explanation is wrong because the fact of the conflict between feudalism and capitalism does not explain the Arab national movement in Palestine. There are parallel manifestations of nationalism in the adjacent countries (Syria, Egypt). Moreover it does not explain how a clique of effendis succeeded in getting control over a militant national movement of hundreds of thousands. It is clear that the basis of the antagonism of the Arab masses to the Jewish population does not arise from the fact that the latter have brought in a higher standard of living and have created a modern labour movement. Their principal opposition arises from the fact that they see in the Jewish population the bearers of Zionism, that political system based upon national exclusivism, and hostility to the aspirations of the Arab masses to independence and democratization of the political regime.

The second view, the claim of the Arab nationalists, is likewise erroneous. It does not take into consideration that there really is a conflict between feudalism and capitalist development, secondly, that inside the nationalist movement there is an Arab bourgeoisie which in competition with the closed Jewish economy develops exclusivist Arab tendencies, and thirdly, that the Jewish population is no integral part of the imperialist camp.

What follows therefore is that the collision in the Arab-Jewish conflict is between two national exclusivist movements (between Zionism and the feudal, semi-bourgeois Arab leadership on the one hand, and on the other the struggle of the Arab masses against Zionism). The consistent struggle for the easing up of this conflict is therefore only possible on the basis of the struggle against Zionism, against Arab national exclusivism and anti-Jewish actions, against imperialism, for the democratisation of the country and its political independence.”¹⁶²

So we see the RCL leader adhering to an idealist, not dialectical-materialist method, which equates both Zionist and Arab nationalism as “national exclusivism” without understanding the difference between an oppressed nation and a colonial settler oppressor nation. Consequently, Cliff could not see the important difference between the nationalism of an oppressed nation and the

162 Tony Cliff (under the pseudonym L. Rock): The Jewish-Arab Conflict, in: New International, November 1938, www.marxists.org/archive/cliff/works/1938/11/jew-arab.htm

nationalism of a colonial settler oppressor nation.

However, as Lenin explained at the Second Congress of the Communist International, recognition of this difference – which is so essential in the imperialist epoch – is a precondition to understand and act as a Marxist: *“First, what is the cardinal idea underlying our theses? It is the distinction between oppressed and oppressor nations. Unlike the Second International and bourgeois democracy, we emphasize this distinction.”*¹⁶³

As a result of its failure, the RCL saw in the Arab Uprising 1936-39 mainly a pogrom against the Jews and remained on the sidelines of history. It failed to assimilate the revolutionary position of the Fourth International which supported the Arab Uprising in 1936-39:

*“The struggle against war and its social source, capitalism, presupposes direct, active, unequivocal support to the oppressed colonial peoples in their struggles and wars against imperialism. A “neutral” position is tantamount to support of imperialism. Yet, among the announced adherents of the London Bureau congress are found ILPers who advocate leaving the courageous Ethiopian warriors against marauding Italian fascism in the lurch on the grounds of “neutrality,” and “Left” Poale Zionists who are even at this moment leaning upon British imperialism in its savage campaign against the legitimate, even if confused, struggle of the Arab peasantry.”*¹⁶⁴

But when the Fourth International degenerated after the Second World War as a revolutionary Marxist International, this meant the political end of the RCL. Had the Fourth International not degenerated, it would have been possible that the RCL or some of it would be saved for the working class revolution. However this was not the case. In 1948, the FI, among other political mistakes, refused to give military support to the Arab armies in the war of 1948. In 1952, the FI finally crossed the Rubicon when the Bolivian section supported the Popular Front almost without any opposition.

There is no doubt that Cliff and his comrades tried to break away from Zionism, but they could not make the break. Facing repression by the British military government, social ostracism and physical attack by Zionists, and understandable mistrust by Arab workers, the small and entirely Jewish initial core of Palestinian Trotskyists grew modestly over the years and gradually gained a hearing among Arab workers and intellectuals. They left behind documents that reflect the efforts of a young and inexperienced Marxist organization to come to grips with a difficult, almost unprecedented, political situation. Yet some of their mistakes would later be picked up and magnified by renegades from and pretenders to Trotskyism. This makes the criticism all the more necessary.

163 V. I. Lenin: Report of the Commission on the National and the Colonial Questions (at the Second Congress of the Communist International 1920); in: LCW 31, p. 240, <http://marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/jul/x03.htm#fw3>

164 Fourth International: Resolution on the Antiwar Congress of the London Bureau (1936), in: Documents of the Fourth International, New York 1973, p. 99

Tony Cliff while in Palestine, “wrote a series of three articles for the American Trotskyist monthly *New International: British Policy in Palestine* (October 1938), *The Jewish-Arab Conflict* (November 1938), and *Class Politics in Palestine* (June 1939). I used the pseudonym L. Rock. So, let us examine these articles.

On The Palestinian Revolt in 1929

These articles did not call on the Jewish workers to join the Arab workers in the struggle against British imperialism and Zionist colonialism, as Cliff claimed in his autobiography. In these articles he blamed the British for inciting national hatred between the two peoples in Palestine, while characterizing the Arab masses’ uprising against the British and the Zionists as a pogrom against the Jews.

On the British Policy in Palestine Cliff wrote: *“British policy in this country is based on a system of divide and rule, the system of inciting national hatreds between the two peoples in the country in order to assure itself the position of arbitrator. The facts which indicate the extent to which the British provoke national antagonisms are too numerous to recite here. We must content ourselves with a few typical instances. From the beginning of British rule in Palestine to the present there have been four bloody attacks on the Jews – 1920, 1921, 1929 and 1936-38. (...) In 1928 the government began to proclaim the provocative decrees concerning the juridical status of the Wailing Wall (sacred to orthodox Jews) thereby opening the door to the chauvinistic religious propaganda of a gang of effendis and leading to the pogroms of 1929 under the slogan of “Defend the Holy Places.” Simultaneously the government by this means strengthened the influence of the religious chauvinist element among the Jews (at that time there arose the “Commissions for the Defense of the Wailing Wall”).”*¹⁶⁵

This account was very different from reality. It was fed by the Zionist press and political pressures as we saw. In his article on the events of 1929 Cliff wrote: *“Jewish immigration represents a basic factor in the process of accelerating capitalist development. The growth of a Jewish and Arab working class which, considered historically, represent a serious anti-imperialist force is bound up with Jewish immigration into the country”*¹⁶⁶

And in addition he wrote: *“(It) is evident that the British know full well how to exploit the elementary needs of the Jewish worker, namely immigration and colonization, neither of which contradicts the real necessities of the Arab masses, in order to raise a barrier of hate between the producers of both peoples and to assure itself of the dependence of the Jewish population”*

165 Tony Cliff (under the pseudonym L. Rock): *British Policy in Palestine*, in: *New International*, October 1938, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/cliff/works/1938/10/britpol.htm>

166 Tony Cliff (under the pseudonym L. Rock): *British Policy in Palestine*, in: *New International*, October 1938, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/cliff/works/1938/10/britpol.htm>

Furthermore Tony Cliff shows in the same article political sympathy to some Palestinians who were pro Zionist element and he writes in the same article: *“The government has systematically prevented all attempts at effecting a reconciliation of the two peoples. An Arab party was organized in Haifa, which raised the slogan of “Peace between the Jews and Arabs” (it was a bourgeois liberal party) and counted among its members even the Arab mayor of the city. The British government together with the feudal Arab leadership and the Zionist organization were responsible for the defeat of this party in subsequent elections, and brought such pressure to bear on its members that it was dissolved”.*

In fact, the Mayor of Haifa, Hasan Shukri, was a Zionist collaborator. In his article Cliff walked in his uncle Chaim Margalio Kalvarisky’s shoes. We can learn who was Hasan Shukri, from The Canadian Jewish News that carried this information: *“It goes without saying that Palestinian Arabs were opposed to Zionism. But from the moment they mounted a concerted campaign to fight it, the Palestinians split into two warring camps, much to the benefit of the Yishuv, the Jewish community in Palestine. The mainstream camp, led by Mohammed Amin al-Husseini, the grand mufti of Jerusalem, could not reconcile itself to the Zionist project, whose ultimate goal was Jewish statehood. The accommodationist camp, which was identified with his bitter rival, the Nashashibi family, was pragmatic and open to coexistence with the Zionists, believing that they were simply too strong to be defeated. (...)*

The Balfour Declaration, issued by the British government on Nov. 2, 1917, galvanized the Palestinians, prompting them to form nationalist organizations, mount anti-Zionist demonstrations and carry out attacks against Jews. In response, Zionist leaders – spearheaded by Chaim Margalio Kalvarisky, a land purchaser for the Jewish Colonization Association, and Col. Frederick Kisch, a retired British intelligence officer and head of the Zionist executive’s political department – devised a counter-strategy. Chaim Weizmann, the president of the World Zionist Organization, was also involved in this campaign. (...)

The Palestinians who chose co-operation were driven by various motives. Some assumed that the Zionist movement was an arm of the British Mandate and, therefore, should be cultivated. Still other Palestinians, particularly land dealers and job seekers, were animated by personal gain. Palestinians who considered themselves nationalists but who were opposed to the Hussein leadership were also targeted by Zionist strategists. Palestinians who had Jewish friends and who were repelled by the violence of Palestinians also tended to favour co-operation. With this in mind, Kalvarisky established the Muslim National Associations, a loose network of Palestinian political parties. But the concept did not work, and after more than a decade, he abandoned the idea altogether. (...)

Zionists tried to shape Arab public opinion by subsidizing Palestinian newspapers in Jaffa and Jerusalem and by recruiting writers who would sing the praises of Arab-Jewish co-operation and brotherhood. But as Cohen suggests, this strategy was only partially successful. (...) On another front, the Zionist movement tried to recruit Palestinian public figures and informers. The first Palestinian Arab accused of collaboration,

a village elder from the Mt. Hebron area, was murdered in 1929. The mayor of Haifa, Hasan Shukri, a symbol of coexistence, survived an attempt on his life".¹⁶⁷

On The Arab Uprising in 1936-39

The Fourth International took a revolutionary position on the Arab Uprising in 1936-39 and condemned the "Left" Poale Zionists who are even at this moment leaning upon British imperialism in its savage campaign against the legitimate, even if confused, struggle of the Arab peasantry." This differentiated the Fourth International from Cliff, who saw in the 1936-39 revolt a pogrom against the Jews. Revolutionaries at that time called to open the gates of the West for the Jews, but not to support Jewish settlers' colonization.

In the year 2000, the SWP admitted that in their journal: *"In the year of the 1936 events, when the Arab uprising took place, corpses of victims were lying in the streets, and difficult questions were burning. Gluckstein wrote an article in the Chugim paper Eamifneh (At the Turning Point) in which he argued that Zionism from a class standpoint brought blessings to the country and the Arab fellah. This article was brought to England 30 years later by Professor Yehoshua Porat, who used it in sharp debate with Tony Cliff, who by then would not have dreamt of saying such a thing. In 1936 he was still torn between Zionism and socialism, and looked to Marx for the answers to the shocking phenomenon of a people returning to its country because of real and difficult suffering, who in their turn imposed suffering on other people: 'I was then for the Arab right of self-determination and also for the right of the Jewish refugees to come to Palestine."*¹⁶⁸

Cliff began his article Class Politics in Palestine (June 1939) by referring to the revolutionary Marxist positions on the national question He wrote: *"All wings of the Zionist movement hold firmly to the theory that no anti-imperialist liberation movement exists in Palestine and that the existing Arab movement is the product of the propaganda of the Arab feudalists, and the agents of German and Italian fascism. This is said not only by the fascist Zionists and the liberal bourgeoisie, but also by the reformists and even the members of the London Bureau – "Poale Zion and Marxist Circle" and the "Hashomer Hazair". As grounds for this view they use three arguments: (a) at the head of the Arabian movement stand feudalists for the most part, hence the movement is reactionary; (b) a movement that practices terrorism against the Jewish population, and is mainly against Jewish workers, is nothing but a pogrom movement; (c) a movement supported by Hitler and Mussolini is necessarily reactionary and fascistic. These arguments are wrong from the ground up and distort the reality, inasmuch as they are calculated to cover up more or less Zionist aspirations and an alliance with oppressive British imperialism.*

167 Hasan Shukri: Zionist movement was aided by Palestinians, The Canadian Jewish News, 22 May 2008, <http://cjnews.com/node/81118>

168 Ygal Sarneh: A revolutionary life; in: International Socialism Journal, Issue 87, Summer 2000, p. 143, <http://pubs.socialistreviewindex.org.uk/isj87/sarneh.htm>

Have not many national movements been led by feudalists (e.g. Abd-el Krim in Morocco, the Syrian and Egyptian national movements in their inception, etc.)? Were not national liberation movements at the beginning of their development, when they were under feudal leadership, often directed against members of other nationalities in their land (Ireland, formerly also India, the Boxer uprising in China, etc.)? And are not national liberation movements exploited largely by other imperialist forces that are hostile to the imperialism against which the movement is directed? There is no doubt that the Arab national movement in Palestine, like its parallels in other colonial countries, is historically essentially an anti-imperialist movement.”¹⁶⁹

The Debate with the South African Workers Party (WPSA)

But then Cliff continued in this article not by supporting the Palestinian anti-imperialist movement, not even by calling at least for a section of the Jewish workers in Palestine to join the Arab anti-imperialist struggle. Instead he referred to the racist settlers workers as the revolutionary subjective of history, and he called for an imaginary unity between the Arab and the Jewish settlers. He rejected the position of the Trotskyists in South Africa and wrote:

“Palestine cannot emancipate itself from the imperialist yoke unless a unification of the Arab and Jewish masses takes place, for the latter represent a third of the population, the Jewish workers are half of the Palestine working class, and Jewish economy is decisive in many branches of industry. The Jewish toiling masses will not, however, support the anti-imperialist movement if no class differentiation takes place in the Arabian national movement. What is so terrible in the situation in Palestine is that, on the one hand, there is a strong national differentiation between Jews and Arabs and, on the other, the national unity in the Arab camp is very firm. (...)

(An) attempt has been made to compare the position of the Jews in the country with that of the whites in South Africa. This analogy was drawn in order to show that the Jewish worker must not unite with the Arab, as an argument against the international organization of the workers in Palestine. The analogy was then of course seized upon by the PCP in order to show the “imperialistic character” of the Jews in Palestine. We wish to test this analogy in order to show clearly that the Jewish worker in Palestine is not an integral part of the imperialist camp and that his objective interests will lead him to unification with the Arab worker.”

As a result Cliff fully supports Jewish-Zionist settlement in Palestine as a supposedly “anti-imperialist” demand: *“Since the World War, two hostile camps face each other in Palestine, an Arab and a Jewish. The former demands the stopping of Jewish immigration and identifies this demand with the struggle against Zionism. The latter demands the opening of the doors of the country to immigrants and sees therein the essence of Zionism.*

169 Tony Cliff (under the pseudonym L. Rock): Class Politics in Palestine, in: New International, June 1939, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/cliff/works/1939/06/classpol.htm>

Against both these camps there appeared directly after the World War a section of the Comintern which for a number of years adopted an independent internationalist position. The members of the Comintern in Palestine, up to the great turn in the colonial question at the time of the Chinese Revolution, while absolutely opposed to Zionism (against the national boycott, against slogans like the Jewish majority and the Jewish state, alliance with England, etc.), declared at the same time that the Jewish population is not to be identified with Zionism and hence demanded the maximum freedom of movement for Jewish immigration into Palestine. Not only this, but they demanded from the government also material aid for the establishment of the Jewish immigrants in the country. They declared plainly that the struggle of the Arab national movement against Zionism, the Jewish majority, does not require the demand of stopping Jewish immigration, and they justified the unconditional maintenance of the Arab majority. They declared that the struggle against Jewish immigration shifted the anti-imperialist struggle to anti-Jewish rails, and that this was profitable only to English imperialism. They declared plainly that any struggle against Jewish immigration would only strengthen Zionist chauvinism among the Jewish masses.

With the turn to the right in the colonial policy of the Comintern, however, which was also manifested in Palestine, the Communist Party of Palestine, submissive to Stalinism, began the struggle against Jewish immigration, asserting that it was an immigration of conquest, and that the struggle of the Arab national movement was a defensive struggle. But is the correct answer to Jewish aggressive chauvinism, Arabian defensive chauvinism? Unfortunately, there is a similar error in the article from the *Spark*: the struggle of the Arabs against Jewish immigration is a defensive struggle against the conquering Zionist movement, and therefore, even though we are, as socialists, generally in favour of free immigration, it is not necessary in Palestine. The "Hashomer Hat-zair", of the London Bureau, argues similarly: the struggle we are conducting against the political independence of Palestine is a defensive struggle against the aggressive Arab national movement and therefore, even though we are, as socialists, generally in favour of the independence of the colonies, it is not necessary in Palestine.

Without taking a clear internationalist position on the question of Jewish immigration, without a sharp struggle against any oppression of the Arab population by imperialism and Zionism, without a sharp struggle against attempts to suppress Jewish immigration, the establishment of a broad anti-imperialist front is impossible."

A very different position from what he claimed he held in Palestine in his autobiography!

The Trotskyists in South Africa in the WPSA criticized him in their magazine *The Spark* for very good reason. They compared the position of the Jewish settlers in Palestine at that time with the position of white workers in South Africa. They drew the correct conclusions from their analyses – they opposed Zionism, Jewish immigration to Palestine and supported the native Arabs liberation struggle:

"But the Jewish immigration into Palestine is something entirely different. It is an immigration with the avowed aim of trampling upon and destroying the rights of the

*native population in that country. It is an invasion under the protection of imperialism and for the strengthening of imperialism. Zionism – and by this we mean all the Zionist parties, from the Revisionists to the so-called socialists – has openly proclaimed that the aim of this immigration is to attain a majority in Palestine and reduce the Arabs to a minority in a then Jewish State. Against this aim to defeat them politically and economically the Arab people, the natives in Palestine, have waged this war for two and a half years. The immigration question was and still is the pivotal point in their struggle. Not to support the Arabs in this just, defensive demand means to side with British imperialism and its tool, Zionism, against a native oppressed people.”*¹⁷⁰

In reply to another semi-Zionist article of Tony Cliff the WPSA leaders correctly wrote: “Comrade Rock has to admit that the Arab National movement in Palestine is, like its parallel in other colonial countries, an anti-imperialist movement. He has further to admit that the Revolutionary Marxists are in duty bound to support the national liberation movement with all their strength even if the bourgeoisie or the feudalists stand for the time being at its head. The Marxists will of course preserve their party independence and will always point to the proletarian road, etc. So far so good – in theory. But when Comrade Rock comes to practice, he not only does not support this admittedly anti-imperialist movement, but he turns his wrath upon the “Spark” for expressing its great satisfaction with the anti-imperialist struggle of the Arabs, and their united will to attain national liberation.

We regret having to repeat here what we have already said in that article, but it is obviously necessary: ‘Nothing will blind us or distract us from the fundamental issue, namely, the Progressive revolutionary struggle of a colonial people against imperialism. We had and we have no illusions concerning this struggle, whatever the outcome of the present political maneuvers in Palestine may be. Whether British imperialism will succeed by its new move for a round-table conference in breaking the Arab united front (as it succeeded before by a similar move in India), and by corruption succeed in side-tracking the national movement, or whether the present struggle will go on, we are under no illusions. We have no doubt that, so long as the national movement is led and dominated by the Arab national bourgeoisie and clergy, the struggle for liberation cannot be crowned with success. It will terminate in a foul compromise between the national bourgeoisie and imperialism. Time and again this has been proved by history. But, so long as the fight is progressive we have to support it, while at the same time warning the Arab workers of their treacherous bourgeoisie.’ (...)

Unfortunately Comrade Rock is not an internationalist, and nothing could illustrate it more clearly than this last article, where after much juggling with Marxist phraseology and centrist sophistry he comes out openly for the All-Zionist National slogan of unrestricted Jewish immigration! He is not in a position to refute a single one of our arguments against this immigration, which we maintain is not immigration but invasion

¹⁷⁰ The Spark, *Zionism and the Arab Struggle*, originally published in The Spark, the organ of the Workers Party of South Africa (Fourth International), November 1938. Reprinted in The New International, Vol.5, No.2, February 1939, <http://www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/ni/vol05/no02/spark.htm>

*under the protection of, and for the strengthening of Imperialism, with the avowed aim of trampling upon and destroying the rights of the native population of that country, with the aim of reducing the Arabs to a minority in a then Jewish State.”*¹⁷¹

The Workers Party in South Africa took Trotsky's position on South Africa where he called for a Black workers state.¹⁷² The WPSA in South Africa understood that the Zionists are the Afrikaaners in Palestine, while Cliff denied it.

In summary we can say that the WPSA held a basically revolutionary and internationalist position in this conflict, while Tony Cliff and the RCL rather gave in to the Zionist pressure, took a reactionary position (on Jewish colonial migration) and failed to take the side of the Palestinian resistance.

Trotsky's struggle against Cliff and the RCL on the question of revolutionary defeatism before WWII

This tendency of the Tony Cliff/RCL towards centrism became also transparent in their position towards the approaching imperialist war. While in his autobiography Cliff improved upon his actual positions he held in Palestine, in the Tony Cliff archive we can not find the exchange of letters the RCL had with the Russian Left Opposition and with Trotsky that proves that the RCL took a reformist position on the coming second imperialist world war.

Just before the war the RCL in Palestine wrote to Trotsky to express concern over the traditional Bolshevik strategy of 'revolutionary defeatism' according to which the main enemy of the proletariat is always at home and revolutionary activity is to be carried on in wartime even though that may cause the defeat of one's own country.

Trotsky replied to the RCI in a document, dated November, 1938, and which is signed by "Group of Palestinian Bolshevik-Leninists". The RCL's letter appeared in the Editorial Board Bulletin of the Russian Opposition:

"The members of the RCL stated: The general schema is defeatism in all imperialist countries ... Defeatism, according to Lenin's definition, and as it has been generally understood, signifies a desire for defeat and giving aid to the latter. Is that slogan applicable to any imperialist country in any war? In the opinion of the authors, it is no longer applicable.

Two hypothetical warring camps are envisaged: on the one side – Germany, Italy and Japan, and on the other – Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, Spain, China, France, England and the United States. True, such a combination is least likely, but it is not excluded, and therefore the working class must be prepared for it. What are the differ-

171 The Spark: Rebuttal on the Palestine Question; in: The New International, Vol.5 No.10, October 1939, www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/ni/vol05/no10/spark.htm

172 See Leon Trotsky: On the South African Theses (1935); in: Trotsky Writings 1934-35, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1935/04/wpsa.htm>

ences between the last world war and the one we presuppose?

(a) The last war was wholly imperialist ... The specific weight of the Serbian question was far too insignificant ... The war we presuppose is not imperialist on all sides. The difference between Serbia and the Soviet Union is far too obvious. (b) Even if we were to assume that the international reactionary significance of the then monarchy and of modern fascism are equivalent for the world proletariat, with the composition of the warring camps during the last war, there were no particular reasons, for example, among the French workers, for striving precisely for the overthrow of the Hohenzollern monarchy ... (c) However, there is an enormous difference between the historical role of the monarchy in the epoch of ascendant capitalism and the role of fascism ... (d) In the period of the first world war there existed in all countries a revolutionary movement and the objective possibility of conducting a defeatist policy. Fascism has introduced a radical change. It so strangles the working class as hardly to make it possible to comply with Lenin's third condition for defeatist policy, and it is not excluded that the question of revolutionary intervention may arise.

We thus see that the establishment of the bare fact that a given country is imperialist is not sufficient for conducting the necessary revolutionary policy in any war precisely by the methods and slogans of defeatism." ¹⁷³

The Left Opposition in Russia replied to them extremely harsh and unequivocally:

"Our Palestinian Friends have made an obvious and extremely dangerous concession to the social-patriots. (...) The main tendency of the authors of this document is apparently the following: to hold that "defeatism" is obligatory for the leading fascist countries (Germany, Italy), whereas it is necessary to renounce defeatism in countries even of doubtful democratic virtue, but which are at war with the leading fascist countries. That is approximately how the main idea of the document may be worded. In this form, too, it remains false, and an obvious lapse into social-patriotism. (...)

We consider as erroneous to the core the idea of the document that of the three conditions for "defeatist" policy enumerated by Lenin, the third is presumably lacking nowadays, namely, "the possibility of giving mutual support to revolutionary movements in all warring countries". Here the authors are obviously hypnotized by the reported omnipotence of the totalitarian regime. As a matter of fact, the immobility of the German and Italian workers is determined not at all by the omnipotence of the fascist police but by the absence of a program, the loss of faith in old programs and old slogans, and by the prostitution of the Second and Third Internationals. Only in this political atmosphere of disillusionment and decline can the police apparatus work those "miracles" which, sad to say, have produced an excessive impression also on the minds of some of our comrades." ¹⁷⁴

173 Preface of the Editors to Editorial Board of the Bulletin of the Russian Opposition: A Step towards Social-Patriotism. On the Position of the Fourth International toward the Struggle against War and Fascism; in: New International, vol. VI, no. 7 (July 1939), pp. 207-210, www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/ni/vol05/no07/bulletin.htm

174 Leon Trotsky: A Step towards Social-Patriotism; in: Writings of Leon Trotsky 1938-

In the Manifesto against the imperialist Second World War Trotsky wrote: *“But isn’t the working class obliged in the present conditions to aid the democracies in their struggle against German fascism?” That is how the question is put by broad petty-bourgeois circles (...). We reject this policy with indignation. Naturally there exists a difference between the political regimes in bourgeois society just as there is a difference in comfort between various cars in a railway train. But when the whole train is plunging into an abyss, the distinction between decaying democracy and murderous fascism disappears in the face of the collapse of the entire capitalist system.”*¹⁷⁵

The RCL and the 1948 War

In the article “Against the Stream” (1948) the Revolutionary Communist League of Palestine took the following position: *“Each side is “anti-imperialist” to the bone, busy detecting the reactionary – in the opposite camp. And imperialism is always seen – helping the other side. But this kind of exposure is oil on the imperialist fire. For the inveigling policy of imperialism is based upon agents and agencies within both camps. Therefore, we say to the Palestinian people, in reply to the patriotic warmongers: Make this war between Jews and Arabs, which serves the end of imperialism, the common war of both nations against imperialism!*

*This is the only solution guaranteeing real peace. This must be our goal which must be achieved without concessions to the chauvinist mood prevailing at present among the masses. How can that be done? The main enemy is in our own country!” – this was what Karl Liebknecht had to say to the workers when imperialists and social democrats were inciting them to the slaughter of their fellow workers in other countries. In this spirit we say to the Jewish and Arab workers: the enemy is in your own camp! Jewish workers! Get rid of the Zionist provocateurs who tell you to sacrifice yourself on the altar of the state! Arab worker and fellah! Get rid of the chauvinist provocateurs who are getting you into a mess of blood for their own sake and pocket. Workers of the two peoples, unite in a common front against imperialism and its agents! (...) The only way to peace between the two peoples of this country is turning the guns against the instigators of murder in both camps”.*¹⁷⁶

This was not a revolutionary position but, like the RCL’s earlier positions, a semi-Zionist position. The Zionists were fighting to cleanse the country from the Palestinians. Revolutionaries should have called for military support for the Arab armies that went to war against the Zionists under the pressure of the Arab masses. At the same time revolutionaries should have refused any political support for the Arab rulers, demanded them to arm the masses, while

39, pp. 207-212; www.marxists.org/history/etol/newspape/ni/vol05/no07/bulletin.htm

¹⁷⁵ Leon Trotsky: Manifesto of the Fourth International on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian World Revolution; in: Writings of Leon Trotsky 1939-1940, p. 221; www.marxists.org/history/etol/document/fi/1938-1949/emergconf/fi-emerg02.htm

¹⁷⁶ RCL: Against the Stream, Fourth International, May 1948, <http://www.internationalist.org/stream1948.html>

at the same time organizing workers militias and doing revolutionary work in the Arab armies. This combined with raising transitional demands and the full Marxist program could have led to a workers revolution that would change the history of the Middle East and beyond.

With the collapse of the RCL, the revolutionary working class strategy and program were buried in Israel. *Matzpen Marxist* (compass) that was a very known organization in Israel and in the left circles in the world had a centrist program on Palestine. It called for a de-Zionization of Israel as part of the Socialist Federation of the Middle East

“The Socialist Organization in Israel – better known by the name of its paper, Matzpen – was founded in 1962 by a group that formed around four members who had been expelled from the Israeli Communist Party (ICP), having challenged the ICP’s lack of internal democracy and its unquestioning allegiance to the Soviet Union. The organization is committed to a socialist revolution based on councils elected by the workers, is opposed to Zionism and calls for recognition of the Palestinian people’s national rights. In its early years, the main activity of the group’s members was aimed at creating an independent workers’ trade union outside the ambit of the From the beginning, the group’s prominent members were Oded Pilavsky, Akiva Orr, Moshé Machover and Haim Hanegbi. In 1964 Matzpen was joined by a group that included some Arab members that had split from the Haifa branch of the ICP, among whom were Jabra Nicola and Daoud Turki. These, in turn, brought along with them some other Arab and Jewish activists from Haifa and the Galilee. This group joined Matzpen on the basis of the following jointly agreed principles: rejection of Zionism, (De Zionization of Israel) unequivocal stand for revolutionary socialism, rejection of the cult of the Soviet Union and its ideological and political implications, absolute rejection of Stalinism and the cult of personality, support for genuine international solidarity, support for the integration of Israel in a socialist Arab union, on the basis of self-determination.”¹⁷⁷

What does it mean – De-Zionization of Israel? Israel as a state of the settler colonialists cannot transform itself to de-Zionist state. It must be overthrown and replaced by a Palestinian workers state with equal civil rights for the Jews who accept such a state. Recognition of the right of self-determination of the Israeli oppressors contradicts the Marxist revolutionary position of support for self-determination only for oppressed nation. Because of this weakness Matzpen collapsed. Later on, the attempt to reorganize it also fail after it accepted the Oslo accord.

Today left wing organizations repeat the same kind of mistakes the RCL did in Palestine. It is not because they try to imitate the RCL but rather because the leaderships of these organizations see the world from the same perspective the RSL saw it in Palestine; trying to sit in the space between two chairs: The super-exploited Arab workers and the settler labor aristocracy on the other. Revolutionary Marxists act in this world very differently because they see the world through the eye glasses of the revolutionary international working class, the

177 <https://www.marxists.org/subject/jewish/matzpen-history.pdf>

lower and middle layers of the class not the labor aristocracy and from the eyes of the most oppressed not the colonial settlers oppressors.

Israel will continue to fight imperialist wars which it cannot win until one day it will suffer a major defeat. For this reason we say that Israel is not only the oppressor of the Palestinians but also a death trap for the Jewish masses. The only way the Jewish working class or at least part of it can be free is by joining the revolutionary struggle of the Arab Workers and Fallahins. The RCIT and its section in Israel/Occupied Palestine, the ISL, are fighting for such a perspective and for the building of revolutionary party in these countries as well as internationally.

Conclusion

Israel was not established in 1948 because of the suffering of the Jews during the Holocaust, as the Zionists and some pro-Zionists claim. *“On the eve of Yom Ha-Shoah, Holocaust Memorial Day, Shlomo Aronson, scholar-in-residence at the Library and professor of political science at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, discussed Hitler’s policy of genocide against European Jews during World War II and its relationship to the subsequent founding of the state of Israel in 1948.”*¹⁷⁸

Yet Zionists and their supporters manipulated the public opinion to convince the people around the globe that the Zionist state represents all the Jews and Israel is a guarantor against another holocaust. You have to be very naive at best to believe that the same imperialists that closed the gates to the Jews during the WWII all of a sudden decided to support the Jews. Israel was founded as a state that its role is to guard the control of the imperialists of the Middle East. Its wars have been aimed to crash the Palestinian resistance to the state of the settler colonialists. To crash Arab regimes that the imperialists do not like because they show a degree of resistance to the imperialist super-exploitation and to expend its territory along the map the Zionist delegation to the 1919 “Peace Conference” in Paris presented. While Israel can make peace with the reactionary local rulers of the Arab states, it cannot make peace with the Palestinians and the Arab masses.

Israel has reached its high point in the war of 1967 but from a military and politically perspective it is in decline since the wars on Lebanon and Gaza. The Israeli Jewish workers will not develop any revolutionary socialist perspective as long as they will not break from Zionism, in the same way the white workers in South Africa could not develop a revolutionary perspective. The Jewish workers and the popular masses in Israel will break with Zionism either after a major military defeat of Israel or the victory of the Arab revolution. The latest proof is the protest movement against Netanyahu that speaks about the danger to the Israeli democracy which is really an ethnocracy - a bourgeois’ democracy for the Jews in Israel.

Meantime Israel will continue with its war crimes against the Palestinians and some Arab states that will show some signs of opposition to the imperialist control of the region. The USA is keenly aware of the fact that Israel could not win the wars in Lebanon or against Hamas in Gaza. For this reason, it decided to sell to the Arab Emirates the 50 stealth F-35 fighter jets in spite of Israel’s initial protest and its argument that Israel has a need to maintain its military superiority. This sale indicates that Israel is not considered any more as the

178 John Sayers: The Holocaust and the Founding of Israel, <https://www.loc.gov/loc/lcib/9807/aronson.html>

super-keeper of the imperialist order in the region and other states are required as well for this role.

Abu Dhabi is the first Middle Eastern country, other than Israel, to be considered a sufficiently reliable and credible military partner by the United States to be allowed to purchase the coveted F-35. At the same time the USA has turned down Egypt requests to buy the F-35 and has purchased the Russian Su-35. This may push the USA to sell F-35 to Egypt as well not to lose its position in Egypt to Russia.

Trotsky on the Jewish Question

After he was expelled under Stalinist pressure from Europe, Trotsky granted several interviews to the press on his arrival in Mexico in January 1937. In one of these he expressed his views on the Jewish problems. It was granted to the Jewish Daily Forward, a New York Social Democratic daily on January 18, 1937.

This is what Trotsky had to say on the Jewish question: *"On the Jewish question, first of all, I can say that it cannot be resolved within the framework of the capitalist system, nor can it be resolved by Zionism." ... "I cannot say what will become of the Jews in a few hundred years, just as I do not know what will become of the Mexicans. I do know, however, that the Jewish question will only be resolved by the socialist revolution."*¹⁷⁹

Today Islamophobia has replaced to a large degree Anti-Semitism.¹⁸⁰ The Zionists have played a very ugly part in the Islamophobia and in supporting the right-wing and even the fascist organizations against the left-wing in Britain and in the USA as well in supporting the racist and Anti-Semitic regimes in East Europe. The far-right is pro-Zionist but anti-Jewish, thus Israel and the Zionists are supporting real Anti-Semitism hoping to get more Jewish immigrants to be used as soldiers and settlers in the West bank.¹⁸¹ Many of the Jews in the USA

¹⁷⁹ Leon Trotsky: Interview with the Jewish Daily Forward, in: Trotsky Writings 1936-37, p. 106

¹⁸⁰ See on this e.g. chapter V in Yossi Schwartz: Racism, Anti-Semitism and Zionism. On the oppression of North American Indians, Afro-Americans, Muslims and Jews in history and present, February 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/racism-anti-semitism-and-zionism/>; see also: RCIT: Boycott Imperialist and Islamophobic France! Solidarity with the Muslim migrants! Drive out the French occupiers from Mali and other countries! 26.10.2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/boycott-imperialist-and-islamophobic-france/>; Yossi Schwartz: Down with the Islamophobia in France: "We Are Not Samuel!", 20 October 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/down-with-the-islamophobia-in-france/>; Michael Pröbsting: France: "Our Republic"? Social-Chauvinism and Capitulation to Islamophobia by the Left, 2 November 2020, <https://www.thecommunists.net/worldwide/europe/social-chauvinism-and-capitulation-to-islamophobia-by-the-french-left/>

¹⁸¹ See on this also Yossi Schwartz: On Anti-Semitism and Zionist Racism, 22.12.2018, <https://www.thecommunists.net/theory/on-anti-semitism-and-zionist-racism/>; by

are moving away from Israel which further weakens it. Israel is not only an oppressive state with a military imperialist role. It is a death trap for the Jews unless they break with Zionism and join the Arab revolution.

About the Author

Yossi Schwartz was born in Jerusalem in 1945 to a family with roots in Palestine since the 1760s. He was a left Zionist from the age of 15 until his early 20s. In 1966 he protested against the visit of Konrad Adenauer, the chancellor of West Germany, as part of the new alliance of Israel with Germany. Yossi protested this visit with the slogan: six millions times no, because of Adenauer anti-communist political views, because he was a strong supporter of the cold war and because his administration was full of Nazis. Yossi was arrested during the demonstration in Jerusalem after he was beaten by six policemen. He was charged and found guilty of beating up six policemen.

This led him to begin his study of the nature of Zionism which made him an Anti-Zionist. He was a soldier (a medic) in the Israeli army and participated in this role in the 1967 war. He opposed the Israeli side and propagandized against the Israeli war during the war. After 1967 he formed, together with other left figures, the *New Left* (Shiah) that opposed the 1967 occupation. He was the first person who raised the Palestinian national flag in the Hebrew University in 1968. In response to Golda Meir, the Prime Minister of Israel that began the new settlements in the West Bank, he organized a symbolic settlement in her garden in Jerusalem and was arrested for it.

Yossi became a Trotskyist in 1970 and has been a Trotskyist since then. He was blacklisted in Israel and was forced to leave Israel to survive. He lived in Canada between 1974 and 1998 where he became a lawyer and helped many Palestinians refugees escaping the brutal repression of the Palestinians by Israel during the first Intifada to settle in Canada. Yossi opposed the Oslo agreement and condemned it as a betrayal of the PLO. In 1998 Yossi returned to Israel and since 2003 he supports the idea of one democratic state from the river to the sea – a Red Democratic Palestine. That will be formed by the workers and the fellahins as part of the Arab revolution. Such a state will include all the Palestinian refugees who want to return and all the Israeli Jews who are ready to live as equal to the Palestinians.

Yossi is a member of the *Internationalist Socialist League* (Section of the Revolutionary Communist International Tendency [RCIT] in Israel / Occupied Palestine) and also a leading member of the RCIT. Furthermore, he is a member of the Movement for One Democratic State in all Palestine.

In *The Zionist Wars* Yossi Schwartz gives an overview about the process of Zionist colonialization of Palestine as well as the resistance of the indigenous Arab population. He deals in detail with the popular struggles of the Palestinians against their expulsion by the Zionists.

The Zionist Wars elaborates in detail the character of Israel's military campaigns in 1948 and the following decades which resulted in the expulsion of large parts of the Palestinian population. These wars were also crucial to implement the imperialist subjugation of the Arab countries.

However, as Yossi Schwartz elaborates, the Zionist state has passed its peak already some time ago which has been demonstrated by its failed military campaigns in Lebanon as well as in Gaza.

In *The Zionist Wars* the author also discusses in much detail the program of the communist movement on the Palestinian question. He shows the adaptation and finally capitulation of Stalinism to the Zionist project – culminating in massive arms shipments for the Israeli forces during the War of 1948.

In this book Yossi Schwartz elaborates the analyses and conclusions of Leon Trotsky and the Fourth International for the liberation of Palestine. He also discusses the strength and weakness of his successors in dealing with the Zionist state and the Arab liberation struggle against it.

In *The Zionist Wars* Yossi Schwartz defends the national liberation struggle of the Palestinian people and outlines a socialist perspective.



Yossi Schwartz is a socialist and Anti-Zionist activist since more than five decades. He is the author of many articles and pamphlets in English and Hebrew language. He is a member of the *Internationalist Socialist League* and also a leading member of the *Revolutionary Communist International Tendency*. Furthermore, he is active in the *Movement for One Democratic State in all Palestine*.