



# **Palestine**

**history of  
a colonization**

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## **Index**

<b>Presentation</b> .....	1	Stalin: Godfather of the second marriage of Zionism.....	20
<b>Palestine: history of a colonization</b> .....	3	The Fourth International was the only anti-Zionist left-wing faction .....	21
Introduction.....	3	The 1948 war began in 1947 .....	21
The Zionist movement.....	6	The phoney war of 1948 and the betrayal of King Abdullah .....	22
The history of Zionism according to the Zionists .....	7	How to manufacture a “land without a people” <sup>23</sup>	
The strange beginnings of a “national liberation movement” .....	9	The colonial state, racist and the cop of the Arab revolution.....	24
Zionism in search of a good party .....	11	The counterrevolutionary cop.....	26
First marriage of Zionism: The Balfour Declaration .....	12	Some conclusions .....	29
Palestine under occupation and the British Mandate (1918-1948).....	13	Jewish youth must repudiate Zionism .....	29
The economic liquidation of the Arab population .....	15	Notes .....	31
The other side of the “socialist” kibbutz.....	16	<b>Writings of Nahuel Moreno on Palestine</b> .....	40
The other side of the “socialist” Histadrut.....	16	Palestinian democratic slogan that can make way for the workers’ revolution .....	41
The other side of the “produce of the land” ....	17	Israel, a Nazi state.....	46
The other side of Zionism as a “national liberation movement” .....	18	Who oppresses, who is the oppressed?.....	47
The “new Moses” shows up .....	19	<b>What are Zionism and Israel</b> .....	48
		<b>Chronology</b> .....	51

# Presentation

60 years ago, on May 14, 1948, the Zionist movement institutionalized in the Palestinian territory the State of Israel. So it was consummated an operation of expulsion of nearly a million native inhabitants, mostly simple peasants. The hundreds of thousands who remained were transformed into “second-class citizens”, pariahs in their own land. Still very fresh in the memory of the world, memories of the slaughter of millions of Jews suffered at the hands of Hitler and the Nazis. The propaganda of Zionism, with the complicity of virtually all imperialist governments and the USSR subjugated by Stalin, allowed the installation of a myth: “a land without people for a people without land.” The voices of condemnation were almost inaudible.

The Palestinians never gave up, never stopped resisting. And in the 1960s they began to be heard. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) arose, led by the legendary Yasser Arafat (1929-2004). The Six Day War in 1967, when Israel extracted new territories from neighbours Egypt, Jordan and Syria, confirmed the aggressive and expansionist character of Zionism. The Palestinians did not get frightened. In 1969, while they were denounced as “terrorists” in a fierce global campaign, they made their appeal to the world: “For a secular, democratic and non-racist Palestine.”

In December 1973, the [Argentinian] PST (Socialist Workers Party) published this work reprinted today: *Palestine: history of a colonization*, in their *Revista de América* No. 12. It was part of their campaign in support to the struggle of this oppressed people. It was a well-documented research, which, with the evidence available then exhaustively demonstrated the invasive and pro-imperialist character of Zionism and its offspring, this “country” enclave installed with blood and fire in Palestine.

Governments and the various sectors of the Arab bourgeoisie swung between their capitulations to imperialism, and Israel itself, and their sporadic measures of rejection, such as the 1973 war. The oppressed Palestinian people endured all kinds of suffering, within the borders of the invader and the various Arab countries that gave them refuge. There was neither a leadership nor steadfast allies to allow a solid answer, and that gave respite to Israel.

In 1978, the Egyptian Government gave a decisive step towards betrayal, when negotiating with U.S. and Israel at Camp David, it signed with President Jimmy Carter the recognition of the existence of Israel, through the pro-Zionist and pro-imperialist utopia of the “two states”. Before the completion of the XX century, in 1993, Yasser Arafat, the PLO leader, continued on that path. Vain attempt to give the invader an impossible recognition. The oppressed people never stopped fighting...

In the XXI century, the permanent mobilization and the suffering of the people of Gaza and the West Bank have been increasingly taking centre stage. In the Middle East and around the world the crisis, the weakening and discrediting of Israel are growing. The Palestinian cause wins growing support.

There is currently a movement that promotes the economic boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel. The war against Lebanon in 2006, when it bombed Beirut to near destruction, was a tremendous defeat and a new blow to its false legitimacy. And the everyday images of Gaza and West Bank citizens bombed, repressed, without food, without water or electricity, are the clearest demonstration that in Palestine there is a genocidal invader. That is “the problem” of the Middle East. For this reason there has been no peace in this region for 60 years (and actually much longer).

These facts make the voices denouncing Zionism and Israel more numerous and strong. Consider two examples. After decades of being virtually ignored, the strong movement against Israel and Zionism by Jewish religious sectors, which they denounce as totally opposite to their tradition (see Yakov Rabkin, *A Threat from Within: A Century of Jewish Opposition to Zionism*, Planet, 2008) has been spreading since 2004. In an opposite corner, we can mention the last book of that historic friend of Israel, former President Jimmy Carter. In 2006 he published *Palestine: Peace*

*Not Apartheid*, where he says: “The situation in Palestine now, the confiscation of their land, the inability of the people to protest what happens, construction of the ‘wall’ within its territory, and the complete separation of Israelis from Palestinians are, in many ways, conditions far worse than apartheid in South Africa.”

It is within this context that an idea begins to recover and it is increasingly getting stronger, that to “solve” the problem of the Middle East it is necessary to achieve “a secular and democratic Palestinian state”.

To update the 1973 research and provide information on many of these items mentioned, we publish now other texts, and finally a chronology of the rise of Zionism and the Palestinian struggle, from 1897 to 2008.

Buenos Aires, June 2008

# **Palestine: history of a colonization**

**Roberto Fanjul • Gabriel Zadunaisky**

## **Introduction**

The central theme of this work is the character of the State of Israel, from the origins of the Zionist movement up to the role it fulfils today in the social and political landscape of the Middle East. We have thus confined ourselves almost exclusively to the history of Zionism in Palestine.

With regard to the current situation in the Middle East, it is not possible to take a correct position without previously having clarified the nature of the State of Israel and its current role. Given the monumental collection of fables, half-truths or outright lies on this issue that the imperialist press serve us daily, we found it necessary to go back to the origins of the colonizing power that resulted in the founding of Israel and has led to more than thirty years of strife and bloodshed in that vital area of the planet.

Prior to considering the trajectory of Zionism, especially of Zionism in Palestine, it is necessary to say a few words about the specific situation that hit the Jews in Europe since the middle of last century, since in this historical context the Zionist movement is born.

Perhaps there is not such a historical fable as the problem of “survival” of the Jews through the centuries. Idealist “historians”, priests, rabbis, etc., have tried to explain this phenomenon by appealing to various myths: from the characteristics of the Hebrew religion, even racist fables (i.e., that Jews constitute a “race” with special characteristics that would keep them immutable in any historical circumstance).

Marxism has cleared this entire mythological tangle. Studies of Karl Marx, first, and especially later the great Marxist Abraham Leon<sup>1</sup>, have scientifically established material and historical causes of the “originality” of the Jewish people. These reasons are earthy and have nothing to do either with Jehovah or with a supposed racial “essence” immutable through the ages, as posed by both Zionists and anti-Semites.

The secret of Jewish survival is very simple: in pre-capitalist societies the Jews constituted a social class, or rather a people-class. They are not the only example in history: the Gypsies, for example, were also a people-class.

In pre-capitalist societies, Jews represented “prehistoric” forms of capital, both in the ancient world as in the feudal world. In feudal society, for example, we have the following classes: feudal lords (nobles or priests) and the serfs of the soil. These serfs worked the land and had to give part of the proceeds to the feudal lord. Almost everything produced was directly consumed or used, either by the Lord and priests or by servants. The product was not produced to sell or exchange in the market and make a profit. It was essentially a society producing use-values and not exchange values, as is our present capitalist society. Trade and money, however, did exist. But trade was the exception, not the rule. The dealing and lending of money were developing relatively on the margin of the mode of production of these societies producing use-values. So it was exercised by “foreigners,” by people-traders (Phoenicians, Jews, Lombards, etc.). People-class, as Marx said,

existed in the pores of a society producing use-values. The Jews are the survival of an old merchant and financial pre-capitalist class.

On these material relationships rose the institutional and ideological superstructure: Community authorities, a “special” religion, and the myth of considering themselves descendants of the original Hebrew people inhabiting Palestine at the beginning of our era, and so on. This superstructure helped maintain cohesion of people-class but, at the same time, distorted the true nature of its existence. This phenomenon of false consciousness is, moreover, common to all ideologies.

The role of the Jews as a people-class not only explains their survival, but their assimilation as well. Abraham Leon proves with an enormity of data that, in places and times where Jews lost that character of people-class, sooner or later their ideological and institutional superstructure collapsed and they ended up assimilating. This also explains why there is no racial unity among Jews — throughout the history of pre-capitalist societies there are numerous cases of conversion, sometimes massive, to Judaism. Hidden under this ideological-religious cloak, happened the phenomenon of the incorporation of individuals or entire groups to the people-class. This explains why there should have been Jews of Mongolian “race” in Dagestan, black Jews (the Falasha) in Ethiopia, Arabic Jews in the Islam and Jews of Slavonic origin in Eastern Europe. The myth of common descent from Abraham or the inhabitants of Palestine at the beginning of our era does not stand to scrutiny.

With the development of capitalism, to the old Jewish pre-capitalist merchant class the material bases of their existence as a people-class were dissolving. In Western Europe, especially in England, where the capitalist mode of production developed earlier, the Jews began to assimilate naturally. This process would have been general — with the logical delay imposed by the religious remoras, family members, etc. — if capitalism worldwide had remained progressive. But before the end in all Europe of this process of natural assimilation, a process that had barely begun in the backward Eastern Europe, capitalism became imperialism. In other words, it ceases to be progressive and began his stage of decomposition at the global level. The era of revolutions opens, era of transition from capitalism — already condemned by history — to the new socialist society. Capitalism, on entering its senile age, cannot solve the problems that failed to solve in its youth. Not just the Jewish problem, but many others; not only does capitalism, in the final stage of decay, does not solve them, but it usually worsens them. Capitalism began, for example, raising the national problem, raising progressive bourgeois democratic slogans of independence and national sovereignty. But capitalism finished organizing the most monstrous system of imperialist domination, of denial of national and democratic rights for the majority of humanity living in colonial and semi-colonial countries. Capitalism began raising abstract “equality” between men and ended imposing the most aberrant discriminations. So we can go on listing problems, including that of the European Jews.

In Eastern Europe the Jewish masses began to face, since the mid XIX century, a very difficult situation. On one hand, capitalist development — as we have noted — was destroying their old way of existence as a people-class. But, on the other hand, European capitalism was already unable to assimilate the Jewish groups to the bourgeoisie and to the middle class, in a natural way, as it had happened in England, for example. The development of modern European anti-Semitism, culminating in the Nazi regime, has partly to do with this problem. It goes beyond the framework of this essay to analyse this monstrous eruption of racism. We note only that modern anti-Semitism — although resuming medieval myths — had a very different content: it was part of the policy of some imperialist regimes, to which it was convenient to use the Jews (also Gypsies, to a lesser extent) as a target to confuse and divert the desperation of the middle class and even backward sections of the working class.

Faced with this dramatic situation, the Jewish masses in Europe, especially in Eastern Europe, had various policy options. Marxism, which exercised a great attraction on them, raised the solution of the Jewish problem in terms of the struggle for socialism.

Socialism — and within socialism especially revolutionary Marxists — called the oppressed Jewish masses of Eastern Europe to merge with the working class and their struggles. For the wretched Jewish masses of Warsaw or Kiev the path followed by their more fortunate Jewish fellows of England or France was already closed: the path of assimilation as bourgeois in the framework of capitalism. But they could and should assimilate to the workers in the struggle for socialism. While the Tsarist empire encouraged clashes, Russians against Poles or Ukrainians, or of these against the Jews, while the Austro-Hungarian Empire did the same in the mosaic of peoples that it dominated, revolutionary Marxists called for the unity of all workers (of any language, nationality or “race”) to fight against all these regimes and against the European imperialist bourgeoisie. The end of capitalism in Europe and the establishment of socialism would not only end the exploitation of one class by another, but also all forms of oppression, whether national, sexual, racist, etc. Socialism would extinguish the Jewish problem that capitalism could not solve.<sup>2</sup>

Thus there were numerous workers, students and intellectuals of Jewish origin who entered the socialist ranks and became assimilated into the workers of their countries. Trotsky, Rosa Luxemburg, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Radek, Leo Jogiches, are just a few names among hundreds of thousands.

But the old people-class, as we have already noted, under the conditions of modern capitalism was becoming less homogeneous. If on one hand many proletarianized Jews, poor students and intellectuals merged with the labour and revolutionary movement, on the other hand there were gentlemen like the Rothschild, Baron Hirsh and other multimillionaires twinned with the imperialist bourgeoisie of the various European countries. From one end to the other the different layers were staggered — the bourgeois, petty-bourgeois, semi-proletarian, etc. This was the basis of class for other political options which, of course, had nothing to do with revolutionary socialism. They rather were its mortal enemy. Among the solutions to the Jewish problem, the most important were Bundism and Zionism.

The Bundists<sup>3</sup> emerged in Russia and other Eastern European countries as a branch of the social democracy. The Bund, supposedly socialist and theoretically revolutionary, was indeed a reflection of bourgeois nationalism in the bosom of the Jewish proletariat. They were part of the whole current of European social democracy which capitulated to their respective bourgeoisies. Under the slogan of supporting the “national culture”, they argued that the Jewish workers had to organize themselves apart from Russians, Poles, etc. The Bund was playing into the arms of the bourgeoisie dividing workers from each factory or city according to their national or ‘racial’ origin. It is the same as if here [in Argentina, TN] in construction sites (where there are many foreign comrades), in a conflict against the bosses they raised to organize a strike committee of the Paraguayans, another for Bolivians, another for Argentine, another for Chilean, and so on. All this, under the pretext, for example, that the Paraguayans comrades will not forget their Guaraní language; and Bolivians will be able to better preserve their indigenous cultural values threatened by the mixing or “assimilation” with Argentines of European descent. Lenin and Trotsky strongly condemned Bundism.

The social base of the Bund was craft sectors, semi-proletarian or workers of small workshops, especially in the garment and fur industries. It was a vast sector with one foot in the old ghetto and another in the modern industrial proletariat. This was reflected in the ideology of the Bund, which claimed on one hand to be Marxist and revolutionary and on the other refused internationalism by erecting barriers among workers of different origin. This contradictory nature (reflecting an actual contradiction of its social base) determined that despite their capitulation to bourgeois nationalism, the Bund did not raise that Jewish workers had to separate from the struggle of classes and join their bourgeoisie to go to colonize Palestine or some another territory. This “honour” was reserved to the Zionism.

## The Zionist movement

In the same year (1897) in which the Bund was founded, the founding congress of the Zionist Organization took place in Basel (Switzerland). This had its prehistory: “The rapid capitalization of the Russian economy”, says Abraham Leon, “after the reform of 1863, makes the situation of the Jewish masses in the small cities unsustainable. In the West, the middle classes, crumbled by capitalist concentration, begin to turn against the Jewish element whose competition aggravates the situation. In Russia the association Lovers of Zion is founded. Leon Pinsker writes *Auto-Emancipation*, book in which he advocates the return to Palestine as the only possible solution to the Jewish question. In Paris, Baron Rothschild, who like all Jewish tycoons sees with little friendliness the arrival to the West of Jewish immigrants, begins to become interested in the Jewish colonization of Palestine. Helping ‘unfortunate brothers’ to return to the country of their ‘ancestors’, i.e. for them to go as far away as possible. There was nothing objectionable in this for the Western Jewish bourgeoisie who rightly feared the rise of anti-Semitism. Shortly after the appearance of Leon Pinsker’s book, a Jewish journalist in Budapest, Theodore Herzl, attends in Paris the anti-Semitic demonstrations caused by the Dreyfus affair. He will write *The Jewish State*, which to this day remains the Bible of the Zionist movement.”<sup>4</sup>

Although the Zionist Organization was to dispute the same clientele as the Bund and even revolutionary socialism, its class character was markedly different — it was appearing as the program of a sector of the big Jewish bourgeoisie, sector that would end up being dominant within it.

Apologists for Zionism try to obscure this fact, arguing that, in the beginning, most of the great Jewish bourgeoisie was assimilationist and did not support Zionism. And that is true, but it only proves that — as it always happens with any new idea or movement of any social class — at first it is only patrimony of a minority. What you need to ask yourself is whether historically — i.e. long-term — Zionism ended up being the ideology and politics of the whole Jewish big bourgeoisie. Simply put: it is true that, for example, Baron Edmund de Rothschild had tactical differences with Herzl; but today, with whom is the Rothschild family? With Zionism or anti-Zionism? This is how the question must be asked.

Moreover, it is argued that the pioneers of Palestinian colonization were artisans, poor shopkeepers, people, in brief, of whom you may say anything but that they had a bulging bank account. Thus they try to convey — as discussed below— a ‘plebeian’ and even ‘worker’ and “socialist” image of Zionism. They present the figures of Pinsker, as a humble dreamer; of Herzl, a simple journalist who becomes the second Moses; of Borochoy, “socialist” and “Marxist”, etc.

Of course it was not in the plans of Baron Edmund de Rothschild and other gentlemen like him, to move personally to work the land in Palestine. But that does not mean anything in terms of class characterization of Zionism. The key is: to whom it suited that humble and desperate tailors, peddlers and unemployed of Warsaw or Lublin were chartered for the Holy Land? This is precisely what Abraham Leon says.

If there is any doubt of what this meant in relation to the European political situation, it is Herzl himself who is responsible for clearing it — one of its obsessive themes is that the emigration of Jews to Palestine is the only guarantee that they will not be captured by the “subversive parties.” Herzl meets with William II, Emperor of Germany. What do they talk about? “Herzl presented his project in general terms. Then they talked about the Jewish problem, the Dreyfus affair, the influence of Germany in the East and the benefit that could be extracted of the solution to the Jewish question, which, if not solved, — as Herzl did not fail to stress— would push the Jews to the subversive parties. The Kaiser seemed convinced.”<sup>5</sup>

Herzl speaks before the First Zionist Congress: “If, finally, the Russian government remains neutral, Jews are unprotected in the existing regime and pass on to the subversive parties... Zionism is simply the peacemaker.”<sup>6</sup>

This feature of Zionism as a “peacemaker” and obstacle to the Jews “passing to the subversive parties” is what allows Herzl to reach agreements with the most sinister characters of the empire of the Tsars, such as von Plevhe, Count Witte or Ivan von Simonyi, all notorious anti-Semitic and pogroms organizers. “So far, my most ardent supporter is the anti-Semitic of Pressburg, Ivan von Simonyi ...”, Herzl wrote on March 4, 1896.<sup>7</sup> Subsequently, at the gates of the first Russian revolution, Herzl arrives in Petrograd and makes a deal with Plevhe, minister of the Tsar — “I celebrated very much the opportunity offered to me”, Herzl reports later to the Sixth Zionist Congress, “to come into contact with the government of that country [Russia], and I can say I found some understanding for Zionist aspirations, also listening to demonstrations of good will to do something decisive for us ... As for the Zionist movement, major promises were made to me. I can tell you that the Russian government has no intention of obstructing Zionism, so long as it retains its peaceful and legal character. In addition, the Russian government is willing to contribute to the expenses of a migration led by us, Zionists.”<sup>8</sup> What class character, what interests could represent a movement as the Zionist which, in the full bonfire of the Russian Revolution was achieving the miracle to be allowed by the tsarist government to function without “obstacles” and also “contributed to its costs”? In Russia, not even the good and pacific bourgeois of the Constitutional Democratic Party (Kadet) achieved this miracle. And this is what Zionism was getting from a government that was marked by permanent slaughter of Jewish citizens! To explain this political miracle one can naturally appeal to Divine Providence, the Holy Trinity or Jehovah, according to taste; we, materialists, offer another explanation: the Tsar (“bastion of the European reaction”, according to Lenin) and Zionism could reach an agreement because they agreed in their class interests. Both, each in their own field and with different methods reflected the most reactionary and counterrevolutionary interests of the imperialist bourgeoisies of Europe.

That is what Zionism meant in the context of the European class struggle. If it had been reduced to this, it would have gone down in history as one of the ultra-jingoistic and reactionary parties that were swarming especially in the Centre and the East of the Old Continent. Few today would know of its existence. But the Zionist program was not limited only to alienate the Jewish masses from the class struggle in Europe (and therefore of “subversive parties”), its other face was to move these masses out of Europe to constitute a Jewish State.

## **The history of Zionism according to the Zionists**

Advocates of Zionism, especially its “left” apologists vindicate precisely this other face. They accept that Herzl and the Zionist movement were not exactly a progressive factor in European politics, but they argue that this is secondary to an essential fact — Zionism would be the national liberation movement of the Jewish people. A national movement similar, ultimately, to those which achieved the independence of Algeria or India, of the countries of black Africa or Indonesia, etc.

These national movements are not usually led by the proletariat nor its political organizations are Marxist revolutionary, but Leninism poses that they should be supported. Thus, Lenin and Trotsky supported, for example, the struggle for national independence of Turkey, despite being led by the bourgeoisie and anti-Communists as Kemal Ataturk spearheading it. In the same vein they supported Afghanistan’s fight against British imperialism, even though their leadership was not even bourgeois but feudal. Was it more progressive, raise the Zionists, the feudal Emir of Afghanistan than the bourgeois Theodore Herzl? Moreover, the Zionist argument continues, after Herzl the leadership of the Zionist movement in Palestine was taken by the pioneers, former craftsmen and petty bourgeois of the ghetto, turned into workers and peasants in their own land. “Zionism, sociologically speaking”, says Dov Bar-Nir, leader of the MAPAM, party of the Zionist ‘left’, “was a movement of the impoverished petty bourgeoisie, which, by its very nature and its activities, in fact, had two objectives: the proletarianisation of the Jewish masses and organization of their productivity. Come to Israel and look — you will see a million Jewish workers, with their families a million and a half people, who left business, descend to the mines, handle the hammer and work the land. Is this ‘bourgeois’? When the widely democratic Zionist movement creates a

coalition of parties (which have nothing to do with Israeli Government coalitions), will this be a 'collusion' with the bourgeoisie, in a moment where in the 'united fronts' of the Third World they do not recognise ... social differentiation? ... Let us not forget that since the 1930s, the world Zionist movement is under workers hegemony ..." (referring that is led by the Labour Party MAPAI). And he adds further on — "Mao Tse Tung himself did not disdain or reject, in the hour of national liberation, the help of the parties usually called bourgeois... In the particular case of modern nations, discriminated or oppressed, the process seems to be as follows: who says oppression, says national liberation movement; who says national movement, says national coalition; and who says national coalition, progressive and not reactionary, says indispensable hegemony to the working class and peasantry. This was, in broad outline, the history of Zionism."<sup>9</sup>

Let's see in more detail how it would have been, always according to the Zionists, the history of this "national liberation movement": the Jewish people, dispersed by the Roman occupation of Palestine, would constantly want to return to that land, to which they have more right than anyone else, as underlined by the biblical texts.<sup>10</sup> There is no explanation why for two thousand years they did not try to return, despite the fact that they had a good chance to do so, especially during the Middle Ages, when Jews enjoyed a privileged position in the Arab world and got along very well with Islam. Be that as it may be, in the second half of the XIX century, motivated by the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe, Zionism materializes as a "national liberation movement". It began to organize the emigration to Palestine. This country, according to the Zionists, was in a deplorable state, empty or almost empty: "vast regions of the country remained unexplored and belonged to absent feudal lords. Infested with malaria and, apart from some scattered Bedouin tents, were uninhabited and consequently, available."<sup>11</sup> "Hobnobbing in the Holy Land there were heterogeneous groups, Muslims (Shi'ites and Sunni), Cherquizes, Maronites, Christians, Greek Orthodox. In fact, some Jewish peasant families had never left the country after the destruction of the Second Temple and kept two traditional villages in Galilee. It was for a land without people that slowly, towards the end of the last century, began to move a people without a land."<sup>12</sup>

According to the Zionists, this people was returning to their land to work and by no means they were thinking to exploit, as settlers do, Arab labour: "... in a colony, the native works and does not own, while the settler owns and does not produce; in the State of Israel the Jews own the land and cultivate it themselves, while Arabs also own their land and equally cultivate it themselves."<sup>13</sup>

In 1917, the British government, in return for the scientific services rendered by the great Zionist chemist, Dr Weizmann, issued the Balfour Declaration, which recognized the right to establish in Palestine a "national home" for the Jewish people. According to Dr Weizmann, this was "a unique act of global consciousness".<sup>14</sup>

However, British imperialism soon regretted this "act of conscience", rare in them and, under the mandate of the League of Nations, Palestine became a colony. Zionism developed, then, an anti-imperialist struggle which culminated in an "anti-British war of liberation". "The State of Israel arose... out of a British mandate, and not of an Arab state."<sup>15</sup> "The struggle of the Jews against British colonialism was an anti-imperialist struggle, aided by the Soviet Union."<sup>16</sup> In this struggle, according to Zionists, an "army of national liberation" or "people's militia" was forged — the Haganah.

Regrettably the Arabs were thrown against the Zionists and it was necessary to fight against them as well. Why did this happen, according to the Zionists?: the Arab people were under the influence of their feudal lords and arch reactionaries governments which were mobilized by British imperialism and also Nazism. "The Arab society was semi-feudal, governed for land owners and religious chiefs. The Jewish population represented a factor of modernization, introducing economic and social capitalist structures and, at the same time, elements of Socialist tenor."<sup>17</sup> In addition, it brought trade unionism in the form of the great labour union, Histadrut. According to the Zionists, when buying land from the great Arab landlords they were producing an agricultural revolution: "Are we going to take sides with the old Arab feudalism, and regret that there has not been an Arab revolution, but a Jewish revolution, what peacefully destroyed feudalism?"<sup>18</sup> The

unfortunate fact is that agitated by the reactionary propaganda of the feudal Lords supported by British imperialism, the Arabs opposed the UN resolution that imposed in 1947 the partition Palestine and the creation of the State of Israel, on the one hand, and an Arab Palestinian state on the other. Civil war broke out and Israel was also invaded by five Arab States. Israel could beat them, among other things, with the help of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries that had supported the partition. They supplied weapons to Israel. “The 1948 war was waged by the feudal and reactionary Arab regimes to prevent social progress in the region.”<sup>19</sup>

Israel defeated the feudal lords, but, unfortunately, the refugee problem was created. Many Palestinians, blinded by the propaganda of Arab governments, left the country hoping to return behind the victorious Arab armies. When these armies were defeated, they could not return. Moreover, the Arab states took over most of the territory that would have corresponded to the Palestinian state, which, because of them, could not be created. Since then, refugees live in squalid camps in Jordan, Lebanon, etc. “It is true that the Arab refugee camps are a scandal and a shame, stigma of violence used against civilian populations, but they are a shame to the Arabs, not the Jews. They are an unjust violence that has dragged on for twenty years, but is imposed on the Arabs by Arabs, not the Jews.”<sup>20</sup> How come Arabs are so bad with their countrymen? Because, answers Misrahi, “they need martyrs”.<sup>21</sup> “Actually, do Arabs lack territory? Do they lack the land to enable them to integrate refugees ...?”<sup>22</sup> Zionists conclude that, if they do not do it, it is because they do not want to.

Thus, according to the Zionists, since 1948, Israel is building an almost socialist society, of a very singular socialism, if you will, but socialism nevertheless. “Socialism is a project in the Arab countries, and a reality in Israel.”<sup>23</sup> The Kibbutzim (collective farms) are the greatest example of that march to socialism. “The kibbutzim never used any wage earner outside the kibbutz, so as not to exploit any workers.”<sup>24</sup> The key role played by powerful labour union (Histadrut) would also witness what the Zionists say.

Unfortunately, this peculiar socialism cannot be built on peace. Arabs insist on maintaining a permanent state of war: “The ‘progressive’ anti-feudal revolutions of the Arab countries, rather than recognize their common interest with Israel in progressive development, followed and hardened the chauvinist procedures of the feudal regimes.”<sup>25</sup> Thus, in 1956, incursions by Palestinian guerrillas “forced Israel to invade the Sinai”, at a time when Nasser had just nationalized the Suez Canal. Israel had to ally at this time with Britain and France to attack Egypt, but not out of imperialist motives (such as the channel going back into the hands of the Anglo-French company that Nasser nationalized), but to destroy the nests of guerrillas. Something similar happened in 1967 — 100 million Arabs preparing to fall down on 2.5 million Israelis and “throw them into the sea”. And the miracle of David defeating Goliath repeated itself!

According to the Zionists, all actions of the Israeli army have always had the same character: they are defensive or “preventive”. Incursions into Palestinian camps have the same reason, although “Fatah does not comprise more than a few hundred reckless persons.”<sup>26</sup> They claim to represent a “Palestinian people”. But can one really speak of “Palestinian people”? “From a legal standpoint, there are no Palestinian people. From a sociological point of view, I am not a specialist, but I’m not sure it would be so ... I seriously cannot imagine the concept of ‘Palestinian people’ ...”<sup>27</sup>

Finally, let’s say that for the Zionists it is false that Israel is the bridgehead of the U.S. in the Middle East. Israel was born essentially supported by the USSR, and not by the U.S. If Israel has had later to be supported by the U.S., it’s because, according to the Zionists, the USSR began to flirt with the Arab regimes after 1950.

## **The strange beginnings of a “national liberation movement”**

So far we have seen the history of Israel narrated by Zionism, or, rather, by the Zionist “left” as the right wing, a General Dayan, for example, does not take the trouble to go through “anti-imperialism”. This is the history that we get served by the big newspapers which — how strange!

— defend a small “socialist” country against a colossal coalition of “feudal wrens”, “fascist generals” and “mercenaries of Al Fatah”. Such unanimous position of the big business media is not something you see every day! We should have to start revising Marxism if such beauty were true. Fortunately it is not necessary to do so, because the Zionist “history” of Palestine only proves a thing: that the ability to lie is infinite.

Let’s return to the beginnings of the Zionist movement. That is the second half of the XIX century, when the emigration to Palestine begins and the ideology, politics and organization of Zionism is captured. Since the introduction, the reader will have noticed that it is entirely mythological to talk about “Zionism” before this date, although some delirious say that Zionism had been founded —believe it or not — by Moses in person when he came out of Egypt!<sup>28</sup> Of course, this cannot be taken seriously. This is one of many nationalist myths, like Romulus and Remus in Italy, for example. However, we have quoted it, not to laugh, but for a very serious reason: behind legends like these someone wants to hide the real historical framework in which Zionism starts, the colonial expansion of Europe in Asia and Africa.

“We have seen”, says Lenin, “that the period of maximum development of pre-monopoly capital, capitalism in which fair competition prevails, covers from 1860 to 1880. We now see that it is just after this period that begins the huge “boom” of colonial conquest, exacerbating to an extraordinary degree the struggle for the territorial division of the world. There is no doubt, therefore, that the transition from capitalism to monopoly capitalism phase, of financial capital [*i.e.*, *the imperialist phase*, AN], is related to the exacerbation of the struggle for the division of the world.”<sup>29</sup>

What has this to do with Zionism? How is it possible to relate the colonial expansion of European imperialism to the hopes of the humble craftsman, or the poor student in the ghettos of Eastern Europe who began to dream of having a country where they were not humiliated and persecuted? When we speak of European colonial expansion, the images we make are those of the powerful British fleet “mistress of the seas”, the guns of the Kaiser’s armies, the Foreign Legion of “free France” dedicated to hunting Arabs in North Africa, or the Tsar’s Cossacks expanding in Asia. It is difficult, in principle, to relate this to the small trader in Kiev who lived trembling at the prospect of a pogrom. But there was an objective element, as Rodinson says, one small, seemingly unimportant detail: Palestine was occupied by another people.<sup>30</sup>

Reading the “bible” of Zionism, *The Jewish State* by Theodor Herzl, you can see very well the “little detail” that Rodinson talks about — everything is in there, from how to establish the schedule and work shifts, to how dwellings will be, the colour of the flag, etc. But there is a word that is not in Herzl’s book, it is the word “Arab”.

This European intellectual of the end of the century was solving meticulously in his book all the problems that he was foreseeing for the foundation of the new State and its functioning. Is it chance that it has forgotten to treat the problem that Palestine was inhabited (and not by Jews), and that these inhabitants could have something to say on this matter? If Palestine had been, at that time, the centre of a major imperialist power, would Herzl have raised the problem of its inhabitants as the main problem? Or, if the state he was thinking of founding, instead of settling on the banks of the Jordan, was made on the banks of the Thames, wouldn’t Herzl have raised as central issue the presence of the English?

“The ideology of a society is the ideology of its ruling class.” The European imperialist bourgeoisie had infected the drunkenness of the colonial expansion to all classes of society and even much of the labour movement. Except for a minority of the labour movement for the rest of Europeans (even for many of the poorest and most oppressed) the map of the world was “blank” outside “civilized” areas of Europe and the U.S. When Herzl does not even mention the Arabs or when later Zangwill launches its famous slogan (“a people without a land for a land without people”), they knew, of course, of the existence of the Arabs. It was not a “reporting error”. What they came to say, simply, is that Palestine was a land without ... European peoples!<sup>31</sup> And in this

Zionism invented nothing; they were merely copying, or rather, adapting to the ideology and conceptions that were crowning the colonial expansion of Europe.

Within this general conception we will see now more clearly the role reserved for the desperate Eastern European Jews. The fact is that in the European colonialism of the end of century even the most miserable masses also had an assigned role. Lenin continues to emphasize this by quoting Rhodes, the creator of the African colony of Rhodesia [Today, Zimbabwe, *NT*] and one of the theorists of imperialism's colonial stage: "Cecil Rhodes, according to a close friend of his, the journalist Stead, told him with regard to his imperialist ideas: 'Yesterday I was in the East End of London (working class neighbourhood) and attended a meeting of the unemployed. To hear there exalted speeches whose dominant note was bread! bread! and to reflect back home about what I had heard, I was convinced more than ever of the importance of imperialism ... The idea that I cherish represents the solution of the social problem: to save the forty million people in the UK of a tragic civil war, we, colonial politicians, have to take possession of new territories to send them the surplus population'..."<sup>32</sup>

How is this different to Herzl's proposal? Let us replace the words "social problem" with "Jewish problem", "tragic civil war" with "go over to subversive parties" and note that Mr Rhodes does not bother to mention the native inhabitants of these "new territories" (which were also "land without people"! ). Let us do that and we will have almost completed the conception of Herzl that we saw pages earlier. We say almost completed because Herzl lacked an objective element that we will see later.

And colonial expansion lifted thus its philanthropy loincloth — because, who, except people like Lenin and Trotsky, could object to the hungry of the East End leaving their slums to get a new life on the grasslands of South Africa? And really they gained in the change, a pity that at the expense of the blacks. And who, except "subversive" as Lenin and Trotsky, could oppose the poor Eastern European Jews coming out of the darkness of their ghettos to bask in the sun of Palestine? And really they gained in the change, a pity that at the expense of the Arabs. And this, in any language, is called colonialism.

## Zionism in search of a good party

For didactic reasons, we have begun the analysis of the Zionist colonization of Palestine by its general concepts and ideology. Let's go down now to its politics.

We said that Herzl lacked an objective element that Rhodes, more fortunate, had — his own imperialism; in the case of Rhodes, British imperialism. That's why the politics of Herzl (and of his successors)) will have that problem as a hub, i.e. to mesh or to marry some imperialist power. This explains why the main activity of Herzl was his approaches to the different European imperialist powers, seeking to insert Zionism as part of their colonial policy. With this purpose he approaches the Kaiser, its junior partner, the Sultan of the Turkish Empire, and finally Britain. Palestine at that time was in the hands of Turkey.

"If His Majesty the Sultan", Herzl writes to him, "gives us Palestine, we would commit to fully stabilize the finances of Turkey. For Europe we would constitute there a bastion against Asia, we would be the forward Sentinel of civilization against barbarism. As a neutral state, we would stay in permanent contact with Europe, which would guarantee our existence."<sup>33</sup> Commenting on this, Rodinson notes: "It would be difficult to place Zionism more clearly within the structure of the European imperialist policy."<sup>34</sup>

Herzl also proposes to the Kaiser "a chartered company under German protectorate".<sup>35</sup> What was a chartered company? The classic of Zionism, Nahum Sokolow takes charge of clarifying it: "All the great victories of Britain in their peaceful conquests (sic), which began with the institution of a fund or trust, inspired the Zionists. Cecil Rhodes [*once again Mr Rhodes shows up, AN*], who began with only one million pounds, created Rhodesia, which has an area of 750,000 square miles. The British North Borneo Company had a capital of £ 800,000 and now dominates a territory of

31,000 square miles. The Imperial British East Africa Company, which owns 200,000 square miles, began its activities with an initial capital of £ 250,000, i.e. the same that the Jewish Colonial Trust has”<sup>36</sup> (founded by Herzl for these purposes). That is, Herzl proposed the Kaiser a colony under German protectorate and asked him to pressure the Sultan.

The Kaiser did not give help to Herzl and, as for the Sultan of Turkey, a country that was imperialist in relation to the Arab peoples that dominated but dependent in turn of German imperialism, he replied thus: “The Turkish Empire does not belong me, but yes it does to the Turkish people. I cannot distribute any piece of it. Let the Jews keep their millions! When my Empire is divided, they may get Palestine for free. But it shall be only our corpse that will be divided. We will never accept a vivisection.”<sup>37</sup>

Faced with the refusal of the sultan, the reaction of Herzl is significant — he expects to get the chartered company, i.e. the colony, “after the division of Turkey”.<sup>38</sup> Who was the candidate to operate the “vivisection” or sharing the Turkish corpse? —Britain. Herzl moves towards her, but it was too soon. The new re-distribution of the colonial world would take place only in the war of 1914, the imperialist First World War. Herzl died in 1904.

## First marriage of Zionism: The Balfour Declaration

“Divine Providence has placed Syria and Egypt on the way between England and the most important regions of its colonial trade, India, China, the Indian Archipelago and Australia ... Therefore, Divine Providence calls to England to deal vigorously to create favourable conditions in these two provinces ... England must put hands to work on the renewal of Syria through mediation of the only people whose energy can be used consistently and efficiently, through mediation of the true children of this land, the children of Israel.”<sup>39</sup> These words, by the mouth of Colonel George Gawler, former governor of Australia, were spoken in the English Parliament at the early date of January 25, 1853. And they are not unique.

The fact is that from the middle of century, the empire was expanding at full steam. So their statesmen dealt with any kind of skulduggery to set foot on every continent. One of the most ingenious and frequent was to use, import or invent conflicts in backward countries in which Britain intervened to “appease” or “defend the rights” of some party. Thus, for example, when the possibility to build the canal from the Atlantic to the Pacific, not through Panama, but through Nicaragua was speculated on, Britain presented herself stating that in the Atlantic coast there is the “Kingdom of the Mosquito Indians”, and that at the request of the king of Mosquitia, it had signed a treaty to “protect” this “nation” from... Nicaraguan imperialism. “Coincidentally” this operetta kingdom was in the mouth of the proposed canal. Such were the methods of Her Gracious Majesty.

The idea of carrying out the mandates of the “Divine Providence”, i.e. to use the Jews as cannon fodder to colonize “holy land”, was always floating in London, long before there was Zionism. Lord Shaftesbury, in a letter to Lord Palmerston, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, suggests that this method “is the cheapest (sic) and surest way to provide these depopulated regions [*again Palestine is the “land without people”, AN*] of everything they need”.<sup>40</sup>

The subjective conditions for the first “wedding” of Zionism were given, then, for quite a while. Herzl’s efforts were well received in London, but as we have said, they had an objective “inconvenience” — Palestine was in the hands of Turkey. They offer to Herzl to colonize momentarily Uganda or the Egyptian Sinai. This does not gel. There was also another objective problem — Zionism was not very strong among the Jewish masses. Those who wanted to emigrate were doing it massively to the U.S., little few to Palestine. And a good portion of those remaining were influenced by the damned “subversive parties” that kept Herzl awake and were therefore anti-Zionist. This was to change later, with the brutal rise of anti-Semitism in Europe.

The courtship between British imperialism and Zionism would end in marriage in 1917. World War I had sounded the hour of the “distribution of Turkey” as foreseen by Herzl. To speed that “vivisection” or “autopsy” of the Turkish Empire, Great Britain uses the Arab national

movement that had begun to awake some years before. It gives them vague promises of independence to get them to fight against the Sultan and made agreements with some Arab leaders, as Hussein, Cherif of Mecca and his son Faisal.

It was clear that Britain, though not averse to use Arab blood to defeat the Turkish Empire, had no intention of letting them conquer their national independence. So, while making those promises, it signed a secret agreement of distribution of the area with France (the Sykes-Picot Agreement) and issued the “Balfour Declaration” (November 2, 1917), very justly qualified as the “wedding ring” between Zionism and British imperialism. It read:

“Dear Lord Rothschild, I have much pleasure in bringing you, on behalf of Her Majesty’s Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted and approved by the cabinet.

“Her Majesty’s government looks favourably the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this objective, being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of non-Jewish communities, or the rights and the political “status” of the of the Jews residing in any other country.”<sup>41</sup>

With the “Balfour Declaration” began the second stage of Zionism, stage culminating in the creation of the State of Israel. It fulfilled the dream of Herzl — finally Zionism was mated to the colonial policy of a great power!

The road to the creation of the State of Israel thus opened with the following features:

- Due to a unilateral declaration of a major imperialist power.
- This statement imposed a fate to a region of Asia that never had belonged to, nor belonged to England. Britain gave generously to Lord Rothschild the territory of a foreign nation.
- It did not take any account of the wishes or the will of the Palestinian people, which was 93% Arabic in 1917.
- This 93% of Arabs were reduced to the status of “non-Jews” in a “Jewish national home”, i.e. of foreign or almost foreign in their own land! To save face, they talked about their “civil and religious rights” while simultaneously they were denied the number one right of every colonized and oppressed people: that of self-determination, the right to determine for itself and democratically their country destiny, without interference from anyone, much less a major imperialist power.

If there is any doubt left that what Zionism did was simply to graft itself in the overall policy of British imperialism, we give the floor to Dr Weizmann, head of the Zionist Organization and agent of the statement: “On presenting to you”, he addresses the British Cabinet, “our resolution, we entrust our Zionist destiny to the Foreign Office<sup>42</sup> and the imperial War Cabinet, in the hope that it will be considered in the light of imperial interests.”<sup>43</sup> It is impossible to speak more clearly.

The Balfour Declaration and the marriage with Zionism, besides giving the British a valuable aid to establish a future protectorate over Palestine and an essential weapon, as we shall see, to crush the Arab national movement, had other more general motivations — the war policy of British imperialism and the struggle against the Russian Revolution.<sup>44</sup>

## **Palestine under occupation and the British Mandate (1918-1948)**

After the World War I, the Allies (Britain, France, Italy, U.S., etc.) showed how millimetrically accurate was Lenin’s opinion on them: it was an imperialist bandit gang that fought against another imperialist bandit gang (Germany, Austria, etc.) for the distribution of colonies and “spheres of influence” of their monopolies. After the war, all the promises of “peace with justice” or “peace without annexations” were forgotten and the victors divided the spoils, but not without the quarrels typical of any band of gangsters. And what a booty! “The billion colonial slaves” that Lenin talked about.

The winning gang had decided to become institutionalized under the form of the “League of Nations”, worthy predecessor of the current United Nations. It was to give a “legal” veneer to the parcelling out. And as previously agreed, Britain received Palestine under “mandate of the League of Nations” because by then it was ugly to say that they received it as a colony. The promises made to the Arabs, were betrayed.

But the Arabs were not ready for ridicule. The War of 1914 not only had generated a group of imperialist victors, but also, for the first time in history arose a workers’ state, the Soviet Union, which repudiated colonial conquests and which was calling for those “billions of slaves” to expel the settlers.

In addition, throughout the colonial or semi-colonial world, from Mexico to China and India, from Turkey to black Africa, a powerful wave of anti-imperialist struggles began. The “billion colonial slaves” began their march. And the Arab world was by no means an exception.

Within this Arab world, the Middle East will be the area which will bring the most important struggles against the British and French imperialisms that dominated there. Between the two world wars there were numerous mass insurrections. Palestine was the focus of this anti-imperialist struggle, especially during the massive uprising of 1936-1939, which, to be suppressed, demanded half the strength of the whole British Empire’s army; army which, at that time, was one of the most powerful in the world.<sup>45</sup> This revolt began with a general strike that lasted six months.<sup>46</sup> It must be the longest general strike in the history of class struggle.

Thousands of Palestinians were killed, arrested and sentenced to the gallows or long prison terms. In 1939, the heroic Palestinian people were defeated after that terrible bloodbath. This is the main key of the relative ease with which in 1947-1948 the State of Israel could be settled.<sup>47</sup>

The Palestinian defeat is explained mainly by three factors:

- An extremely unfavourable balance of forces with imperialism. This has to do with the world situation — the 1930s is the stage of the most serious defeats not only for the European labour movement, but also for the masses of the colonial and semi colonial peoples. It’s the time of the triumph of Nazism in Germany, fascism in Spain, the consolidation of Stalinism in the USSR; it’s the time of the “Infamous Decade” in Argentina, of the Abyssinian War, the annexation of Manchuria by Japan, the defeat of the guerrilla forces in China that forced Mao Tse Tung to take the “long march”, etc. Meanwhile, Britain was still the strongest colonial empire in the world, it was the imperialism that had best recovered from the crisis of 1929-1930, and also it did not have big problems in its “internal front” to prevent them from moving towards the repression of the colonial masses.

- The leadership of the Arab national movement. Fawwaz Traboulsi, the Arab writer, says: “The little logical choice that followed was between the pro-British Nashashibi clan and the Husseinis, commanded by the notorious Mufti, once upon a time British puppet, who turned to the Axis powers in the mid-1930s. This is the leadership that betrayed the uprising of 1936, when under pressure from the rulers of Iraq, Transjordan and Saudi Arabia cancelled the general strike to negotiate with Britain. The large class of landless and displaced peasants made their presence felt by the continuation of a violent guerrilla war which was defeated at the outbreak of World War II. After that, the Palestinian Arabs defeated, demoralized and betrayed by their leaders awaited the outcome of the conflict between the Zionist settlers and the British.”<sup>48</sup>

The flaws of leadership suffered by the Palestinian national movement, not only had to do with the classic hesitation (or directly betrayals) of ‘feudal’<sup>49</sup>, bourgeois or petty bourgeois chiefs of the national movements of any colonial or semi-colonial country. In Palestine there was a peculiar aggravating element which, according to Fawwaz Traboulsi and other authors, was instrumental: the process of disintegration and marginalization of Arab society collectively, process in which Zionism, as we shall see, would be the cause. Missing, or extremely weak, was the radicalized bourgeoisie or petty bourgeoisie that was to become in other Arab countries the support of Nasserism, Ba’athism and other nationalist movements that preceded them. The Palestinian bourgeoisie was a shadow of bourgeoisie compared with that of other regions of the Arab world.

Also with the nascent proletariat and the peasantry a similar phenomenon of marginalization would take place. But here the leadership problem was suffering a new aggravating circumstance: the collapse of the Communist International, the only faction with global strength to penetrate and dispute leadership. Regrettably, the Communist International, which began (in the time of Lenin and Trotsky) denouncing Zionism as world example of colonialism<sup>50</sup> would end up, with Stalin, supporting Zionism. This course of degradation goes through support and alliance with “democratic” imperialism in the 1930s, just as the Palestinian masses do their utmost to finish with the “democratic” imperialism which oppressed them. Thus, the Palestinian Communist Party is isolated from the Arab masses, and it goes from setback to setback and from crisis to crisis, until, in 1948, ends up supporting the partition of the country and the creation of the State of Israel.

- The third and final factor, but not the least important, was the action of Zionism. No need to clarify that in all the struggles between the Palestinian masses and British imperialism, Zionism always aligned with imperialism. But its action was not merely “political”, it was one of disintegrating and alienating the whole society and the whole people, that 93% of Palestinian Arabs that existed in 1917, so that in 1949 (one year after creating the State) they were reduced to 16%<sup>51</sup> in Israel. And the rest, living in squalor in refugee camps outside their country and their land. Let’s see how this process occurred.

## **The economic liquidation of the Arab population**

“When we occupy the land ... we will gradually expropriate private property in the Estates that we are allocated. We will try to discourage poor people moving them beyond the border, seeking employment for them in the intermediate countries and denying them any employment in our country ... Both the process of expropriation and removal (!!!) of the poor must be carried out discreetly and circumspectly.”<sup>52</sup> This note of Theodor Herzl in his diary, not only proves that he really did not ignore the existence of natives in the place where he wanted to create the Zionist state; it constitutes in itself a whole program. If we dress this program with a few “socialist” phrases such as refusing to employ Arabs “not to exploit them”, that to take the land from the Arabs is to “end feudalism”, etc., we will have the program implemented by Zionism in Palestine and which allowed the creation of the State of Israel. With a small difference: that the “expropriation ... [and] elimination of the poor” could not be accomplished “discreetly and circumspectly” but by brute force, since these poor had the bad occurrence to oppose them.

“The gradual strengthening of this marginalizing [of Arabs] colonialism”, says Jon Rothschild, was carried out under three slogans, which were the pillars of the Zionist movement in Palestine since the beginning of colonization until the establishment of the State of Israel and beyond.

“These slogans were: kibush Hakarka (conquest of the land), kibush Ha’avoda (conquest of labour) and t’ozteret ha’aretz (produce of the land).

“Behind these sonorous words there was a dark reality. Conquest of the land meant that all possible land may be acquired (legally or in other ways) from the Arabs, and that no land owned by Jews was sold or otherwise returned to the Arabs. Conquest of the work meant that in the factories and lands owned by Jews exclusively Jewish workers were employed, as far as possible. The Arab worker was boycotted. In fact, Histadrut, which today pretends to be the “labour federation” in Israel, was created to ... impose a boycott of Arab workers ... Produce of the land meant to practise the boycott of the Arab produce by Jewish settlers and to support only the purchase of produce of Jewish lands or businesses.”<sup>53</sup>

The effect of this policy on the Palestinian people was catastrophic. The Zionists were a minority, but minority in constant growth. Moreover, although minority they had economic power, which is what counts decisively, much higher than that of the Arabs. And this regardless of their close ties with imperialism, of which we will discuss later.

Naturally, the first victims of this strange “socialist” policy of Zionism were the Arab workers and peasants, reduced to the status of unemployed workers and landless peasants, sunk in misery and despair.

## The other side of the “socialist” kibbutz

The situation of the Palestinian peasant, of the fellah, already was bad. Zionism took charge of taking it to the extreme.

“According to the report of the Committee for the Study of Economic Conditions of Farmers in Palestine”, says Tony Cliff in 1946, “commonly called ‘Johnson–Crosbie Report’, only 23.9% of what the fellah produces stays in his hands, whereas 48.8% is consumed by governmental taxes, the rent of the land owners<sup>54</sup> and the interest of the usurer. To understand just how low the standard of life of an Arab peasant is, on account of the backward way of its economy and its exploitation by various parasites (which are the main barrier to the development of its economy) I will do the comparison between the diet of a fellah and the diet which the government gives the prisoners ... [to calculate the expenses in pounds sterling] I make the assumption that a fellah, his wife and four children are prisoners:

	Fellah family in prison	Fellah family in liberty
Wheat and millet	£5.1	£10
Olives and olive oil	£3.8	£3
Beans, lentils and dairy	£12.9	£4
Rice, sugar and other products, purchased by the fellah off their land	£6.7	£1
Total	£43.2	£18

“These calculations”, concludes Cliff, “give us an idea of the terrible conditions endured by the fellahin masses of Palestine.”<sup>55</sup>

And, as if this were not enough, along came Zionism. The latter bought land from the landowner/usurer and entire villages were thrown into the streets. Of course, the Arab was too “barbaric” and “ignorant” to take comfort thinking that the land his grandparents had worked had now an advanced “socialist” kibbutz with settlers from Europe installed. Not being able to appreciate so enormous “progress”, they lost their temper and caused rebellions like those of 1936-1939. And here troops of Her Gracious British Majesty and Haganah (unofficial army of Zionism) would intervene to make him see reason. Thus was Zionism “conquering the land.”

No need to clarify that such a process is the opposite of an agrarian reform or revolution. Zionists opposed tooth and nail to any initiative in this regard, even the timid projects that sometimes the British administration took. A genuine agrarian reform, that is, to give the land to the fellah and to rid him of parasite landlords and usurers would have meant the end of Zionism.

The pretension of the Zionist settlers to be related to Emiliano Zapata, Hugo Blanco or any other agrarian revolutionary would be laughable if it did not give indignation.

## The other side of the “socialist” Histadrut

This Arab evicted from the land was heading to the city. There the situation was not very different in shops and factories. The Arabs were expelled or denied work in Zionist owned or foreign capital companies (dealerships), which were usually run by Zionists managers. To understand what this means, consider the following statistics according to the “industrial census of 1939”.<sup>56</sup>

	Investment	Prime mover
Arab-owned industries	6.5%	2.2%
Industries owned by Zionists	40.3%	22.0%
Dealerships	53.2%	74.9%

Where would an Arab find work then? We already saw the “other side” of the “socialist” kibbutz. Now we know the other side of the “socialist” Histadrut, because this alleged “union” was not created for the struggle of all workers (whatever their nationality, language or supposed “race”) against the bosses, but for the “conquest of labour”, to expel the Arab workers from their jobs. The Ku Klux Klan and the “white unions” do the same in the U.S. without staining the word “socialist”; they also try to prevent poor blacks from being exploited by white capitalists, expelling them from especially skilled employment. If what Zionists did, and do, is not racism, what should be called racism?

Needless to say, this monstrosity to pit workers against each other using their “racial” differences has nothing to do with socialism. Needless to say, this disgusting racism is totally and absolutely incompatible with Marxism. No one has the right to call himself Socialist, and even less Marxist, if one does not defend a minimal internationalist principle, that is, if one is not for the union of all workers, irrespective of their nation, “race” or language.

“Workers of the world unite!” With this slogan Marxist socialism was born and lives. “Jewish worker fight against the Arab worker, join the Zionist or English boss to throw him out of the job, do not admit him in your union, the Histadrut!” Those were the slogans of Zionist “socialism”. Marxism and Zionism are completely incompatible.

When the “socialist” Histadrut could not prevent that somewhere Arabs and Jews work together, they had brotherly relations and fought together against the bosses, then other Zionist organizations like the Irgun and the Stern Gang intervened to “convince” them.

A famous case was that of the Haifa oil refinery, which happened on December 31, 1947, where there had been joint struggles of Arab and Jewish workers against the imperialist bosses. This, of course, did not please the Zionists, or the Arab reactionaries, even less the company and the British government. On that date, an Irgun commando threw bombs and strafed a queue of Arab workers at the door for work. Six were killed and dozens wounded. Taking advantage of this, agent provocateurs among Arabs incited Palestinian workers to attack their fellow Jews. This unleashed then a fratricidal struggle within the refinery with hundreds dead and wounded.<sup>57</sup>

The labour and student activists who read us know of the priceless value of class solidarity, either by their struggle in their factory, or by the strikes and conflicts that they have supported from the outside. We ask them to stop here for a moment and ponder on this example of Zionist “socialism”.

## **The other side of the “produce of the land”**

The third slogan, (t’ozteret ha’aretz) “produce of the land”, closed the circuit. Zionism imposed by force a boycott of all Arab produce. Alas for the fellah who dared to take his vegetable cart to a neighbourhood dominated by the Zionists! Pity the Jewish housewife who some band of thugs of Histadrut discovered buying half a dozen eggs from an Arab!<sup>58</sup>

Although the Zionists were a minority (when the State of Israel was proclaimed they constituted only one third) their purchasing power was greater. These measures, linked as we will discuss later to the action of British imperialism, were an en bloc attack on Palestinian society as a whole, because the ultimate goal was to expel them from the country. Since Zionists and imperialism handled the key economic levers, since imperialism joined to Zionism overwhelmingly outnumbered the Arabs in all stages of the economic cycle, from production to consumption, and in

almost all branches of production, this triple boycott of the Arabs (in the field, at work and in production and trade) tended to convert all Palestinians in a marginalized mass and uprooted from all economic activity. The final step would be to push them out of Palestine.

This en bloc attack and this “molecular” disintegration” of Palestinian society hindered, as we anticipated, the emergence of an Arab leadership that would match the situation. Although those who suffered most were the workers of the city and the countryside, after the appearance of this colonial aggression directed against the whole of the Palestinians, it became very difficult a differentiation of classes that would displace the old traditional families of the leadership of the Palestinian nationalist movement. It became difficult, if not impossible, for a new leadership to emerge, let alone a revolutionary Marxist leadership, at least a radicalized petty bourgeois leadership as is the present leadership of the Palestinian resistance. And out of Palestine matters were not better. As “spokespersons” of the Arab world would appear characters of the ilk of King Farouk of Egypt, or King Abdullah of Jordan, puppets of British imperialism, who would consummate the betrayal of the Palestinian people.

## **The other side of Zionism as a “national liberation movement”**

“We cannot ignore the great interests that England has in the Mediterranean. Fortunately for us, the interests of England in the world are based essentially in the preservation of peace and therefore we are not the only ones who see in the strengthening of the British Empire an important guarantee for the strengthening of international peace. England will be provided with defensive marine and terrestrial bases in the Jewish State and in the British corridor. For many years the Jewish state will need British military protection, and to be protected implies a degree of dependence.”<sup>59</sup>

These words of Ben Gurion, patriarch of the Zionist state, expressed in his report to the 19th Zionist Congress in 1935, reflected quite well the “marriage” between Zionism and British imperialism during the years of its “mandate” in Palestine. However, this passionate declaration of love included the future grounds for divorce and remarriage of Zionism, this time with U.S. imperialism. Let’s see what happened.

Zionism is hooked to the English colonization of Palestine since the Balfour Declaration. But, let us be clear, Zionism is engaged as junior partner: “Here in Palestine”, noted Tony Cliff, “imperialism uses a weapon that has been used for over twenty years to subdue the Arab population — Zionism. Zionism has a special place in the imperial defences. It plays a dual role; first directly, as an important pillar of imperialism, giving them active support and opposing the liberation struggle of the Arab nation. Additionally, it plays the role of passive servant behind which imperialism can hide and against which it can redirect the anger of the Arab masses.”<sup>60</sup>

Let’s see some examples of how this double role was combined. “An English electricity company sets up a company in Palestine and appoints a Zionist as general manager. The result is that now whereas in each colony the anti-imperialist struggle is characterized by strikes, demonstrations and boycotts against foreign affiliates in Palestine the boycott against the electricity company takes another aspect — it appears as an ‘anti-Semite’ manifestation ... Another example further clarifies things”, added Cliff. “In Syria and Lebanon there have been major protests, some violent, against the establishment of the trucking company Steel Bros; here in Palestine, the ‘socialist’ Zionists and the Histadrut, in exchange for a miserable reward, are at the service of Steel Bros and let them settle firmly in the country ...If the British Army, in the period 1936 to 1939, killed thousands of Arab fighters (in the same way that Italians killed Abyssinians, or the Japanese, the Dutch and the English kill Indonesians today), they do not do it to keep their dominion — God forbid! — but to ‘protect the Jews’ ... In this way Zionism offloads its liability for the acts of spoliation and oppression, to imperialism.”<sup>61</sup>

In this policy played a large role the Haganah, the “unofficial” army that Zionism formed in Palestine during the British mandate and with which they expelled in 1948 most of its Arab

inhabitants. Within the mythology of Zionism as “national liberation movement”, the Haganah is often compared with Castro’s guerrillas, with the Vietcong, etc. The Haganah would have developed a heroic struggle against the British occupation army.

It is a shame that the “left” apologists of Zionism are belied by the same Zionists. Take, for example, the book *Antología Israel*, published in Buenos Aires by AMIA (which practically means to say “official Zionist version”) and see what this “National Liberation Army” was and what was doing.

There Mr Moshe Pearlman begins his history of the Haganah with the following words: “It is clear that the British military authorities always acknowledged the existence of the Haganah. They knew their purpose (sic). They had extensive experience in relation to their use as defensive force in internal Palestinian affairs ... During this period, the British military authorities worked openly with the Haganah, never sparing praise for jobs well done.”<sup>62</sup> Strange” national liberation army “this one is!

But what were these “internal Palestinian affairs” and these “jobs well done” to deserve such praise? Mr Pearlman says later: “One could have expected the (British) administration to possess the courage to legalize the status of the Haganah after their service record during the years 1936 to 1939 in the Arab riots.”<sup>63</sup> Is it clear now, Gentlemen Liars of the pro-Zionist “left”, what the Haganah was and what it was for?

In 1939, the British Army and its junior partner, the Haganah, had a crushing victory over the Palestinian guerrillas. But, by that date, the friction starts between Zionism and the Britons. Earlier a Zionist minority had split, the “revisionist” one led by Jabotinsky<sup>64</sup>, who would then establish the terrorist organizations Irgun and Stern Gang which attacked Arabs and the British. The fight that would end up in divorce revolved around the restrictions which in its 1939 White Paper the British government imposes on the purchase of land and Zionist emigration to Palestine.<sup>65</sup>

Why does British imperialism do that?

“Zionism wants to build a strong Jewish capitalist state. [British] imperialism is interested in the existence of a Jewish capitalist society covering it from the hatred of the colonial masses, but not that Zionism became too powerful factor. Regarding this last point, they are willing to try their “justice” against the Arabs and are willing to concede part of their just demands at the expense of Zionism. To secure the services of Zionism, in direct support against any anti-imperialist insurrection ..., imperialism does not necessarily need to stop Zionism from flourishing. A Zionist population of 600,000 people is enough to fill that role.”<sup>66</sup> But, more importantly, in 1939 the British Empire was facing a new world war, it should get a new global policy for the whole of the Arab and colonial world that it dominated in order to keep “peace” while fending with German imperialism. For that, England had the collaboration of Abdullah and other Arab puppets and with the advantage of having crushed the most serious threat: the Palestinian uprising.

They had to give some concessions to make the British butchers of Palestine appear as “protectors of the Arab peoples”. And the lesser partner, Zionism, paid the costs of the operation.

But the “fight” that would ensue between Zionism and the British administration was anything but an anti-imperialist struggle.<sup>67</sup> It was the classic contradiction between global and general interests of the empire and the particular interests of a sector of settlers. It is the same contradiction that existed between the French settlers in Algeria and the government of De Gaulle or between white settlers of Rhodesia and South Africa on the one hand, and British imperialism on the other; contradiction that led to the “independence” of these British colonies. But will there be some chutzpah who dares to claim that they were “anti-imperialist struggles”?

## The “new Moses” shows up

“I feel that the president [of the U.S.] will be the new Moses who will bear the child of Israel in the wilderness.”<sup>68</sup> These “prophetic” statements of a U.S. congressman out of a meeting with the US President were recorded with satisfaction by the *Jerusalem Post* of March 6, 1944. The “Divine

Providence”, this time embodied in the U.S., is getting ready to unleash a new “miracle”, which abound in the history of Zionism. And, as always, at the Arabs expense.

What had happened? Listen again to Ben Gurion: “Our major concern [at the start of World War II] was the fate that would be reserved to Palestine after the war ... Already it was evident that the British would not retain their mandate. If you had every reason to believe that Hitler would be defeated, it was quite obvious that Britain, though victorious, would be greatly weakened from the conflict ... For my part, I had no doubt that the centre of gravity of our forces should move from the United Kingdom to the United States, which was on track to secure first place in the world ...”<sup>69</sup>

We have already seen how, in 1917, Zionism “entrusted his fate” to the Foreign Office and the British Imperial War Cabinet. In 1939, before the new imperialist carve up of the world, Zionism changed the Foreign Office by the U.S. State Department. The alleged ‘anti-imperialist’ struggle of Zionism was, simply, the passage of one partner to the other.

Linked with its new “centre of gravity”, the U.S., Zionism marched steadily towards the creation of the State. Already during the mandate, the British had made a proposal to partition Palestine that Ben Gurion accepted immediately (Proposal of the Peel Commission of 1937). Although they were given only a quarter of Palestine, Ben Gurion was willing to take it as a basis for future expansion: “The Jewish State that has been proposed to us”, said Ben Gurion at this time, “does not correspond to the Zionist goals, but this will be a decisive step towards the realization of our great designs ... We will break the borders imposed on us”.<sup>70</sup>

Finished World War II, the Palestinian question began to be addressed by the United Nations. The farce of the League of Nations was repeating itself. Again without any consultation of the Palestinian people, again in a violation of the grossest form of their rights to self-determination and to dispose of their country and of themselves, the great powers were preparing to give legal “status” to the colonial situation created in the course of British domination. Thus, on November 29, 1947 the partition of Palestine into two states is voted — one Zionist and the other Arab.

Summing up the significance of this vote and explaining the righteous anger that rose on the masses of the whole Arab world, Rodinson says: “For the Arab masses to accept the decision of the United Nations had the meaning of an unconditional surrender to a diktat, the same kind of capitulation of black or yellow kings of the 19th century fronting the cannons pointed at their palaces. Europe had collectively sent settlers whose objective was to seize a part of the national territory. During the period when a native reaction would have been enough to easily eject these settlers; such reaction had been prevented by the police and British troop representatives of the community of Euro-American nations. This reaction had been morally disarmed by the fallacious assurance that this was only the peaceful implementation of some hapless and harmless groups, destined to remain a minority. And later, when the real intention of those groups was revealed, the Euro-American world, united despite its international divergences, from the socialist USSR to the U.S. ultra capitalists, wanted to impose on the Arabs the acceptance of the fait accompli. With regard to the Arabs, the settlement of World War II repeated bitterly the lies of the first.”<sup>71</sup>

## **Stalin: Godfather of the second marriage of Zionism**

“The delegation of the Soviet Union cannot but express their horror at the position the Arab countries adopted in the Palestinian issue, we were all surprised (sic) to see those States, or at least some of them, resorting to arms and giving themselves to military operations to suppress the national liberation movement that is born in Palestine.”<sup>72</sup> Thus spoke Andrei Gromyko, Stalin delegate, at the meeting of 12 May 1948 of the United Nations Security Council. The USSR had not only joined the U.S. to legalize the colonial situation in Palestine but would also send weapons and aircraft to the Zionists through Czechoslovakia. Moreover, the USSR was the first power that recognized Israel; it did so even before the U.S.

Of course, this “certificate of national liberation movement” that Stalin signed to Zionism all that “certified” was the complete degradation of the Soviet bureaucracy. It was one more betrayal in a Stalinist long list.

We have already noted the views of Lenin and Trotsky at the beginnings of the Zionist adventure in Palestine. Twenty-five years later, the facts had fully confirmed the pro-imperialist and colonialist character of Zionism. But this was the least important for the Soviet bureaucracy. All they cared about was the diplomatic chess game that was played to three points between the U.S., the USSR and Britain.

The Soviet bureaucracy bears equal responsibility to the U.S. with respect to the creation of the colonial and racist state of Israel; equal responsibility in the denial of democratic and national rights of the Palestinian people.

The support of the USSR to Zionist colonialism brought much more serious consequences than the weapons and aircraft they send in 1948 to massacre Arabs. It meant, on the one hand, the isolation of Palestinians from the working masses outside of the Arab world. The Stalinists, together with the Social Democrats, were who scattered all over the world the lie of a “progressive” Israel fighting against “feudal hordes”. If this lie had been the exclusive responsibility of Mr Ben Gurion and his new consort, the U.S. government, not many would have been convinced. But the communist parties and the Social Democrats took charge; they turned all their authority and weight of their bureaucratic apparatuses to make millions of workers, students and leftist intellectuals swallow it. Like the Zionists, they took advantage of the world’s horror at the Nazi barbarity and slaughter of six million Jews to conceal that the Zionists in Palestine came to practice the same racism against natives and with similar methods.

On the other hand, the Stalinist betrayal covered with mud socialism and Marxism in the eyes of the Arab masses. Thus, they became easy prey to the manipulations of the most reactionary elements, such as the Muslim Brotherhood, for example, or were left in the hands of people such as King Farouk or King Abdullah.

## **The Fourth International was the only anti-Zionist left-wing faction**

While Stalinism and social democracy fervently supported Zionism and the creation of Israel, the Trotskyists posed: “Down with the partition of Palestine! For an Arab Palestine, united and independent, with full rights of a national minority for the Jewish community! Down with the imperialist intervention in Palestine! Out of the country all foreign troops, the ‘mediators’ and ‘observers’ of the United Nations! For the Arab masses right to dispose of themselves! For the election of a constituent assembly with universal and secret suffrage! For the agrarian revolution!”<sup>73</sup> And the Palestinian Trotskyist Group noted that U.S. imperialism “... has won a direct agent — the Zionist bourgeoisie who, by this fact, has become completely dependent on American capital and American politics. From now on, U.S. imperialism will have a justification to intervene militarily in the Levant whenever it sees fit ... the inevitable consequence of this war will be the total dependence of Zionism to American imperialism”.<sup>74</sup>

## **The 1948 war began in 1947**

The Arab rejection of the partition led to a fight that would lead in 1948 to the intervention of several Arab states, mainly Transjordan (today Jordan) and Egypt, and would end in their defeat.

Unfortunately here we have to dispel another myth of Zionism: the “small group of Zionists against the giant of 100 million Arabs”, “David against Goliath”, etc. In all armed conflicts since 1948, with the exception perhaps of the last war in which matters went somehow more even, the Zionists have always had a clear military superiority. In 1947-1948, while Palestinians were shattered by the defeat of the insurrection of 1936-1939, Zionism not only had the Haganah, organized, armed and tolerated by the British even in times of greatest friction with the Zionists, but

they also had “irregular” units as the Irgun and others and with several thousand trained fighters in the Jewish brigades of the British Army. General Dayan comes out of that school, for example.

In the official Zionist book, *Antologia Israel*, quoted earlier, eloquent figures<sup>75</sup> are given. Let us do the sums:

Jewish Rural Police	2,000
Haganah	45,000
Palmach (special units trained by the British and equal to the famous and efficient commandos of the World War II)	3,000
Irgun and other terrorist groups	3,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>53,000</b>

In addition we must add several thousands of “volunteers” from Europe and the U.S., including fighter pilots, veterans of World War II, who joined the fray. With them we come to between 60,000 to 70,000 Zionists fighters, most of them of high technical and/or military qualification.

Who were their opponents, the “hordes” of “millions” of Arabs? Until the intervention of neighbouring Arab states, practically the biggest organized force of the Palestinians was the “Liberation Army” of Fawzi al-Qawuqji, coming to Palestine in January 1948. They reached the frightening figure of 5,000 men. There were of course many thousands more resisting in all Arab villages and cities. But resistance was disconnected and disorganized military and politically. For them to have imposed the superiority of their numbers against settlers, Palestinians needed a weapon that they lacked — a political and revolutionary organization capable of mobilizing the whole of the Palestinian masses and neighbouring Arab countries. No need to say that this was not the aim of Abdullah, Farouk and other characters who were appearing as “representatives of the Arab nation”. On the contrary, they were incubating a monumental betrayal.

## The phoney war of 1948 and the betrayal of King Abdullah

While the Palestinian resistance was exterminated, while slaughters were happening about which we will speak later, the reactionary Arab governments were attending conference after conference. On May 14, 1948 the State of Israel was proclaimed. The next day, only after months of struggle, become involved, first Transjordan, then Egypt and to a lesser extent other Arab countries. All the armies of the Arab states involved did not exceed 25,000 men,<sup>77</sup> without unity of command. Even at that time the Zionist forces had an indisputable military superiority.

The only military force capable of measuring itself militarily with the Haganah was the Arab Legion of Transjordan, led by British officers. And to say this is to say that they were going towards defeat. Britain, for whom it was convenient to appear now as “protector” of the Arabs, actually developed a double play. While in the United Nations they had opposed the partition of Palestine, they ended up abiding the blockade and embargo of weapons and ammunition to the belligerents. This “embargo”, as in the wars in Abyssinia or Spain, only affected one of the warring parties, in this case the Arabs.

But the final blow on the Palestinians would be the secret pact between Abdullah, King of Transjordan, and Golda Meir, representative at the time of the Israeli government. This covenant consisted simply in sharing Palestine.<sup>78</sup> The State of Israel extended its surface beyond the boundaries marked on the partition map of United Nations, and the King of Transjordan, grandfather of the present Hussein, seized the West Bank. King Farouk only touched a bone, the Gaza Strip. A few years later, Abdullah would be executed by a Palestinian, but this act of justice and despair would not change the fate of his people. Thus began the tragedy of the Palestinian Arab people, stripped of their land and their right to self-determination.

## How to manufacture a “land without a people”

The Zionist settlers had had time to become convinced that the slogan of “land without people” did not correspond to the reality of Palestine. But if the “land without people” did not exist, you could instead manufacture it. We saw how, at the beginning of colonization, economic measures and policies of Zionism tended to a slow but steady marginalization of the Arab population. Now this process would take a leap: the expulsion of the majority of Palestinians and expropriation of their property.

The Zionist leader Yosef Weitz, director for many years of the Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency for Israel, noted in his diary in 1940: “The only solution is a Palestine, or at least Western Palestine [west of the Jordan River] without Arabs ... And there is no other way than to transfer all the Arabs from here to neighbouring countries, to transfer all: neither one village nor one tribe should stay.”<sup>79</sup> To carry out these plans worthy of Hitler, there was only one method: the one that Hitler used. And it was used.

No sooner was the partition voted at the United Nations, a campaign of terror began that forced the flight of the Arab populations. Distinguished as main executors of this butchery were members of the Irgun, terrorist organization that had the advantage of being “unofficial”. That is, when they carried out a slaughter, Ben Gurion could wash his hands. The leader of this fascist terrorist organization was the notorious Menachem Begin, today Herut party leader, honourable Member of the Knesset (Israel’s parliament) and no less Honourable Minister in a number of cabinets.

It would be impossible to do an inventory of all the slaughters of the Zionist settlers. We already reported the Irgun feat in the refinery in Haifa on December 31, 1947. Let’s talk now of Deir Yassin.

The extermination of the Arab village of Deir Yassin has been rightly considered as the My Lai of Zionism, comparing to the slaughter perpetrated in that famous Vietnam village by U.S. troops.

The basic testimonies of the massacre of Deir Yassin were given by the delegate of the International Red Cross in Palestine, Jacques de Reynier, who discovered the bodies and managed to save three seriously injured victims. His report was published in 1950.<sup>80</sup> In April last year [1972, *TN*], the Israeli newspaper *Yedioth Ahronoth* published various documents on the massacre, this included a secret report of soldier Meir Philipsky, who is now General (R) Meir Pa’el, and who at the time of the slaughter was “liaison officer” between the Haganah and the terrorist groups Irgun Zvi Leumi (ETZEL) and the Stern Gang (Lehi).<sup>81</sup> The data can be summarized thus:

On April 9, 1948 special units of the Haganah took the village of Deir Yassin, after defeating a weak Arab resistance. Finished the resistance, they left it in the hands of the butchers of Irgun and Stern Gang. They went house to house, exterminating all of its civilians inhabitants, most of whom were women, elderly and children, since most of the men were outside the village at the time. Throwing hand grenades into the houses and then strafing or beheading the survivors, they exterminated about 250 Arabs.

“Along with a group of inhabitants of Jerusalem”, tells the aforementioned Philipsky, “we begged the commanders to give order to stop the killing, but our efforts were unsuccessful. Meanwhile, about 25 men had been brought out of the houses; they were put on trucks and taken up triumphantly, like a Roman triumph, through the neighbourhoods of Mahaneh Yehuda and Zakhron Yosef (in Jerusalem). When the march ended, they were taken to a stone quarry that lies between Giv’at Sha’ul and Deir Yassin and killed in cold blood there.”<sup>82</sup> The corpses of the village were thrown into wells; there they were discovered by Red Cross delegate Jacques de Reynier.

Israeli historian Arie Yitzhaqui, commenting in *Yedioth Ahronoth* on the published documentation, highlights that Deir Yassin “followed the usual pattern of occupation of an Arab village in 1948. In the early months of the war of independence, the troops of the Haganah and Palmach conducted dozens of such operations ...”<sup>83</sup>

The political objective of the massacres of Deir Yassin, Lydda, Jaffa, etc., could not be clearer: to manufacture the “land without people”, “to transfer”, as Weitz said, “all the Arabs from here to neighbouring countries...” If there are any doubts, Mr Menachem Begin, chief enforcer of these crimes, will clear them: “All the Jewish forces”, says Begin, “advanced through Haifa like a knife through butter. The Arabs fled in panic shouting ‘*Deir Yassin!*’... This mass exodus soon became a mad and uncontrollable flight.”<sup>84</sup> Thus, at the signing of the armistice in early 1949, about a million Palestinians were expelled from their land.

## **The colonial state, racist and the cop of the Arab revolution**

The State of Israel is the institutionalization of colonialism. Like its peers, the States of South Africa and Rhodesia, the native population was stripped of their land and property and of their national and democratic rights, some of them were forced to emigrate and the rest were subject to the classic rules of states where a supposed “superior race” dominates an “inferior race”. The State of Israel is the instrument (armed to the teeth by imperialism) that aims to maintain that colonial situation and to pay back to imperialism for its services acting as a cop against revolutionary movements or just nationalists of the Arab world.

We will be finishing this study with some examples of the colonial, racist and counterrevolutionary character of the current State of Israel.

Perhaps most shocking is the mass dispossession perpetrated on the Palestinian population. We have seen with what methods around a million Palestinians were forced to flee. After the war of 1948, at the same time that they were not allowed to return to their homes, the State of Israel applied a law called “absentee ownership”<sup>85</sup>, according to which the Arab who was “absent” lost all his assets when these were “abandoned”. Thus, land, houses, bank accounts, etc. of this million Palestinians went into the pockets of the settlers. It was the “primitive accumulation” of Zionism. This, combined with injections of billions of dollars of U.S. imperialism, is the secret of Israeli economic development.

The law of “absentee ownership” is a “law” of theft en masse even from the point of view of bourgeois legal norms. It’s the same as if a gang of robbers enters a family home, kills half and produces, as a result, the flight of the rest. When they are going to be held accountable, these gentlemen argue that, having been “absent” and “abandoned” their property, the survivors have lost all rights to it, which has now passed into the hands of the gangsters. At the same time, at gunpoint, they prevent the return of the survivors and, each time a survivor tries to enter his home, the gangsters claim to the world they are “attacked”.

The so called “Law of Return” is another example of racism. Zionism shares with the Nazis and the rest of anti-Semites the myth of considering the Jews as a “race”. The members of this supposed “race” in any country in the world they are and although their predecessors never had anything to do with Palestine, have the right to “return” (?) to Israel and become citizens. Instead, a Palestinian (who 25 years ago was driven by force) or his child, have no right to “return” or citizenship.

During the British occupation, in 1945, some “emergency laws” were enacted that were described by the Zionist leader Jacob Shapira as follows: “These laws have no equivalent in any civilized country, even in Nazi Germany itself. These laws apply only to an occupied country ... no authority can allow such inhuman laws enacted.”<sup>86</sup> Well, these laws remained in effect in the State of Israel and, to complete the mockery, Mr Jacob Shapira shortly afterwards became Minister of Justice, that is, in charge of implementing them. Modifications made years later to these laws have been purely formal and intended to quell protests which arose both inside and outside Israel.

According to these “laws” currently in force in Israel, especially in the usurped territories after the 1967 war, the Arabs are under “military government”. Military authorities have the right to “transfer and drive out the inhabitants of the areas, take and retain in their possession any goods, article or object, practice investigations and raids at all times, limit the movement of people, impose

restrictions on employment and business, enact deportations, place anyone under police surveillance, impose assigned residence ... to seize any land in the interests of public safety, the freely use of requisition, impose military occupation at the expense of the inhabitants, to establish a curfew, suspend postal and other public services.”<sup>87</sup>

There are few States with similar legislation and which applies exclusively to a sector of the population, this sector being determined by “race”. Hitler’s Germany was an example of this kind of State, Rhodesia and South Africa are today [1973, *NT*]. This similarity is impressive, even in form, of anti-black legislation in South Africa and anti-Arab legislation in Israel. Both recognize, moreover, a common origin: British colonial law.

The tangle of racist and colonial laws and provisions support each other and are combined into a single result: oppression, theft and exploitation of the Arab population. A common example is the following: a military authority declares a “security zone” in this or that region. No Arab, therefore, may enter or live in it. If there was any village in the area its inhabitants are expelled, if there was land belonging to Arabs they are not allowed to go and cultivate it. Immediately afterwards the law of “absentee ownership” begins to operate: the lands and villages are “abandoned” their farmers and residents have been “absent” therefore they become the property of Israel. The law of “absentee ownership” applies also to Palestinians who have moved to another place, although these Palestinians remain within Israel and although their transfer was forced by an Israeli authority.

The “Report of the UN Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories”<sup>88</sup> gives a pale idea of the fascist regime that the Palestinian population is subjected to. It is a catalogue of horrors: “torture and ill-treatment”, “administrative detention” (i.e., imprisonment of thousands of Arabs in prisons and concentration camps by order of the military authorities, without trial and indefinite), “eviction of people in the occupied territories under deportation orders calls”, “transfer of several thousands of people from their homes to other parts of the occupied territory”, “expropriation of their property, including the property of persons removed from their homes”, “demolition of homes” (about 10,000 since 1967), “denial of the right to return to their homes to people who fled the occupied territory due to the hostilities of June 1967 and who were deported or otherwise expelled”. Such are the items in the report of the Special Committee of the United Nations. The report finally comes to the conclusion that it is not a policy “used in exceptional circumstances” but, on the contrary, it “has become a rule of conduct or definite policy”.<sup>89</sup> And we add, this “rule of conduct or definite policy” is the logical, fatal and inevitable consequence of any colonial situation. Never, at any time and in any continent, a group of settlers has been able to establish and maintain its dominance over the native population without resorting to methods of this ilk. Rhodesia, South Africa, “French” Algeria, the Portuguese colonies in Africa and Israel are there to prove it.

Since 1948, the development of the colonial and racist state of Israel has increasingly emphasized its similarity to the above mentioned experiences of colonization. And now it is clear all the falsity of the Zionist argument that they are not colonizers because they exploit native labour. We have already seen that at the beginning of colonization, this “not to exploit native labour” was the pious mantle that covered the expulsion of the Arab workers and peasants of their jobs and land (neither in South Africa a black person is a bank clerk, skilled worker or owner of his own land). But, once the displacement of the native population and the expropriation of their property were executed, the Zionists have had no qualms about exploiting the dispossessed Palestinians. Not even the angelic “socialist” kibbutzim fall short in this.

The hunger and thirst for super-profits which dominates the Zionist bourgeoisie extends also the exploitation, racial discrimination and poverty for large sections of the Jewish population, especially of Eastern origin (Sephardic, Yemenite, etc.). Today the state of Israel is a racist pyramid, where the top is occupied by two thousand millionaires (in dollars) of Ashkenazi (European Jews) origin and intimately linked to imperialist investments; further down, a middle bourgeoisie and a privileged State and Histadrut bureaucracy, also of Ashkenazi origin; these

classes and privileged layers sit on the masses of Eastern Jews and, already in the last step of the pyramid, on the Palestinian Arabs.<sup>90</sup> Israel is the South Africa of the Middle East.

## The counterrevolutionary cop

But what has been said so far is only half of the State of Israel. Its other half is its counterrevolutionary role of cop and bridgehead of imperialism in the Arab world. In this, it does nothing more than to continue the “service record” given to British imperialism before statehood.

If it were true the Zionist tale of “socialist” Israel versus the “feudal” Arabs, it would be inexplicable why this alleged “socialist” state since 1948 performs continuous acts of aggression against any Arab ‘anti-feudal’ and anti-imperialist movement. It’s the same as if Cuba, Socialist state isolated in a semi colonial Latin America, would devote itself to make permanent raids into other Latin American countries to assassinate leaders and workers and grassroots activists, bombing workers neighbourhoods and slums, etc. Or, when the Peruvian bourgeois nationalist government nationalized oil, Cuba had sent its troops, along with the U.S., to occupy the concessions area of the International Petroleum Company. Or, now in the recent unrest in Colombia, Cuba had mobilized its army announcing that it would intervene if the bourgeois pro-imperialist government were overthrown. Strange behaviour for a socialist country!

But this, and no other, is the course pursued by Israel since 1948, with respect to its Arab neighbours. This role of counter-revolutionary cop is combined with the pretence of the more patriotic Zionists sectors of building “The Greater Israel from the Nile to the Euphrates”.<sup>91</sup> Let us see some feats of “socialist” Israel.

In 1956, the Egyptian government presided by Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Anglo-French Suez Canal. It was a historical event. It is one of the most important anti-imperialist actions, not only for the Egyptian people, but for all the peoples of the colonial and semi-colonial world. Moreover, to Nasser’s government, like any other bourgeois nationalist government, you can make a thousand criticisms, except to say that it was a “feudal” government.

The nationalization of the Suez Canal was a wonderful opportunity for Israel to settle its confrontation with the Arab world, assuming that Israel was, let alone socialist, at least one bourgeois nationalist anti-imperialist state. Simply that Israel had declared that it was supporting unconditionally the nationalization of the canal and that it was ready to face, together with Egypt, any aggression of the ancient proprietors of the Company of Suez. Would this not have caused a 180 degrees turn in the Arab world’s attitude toward Israel? But we all know what Israel did: joined the armies of France and England, attacked Egypt and took part in the massacre of thousands of Arabs who had “dared” to challenge their former imperial masters.

The black trajectory of Israel continues with its undisguised support of France against Algerian revolutionaries who fought for independence. Later, when the French colonists break with the metropolitan government of De Gaulle who wanted to reach an agreement with the Algerians, Israel helps the fascists of the OAS (*Organisation de l’Armée Secrète*).

The Six Day War in 1967 repeated with little variation the adventure of 1956. A variant was that, for undertaking this war in collusion with U.S. imperialism, Israel had a formidable propaganda machine to appear before the world as a “victim”, as a small and weak country threatened with annihilation by neighbours hundred times more powerful who wanted to “drive all the Jews into the sea”. Unfortunately, this myth of Yankee-Zionist propaganda was fuelled by right-wing Arab sectors. These sectors, as evidenced by the facts, are those who least struggle against imperialism and its Zionist junior partner. They disguise their capitulations by raising the issue of Israel in racial or religious terms and not in terms of social and political struggle against imperialism. Not only did they try to confuse the Arab masses, but, in this way, they played into the hands of Zionism, feeding their propaganda abroad and also consolidating their internal front.

To understand the 1967 war one should begin to look in what international context it occurred. “The specific circumstances that led to this war”, notes Fawwaz Traboulsi, “is the

convergence of two trends: 1) U.S. imperialism unleashed an offensive against the nationalist regimes in the Third World and underdeveloped countries of Europe; 2) the need had by territorial Zionist colonialism of weak Arab regimes, underdeveloped and subordinated to imperialism, was foiled by the Nasser regime in Egypt and the Ba'ath in Syria.

“The 1960 offensive of U.S. imperialism against Vietnam, Cuba, Ghana and Indonesia reached the eastern Mediterranean in 1967. On April 21 of that year, the military seized power in Greece in a coup led by the CIA. It became all too clear that Syria and Egypt would be the next targets. The question was whether the attack would come from within or from without. On May 11, a senior Israeli official seemed to provide the answer when he threatened military occupation of Damascus to end Fatah raids into Israeli territory. It was followed the next day by General Rabin who said that while the Ba'ath regime in Syria was not deposed no government in the Middle East could feel safe.<sup>92</sup> Israel was thinking about its interests: the division of the Arab states in a ‘progressive’ camp and pro-imperialist and oligarchic camp neutralized its plans to impose its fait accompli through the mediation of the imperialist powers or preserve the status quo in which it had the lead. However, since 1965 the Palestinian commando organization Fatah began raids into Israel. Refusing to admit the existence of the Palestinian people, Israel considered such acts as perpetrated by “Arab terrorists” operating from Syria. Israeli incursions in November 1966 against the Jordanian town of Samu and in April 1967 against Syria were considered by official Israeli spokesmen as ‘retaliatory raids’ against Palestinian commando activities.

“The Nasser regime of Egypt’, continues Traboulsi, “had been subject to strong blackmail from the Arab reaction, especially from Saudi Arabia and Jordan, on the passivity of its position on Palestine since 1957. The negotiations that Nasser made to demand the withdrawal of the UN troops from Egypt<sup>93</sup>, the concentration of troops on the Israel border and, finally, to close the Gulf of Aqaba to the Israeli fleet (15-23 May) can only be understood within this context. All at once, Nasser made a movement of active solidarity with threatened Syria and destroyed the last sequel of the 1956 tripartite aggression. He just scored a double victory and proved that Egypt, among the Arab countries, still ruled the roost in the Palestinian issue.

“Nasser”, says Traboulsi, “had disrupted the status-quo, imposed by Israel in 1956. The task was to turn his victory into defeat. On both issues the Israelis and the Americans agreed. [U.S. President Lyndon B.] Johnson told the Israeli Foreign Affairs Minister on May 26: ‘If we can defeat Nasser on the question of the Straits, the blockade will be lifted, the manoeuvre will be ruined and then Nasser’s position at the head of Egypt will be compromised.’<sup>94</sup> Two ways to inflict this defeat were open: forcing the blockade through a fleet of the maritime powers, including Britain and the U.S., or an Israeli invasion.<sup>95</sup> The U.S. government and army had no doubt about the outcome of this invasion. During the crisis, Johnson had twice called for the Pentagon to be informed about the balance of military power between the Arab state and Israel and twice received the same emphatic answer: if the war began, Israel would get a decisive victory in a few days by means of a rush of armoured vehicles and air strikes against Egypt; even if Israel did not initiate the first attack it would win, anyway, the war.<sup>96</sup> On June 2, an important Israeli personality returned from a secret mission in Washington. The next day, [Prime Minister Levi] Eshkol received a telegram from Johnson with a significant omission: the solemn exhortation to Israel to renounce any unilateral military action was dropped; the U.S. president only mentioned its diplomatic efforts. It was after receiving a second message from Johnson that the Israeli War Cabinet held a meeting and decided to start the war.<sup>97</sup> U.S. Imperialism had decided to go to war against the Arab peoples by proxy. Israel had opened the way for the ‘independent action’.”

And Traboulsi adds:

“A word about the famous ‘threat of genocide’. We have already emphasized how the hypocritical double standard of Arab regimes plays into the hands of Zionist propaganda. Did this threat ever exist? In fact, the U.S. Army had a plan ready to intervene in the Middle East if the Arab armies tried to enter Israeli territory. This plan was to form a barrier of U.S. troops (totalling 100,000) between the Israelis (who would be regrouped in the centre of Israel) and the Arab armies

in motion. When Johnson received [Israeli diplomat and politician] Aba Eban on May 26 and assured him that the U.S. would respect its commitments to Israel — according to an official statement by [U.S. Secretary of State John Foster] Dulles in 1957 to defend the status quo post-Suez — he remembered this plan. He could have even mentioned it to the Foreign Affairs Minister of Israel or made him remember it.<sup>98</sup> But, what do the same Israeli leaders have to say about ‘the threat of genocide’? In an interview with [Israel’s daily newspaper] *Haaretz* (December 22, 1968) General Rabin, head of the Israeli general staff, he admitted that Nasser did not want war, but ‘had to face a situation in which he preferred war before withdrawal.’ Moreover, Prime Minister Eshkol described the Egyptian military deployment in Sinai and the general activity of the area as ‘an Egyptian defensive military disposition on the southern borders of Israel’.<sup>99</sup> A misleading political leadership with a defensive deployment of troops is a combination quite unfit for the commission of an act of ‘genocide’.

“The June War, a combination of politics by other means, was the defeat of the predominant Arab policies, both on anti-Zionism as on anti-imperialism. It was the defeat of the countries in an underdeveloped region, with equally underdeveloped regimes, inflicted by a State infinitely smaller, numerically lesser, representative of a colonizing power technically advanced, Europeanised and militaristic that had the strong support of the imperialist camp.

“The Israeli strategy is Zionism applied to military rule: a bewildering ‘Blitzkrieg’ directed to the imposition of facts, more facts and ever new facts. Throughout the war, the Israeli army commanded a numerical superiority over the participants Arab armies and strategic superiority on all fronts. It never lost the initiative, then. The Arab strategy, or rather its absence, reveals to the utmost all the contradictions and limitations of the Arab regimes...

“Even guided”, he says later, “by models of classical military strategy, one can say, surely, that Nasser led himself into a trap. The concentration of troops in the Sinai was a political, not military movement. According to the military manual of Egyptian General Farid Salama, a defensive position would have meant the concentration of troops in the Suez Canal, and once the Egyptian army entered in the Sinai it should have continued with an offensive attack within Israeli territory. But this trap was also political. It clearly reveals the irresolution of the Nasser regime in its relations with imperialism and, in particular, with the United States. The whole contradiction of the position revolves around the relationship between Zionism and imperialism. In periods of struggle against the local reaction, Nasser invariably ‘used’ the Palestinian problem to prove that Zionism, imperialism and the Arab reaction was one and the same field. Only a few weeks before the June war he was repeating his famous slogan ‘Israel is America and America is Israel’. But it is precisely when both enemies converged on a furious attack against the Arab peoples that Nasser strives to separate them. In his last press conference before the war, he used language clearly conciliatory towards the U.S. and even appealed to U.S. imperialism not to get involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict if it broke. The last action taken before the war was the decision to send [Minister of Interior] Zakaria Muhieddin (known for its pro-Western sympathies) to Washington to discuss the crisis. The war began before his departure. Moreover, the attitude of petty bourgeois regimes to imperialism is synthesized in one of Nasser’s interpretations of the Arab defeat. He argued that the U.S. misled the Egyptian rulers because, on the eve of the war, the U.S. ambassador in Cairo had assured Nasser that Israel would not be the first to attack.”<sup>100</sup>

But where the character of counterrevolutionary cop of the Zionist State is most tested, if it is possible, is in its constant attacks against Palestinian refugee camps and their national liberation movement, expressed in resistance organizations as Fatah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), etc. The Zionist State is allied with reactionary Arab governments, especially in Lebanon and the butcher [King] Hussein of Jordan, to suppress the Palestinian people. The fact is the struggle of Palestinian people drive the Zionists to despair. We have already seen how many settlers, such as the aforementioned Professor [Benjamin] Akzin, seek to deny the existence of the Palestinian people. But, despite thirty years of defeats, betrayals, exile and misery, the Palestinian people are mobilized and their struggle

continues. This explains the anger of the Zionist great bourgeoisie, who knows that they usurp their property, their land and their national and democratic rights.

That's why on September 1970, when Hussein unleashed repression on the Palestinian camps, slaughtering 20,000 refugees — recreating the Chile of the Middle East — Dayan assisted him bombing camps. Let us recall how the U.S. fleet was mobilized, how Israel staked its army over the Jordan River and announced that they were ready to invade if the fight was unfavourable to the butcher Hussein and if he was brought down by popular mobilization. Let us remember that there was a Chile in the Middle East and Israel intervened to rescue its Pinochet!

## Some conclusions

To conclude, we insist with what we have already been raising in this paper: only a gross falsification of historical facts can hide that Israel is a colonial enclave, with similar characteristics to the “white” states of Africa, built on the basis of the eviction, racial discrimination, exploitation and denial of democratic and national rights of the native population. In the area where it has been implemented, this colonial enclave acts as a cop of imperialism to suppress the national and social struggles of the Arab

Few still swallow the pill of a “socialist” or “progressive” Israel. However, especially in Europe, among the petty bourgeois left there are still some who digest in whole or in part that fable. Why? This has to do with some original historic features of the Zionist colonization.

We told how Rhodes and British imperialism (and also other imperialist powers) took advantage of the tragedy of the masses without bread and jobless in Europe to develop their colonial adventures. But Zionism took advantage of something else, of one of the greatest tragedies and crimes of the agony stage of imperialism: of anti-Semitism and the massacres of the Nazis in Europe. After this memory Zionism tried, and still tries, to justify that in Palestine it applies the same racist criteria and the same methods of Hitler's Germany.

Another confounding factor was the ideological justification of Zionist colonization (we have seen how in this, additionally, Stalinism contributed its “grain of gold”). The Zionist ideology is a unique blend of religious, chauvinistic and ultra-reactionary ideas with justifications and rationalizations supposedly socialist and even “Marxist”.

There is nothing mysterious or inexplicable in this. If anyone asked the American colonizer what he came to do here, he would hardly answer: “I come to slaughter the Indians and reduce those who are left alive to semi-slavery, to live off them.” In 99 cases out of 100, the answer would be: “I come to save the souls of these poor infidels”. And taken individually, most of the Spaniards were sincere. Thus, every colonialism developed in its ideology the rationalizations appropriate to its time and audience. Neither Rhodes nor company said they colonized Africa to suck the blood of blacks. Not a hope! According to them, they carried the light of civilization precisely for the benefit of the poor natives.

Zionism, colonialism late expression, appears when socialist ideas have become flesh in the broad masses of Eastern Europe. It has to dispute a sector a sector of these masses influenced by Marxists and the Bund; it is doomed, then, to present a socialist varnish. It was inevitable that the sincere colonialist Theodore Herzl was succeeded by the false “Marxist” [Dov Ber] Borochof. Of course, we speak of ideological falsification, not psychological.

But if Marxism teaches anything is that behind the veil of ideology lies reality. And when the ideological mask of Zionism falls down the unpleasant face of the colonialist shows up.<sup>101</sup>

## Jewish youth must repudiate Zionism

We believe that this must be pondered upon especially by the Jewish youth, who are subjected to a colossal ideological blackmail by the entire Zionist apparatus, which takes advantage of the last vestiges of the structure of the Jews as a people-class.

Zionism speaks, for example, of not losing the traditions. But which tradition? The young Jew has two “traditions” to choose from: one is that of Marx, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rosa Luxemburg, Abraham Leon, etc. Another is that of Theodore Herzl, the Rothschild family, or that of the rabbis. To the first tradition answer Rami Livne, Meli Lerman, Levenbraum and other young Jews arrested, tortured and sentenced recently to long prison terms in Israel for fighting with his brothers, the Palestinian Arabs. To that same tradition answer fellow Jews in Israel who serve in the ranks of Matzpen, sympathizing section of the Fourth International. Or here in Argentina those who are active in our party and other anti-Zionist leftist organizations. In the other tradition, however, are located Dayan, Begin, Golda Meir and company. We must choose. Who answers to a tradition cannot answer to the other.

We, revolutionary socialists, like to speak clearly. So, to the young Jew torn between the fierce colonialist reality of Israel and the emotional pressures of his family, pressures from the environment and the Zionist apparatus, we say, comrade, do not get confused, there is no Zionist “left” that allows you to stay on good terms with God and with the devil. The Zionist or pro-Zionist “left” is a complete falsehood, it is defective merchandise, and for a very simple reason: because Zionism is a nationalism of oppressors, not the oppressed.

The nationalism of the oppressed peoples has big progressive seams; there it is legitimate to actually speak of “left wing”. But not so with the nationalism of oppressors; for example, with U.S. nationalism, with the white settlers in Africa or the Zionist settlers in Palestine.

You cannot speak seriously either of “left” or of “socialism”, without rejecting all forms of national or “racial” oppression. And if you, comrade, are consistent with this rejection, you must automatically place yourself outside of Zionism. Unless you want to make an exception, you are against all forms of oppression anywhere in the world ... least in Israel. If so, we would transcribe the following reflection of Maxime Rodinson: “I still think that being Jewish does not force me to use two different weights and two measures. Or else, let’s better be frank and declare that, whatever the circumstances, a particular group of people is always right; in this case, the group to which we belong according to anti-Semitic and Zionist criteria, i.e. to the group of Jews. Such conviction of impeccability of our own ‘ethnic’ group is a common phenomenon in the history of human groups. This phenomenon is called racism.”<sup>102</sup>

We would finally make a warning to all Jewish youth: Zionism is a serious threat not only to the Arab masses, but also for the hundreds of thousands of Jews who went to Palestine honestly believing in the Zionists promises of security and peace. In fact at this point of the revolution of the colonial peoples, it is absolutely impossible to exercise in a “peaceful” and “secure” manner the role of colonizer. Today the actual program of Zionism is the “war for a thousand years” spoken of daily by paranoid fascist Dayan.<sup>103</sup> By linking imperialism to fate the 2.5 million Jews living in Palestine, Zionism has made a dangerous move, because in the long term, historically, imperialism is doomed to weaken and decline. Although not in the immediate future, Zionist settlers have no guarantee that ultimately imperialism will not negotiate them, as happened to the French settlers in Algeria.

Faced with this prospect, fellow Jews should know that the Palestinian resistance offers them another option: “no safety in a racist State, but complete safety in new a democratic Palestine.”<sup>104</sup>

Down with the racist and colonial State! For a secular Palestinian state, non-racist and with extensive democratic rights for all its inhabitants, Arabs and Jews!

Our party supports this democratic slogan raised by the organizations most representative of the Palestinian people. Support for the democratic slogan, whose content is similar to the constituent assembly slogan upheld by the Fourth International in 1948 does not mean, of course, we give a guarantee on the Palestinian leadership. In *Avanzada Socialista*<sup>105</sup> (October 24, 1973) we explained this slogan thus:

“We understand that the most correct action is to support the creation, in the territory now occupied by the Zionist state, of a secular Palestinian state, non-racist and with extensive democratic rights for all its inhabitants.

“Secular state means that it will not be based or hold any ‘official’ religion, neither Islamic, nor Jewish, nor Christian. A secular Palestinian state will not be based either in the ‘Old Testament and the prophets of Israel’ (as in the current Zionist state), or in the Koran (holy book of the Islamic religion and which rules the constitution and the laws of several Arab states). At the same time, it will guarantee every one of its inhabitants total freedom to worship as they want or no religion if they so prefer.

“This secular Palestinian State will eliminate privileges, racial discrimination and persecution that exist today in the Zionist state and will guarantee to all its citizens, whether of Arab or Jewish origin, equal democratic rights: freedom to speak and teach in their native tongue and to publish in it its press and books, non-discrimination in public and private employment and equal wages, equality to elect and be elected to public or union office, Arabic and Hebrew as official languages, and so on.

“Some readers may consider the following objection: ‘We agree that we must finish with Dayan, Golda Meir and company. But why have the slogan of a single Palestinian state? This would guarantee, of course, the right to self-determination of the Arabs, as they might be in the majority in this Palestinian state. But does that not infringe the rights to self-determination of the Jews; we should not put them in the same bag as Dayan and his band?’

“The answer is very simple, we revolutionary Marxists defend the right to self-determination of the oppressed, not the oppressors.

“The right to self-determination is a specific problem, not a question of majority or minority arithmetic. We defend the right to self-determination of the minority ‘Catholic’ Irish in Ulster against ‘Protestant’ English majority, because the first is oppressed by the second. For the same reason we support the black majority in Rhodesia, South Africa and the Portuguese colonies, against the white minority that enslaved them in the most savage way. What would we raise, for example, for South Africa? The self-determination of blacks and also whites who denied them even the condition to be human?

“The case of Israel is similar to Rhodesia, South Africa or Algeria before the revolution. As in those cases, imperialism ‘imported’ a colonizing minority that stripped millions of natives of their land and their national and human rights. As in South Africa, where blacks are locked up like cattle into ‘native reserves’, millions of Palestinians live in the misery of the ‘refugee camps’ in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan. In addition, they are victims of massacres perpetrated by the Zionists and their Arab accomplices, the reactionary governments of Lebanon and Jordan. The Palestinians who remained in Israel are subjected to a regime of Nazi terror.

“Who, then, are the oppressors and who are the oppressed? Who has the right to self-determination? Here the matter is simple and concrete: the first and immediate question is to restore to the oppressed people their land and their national and democratic rights. At the same time, ensuring that all Jews who want to live in peace and brotherhood with the Arabs and without exploiting them, all Jews who do not want to be cannon fodder for Dayan and U.S. imperialism, complete equality of democratic rights as citizens of a secular and not racist Palestinian state.”

## Notes

1. Abraham Leon was one of the top leaders of the European Zionist “left” until the eve of World War II. By that time, Leon came to the conclusion that his Zionist party, Hashomer Hatzair (The Youth Guard), has been serving British imperialism. He breaks completely with Zionism and enters the Fourth International. Following the German occupation, he reorganizes the Belgian section, publishes underground newspapers, and promotes organization of the resistance in various sectors of the labour movement. When going to Charleroi, with a mission to help the reorganization of the miners’ council of union delegates, which was being led by the Trotskyists, he is arrested by the Gestapo. He died in the Auschwitz concentration camp.

In incredibly difficult conditions, under German occupation, Leon writes *The Jewish Question*, the most important Marxist study that has been produced on the subject. There he formulated the theory of “people-class”. He also makes a prediction: if you create a Jewish state in Palestine, it will be “a state under the complete domination of English or American imperialism” (Abraham Leon, *The Jewish Question*, Pathfinder, New York, 1970, p. 252).

2. Zionists argue today that this solution was utopian, that revolutionary struggle failed to save the six million European Jews slaughtered by the Nazis and, moreover, in the USSR and other socialist countries anti-Semitism traits persist. Hence they deduce that anti-Semitism is an “eternal” phenomenon, common to all societies and peoples. The Zionist conclusion is false from head to toe. Anti-Semitism remained alive in Europe after the Russian Revolution, precisely because socialism could not triumph throughout the continent. The revolution was defeated in the main European countries, and especially in its key country: Germany. The survival of capitalism and the counterrevolutionary course opened since 1923 would finally lead to the triumph of fascism in Germany and the bureaucratic deformation of the USSR, to Stalinism. Contrary to the claims of the Zionists, this painful historical experience confirms the thesis of revolutionary Marxism: racism, as well as national or woman oppression is an outgrowth of societies where there are classes or layers of privileged.

Anyhow, as a separate issue, it would be interesting if Zionists gentlemen would answer the following question: on which side of the barricades were they in the European revolutionary process that began in October 1917? Did the Zionists, for example in Germany, fight alongside Rosa Luxemburg? All the information we hold show the opposite: that Zionism was aligned with the European imperialist bourgeoisies against the revolution advancing from the east. And the triumph of the revolution in Europe would have prevented a Hitler in Germany and Stalin in the USSR. Of course, that also would have made impossible the State of Israel.

3. Bund: General Jewish Labour Bund of Lithuania, Poland and Russia, founded in 1897. Initially it was part of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party. Upon the division of the RSDLP, the Bund always aligned itself against the Bolsheviks. In 1917 it supported Kerensky against Lenin and Trotsky. The Bund remained very strong in Poland until World War II.

4. Abraham Leon, *The Jewish Question*, Pathfinder, New York, 1970, p. 244.

5. Preliminary study by Alex Bein of Theodor Herzl’s book, *The Jewish State and other writings*, Ed Israel. Buenos Aires, 1960, p. 56.

6. Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State and other writings*, *ibid*, p. 199.

7. André Chouraqui, *A Man Alone, The Life of Theodor Herzl*, Jerusalem, Keter Books, 1970, p. 106, cit. by Maxime Rodinson, *Israel, a Colonial-Settler State?*, Monad Press, New York, 1973, p. 102.

8. Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State and other writings*, *ibid*, p. 213.

9. Dov Bar-Nir, *The Jews, Zionism and Progress*, in the compilation by Jean Paul Sartre *The Arab-Israeli Conflict*, special issue of *Les Temps Modernes*, No 253, BIS, 1967, p. 486.

10. “It is not the British Mandate, but the Bible which is our right on this earth” R. J. Swi Werblowsky, *Israel and Eretz Israel, Dossier ... ditto*. p. 402.

11. Dov Bar-Nir, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict*, *ibid.*, p.486.

12. Ephraim Tari, *The meaning Israel, The Arab-Israeli Conflict...*, *ibid.*, p. 560. The famous slogan “a land without a people for a people without land” was raised by one of the early leaders of the Zionist movement, Englishman Israel Zangwill. Take note that for Mr Tari, Muslims and others he names are not “a people” (for him Palestine was “without people”), but just “heterogeneous cores” almost to the level of the mosquitoes that infected the swamps of this “land without people”.

13. Robert Misrahi, *Coexistence or war, The Arab-Israeli Conflict...*, *Ibid*, p, 584.

14. Maxime Rodinson, *Israel, a Colonial-Settler State?*, *ibid*, p. 46.

15. Robert Misrahi, *Coexistence or war, The Arab-Israeli Conflict...*, *ibid*, p, 584.

16. Josef Shatil, "Las ideologías en el conflicto árabe-israelí", in *Antología Israel, la liberación de un pueblo*, AMIA, Buenos Aires. 1968, p. 316.

17. Simha Flapan, Dialogue between Arab and Israeli socialists is a historical necessity, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict ...* ibid., p. 608

18. Robert Misrahi, ibid, p. 585.

19. Josef Shatil, ibid, p.316.

20. Robert Misrahi, ibid, p. 583.

21. Robert Misrahi, ibid, p. 583.

22. Shimon Peres, *Near days and far distant days, The Arab-Israeli Conflict...*, ibid. p. 558. When writing this article, Mr Peres was Rafi Party general secretary, founded with Ben Gurion and General Dayan, as a scission of Mapai.

23. Robert Misrahi, ibid, p. 590.

24. Robert Misrahi, ibid, p. 585.

25. Josef Shatil, ibid, p.316

26. Simha Flapan, ibid, p. 641.

27. Prof. Benjamin Akzin, *Llegó el momento de tratar cuestiones concretas* in *Antología Israel...*, ibid, p. 296.

28. "Let's underline, first of all," says Dov Bar-Nir, "that there has not been a Zionism, but many. Three were 'achieved': The Exodus from Egypt, exodus from Babylon, and the exodus from the Diaspora" (Dov Bar-Nir, ibid, p. 447). Mr Bar-Nir calls himself Marxist (?) and he was one of the founders of Hashomer Hatzair and MAPAM.

29. Lenin, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Collected Works, Volume I, Cartago, Buenos Aires, 1960, p. 449.

30. Maxime Rodinson, *Israel ...*, Ibid, p. 38.

31. Lenin pointed out that "in the late XIX century the heroes of the day were in England [and also in all Europe, AN] Cecil Rhodes and Joseph Chamberlain, who openly preached imperialism and maintained an imperialist policy with biggest cynicism!" (*Imperialism ...* ditto. p. 450). Let's Imagine what would be this mentality in the founders of the Zionist movement when (not in the XIX century, but today) such a "leftist" gentleman who writes in *Les Temps Modernes*, a leftish magazine run by the equally leftish Jean Paul Sartre, says that Palestinians were not a people, but "heterogeneous cores" (see note 12) and that Palestine was "without people". Or when an "eminence" of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Professor Akzin is "not sure that there are a Palestinian people" (see note 27). Fatah seems to have not yet convinced this "professor"! We hope they do so soon!

32. Lenin, *Imperialism ...* ibid, p. 451

33. Maxime Rodinson, *Israel ...*, Ibid, p. 42.

34. Maxime Rodinson, *Israel ...*, Ibid, p. 44.

35. Alex Bein, ibid, p. 57.

36. Nahum Sokolow, *History of Zionism*, London, Vol II, p. XLVII, cited by Yuri Ivanov, *The Zionist bourgeoisie*, Nuevas Masas, Buenos Aires, 1973, p. 49.

37. Maxime Rodinson, *Israel ...*, ibid, p.105.

38. Alex Bein, ibid, p 65.

39. Nahum Sokolow, ditto, Vol I. p. 138.

40. Nahum Sokolow, ditto, Vol II. p. 230. Lord Shaftesbury is the real father of Zangwill's slogan. In 1854, Shaftesbury launches the slogan "land without a nation, a nation without territory" (cf. Fawwaz Traboulsi, "*The Palestinian Problem*" in the compilation *The Palestinian revolution and the Arab-Israeli conflict*, Cuaderno de Pasado y Presente No. 14, Cordoba, 1970, p. 60.

41. Facsimile reproduction of the Balfour Declaration in Ghazi Danial, “*Why am I Fedayeen?*”, Buenos Aires, undated, p. 5.

42. Foreign Office: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of British imperialism.

43. *Weizmann Trial and error*, Harper’s New York, 1949, p. 205, cit Maxime Rodinson, *Israel ...*, *ibid*, p. 47. Zionist leader Herbert Samuel would comment in his memoirs: “It will be in this way that we will build in the vicinity of Egypt and the Suez Canal a Jewish state in British obedience.” *The Arab-Israeli Conflict ...*, ditto, p. 247. Is it necessary to add anything else?

44. Rodinson makes the following analysis, after recalling that Britain, at that time, was embarked in a deadly war with the Central Powers (Germany, Austria and Turkey). “The major reasons for the Declaration lay in the desire of a propaganda impact on the Jews of Central Europe and the hope to reap the benefits of the future liquidation of the Ottoman Empire. The Jews of Germany (where the headquarters of the Zionist Organization had been located until 1914) and of Austria-Hungary, had been conquered for the war effort largely because they fought against Tsarist Russia, persecutor of the Jews. In the conquered Russian territory, the Germans presented themselves as protectors of the Jews oppressed by the ‘Muscovite yoke’” (here Rodinson quotes proclamations of the German Chiefs of Staff). The Russian Revolution reinforced defeatist tendencies in Russia. The Russian Jews were attributed an important role in the revolutionary movement. It was essential to give them reasons to support the Allied cause. It is no mere coincidence that the Balfour Declaration was issued five days before the fateful date of November 7 (October 25 on the Russian calendar) when the Bolsheviks seized power. One of the goals of the Declaration was to support Kerensky. They also thought about the strength of American Jews, a country that had just joined the Allies. It was necessary to obtain a maximum effort, when in them pacifism was prevailing. It was necessary to anticipate the German and Austrian Zionists who were negotiating a kind of ‘Balfour Declaration’. With regard to Palestine, Rodinson points out the links of this statement with the agreements with Hussein of Mecca and with France (Sykes-Picot): “It was not a bad idea in the Middle East to have a population linked to England for recognition and need. Making Palestine a special problem, thus attributing to England a particular responsibility, was to obtain a sound basis for making demands for the partition that would follow the war” (Maxime Rodinson *Israel ...*, *ibid* p. 47 and 48). Rodinson makes this analysis based primarily on documents of the British War Cabinet, issued since. It is hardly necessary to clarify that there is no traces of the so-called ‘gratitude’ for the inventions of Dr Weizmann. This is another historical myth of Zionism.

45. Jon Rothschild, “*How the Arabs Were driven out of Palestine*,” Intercontinental Press, Vol. 11, No. 38, New York, 1973, p. 1208.

46. Nathan Weinstock, *The truth about Israel and Zionism*, Pathfinder, 1970, p. 5.

47. Professor Y. Baner of Jerusalem, in “*The Arab Revolt of 1936*”, New Outlook, Jul-Aug-Sep. 1966 concludes: “... the conditions for the victory of 1948 were created during the Arab Revolt” (quoted by Nathan Weinstock, *ibid*, p. 5).

48. Fawwaz Traboulsi, “*The Palestinian problem*” in the collection *The Palestinian revolution and the Arab-Israeli conflict*, Pasado y Presente, Cordoba, 1970, p. 77.

49. We place “feudal” in quotes because the existence of feudalism in the classical European sense is arguable in the Muslim world. When speaking of “feudal” Arabs, we refer to the old ruling class, with roots anterior to the penetration of modern capitalism, owner of vast tracts of land, but also with interests in trade and usury (which existed despite the prohibition of the Koran). The forms of land ownership and extraction of the surplus product from farmers in Islam were very varied and complex depending on the place and time in history. There is today a whole debate among Marxists over how to characterize the mode (or modes) of production and the socioeconomic structure of Islam before the penetration of modern capitalism with centre in Europe. If the characterization of feudal (in the classical sense) seems to be inadequate, there are also objections to the label of “Asiatic mode of production”, at least according to the characteristics that Marx studied for the case of India. On this discussion, the authors of this article have not

elements to declare themselves. For additional information see Maxime Rodinson, *Islam and capitalism*, University of Texas Press, 1966, particularly at p. 47 ff. But regardless of this, there is a political problem: the obsession of rushing to put the stamp of “feudal” to the Arab world is about two ideologies, colonialism and Stalinism. To the colonialist mentality, to speak of “feudal” is the same as saying “the dark night of history to which we must bring the light of civilization” (and the oil companies). Zionism puts the “Marxist” t-shirt to this old colonialist “tagline”, when it says it represents “progressive” capitalism (or socialism) in the struggle against “reactionary” feudalism. So it tries to justify the oppression of one backward people by another advanced. As for Stalinism, the situation is different: in the struggle against Trotskyism and to justify all bourgeoisies rinses (“democratic” and the others), Stalinism denied the possibility of combinations or jumps of historical stages. And thus, necessarily, all people had to go, or have gone, through the stages of primitive communism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism and socialism. History ignored Stalin’s decrees, but, instead, the poor Soviet historians were forced to find “feudalism” and “slavery” in the past or in the present of all people; failure to do so meant to be considered “Trotskyist” and treated as such. In his bureaucratic delirium, Stalin went so far as to outlaw Marx’s writings on the “Asiatic mode of production” since they destroyed his schemes. We make this digression, given that in 1947-1948 both ideologies (the colonial-Zionist and Stalinist) will merge to fabricate “scientific” arguments that justify the creation of Israel.

50. “As poignant example of deception perpetrated against the working class in countries subjugated by the combined efforts of the Allies imperialism and the bourgeoisie of this or that nation, we can cite the case of the Zionists in Palestine, where under the guise of creating a Jewish state in this country where Jews are a tiny minority, Zionism has delivered the marginalized populations of Arab workers to exploitation by England” (*Second Congress of the Communist International (1920). Thesis and additions on the national and colonial question*, Editorial Pluma, Buenos Aires 1973, volume I, p. 192).

51. Estimated share based on statistics in *Antología Israel*, idem, p. 344.

52. *The complete diaries of Theodor Herzl*, Vol I, p. 88, quoted by Fawwaz Traboulsi, *ibid*, p. 131.

53. Jon Rothschild, *ibid*, p. 1207.

54. This same author notes that half of the land of Palestine was in the hands of 250 families who were at the same time, strong usurers.

55. Tony Cliff, *Le Proche et le Moyen Orient a la Croissee des Chemins*, Quatrième Internationale, Paris, Aug / Sep 1946. Cliff lived in Palestine.

56. Ditto.

57. Cf Jon Rothschild, *ibid*, p. 1209.

58. To demonstrate that these three slogans reflected the daily practice of the Zionist movement in Palestine, it is enough to quote David Hachohen, leader of Golda Meir’s party, who was a member of the Israeli parliament for many years and who fulfilled the function of Chairman of its Defence and Foreign Affairs Committee. In a letter published in the newspaper *Haaretz* on 15 November, 1969, he addressed the secretariat of the MAPAI party as follows: “I have in mind the fact that I was one of the first among our comrades to go to London after the World War I. There I became a socialist ... When I joined the socialist students, English, Irish, Jewish, Chinese, Indian, African, we discovered that we were all under British rule or directly under their government. And even here, in this intimate setting, I had to fight my friends on the issue of Jewish socialism, to defend the fact that I would not accept the entry of Arabs in my trade union, the Histadrut; to defend preaching among housewives that they do not buy from Arab business; to defend the fact that we were doing guards in orchards to prevent Arab workers from getting jobs there ..; throw kerosene on Arab tomatoes; attack Jewish housewives in the market and smash the Arab eggs they had bought; give praise to heaven because the Keren Kayemet (Jewish National Fund) sent Hankin to Beirut to buy land from absentee landlords and throw the fellahin (peasants) from their land, that it is allowed to buy dozens of dunams (unit of measurement of land) from the Arabs, but to sell a Jewish dunam,

God forbid, is prohibited; to take Rothschild, the incarnation of capitalism, as a socialist and call him the ‘benefactor’, to do all that was not easy. And despite the fact that we did it, maybe we had no choice, I was not happy with it.” (Taken from *Haaretz*, Israeli daily, 15 November 1969, and quoted by Arie Bober, *The Other Israel. The Radical Case Against Zionism*, Ed. Garden City, New York, Doubleday, 1972).

59. Quoted by Peter Buch, *La crisis de Medio Oriente*, Eleve, Buenos Aires, 1971, p. 12.

60. Tony Cliff. *Le proche-orient au carrefour*, Quatrième Internationale, Paris, October / November 1946.

61. Ditto.

62. Moshe Pearlman, *Haganah: The story of Jewish self defence in Palestine*, reproduced in *Antologia Israel*, *ibid*, p. 63.

63. *Ibid*, p. 84.

64. In order to characterize the “revisionist” current of Jabotinsky, Rodinson recalls the testimony of Leon Dennens in his book *Where the Ghetto Ends* (New York, King, 1934, p. 233): “... the Jewish aristocratic youth shouted, marching with brown shirts while they stoned the windows of Jewish left newspapers, ‘Germany for Hitler!, Italy for Mussolini! Palestine for us! Long live Jabotinsky!’” (Rodinson, *Israel ...*, *ibid*, p. 108). Of these elements Irgun and Stern Gang organizations will emerge.

65. At that time a large number of European Jews, victims of Nazi persecution, wished naturally to leave Europe. But Zionism did not support in any way to go to another country other than Palestine. Thus, when the “democratic” England and the more or less “democratic” U.S. closed the doors of their metropolitan territories to refugees, Zionism refused to make the slightest protest. The Socialist Workers Party (SWP) in the U.S. organized, for example, major campaigns to urge Roosevelt to avail himself of the refugees. Zionism refused absolutely to do anything. Why? As explained by Rabbi Wise, head of Zionism in the U.S at the time, the problem of the State was being negotiated with Roosevelt, and therefore they tried to disturb it as little as possible. (Cf Peter Seidman, *Socialists and the fight against anti-Semitism: an answer to the B’nai B’rith Anti-Defamation League*, Pathfinder, New York, 1973, p. 19 ff.). But the underlying reason was explained at the time by Ben Gurion: the issue was to create the State and not to save Jews in Europe: “Britain is trying to separate the problem of Palestinian refugees ... If the Jews had to choose between the refugees, saving Jews from the concentration camps, the leaders would have mercy [for the refugees, AN] and the energy of the people would be channelled to save Jews from several countries. Zionism would then not only be removed from the agenda of the world public opinion, in Britain and the United States, but also of the Jewish public opinion. If we allow the separation between the refugee problem and the Palestinian problem, we are risking the existence of Zionism.” (Ben Gurion, letter of 17 December 1938 to Zionist Executive, cit. by Peter Seidman, *ibid* p. 20). For Ben Gurion it was preferable to risk the lives of millions of Jews who sought refuge and not the existence of Zionism in Palestine. Zionism had “no mercy”. What mattered was getting settlers and not to “channel the energy of the people to save Jews from several countries.”

To encourage settlement, we have seen that Zionism had no qualms in admitting without protest the closure of immigration in the U.S. and England. Nor had it trouble emulating Herzl-Plehve agreement, signing pacts with Hitler, as the “Haavara Agreement” between the Hitlerist Reich and the Jewish Agency. (Rodinson, *ibid*, p. 103).

66. Tony Cliff, ditto.

67. “Even in these moments”, points out Cliff, “they do everything possible to prove that they are not enemies of imperialism, but its allies. Thus, for example, in the process for carrying arms, held on November 28, 1944 to Epstein, a member of Hashomer Hatzair (the ‘socialist revolutionary’ Zionist party), he told the judges: ‘You who come from England, will surely appreciate the dangers and difficulties involving enterprises of development and colonization of the backward countries. In the history of mankind, no enterprise of colonization has taken place without

bumping into hatred of the natives. It will take years, perhaps generations, for these people [the 'natives', AN] to become able to appreciate and understand how beneficial is this enterprise for their future. But the English people have not fallen off the task of developing the backward countries, knowing that in so doing, you fulfil a historic and humanitarian mission. You have sacrificed your best sons on the altar of progress.” Tony Cliff, *Le proche-orient au carrefour*, ditto.

68. Cit. Maxime Rodinson, *Israel ...* Ibid, p.109.

69. Michael Bar-Zohar, *The Armed Prophet: A biography of Ben Gurion*, London, 1967, p.

67. Bar-Zohar is a leading Israeli biographer of Ben Gurion.

70. Ditto, p. 61.

71. Maxime Rodinson, *Israel ...*, Ibid, p.69.

72. Quoted by Moshe Sneh, *Getting out of the vicious circle of hate in The Arab-Israeli Conflict ...* p. 672.

73. Quatrième Internationale, June 1948, p. 30.

74. Ditto, p. 31 and 32.

75. Shaul Ramati, *The Haganah: the militia of Israel* in *Antologia Israel*, ibid, p. 77 and 78.

76. Jon Rothschild, ibid, p.1211.

77. Maxime Rodinson, *Israel ...* , Ibid, p. 74.

78. Ditto, p. 86 and Jon Rothschild, ibid, p. 1211.

79. Published in the 29 September 1967 issue of *Daavar* and cited by Jon Rotschild, ibid, p. 1206 and Nathan Weinstock, ibid, p. 3.

80. Jacques de Reynier, *A Jerusalem un drapeau flottait*, Neuchatel, 1950.

81. Some of these reports were translated into English and published in the journal Middle East International, London, April, 1973. From there we took them.

82. Ditto.

83. Ditto.

84. Menachem Begin *The revolt; story of the Irgun*, p. 165, quoted by Rodinson, *Israel ...*, ibid. p. 115 and Peter Buch, ibid, p. 18.

85. AI-Ard Co. Ltd., *The Arabs in Israel, The Arab-Israeli Conflict ...*, ibid. p. 843.

86. Ditto, p. 860.

87. Colloquium of Arab Jurists on Palestine, Algiers, 1967, p. 75.

88. UN 27th Session, October 9, 1972, publication A / 8828, Spanish.

89. Ditto, p. 44.

90. A study published a few days ago in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, October 1973 supplement of the French newspaper *Le Monde*, takes the following x-ray of the occupational structure of the State of Israel: “The overall standard of living of the population has improved after the war of June 1967, but the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged sectors does nothing but grow year on year.” “This phenomenon is reflected, among others, in the following figures: from 1970 to 1972 the workers share of national income fell from 80.5% to 74%. During the same period, the capitalists share increased from 19.5% to 26%. But the income gap becomes brutally apparent when comparing the lifestyle of the 15% of Israelis who depart abroad every year and have modern luxury cars and houses, with the situation of the 20% who struggle in vain against price hikes, seeing their precarious living standards worsen every month. An increasing share of this sector becomes a lumpenproletariat wretched and hopeless.” “This Israeli lumpenproletariat, or rather Jewish-Israeli, had a tendency to grow in recent years, and with it crime in all its forms. This phenomenon is due primarily to the transformation of the composition of the workforce. Israel, like any country on track to rapid industrialization (exports have increased by 25% in 1972 and investments by 20%) and full employment, uses the method of importing foreign labour to fill unskilled lower paid jobs while the Israeli worker has more qualified and better remunerated professions.”

“In Israel, the Arab population is playing the role of unskilled ‘foreign’ labour reserves (it is necessary to add to this the seven thousand Georgian Jews recently emigrated from the USSR). The process of Arabization of common and unskilled labour was even faster in the period from 1968 to 1973, after about seventy thousand Palestinian workers from the occupied territories gradually agreed to work in Israel. The Arab labour, more efficient and disciplined especially since it does not have the same facilities to enforce their rights, has gradually replaced the mass of unskilled Jewish workers in factories, restaurants and even the fields. A small part of these eliminated Jewish labourers returned as supervisors, and sometimes as foremen of the Arab proletariat. But most have become a lumpenproletariat, in its potential and actual forms, who do not want to recover the jobs lost, now considered “degraded” for they are occupied by Arabs.

“This lumpenproletariat is made of 85% by Jews originating from Arab countries, for which the possibility of more skilled jobs is more or less closed. Such occupations need an instruction that they generally do not have. Having grown up in large families, they soon had to leave school for work. Thus, there are no less than 20,000 youth, in the age of 14-18 years, who neither study nor work. Another telling figure: in the Israel of 1972, in which the military and scientific prowess surprised the world, there are 104,000 children (over 54% of Jewish children) in families in which the father has had no more than primary education. It is in the disadvantaged layers that the highest number (one in five) of under-fed children, malnourished or grown under the so-called ‘family disaster’ conditions can be seen. It is in these sectors that juvenile delinquents are recruited. The growing resentment in these thousands of Oriental Jews, who wonder what it is done for them at the time that Israel is proud of its two thousand millionaires, comes to find their political voice in the vote for the Black Panthers, who got 2% of the votes cast in the election to the Histadrut.”

91. “You must fight with enthusiasm ... By invasion or by diplomacy; the Israeli Empire will be built. It shall include all territories between the Nile and the Euphrates.” (Ben-Gurion speech at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1950, cit. In *The Arab-Israeli Conflict...*, ibid, p. 248).

92. Quote from Traboulsi: Rodinson, op. cit, pp. 185-6.

93. Quote from Traboulsi: “It should be recalled that Egypt demanded initially that UN troops evacuate their observation posts along the border (there was no mention of Gaza or of Sharm el-Sheikh), and it was only after U Thant stated it was all or nothing, that Egypt formally demanded of him, on May 18, the withdrawal of UN troops from Egyptian territory. Israel who never accepted the presence of UN troops on its borders, maintained its position when asked again, after the withdrawal of the UN from Egypt.”

94. Quote from Traboulsi: Michel Bar-Zohar, *Histoire secrete de la guerre d’Israel*, Fayard, Paris, 1968, p. 149-50. The author, an Israeli biographer of Ben Gurion, related that during the June war, senior State Department officials used to stalk Israeli diplomats with this question: “When will you attack Syria?” (P. 305). The Israeli victory would equally be a defeat for the USSR. Bar-Zohar: “[U.S. President Lyndon B.] Johnson knew that if he managed to neutralize and deter the Soviets to intervene in the conflict, the Arab defeat by Israel would be interpreted by the world as a terrible defeat of the USSR ... the Arab world, defeated in war, would experience a deep resentment against Moscow” (p. 255). In fact, the reactionary elements in the Arab world capitalized on the matter. Part of the huge mass demonstrations in Cairo, when Nasser resigned on June 9 [1967], was directed against the Soviet embassy. Some attempts of the same kind failed in Beirut.

95. Quote from Traboulsi: “The joint report of May 26, from Rusk and McNamara to Johnson concludes with two alternatives: a multinational naval force or ‘to let Israel act independently.’ Significantly, the Secretary of Defence, McNamara, was very sceptical about the possibility that the naval force could break through the [Straits of] Tiran.”

96. Quote from Traboulsi: ibid, pp. 128, 139, 141.

97. Quote from Traboulsi: “Uri Dan, quoted by M. Machover & M. Haneghbi in *Léttre a tous les ex braves Israéliens. Rouge* January 22, 1969. “

98. Quote from Traboulsi: Bar-Zohar op. cit, p.128.

99. Quote from Traboulsi: Machover & Haneghbi op. cit.

100. Fawwaz Traboulsi, *ibid*, p. 102.

101. When the environment or the circumstances make it unnecessary to use this ideological mask Zionism appears clearer. For example, IPS and Reuter cables (published on *Mayoria* 18 November 1973) reported that: "Together with the U.S., South Africa was the only country in the world during the last war in the Middle East that helped Israel without any pretence." According to *Newsweek*, Pretoria sent Israel more than a million dollars, and according to *The Daily Telegraph*, sent pilots. First and foremost, it influenced the existence of a significant Jewish community in South Africa. This community which boasts over 115,000 people sent, after the U.S., the biggest financial contributions to Israel. The South African leaders also have their reasons for such collaboration. For Prime Minister Verwoed it is the need "to unite all whites against the hordes". A leader of the Jewish community in the Union of South Africa was clear, Jakob Oppenheimer wrote in the *Herald Tribune*: "Our two countries have a mission to maintain Western civilization islets in the ocean of Neolithic barbarism." The Arab countries have applied, therefore, total boycott of South Africa.

102. Maxime Rodinson, *Israel ...*, *Ibid*, p. 78.

103. "We are a generation of settlers", says Dayan, "and without the steel helmet and the cannon, we know not how to plant a tree or build a house. We do not step back before the hatred of hundreds of thousands of Arabs around us; we do not turn our heads so that our hands do not tremble with fear. That is the fate of our generation ... to be prepared and armed, strong and rough so the sword does not fall from our hands..." (Quoted in Jon Rothschild, *How and why the Zionist expanded its borders*, IP, Vol 11. No. 39. 1973, p. 1237). These days, he has just said that the war against the Arabs was "just beginning". Any resemblance between Moshe Dayan and Adolf Hitler speeches are not pure coincidence.

104. Document of Fatah, *the Palestinian revolution and the Jews*, Algiers, 1970, p. 16, mimeographed reprint.

105. Weekly periodical of the PST (Argentina).

## Writings of Nahuel Moreno on Palestine

The following are three fragments of various works of Nahuel Moreno that deal with the subject.

***“Palestinian democratic slogan that can make way for the workers” revolution***. Published in *Correspondencia Internacional*, September 1982. Moreno polemicized with a group of Chileans comrades who had left Lambertism and incorporated into our current (then called LIT-CI). There we can find a broad characterization of the PLO.

***“Israel, a Nazi state.”*** Published in *First World Congress of the LIT-CI* [1985], Ediciones Crux, p. 123/4. In one of his speeches at the World Congress, Moreno briefly referred to the definition of the State of Israel.

***“Who oppresses, who is the oppressed?”*** Published in *Conversations*, Ediciones Antidoto, p. 5/7. In this question, Moreno delimits the accusations of “anti-Semitic”, defines the Zionist as oppressors in Palestine and ranks Arab terrorism as a result of this brutal oppression.

## **Palestinian democratic slogan that can make way for the workers' revolution**

Dear comrades,

We have received your letter of July 31 with “summary” questions and implicit and explicit critiques to our positions on the Middle East. The key to our differences, even in what makes the method to address the problem, lies in your assertion that the policy and slogan of secular, democratic and non-racial Palestine are bourgeois and they can only be supported “if a State of these characteristics arises, in struggle against Zionism and imperialism”.

Moreover, our differences are further fine-tuned when, at the end of the letter, you state that “naturally” you agree with us in “the characterization of the war in Lebanon, with the core anti-imperialist slogans and in making our focus the destruction of the Zionist state”. Also, when you pass our “hub” slogan of military support to the PLO and Syrian troops.

So as a first approximation the differences seem to be merely tactical. According to you, we completely agree on the “hub” and the “basis”, which would be the “destruction of the Zionist state”, and you mark your disagreement on what should be built “after”: for us, it would be the “bourgeois” slogan of a Palestinian state, secular, democratic and non-racial. For you, however, the slogan you consider “transitional” and “classic Trotskyism” is Palestinian constituent assembly on the basis of the destruction of the Zionist state. We will see that it is not so.

### **Who will destroy it?**

In making this first question, logically derived from our principled agreement, begin the profound differences of method, which are then reflected in the policies and slogans. If the decisive and fundamental purpose is the destruction of the Zionist state, it is a matter of establishing what are the objective forces currently engaged in this progressive, historical task, and what are the best slogans to support them and ensure that they fulfil their role with the greatest enthusiasm and strength.

Perhaps the exploited and discriminated Sabras and Sephardim in Israel are doing it? Or is it Ashkenazi workers?

At this time, these forces are a stronghold of the Zionist state, not the vanguard of its destruction. The Ashkenazi labour aristocracy, through the Labour Party fully supports Zionism. The Sabras and Sephardim gave Begin his electoral constituency and they enthusiastically support his plans of colonization of Arab lands.

This leaves at present the Arab and Muslim movement as the only social sector in constant struggle against Israel, whose undisputed vanguard are the Palestinians driven from their homeland by the Zionists. For 34 years, since the racist state was built, the way to fight for its destruction has been to support the just war of the Palestinians and Muslims. We see no other way, for there is no other power in the objective reality that confronts Zionism arms in hand.

As Trotskyists, we must then try to find the appropriate slogans for this objective reality, this is, that help the Arab mobilization and combat. That is our method, but not yours.

### **Slogan for accomplishing the task or for after completion?**

When our methodological differences are embodied in various slogans, the new problem comes up of the function and the role they should play in the struggle. When and why should we use a slogan?

If we are guided by your slogan, Palestinian constituent assembly, it is raised for after the “base” task is accomplished. It is not to help better fulfil the task but to solve a later problem, in this case, what would arise after the destruction of the Zionist state.

This is the methodology that Trotsky defined as dissolving the concrete into the abstract and futurological. Actually, you are dissolving the concrete, which is the Mohammedan and Palestinian fight to destroy the fascist, racist and based on the Old Testament state, into a futurological abstraction that, once the state is destroyed, you will call its current inhabitants, who are Zionists and have an absolute majority over the Palestinians, to a constituent assembly to discuss the reorganization of the country, giving each of them a vote, like the Palestinians.

We, instead, believe that the slogan should be at the service of the task, in this case, the destruction of the Israeli state. Not to give response to the problem after this destruction, but to implement it, to better mobilize the Palestinians. And let alone when the futurological abstraction is completely reactionary.

Your slogan does not help for the only present agents for the destruction of the Zionist state to have increasingly daring and courage, but undermines that purpose. The Palestinian constituent assembly slogan, consciously or unconsciously, today serves Zionism, temporizes with it and it is the reason why only Lambert raises it but not all Trotskyism and less the revolutionary kind.

### **The trap of shameful support**

One of the basic problems of the war which, under diverse forms, has been developing for 34 years is the dispute over who has the right to remain in Israel. That is, if the Zionists are going to continue or not, if the imperialist enclave supported in the Jews will stay or be destroyed. The Palestinians say and fight so that the Zionists, and occupiers who came to strengthen the enclave, go away.

If the enclave remains, that is, if Israel wins the war, it could take different forms. It could get to assimilate a collaborationist Palestinian minority and allow them some rights, even — why not? — electoral ones. But if it is destroyed by the Palestinian war it will mean that the Zionists will leave Israel and, with them, those who give them their social and political base. This slogan, *Zionists out of Israel!*, is the decisive one, giving substance to our formulation of destruction of the Zionist state. There is no other way to destroy the Zionist state than throwing out the Zionists. What kind of destroyers of the Zionist state are we if our main banner is to allow the Zionists to win or participate in an election for a constituent assembly, by which we commit to fight with them and against the Palestinians, because the latter do not consider the Zionists vote useful?

The Palestinian constituent assembly after the destruction of the Zionist state is precisely the shameful way of supporting the Zionists and of validating their presence, giving a “democratic” veneer to their fascist usurpation.

If you want to suggest that this constituent assembly would be with non-Zionist Jewish settlers, we have implicitly answered before. These imaginary inhabitants do not exist. If the Jewish proletariat were to break with its Zionist apparatus (what we call), we should study the best way to connect it with the Palestinian struggle. But this is music of the future.

In your letter there is a theoretical error that leads you towards the slogan of constituent assembly, even though, as we have seen, it does not serve to mobilize Palestinians and it is pro-Zionist. You think it is “transitional” therefore superior to ours, which is bourgeois.

That is false. It is a strictly bourgeois slogan, as bourgeois as ours. Neither has a single class element. The constituent assembly is a bourgeois democratic claim, not based on class but on citizens. For each inhabitant, a vote. It is the epitome of bourgeois political rights.

Like any claim, regardless of its historical origin, it can play a traditional, progressive, regressive, and revolutionary or counter-revolutionary role, which depends on the context. For example, it is criminally counter-revolutionary in any colonial enclave, so imperialism tends to wield it to defend the enclave. We do not recognize any bourgeois democratic right of the people sent by the metropolis. When we occupy Guantánamo we will not call a constituent assembly with equal rights for Cubans and settlers from the base. Our slogan is, of course, Yankees out of Guantánamo, the same as we have in Israel.

In Israel today, the constituent assembly slogan is equally counter-revolutionary. We could only raise it ultra-propagandistically, and would be useless, preceded by a lengthy explanation saying that it will only take place if and when the Palestinians want it, when all Zionist, fascists, racists Jews who do not want to coexist with the Arabs have been thrown out of Israel.

If this is not properly clarified, or if it is dissolved in an abstract formula as the destruction of the Israeli state, without explaining that this destruction necessarily implies the removal of its current inhabitants, the slogan means accepting the *fait accompli* of the Jewish occupation of Israel and say that from now we will all be democratic, even the fascists.

### **Why does the leadership of the PLO abandon it?**

In contrast, the bourgeois and non-classist slogan of a Palestine secular, democratic and non-racist, besides being the most progressive one raised by the Palestinian movement, can pave the way for the workers revolution. In another situation it could become counter-revolutionary, but today it plays a precise role equivalent to *Yankees out of Guantanamo* or *Zionists out of Israel*, which is what the “not racist” part of the formula actually means. And that seems very good: that racists Jews are driven from Palestine. And tomorrow, also Arab racists. But tomorrow, not today. Because today Arab racism against Israel is progressive: it destroys the Zionist state.

So good is the slogan that, as the leadership of the PLO and the Arab movement become increasingly reactionary they drop it and, with it, the political line of destroying the state of Israel, to accept the establishment of a Palestinian state in some place of the Middle East.

We will be left alone raising the bourgeois democratic slogan most heartfelt and advanced of the Palestinian people. We are not taking a bourgeois or petty bourgeois “left-over”. We emphasize that the role of each slogan depends on the context in which it is wielded. In this regard, it is worth remembering the tactics Trotsky advised after Hitler took power. The “Old Man” advised to consider the possibility of raising the convening of the Parliament that elected Hitler, with which it would have been possible to try to get the petty bourgeoisie to break with fascism and join the proletariat, via parliamentary legitimacy. Similarly in Austria. As the working class there did not believe in workers democracy or proletarian dictatorship, Trotsky advised the line to defend bourgeois democracy with class mobilization methods.

As an ultra-reactionary parliament, bourgeois democracy or constituent assembly may, under certain circumstances, become progressive or transitional slogans, we believe that in the Middle East, the bourgeois slogan that fulfils that role is that of Palestine secular, democratic and non-racist.

The slogan also serves, to the extent that it is abandoned by the leadership of the PLO, to attack them like the boomerang and the same with all reformists who come to agree with imperialism, handing them the fight against the Zionist state. We appear as the only “consistent democrats” who are willing to use all means of struggle to destroy the State of Israel, imposing the great objective of the Arab masses.

### **What is the PLO?**

Our methodological and political differences are intimately tied to those we also have regarding the overall characterization of the situation and the PLO itself. When you write “if a State of these characteristics arises (secular, democratic and non-racist), in struggle against Zionism and imperialism, we would support it. But it is unclear why we claim it as our slogan”, you show you do not believe that there is already a secular, democratic and non-racist organization at war with Israel and imperialism. However, its origin dates back to 1948 and it has consolidated since 1969 when the PLO was founded.

For us, the key to the situation of the Middle East is the war, sometimes declared, sometimes not, but permanent of the Arab movement and specifically Palestinian, against the State of Israel.

This war has been expressed in various forms, globally or narrowly, with clashes between states, such as those staged by Egypt and other Arab nations, or with large and small guerrilla actions.

Of the various nations and nationalities in permanent war against Israel there is one, that of the Palestinians, who when they organized the PLO, formed this secular, democratic and non-racial organization, vanguard of the war against Zionism. Do we support it now or wait for them to win the war, occupy Israel, retrieve its territory and thus re-form as a State, for only then support it?

If we did that we would support it when the war was ended, when our support would not mean anything and even when the slogan would lose its transitional character.

You characterize the PLO as just another political party. For us, it represents the Palestinian nationality as a sui generis state organization secular, democratic and non-racist, in war. It is almost a state: it is a united front covering the entire Palestinian movement in struggle to regain their homeland and return to being a state. In fact it is a government: we claim for its recognition just as we did for the FSLN in Nicaragua. It is an organized nationality to which their land has been taken away: when it recovers it, it will be a nation again. It is a sui generis nation.

When you deny this role of the PLO, considering it a mere faction of Palestinian politics, you give a “left” foundation to the characterization of imperialism. They also disown it as Palestinian national organization, defining it as a terrorist organization. Instead, they are willing to negotiate with Palestinian characters that nobody knows and eventually the Palestinian mayors of Judea and Samaria, because they collaborate with Israel.

Your refusal to acknowledge this sui generis character of nation without territory means that you endorse the Zionist and imperialist plunder of that country and accept they are right when they argue that, being expelled, the Palestinians were no longer an organized nationality.

Today, the organized Palestinian nationality has about 5 million people, divided into two sectors: those in refugee camps, led by the PLO, which are the majority, and the layer of professional, technical and, generally, well-off middle class, which is the most advanced in the Arab world, and serves mainly in Persian Gulf countries. They have not lost their Palestinian nationality — they are politically active or contributors to the PLO, which has offices and embassies in all Arab countries and many other nations.

## **The OLP and its government**

Your sectarian characterization of the PLO, in which you confuse its progressive totality with the fact that it has a treacherous, capitulatory or conciliatory leadership, produces several consequences. Firstly, with regard to its historical war, you resemble the sectarians who did not want to support Argentina against Britain, because Galtieri ruled it.

But neither are you capable of hitting their leadership for their actual capitulations that, in our view, are based on the abandonment of the slogan for a Palestine secular, democratic and non-racist.

Your criticism that we are deluded because we call the PLO to fight for socialism has the same root.

While this is not our fundamental slogan since, as it has been said, it is the recovery of the land, to rebuild the nation, expelling the Zionists and ending up constituting a secular, democratic and non-racial Palestine, our call to the PLO to struggle for socialism is based on considering it to be a sui generis nation. We say socialist PLO as we say socialist Chile. We do not ask their bourgeois or petty bourgeois leadership; just as in Chile we did not ask Pinochet. You forget to point out that careful, but systematically, as we do with every bourgeois government which directs a just war, we criticize the PLO leadership and we do not give them any political support.

The same confusion leads you to point out that we do not agitate for the need to build Trotskyist parties in Palestine and the Middle East. Of course, we must do it now! But the first thing to build it is a concrete program. We raise this program: PLO’s military triumph supported in the mobilization of the Arab masses against Zionism, to destroy their state and for the Palestinians to return, i.e. the PLO. That is the fundamental point. Along with it, to make the PLO to break with the

bourgeoisie, i.e. a Palestinian State that breaks with the Arab bourgeoisies and practices class struggle. This is what we say systematically.

We can discuss which of the two poles of the program we should highlight, if the break with the bourgeoisie or the destruction of the State of Israel. We think that if we want to work on the Palestinian and Arab masses, the one we have been doing is paramount: the common front of struggle against the Zionists, within which we demand a new leadership. With this orientation we work and want to work in the PLO. It seems the most appropriate, strictly speaking, the only one, to build, with its best fighters and its most exploited sectors, the revolutionary party.

## Israel, a Nazi state

I want to touch in passing Israel. First to make a self-criticism: Israel is not a fascist state but, in the sense that we define it, it is Nazi. Nazism provides methods of civil war, not only against the proletariat but also against races, especially the Jewish and Slavic races. It is one of the highest monstrosities of imperialism.

I do not want to devote myself to the historical problem, that Nazism potentially has shown all that is the future of humanity if capitalism triumphs. From the point of view of the monstrosity, the Nazi dynamics is brilliant because it is an attempt to transform the exploited in different species, in different races. The monstrosity of capitalism, in that sense, aimed perfectly well. In human monstrosity there can be no more: the attempt to divide humanity in sectors that will end in different species, some working and others living at the expense of the other. To this end there were the methods of civil war against races, not only against the working class [...]

We know perfectly well that the working class of Israel, especially Ashkenazi (i.e., Jews of European origin), are not persecuted, we know they have Histadrut (Trade Union Confederation), they have everything. [...] What we denounce is that there is a systematic genocide of racial type. This is typical of Nazism more than of Fascism. So I criticize myself.

We did not appreciate the depth of this we have now learned. Also one of the greatest Israeli jurists, member, if I remember correctly, of the Supreme Court, said that Israel was Nazi. We changed and said it was fascist, without grasping how deep it was. He understood better than we did, and he knew that even as a member of the Supreme Court he could afford the luxury to say that Israel was Nazi, he was free to speak. He was right; it was Nazi in this sense: the methods of civil war against a race. Where a race is persecuted with methods of civil war, there are Nazi methods, because they are methods of civil war.

Well, comrades, that is all.

## Who oppresses, who is the oppressed?

*You draw a parallel between Nazism, apartheid and Zionism. Have you ever been accused of anti-Semitism for it?*

Yes, the Zionist left accuses me of anti-Semitism, especially as I argue that the destruction of the Zionist state is needed.

As a Marxist, I start from the base that the proletariat of a nation which exploits and oppresses another, as Israel do to Arabs and Palestinians, cannot be liberated. The Jewish working class is heir to a glorious tradition of class struggle: the road of the Western proletariat, including the Argentinian, is strewn with a multitude of heroic Jewish fighters. But this proletariat cannot continue to the end, or to grow green again and exceed its glorious tradition until they get on the side of the Palestinians and the Arabs, who are repressed, persecuted and enslaved by the State of Israel. Genocide is a constant of Zionism, from the early years until the recent invasion of Lebanon and slaughter in the camps of Sabra and Shatila.

Calling us anti-Semites is a trap for the unwary. It's like saying that a German who wanted the defeat of Nazi Germany was anti-German, or someone who wants to sweep Boer republic off the map because it is anti-black, is a racist because he is against the Boer farmers.

The question to be answered with regard to relations between peoples, races, nations and classes is very simple, I would say too simple: who oppresses, who is the oppressed? For a revolutionary Marxist the answer is as simple as the question: we are against the oppressors and for the oppressed. We defend to death the latter, while noting, when needed, their leadership mistakes.

Arab terrorism is an aberrant tactic, totally wrong, and so we say. But we continue beside the Palestinians and Arabs, defending these fighters although they use aberrant and monstrous tactics that go against the interests of their people.

What is essential for us is that this terrorism is born out of desperation of the Palestinians youth living in conditions similar to those of the Nazi concentration camps. Look at the photos of the inhabitants of these areas: they have the skin attached to the bones. They show the same state as the survivors of the Buchenwald and Auschwitz camps when they were liberated at the end of the war. The culprit is the State of Israel, supported, unfortunately, by its people; as the Nazi state, during its early years, had the support of most of the German people. Never mind that these camps are within or without the borders of Israel, its existence is due to the expulsion of Palestinians from their homeland.

The similarity with the Boer State and Nazism is obvious. The Nazis not only persecuted the left but also used the most brutal methods of civil war against other races, mainly against Jews. We have always fought in the front row against all expressions of Nazism and will unconditionally defend the Jews.

When one belongs to an oppressing race or nation, struggling against a nation or nationality oppressed, if one is a consistent revolutionary Marxist, one is for revolutionary defeatism. The lesser evil is the defeat of one's own country or nationality. Lenin favoured the Russian defeat in the Russian –Japanese War and in World War I, and so he was called traitor, anti-Russian, racist German agent. And our comrades fighting the Zionist Jews are called traitors, renegades, anti-Semitic, for opposing the oppression and genocide of the Arabs and the Palestinians by the State of Israel.

Racial oppression in Israel and South Africa is a modern expression of Nazi barbarism; it shows once again that where there is capitalism, Nazism is just around the corner if not stopped by the mass movement.

And even without going to the monstrous extremes of Nazism and its younger brothers, Zionism and apartheid, the economic development of capitalism itself leads to cases of North-eastern Brazil and India — dwarfism, progressive and cumulative stultification.

# What are Zionism and Israel?

*By Mercedes Petit and Gabriel Zadunaisky. Fragment of an open letter of the leadership of the [NT, Argentinian] PST to the Partido Obrero (Workers Party), of March 11, 1984. The text locates the characteristics of the “left wing” of Zionism and its slogan of “peace for land”, arguing against the Partido Obrero pro-Zionist positions.*

At the end of the last century, in response to pogroms against Jews that happened mainly in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Tsarist Russia (which were among other reasons a consequence of a policy of repression against workers and oppressed nationalities), a movement is formed driven directly by the imperialist bourgeoisie (with some prominent multimillionaire Jewish tycoons at the head, such as Rothschild), Zionism, which argued that the solution was to form a “Jewish” state. This plan had the perfidious objective of separating the Jewish masses (mostly poor peasants, artisans, shopkeepers or workers) of the class struggle in their respective countries, of the struggle of all the exploited and oppressed to overthrow these totalitarian regimes, and of the global fight against the imperialist bourgeoisie system. It had the express purpose of separating them of the Marxist, revolutionary parties, which were condemned by the Zionists as “subversive” parties.

This imperialist plan based on racism, i.e. fascist, was opposed by Marxists from the very beginning. The III International considered “the pretext of creating a Jewish state in Palestine, the country where Jews are a tiny minority”, as “deception organized by the imperialist powers with the complicity of the privileged classes of the oppressed countries” (Second Congress, 1920).

From the very onset of this sinister movement, for Marxism the following definition holds:

“Jewish state” = Zionism = Racism = Fascism

## Israel, a Zionist, racist, fascist, invader “country”

The imperialist Zionist fascist counterrevolution succeeded in imposing the “Jewish state” in Palestine in 1948. The emergence of Israel in this land was the culmination of years of struggle and anti-imperialist resistance of the Arab masses in the Middle East. Between the two world wars there were numerous uprisings against British and French colonialists.

Palestine, which had been under British rule since the end of World War I was the focus of these mobilizations, particularly between 1936 and 1939. To crush the Palestinian masses British imperialism had to appeal to half of the troops in its army, one of the most powerful in the world.

And it also benefited from the efficient collaboration of the sinister Haganah, the “unofficial” army that the Zionists had formed to repress the Palestinians during the British occupation. In this struggle, thousands of Palestinians were killed, arrested and condemned to the gallows or sentenced to very long prison sentences. In 1939, the heroic Palestinian people were practically crushed by this bloodshed. This facilitated the formation of the “Jewish state”, Israel, in 1948.

The native Palestinian population was stripped of their land and their property, of their national and territorial democratic rights, by military force of British troops and paramilitary Zionist bands — leaving aside circumstantial friction occurred between Zionists and British — with the support of French and American imperialism and the approval of the sinister Soviet bureaucracy. Most of the inhabitants of Palestine were forced to emigrate, to wander as outcasts around other Arab states in the region, and those who remained within the borders of the new “country” suffer since then not only from a tremendous overexploitation, but also all the consequences of the fiercely racist legislation prevailing in Israel, only comparable to South African apartheid.

Israel is not just any country either, but an artificial monstrosity, product of imperialist-fascist counter-revolution, an invader, racist state, whose existence is based on the slaughter, genocide, dispossession and expulsion from their lands of the massive population of Palestine.

We Argentinians know very well a phenomenon similar to Israel: the Malvinas [Falkland, *TN*] Islands. British troops invaded that part of the Argentine national territory 134 years ago, imposed by military force its domain and transformed into a colonial enclave. The imperialists and Zionists = racists = fascist Israelis did the same in the Palestinian territory since 1948. With a difference that enlarges the crime: while that part of Argentine territory was uninhabited the lands on which the fascist state was imposed were inhabited by millions of peaceful peasants, overwhelmingly Palestinian, who were invaded, massacred and evicted. Just as the Malvinas, after the defeat of the 1982 war, remain a British colonial enclave in the Argentine territory, Israel is a country enclave, which sits in the Zionist = racist = fascist persecution to the native population, the Palestinians whether inside or outside Israel.

Let us remember comrades: since 1948, for revolutionaries the following definition applies:

“Jewish state” = existence of Israel = enclave = genocide

## **We'll return! — The battle cry of the Palestinians**

Although the imperialist Zionist fascist invasion succeeded in 1948 in imposing the state of Israel, since then began the war against Israel of all the Arab masses and particularly Palestinians to return to their land and regain their rights. The fact of having to continually confront the military aggression of the Zionists = fascist Israelis caused by the existence of Israel and for having lost their land, for having become a nation without territory, for not only having to suffer direct attacks of imperialism and Israelis, but also sections of Arabs bourgeoisie and landowners, all of these led to their struggle developing almost exclusively in military form, with the Fedayeen, the famous fighters against the Israeli army, and all kinds of sabotage and attacks both against imperialism and against the Zionist invaders.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which became the nucleating organization of all Palestinians dispossessed by imperialism and Israel, was formed in the 1960s. The PLO heads since then the war of the Palestinians to return to their land. The Palestinian resistance was forged and the PLO became bigger and stronger, to become globally recognized as the national representative of the Palestinian people, because they raised the only democratic solution to the Palestinian “problem”: the destruction of the State of Israel, to allow the return of their land to the overwhelming majority of the population, the Palestinians. In the case of this punished people, their right to national self-determination begins with recovering the land from which they were brutally expelled. If the democratic right of the Palestinians to return is achieved, this means the demise of the fascist = Zionist state, because the Palestinians are the undisputed majority. Palestinians democratically may establish a “secular, democratic and non-racist state” (as the National Charter of the PLO states), which will be the only one that can bring peace to the region and allow Muslims, Jews and Christians dwellers to enjoy equal rights.

The position of the revolutionaries is clear. As well as we fight Zionism for its racist-fascist character from its very inception, since 1948 we wholeheartedly support this war which means the democratic struggle of the Palestinian people, and later of the PLO, to destroy Israel and return to their expropriated lands. Let us remember comrades:

Palestinian self-determination = destruction of Israel

## **The “democratic” wing of the fascists**

Israel, since its birth, encouraged the development of a wing of Zionism that criticized the nastiest actions of the Israeli army, the most outrageous genocide, the more expansionist plans of the various governments, with the precise goal of seeking support among left-wing organizations and democratic opinion in different countries to recognize the “Jewish state”, fascist, racist, genocidal, which would give legitimacy to Israel’s existence.

This “democratic” wing of Zionism, also known as “leftist” or “socialist”, appeals to the following plot falsification: in the Middle East there would be “two” peoples who have historically

fought for national liberation, Palestinians and “Jews”. The latter would have achieved a huge step since there is Israel, their “State”, which would be a result of the “triumph of Zionism, the liberation movement of the Jewish people”. The difference between Palestinians and “Jews” would be the former have not yet reached their victory, they have no state, and the “Jews” do. The Palestinians have “also” the right to have their state and they must continue their struggle, but they should not do it “against” Israel, but “by their side”. In both movements there were “extremists”. On the one hand, “bad governments” of Israel, which have unfair expansionist ambitions. On the other, the PLO, which is not fighting for the self-determination of the Palestinians, but is an organization of “murderers”, “fanatic terrorists”, “fascists”, militarily fighting innocent people behind the “racist” target to destroy Israel.

All this ominously false argumentation, that is powered directly by Israel, by their embassies in different countries and by imperialism, has a clear goal: to disguise the tremendous injustice, the crime against democracy which means the existence of Israel, and to strike at the just struggle of the Palestinians, trying that they give up recovering what they are democratically entitled to, that they waive their right to return to their land and to accept as an irreversible fact the existence of the “country” of the invaders, Israel. Their policy is summarized in the formula of “mutual recognition”: that the Palestinians accept Israel’s right to exist as a nation, just give up the struggle for their destruction.

Ultimately, this encapsulates the essence of Zionism, which is synonymous with Israel’s existence. The “right” wing is content to ensure its existence with the millions of dollars that imperialism, particularly the U.S., inject every year to the Israeli economy to survive and with military strength of their army. The “democratic” wing intends to decorate this with the consensus of democratic and “leftist” sectors and with a “pro-Palestinian” varnish. This is, ultimately, the nuance of difference between the two wings of Zionist fascism.

That is why, comrades, we revolutionaries repudiate the Zionist = fascist formula of “mutual recognition”.

“Mutual recognition” = existence of Israel = fascism.

# Chronology

## 1897

First Congress of the Zionist Organization in Basel (Switzerland). Herzl's negotiations before the various powers begin.

## 1905

First Russian revolution.

## 1914

Start of imperialist World War I of the Allies (Britain, France, Russia, Italy, etc.) against the Central Powers (Germany, Austria–Hungary, Turkey, etc.). In 1917 the United States join the allies.

## 1915

McMahon–Hussein Agreement whereby Britain undertakes to recognize the independence of the Arabs if they revolt against the Turkish Empire that dominated them.

## 1916

Secret Sykes–Picot Agreement: ignoring the previous commitment, Britain signed a secret agreement with French imperialism to divide up the Middle East.

## 1917

February Revolution in Russia. The Tsar falls.

November 2: British imperialism issued the Balfour Declaration, in contradiction with previous agreements.

November 7: October Revolution in Russia. The soviets in power.

## 1918

September: the Arabs take Damascus, defeating the Turkish Empire.

October: British and French armies occupy the entire Middle East.

November: revolution in Germany and in Central Europe. The Kaiser falls and the World War I ends.

## 1920

Great Britain receives the “mandate” on Palestine from League of Nations. The first Arab rebellion explodes. Britain appoints the Zionist leader sir Herbert Samuel as High Commissioner. Founding of the Haganah.

July: the Second Congress of the Third International said: “It is necessary to tirelessly unmask before the working masses in all countries and especially the most backward countries and nations, the deception organized by the imperialist powers with the complicity of the privileged classes of the oppressed countries [...] we can mention the topic of the Zionists in Palestine, where under the pretext of creating a Jewish State, in the country where Jews form a negligible minority, Zionism has delivered to the marginalized population of Arab workers to exploitation by England.” (Thesis and addenda on the national and colonial question).

## 1923

Arab rebellion.

## 1926

Arab rebellion.

## 1929

Arab rebellion.

## 1935

Starts the largest Arab insurrection that will culminate in 1936 and which runs until 1939, when it is definitively crushed. At the beginning of this uprising occurs the general strike of six months, the longest in history.

**1937**

Proposal of the Peel Commission of partition of Palestine.

**1939**

The latest Arab guerrillas are exterminated. White Paper: it begins the breakdown of Zionism with Britain. Start of imperialist World War II. The Nazis massacred millions of Jews.

**1947**

November 29: United Nations vote for the partition of Palestine. Large demonstrations and protest strikes by Palestinians. The terrorist campaign starts: massacres in the Haifa refinery, Jerusalem, Jaffa, Lydda, Safad, etc. The Palestinian exodus begins.

**1948**

The terror deepens, culminating on April 9 in the massacre of Deir Yassin. Palestinian resistance is crushed. The mass flight of Palestinians occurs.

May: the British mandate ends and the “State of Israel” is proclaimed. The intervention of the Arab armies of Transjordan (present Jordan), Egypt, Syria, etc. starts. Golda Meir–King Abdullah secret pact to divide up Palestine.

**1949**

Armistice with the Arab States. Israel denies the refugees their return. Expropriation of Palestinians property and lands.

**1950**

August 27: killing of Bedouins in the Negev.

**1951**

April 5: the Zionist aviation bombarded the village of Al-Hamma.

**1952**

January 11: massacre in the Arab village of Beit Jala (near Bethlehem).

**1953**

January 28/29: massacre in the villages of Falame and Rantis (Jordan) during an Israeli incursion.

August 11: attacks on the villages of Idna, Surif and Wadi Fukin (Jordan).

October 15: Israeli attack on the village of Qibya, Shuche and Budrus (Jordan); 75 men, women and children massacred. Qibya completely destroyed.

**1954**

March 28/29: Zionist attack and massacre in the village of Nabalín (Jordan).

July: The “Lavon affair” is discovered. This Israeli Cabinet Minister had organized a band of thugs in Cairo to set fire to the British and American embassies and produce an intervention.

September 1 / 2: massacre in the villages of Beit Liqya, Tahta, Wadi al-Malagi (Jordan).

**1955**

February 8: Zionist attack on the Gaza Strip, with the death of 38 civilians.

August 31 / September 1: massacre in the villages of Kan Younis and Bani Suheila (Gaza Strip).

November 2 / 3: attack at the Egyptian post of Sabha (Sinai), 50 dead Arabs.

December 11: killing of 50 Arabs in the attacks on the villages of al-Butheia and Koursi.

**1956**

April 4: Zionist forces invaded Deir al-Balah and Gaza market square, 56 Arabs dead and 103 wounded, mostly children and women who were shopping.

July 26: Nasser, President of Egypt, nationalizes the Suez Canal.

August 28: attack on the village of Umm al-Rihan (Jordan):

September 11: Zionist attack on Rahwa (Jordan), 15 villagers killed.

September 13: attack on the school of Gharandai (Jordan), 11 dead.

September 25: Zionist attack to Husan and the school in the village of Wadi Fukin (Jordan), 39 dead and 11 wounded.

October 10: attacks and killings in the villages of Qalgilya, Azzun, Nabi, Ilyas Khan Sufin (Jordan), 48 Arabs dead and 23 wounded.

October: invasion of Egypt by Israel, France and Britain in “punishment” for the nationalization of the Suez Canal. Thousands of Arabs are slaughtered in the bombing to Port Said, Suez and Ismailia.

October 29: massacre in the village of Kfar Kassem. This Arab village was in Israeli territory. The authorities had arranged the curfew without notifying the Arab villagers. When they returned to their village after working in the field they were machine gunned; 49 dead.

November 3 and 12: during the Israeli occupation of Gaza, after the October war, Israeli troops open fire on two manifestations of Palestinians in Rafah and Khan Yunis refugee camps, killing 111 and 275 Arab civilians respectively.

#### **1962**

February 14: attack and destruction of the village of al-Tawafiq.

#### **1964**

November 13: attacks on the Syrian villages of Abbasieh and Tell al-Aziziyat.

The Arab States created the Organization for the Liberation of Palestine (OLP). The following year the movement Fatah, led by Yasser Arafat carries out its first attack on Israel.

#### **1965**

May 27: attacks on Jordanian villages of Kalqilya and Manshiyat.

October 28: attacks and killings in the villages Huola and Resi al-Jabal (Lebanon).

#### **1966**

During this year and until the 1967 war, Israel carries out permanent air strikes on Syria.

13 November: massacre in the Jordanian village of Sammu.

#### **1967**

Continuing attacks on Syria, in preparation for the June war.

June: The 6 Day War. Israel invades Egypt, Syria and Jordan. They snatch from Egypt the Sinai Peninsula and the Gaza Strip, from Syria the heights of the Golan, and from Jordan the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Second Palestinian exodus, 400,000 Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank and 100,000 from Quneitra are expelled from their homes.

November: the U.N. Security Council approves Resolution 242, calling for the Israeli withdrawal, fair recognition of all States of the region and a fair solution to the problem of refugees.

#### **1968**

December 28: Zionist attack on Beirut airport.

#### **1969**

On January 14 Fatah, turned into the principal current of the PLO for leading guerrillas against Israel, unveiled a seven point paper calling to fight for the destruction of the State of Israel and the conquest of “a Palestinian, secular, democratic and non-racist State”. Shortly after Yasser Arafat was elected President. The Palestinian National Charter adopted by the PLO proclaimed the struggle for “the establishment of a free democratic society in Palestine, open to all Palestinians – Muslims, Christians and Jews”.

#### **1970**

January 1: attack to Irbid (Jordan).

January 28: bombing to a neighbourhood in Cairo.

February 12: bombing a factory in el-Khanka (Egypt); 68 dead and 28 wounded.

March 30: bombing of Mansuora (Egypt).

April 8: Zionist aviation sheds napalm on the primary school of Bahr al-Bahr (Egypt); 46 children die burned and 40 others suffered serious injuries.

September 28: the President of Egypt, Nasser dies. He is succeeded by Anwar El Sadat, which keeps the country away from Soviet influence and begins to place it at the service of the plans of U.S. imperialism in the area.

September: the struggle between Palestinian revolutionaries, who have grown in strength and popularity, and King Hussein of Jordan explodes. Israel intervenes in favour of Hussein, bombing the Palestinian camps. The U.S. fleet moves to intervene. 20,000 Palestinians are massacred. It is a major defeat for the Palestinian masses and guerrilla groups, who are forced to take refuge in the Lebanon. It is known as Black September.

### **1972**

Attack on the Israeli delegation at the Munich Olympics. Eight athletes die. It is an action that is totally wrong from a desperate Group (Black September) that plays into Zionism hands. Israel in retaliation bombarded the Lebanon, including Beirut airport, and swept dozens of Arab villages.

### **1973**

October 6: Yom Kippur War. Egypt, in agreement with Syria, launches a military attack against the troops of Israel settled in the Sinai and the Golan Heights. The PLO called for a general strike affecting a large part of the Israeli economy. After a first surprise, Israeli troops supported by a gigantic operation of supply provided by the U.S. made the Arab troops move back. Anyway, the crisis in Israel advances. From then on, Sadat advances in the total surrender to imperialism and the Zionists.

October 22: the UN Security Council approves Resolution 338, which calls for the cease-fire, the compliance to Resolution 242 of 1967, and immediate negotiations for a “just peace”.

December: negotiations between Egypt and Israel open, sponsored by the United States and the USSR. They were preceded by a tour of Kissinger. The PLO does not participate.

### **1974**

June: the PLO meets in Cairo and adopted a document where it started to abandon the struggle for the destruction of the State of Israel.

December: the bombings to the Arab villages and the refugee camps in Lebanon were becoming permanent.

### **1975**

May: start of street fights in Beirut.

August: another tour of Kissinger.

September: new agreement Egypt–Israel on the Sinai. Egypt recovers some kilometres of land and some oil wells and undertakes not to participate in any armed action against Israel. Palestinian students take the Egyptian Embassy in Madrid in repudiation of the agreement. The PLO does not support them.

### **1976**

Syria invades the Lebanon, giving support to the Phalange militia and the Christian right, who are on the verge of being defeated by the Lebanese opposition and Palestinian fighters. Ten years of civil war will open.

June 27: a terrorist commando, which never was identified, kidnapped in flight an Air France plane that was making the journey Athens–Paris with almost 300 people on board. They demanded that Israel release a hundred imprisoned Palestinian militants. While the plane was at the airport in Entebbe (Uganda), the Israeli Government launched a rescue operation. Israeli aircraft led a commando group which in 52 minutes took an action in which killed all kidnappers and 3 hostages and rescued all the rest. Details of the operation were never released.

## **1977**

An explosives laden refrigerator exploded in the centre of Jerusalem. Twenty People die and there are a hundred wounded.

Egyptian President Sadat travelled to Jerusalem in mission of “peace”. Other Arab Governments define him as traitor.

## **1978**

Israel invades southern Lebanon.

September: Egypt, Israel and the U.S. sign the Camp David agreements, offering the Palestinians restricted autonomy in the occupied territories. Israel continues the refusal to negotiate with the PLO, and the latter rejected the autonomy proposal. Egypt is the first Arab country that officially recognizes Israel and makes a “peace” agreement separately. The U.S. gives Israel \$ 2.3 billion annual aid. Israel returned to Egypt the Sinai and its rich oil wells. The Arab League rejected the agreement and Egypt is isolated from Islamic countries.

## **1979**

January: revolution in Iran. The Shah flees. Return from exile of Khomeini. On February 10 the masses rise, attack the barracks and chase the agents of the secret police (Savak). For almost two years the worker strikes occur and develop the *shoras* (worker councils) and the coordinating committees.

November: the U.S. Embassy in Tehran is occupied with civilian and marines hostages.

December 27: to curb the rising power by the Iranian revolution, the Soviet Union invades Afghanistan.

## **1980**

September: Iraq’s attack against Iran starts.

## **1981**

January: ends the occupation of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran.

October 6: Sadat, President of Egypt, is killed by Islamic fundamentalists in the midst of a military parade. Hosni Mubarak assumes.

## **1982**

April: Iranian troops drive Iraqi invaders out of Kurdistan. The President of Iraq, Saddam Hussein, is forced to open peace negotiations.

June 29: Iraq announces its total withdrawal from Iranian territory.

June / July: Iran’s offensive against Iraq starts.

June 6: Israel invades the Lebanon. Armed by the U.S., the Israeli army massacred thousands and thousands of Palestinians, Lebanese and Syrians, and sweeps Beirut. The operation is called “Peace for Galilee”. Begin and Sharon promised that it would last “twelve hours” and would bring “40 years of peace”. Three years later they folded back defeated.

August: the PLO fighters are nearly decimated. They are forced to leave Beirut and disperse defeated in the Arab countries. Arafat took refuge in Tunisia. He begins his statements on the abandonment of the armed struggle against Israel, the transit to diplomatic channels to achieve a Palestinian “State” coexisting with Israel, and the acceptance of the Resolutions 242 and 338 of the United Nations that legitimize the Zionist State.

September: fascists Lebanese militiamen and Israeli soldiers invaded the civilian refugee camps in Sabra and Shatila, on the outskirts of Beirut. They killed more than 1,000 people, mostly elderly, women and children. Ariel Sharon is responsible. Within Israel a wave of repudiation rises. More than half a million people mobilized by the “Peace Now” movement demonstrate demanding the fall of the Government and to restrict the Zionist expansion.

September: an Israeli–Lebanese–American agreement is signed. Reagan and Mitterrand announce the dispatch of a multinational “peace” force. There will be 5,000 elite soldiers,

Americans, French, British and Italians. Three hundred U.S. advisers prepare the new Government army.

### **1983**

Bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut; 63 dead and hundreds of wounded.

### **1984**

February: popular insurrection in Beirut. The U.S. suffers a major defeat, as they are forced to remove all the Marines with the Sixth Fleet.

### **1985**

February: defeated, Israel withdraws from Lebanon, except in the border area, which promotes the formation of the mercenary South Lebanon Army and Israeli troops remain in the so-called "security Strip".

April: a restaurant in the centre of Madrid is bombed; 18 People die and 82 wounded, 15 are American soldiers.

### **1986**

January: Reagan promotes economic boycott against Libya, accusing Gaddafi of encouraging terrorist attacks against Israel. The U.S. Sixth Fleet usurps territorial waters of Libya to settle in the Gulf of Sidra.

April: the U.S. bombs Libya. All Arab governments and Iran condemned the attack.

June: the crisis of the PLO erupts, with violent clashes. The capitulations of Arafat to Egypt and Israel will strengthen internal opposition and pro-Syrian sectors, there is bloodshed. Arafat and fighters from the Fatah are expelled from Tripoli (Libya).

October 23: suicidal commandos of the Islamic Jihad made an attack against the barracks of American and French troops in Beirut. More than 200 marines and more than 50 French soldiers die.

October: there is a general strike of two hours of Israeli workers. They claim against the fall in living standards, linked with the disastrous invasion to the Lebanon. Previously there were strikes of the State unions, postal workers, doctors, teachers, port workers and miners.

December: there is an explosion on a bus in Jerusalem. Kills four people and there are more than 40 wounded.

May: Iraq bombs tankers in the Gulf to force U.S. and Saudi Arabia to enter the war against Iran.

October: a Likud–Labour coalition Government is formed in Israel to try to alleviate the strong crisis, caused because they are being defeated in the Lebanon.

October 2: Israel attacks the PLO headquarters in Tunisia; 60 Palestinians and 20 Tunisians die.

October 8: 4 Palestinians hijack the ship "Achille Lauro". An American tourist is killed.

December: Jihad makes attacks on the Israeli airline El Al, in the airports of Madrid and Rome. Killed 19 passengers and wounded 110.

December: a scandal bursts in the U.S. when it becomes known that it sold arms to Iran.

### **1987**

December 9: the Intifada begins. In Gaza (which is part of the territories invaded in the 1967 war) in repudiation to the death of four Palestinian workers whose pickup truck was hit by a truck of the Israeli army, thousands of people left the streets to shout against the occupiers and to confront the Zionist troops with stones. For months daily demonstrations will continue, which extended to all of Palestine.

December 21: first mass general strike of the Israeli Arabs in 40 years of existence of Israel. The slogan is "for a Palestinian State".

## **1988**

January 23: thousands of demonstrators from the Peace Now movement go through Tel Aviv demanding a peaceful solution and negotiation with the PLO for the two “States” to coexist.

February 13: new demonstration of Peace Now led by members of the Knesset and military heads of the Zionist “left”.

February: the U.S. Secretary of State George Schultz begins a tour of the Middle East to try to impose a “peace” plan in exchange for the surrender of a part of the occupied territory.

By mutual agreement, military hostilities between Iraq and Iran cease.

November: the Palestinian National Council proclaimed the creation of a “Palestinian State” and implicitly recognizes Israel by supporting Resolution 242.

## **1989**

February: the USSR, defeated, withdraws from Afghanistan.

May: Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir presented a four point plan which includes elections in the occupied territories. He ruled out contact with the PLO and the Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

October: the U.S. Secretary of State James Baker proposed a five point plan, which Shamir rejected after forming a right-wing coalition in June 1990.

November: fall of the Berlin Wall.

## **1990**

August: Iraq’s army occupies Kuwait. U.S. imperialism promotes an economic blockade and gigantic war preparations begin. Arafat supports Saddam Hussein. The latter offers territorial concessions to Iran, to win their support. In February 1990 he officially ends of the war against Iran.

## **1991**

January 17: start of the Gulf war.

February: Iraq bombs Israel.

End of February: the military coalition of the UN driven by the U.S. defeat Iraq.

March: U.S. President George Bush argues that the victory over Iraq opens an opportunity to resolve the Arab–Israeli conflict. Baker travels to the Middle East, in the first of eight peacekeeping missions.

August: Baker proposes the preparation of a Conference on the Middle East in mid-October. Shamir agrees to attend, provided the agenda is beforehand agreed by the Palestinian representation.

October 20: the Israeli Cabinet accepts the realization of a peace conference, sponsored by the U.S. and the USSR, after Syria, Jordan and the Lebanon had agreed to participate.

October 30: at the request of Israel, the Palestinian delegation to the Madrid talks is formed with residents of the occupied territories; hence the PLO is formally excluded, even though its officials instruct the delegation.

December: Gorbachev falls and the Soviet Union dissolves.

## **1992**

March: a bomb attack destroyed the building of the Israel Embassy in Buenos Aires.

June 23: Yitzhak Rabin (of the Labour Party) defeats Shamir (of the Likud Party) in national elections.

November 27: general strike in the occupied territories. There are daily clashes and demonstrations. Thousands of Palestinian prisoners go on hunger strike in 15 Israeli jails.

Israel deported 415 activists of the Palestinian resistance to the ongoing negotiations to a “no man’s land” on the Lebanese border.

## **1993**

January 19: the Israeli Parliament suspends the criminalization of contacts with the PLO, which had been imposed in 1986. Rabin still refuses to negotiate with the organization directly.

February: attack on the twin towers in New York; 5 dead and more than 1,000 wounded.

April 27: negotiations, which had been suspended by Israeli repression, restart. 396 Palestinians still deported.

August 12: Israel does not object the unprecedented decision to appoint seven members of the PLO to the Palestinian Peace delegation. Days later resignations occur and there is a crisis in the direction of the PLO. There are rumours about secret meetings that reach a tentative agreement on the autonomy of the occupied territories.

August 31: the Israeli cabinet approved a draft agreement with the PLO on Palestinian autonomy in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho. The PLO says that the clause of its National Charter that denies the existence of Israel has no effect or value.

September 23: in Oslo (Norway) the historic agreement between the PLO and Israel is signed: mutual recognition; Palestinian autonomy in Gaza and Jericho for five years; elections in nine months for an Autonomy Council; removal of the Zionist army and creation of a Palestinian police force. Signed by Yitzhak Rabin, Israeli Prime Minister, Yasser Arafat, PLO and U.S. President Bill Clinton. Major Palestinian groups — Hamas, Hezbollah, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and others— reject the agreement, and the Governments of Libya, Sudan, Iran and Iraq as well.

## **1994**

February: Israeli attacks to Hezbollah bases in the south of Lebanon.

In Hebron, a Jewish physician kills more than 50 Palestinians who were praying inside a mosque. In the subsequent unrest the Israeli soldiers kill dozens more and there were hundreds of wounded. At the funeral, the soldiers killed three other Palestinians and left 50 injured.

May 4: in Cairo, Rabin and Arafat sign the agreement for autonomy in Gaza and Jericho.

May 21: an Israeli commando, in a lightning operation, kidnapped a leader of Hezbollah while he slept in his home in a small town in the north of Lebanon.

June 2: Israel's bombing at a training camp of Hezbollah in the Bekaa Valley (Lebanon). It was the bloodiest in seven years, with 45 dead and more than 70 wounded. Lebanon requests an urgent meeting of the Security Council. The Arab League condemned the attack.

June 9: as per the Arafat–Rabin agreements, Israel begins releasing Palestinian prisoners.

June 15: for the first time, Israel and the Vatican establish diplomatic relations.

July 1: after 27 years of exile, Arafat returns for the first time in a public and official way to Palestine, visiting the Gaza Strip.

July 5: the “Palestinian Autonomous Government” settles in Jericho.

July 15: Bill Clinton announces that on July 25 Rabin and King Hussein of Jordan will meet in Washington. Both countries are technically at war since 1948.

July 17: Israeli crackdown on Palestinian workers in the main border post between Gaza and Israel, the Erez Crossing. There are two dead and 92 wounded. Thousands of Palestinians face repression.

July 18: a bomb attack destroyed the six floors of the building of the Argentine Israelite Mutual Association (AMIA) in Buenos Aires and several neighbouring buildings. There are dozens of dead and missing and more than 100 wounded. Soon after in Panama an aircraft bursts in flight carrying Jewish businessmen and in London exploded a car-bomb against the Embassy of Israel.

July 25: Rabin and King Hussein are presented before the U.S. Congress and they announce the start of peace negotiations. Syria, with the support of the Lebanon, says separate agreements with Israel weaken the Arabs. The PLO rejects the Israeli–Jordanian agreement.

July 27: Rabin makes a new proposal to Syrian President Hafez Assad on the Golan Heights.

Israeli bombing in the south of Lebanon. There are eight (nearly all women and children) dead and 30 wounded.

October 26: Jordan signed a peace treaty with Israel. The ceremony is attended by Bill Clinton.

### **1995**

April 9: two Palestinian suicide terrorists kill seven Israelis soldiers and a student in the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian Authority detains 170 Islamic fundamentalist activists.

September 28: agreement in Washington between Israel and Palestinians, of autonomy to Palestinian territories.

November 4: Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is assassinated by a student of an ultra-Orthodox Jewish group.

### **1996**

20 January: Arafat is elected Chairman of the Palestinian National Authority, with 88% of the votes.

May 21: elections in Israel give a win by narrow margin to the candidate of the right, Benjamin Netanyahu.

April: Israel bombs civilian targets in the south of Lebanon.

September: the opening of a tunnel threatens the foundations of the mosque of Al Aqsa in Jerusalem, one of the most important. The fact is regarded as a provocation by the Palestinians. There is a popular rebellion and confrontation with the army of Israel that costs 70 dead and hundreds of wounded.

### **1998**

October 23: at Wye Plantation (United States), Netanyahu, Israeli prime minister, and Arafat, agree to the withdrawal of the Israeli troops from 13.1 % of the West Bank and the release of Palestinian detainees. Two months later Israel froze the agreement.

### **1999**

September 4: Barak signs with Arafat, in Egypt, a modified version of the Wye Plantation Accords; a part of Palestinian prisoners is released and the Israel army withdraws from Palestinian administration areas.

### **2000**

May 24: the Israeli Army abruptly abandons the Lebanon. Israel suffers a hard military defeat. What was planned as a gradual and planned withdrawal becomes a rout, leaving to their fate the mercenary Christian fascists of the South Lebanon Army, armed by Israel. Hezbollah fighters occupy the whole south of Lebanon, take over tanks and artillery left behind by the Israeli army in their flight and free hundreds of resistant Lebanese prisoners.

July: Arafat, Barak and Clinton meet at Camp David, the summer residence of U.S. Presidents, for several days with the declared purpose of signing a peace agreement. But the Summit ends in failure.

September 10: the Palestinian Central Council adjourned to November 15 the proclamation of a Palestinian independent State in West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This proclamation was scheduled for September 13, when interim agreements with Israel expire.

October: the Intifada extends to all the occupied territories and also to the inside of the Israeli State. Across the Arab world grows an unstoppable wave of solidarity. In Yemen 500,000 demonstrators take to the streets shouting "death to the United States, death to Israel!" Iraq announces that a million volunteers enrolled to fight Israel. Hundreds of thousands are also mobilized in Morocco.

October 12: the destroyer USS Cole, one of the most modern of the U.S. fleet, "encountered" an explosive boat on the shores of Yemen, causing a gaping hole and the death of 17 marines and dozens of wounded. The response of the United States is surprisingly cautious. Closes 37 embassies in Africa and Asia to prevent new attacks and announces that "they are going to investigate" the attack on the destroyer.

October 17: Summit at Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, between Arafat and Barak, hosted by the United States. It is agreed to “stop the violence”. But the agreement has no effect. The Intifada continues with force. Marwan Barghouti, chief of the Tanzim, the Palestinian militia of Fatah, said that the Intifada “cannot be stopped with an order... It is the masses on the street”.

## **2001**

February: Ariel Sharon, leader of the right-wing Likud party, the mass-murderer of Sabra and Shatila in Lebanon, wins the election to Prime Minister in Israel

April / May: climb in violence. For the first time since 1967 Israel used F-16 aircraft to bomb densely populated areas causing 12 dead, 120 injured and destruction of several buildings. The pretext is a Palestinian suicide bombing at an Israeli shopping centre. The Israeli bombardment is repudiated internationally. Even the Bush administration hypocritically condemns the attack, saying that “they should stop it”.

September 11: attack and destruction of the Twin Towers in New York.

October 7: the United States start the invasion of Afghanistan, under the pretext that they will capture Bin Laden, the supposed mastermind of the attack on the Twin Towers. Although, despite sophisticated military machinery and spy satellites, they never find him.

October 17: a Palestinian command, claimed by the Popular Front for the liberation of Palestine, kills in a Jerusalem hotel the ultra-right Tourism Minister Rejabam Zeevi.

December: confinement of Arafat in the Mukata, the House of Government in Ramallah, West Bank. After a wave of suicidal Palestinian attacks, Israel accused the Palestinian President of not acting to stop them, and the Israeli Army established a military siege to Arafat offices.

## **2002**

March 10: thirty shells fired in a little less than 40 minutes destroyed the residence of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in Gaza early in the morning. Previously the international airport in Rafah, Ramallah’s Radio and TV and the Orient House in Jerusalem had been bombed and destroyed.

March 29: after a day of violent military assault with tanks and artillery to the offices of Yasser Arafat in Ramallah, in what little remained afoot of the Mukata, the Israeli forces say they control almost the entire complex.

In the midst of the Israeli offensive on Ramallah, another suicide bombing in Jerusalem left a toll of three dead and over 20 wounded. The attack was carried out by a young Palestinian woman of 16 years that exploded in a supermarket in the Kiryat Yovel area.

In a message aired at the end of the emergency meeting of the Israeli Cabinet, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced the offensive saying: “We are facing a coalition of terror and Arafat is an enemy to isolate.” Arafat replied on the Arab television network Al-Jazeera, pointing out that the Palestinians would never surrender in their “struggle for an independent State” and accused Israel of not wanting “peace”.

Meanwhile, in the rest of the Palestinian territories there were violent protests against the Israeli offensive and also the attacks continued. Additionally, in Jerusalem, police collided with Palestinian demonstrators protesting near the Al-Aqsa Mosque, where the second Intifada began. There were also protests in the camps of Palestinian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon.

April 3: Jenin massacre. The Israeli army invaded the Palestinian towns of Jenin and Salfit. At the same time, continue the operations in Ramallah, Bethlehem, Tulkarem and Kalkilya. In Jenin, the Israeli army bombs, invades and destroys this Palestinian camp of 15,000 inhabitants. Palestinians resist heroically house to house against Israeli bulldozers and tanks. There are 500 dead and thousands injured, including elderly and children among the Palestinians. United Nations envoy, Terje Roed-Larsen, was able to enter the settlement after the Israeli withdrawal, and spoke of “an appalling, unacceptable and irresponsible situation”. The European Union says that “we must investigate”.

June 16: begins the construction of the wall, including the confiscation of land and the destruction of thousands of olive trees near the village of Salem, in the north of Israel, and to the west of the West Bank town of Jenin, after the Council of Ministers of Israel approve raising the halfway point of a “security fence”, from an initial length of approximately 350 km, designed to prevent the infiltration of “Palestinian terrorists”.

End of July: the leader of Hamas in the Gaza Strip, Salah Shehade is killed with a one ton missile. The missile killed another 15 Palestinians and wounded another hundred.

September 11: the Israeli Government decides that the tomb of the biblical matriarch, Rachel, in the West Bank’s Bethlehem district is under its sovereignty which is the annexation of 25% of the territory of the city.

September 22: Israel again bombed the offices of Arafat in Ramallah. Thousands of Palestinians defy curfew to surround the Mukata and defend their leader.

### **2003**

January: in the framework of the III Social Forum of Porto Alegre there is a rally of 20,000 people in solidarity with Palestine and calling for penalties on Israel.

March 15: huge demonstrations against the imminent war and invasion of Iraq. In Europe, there are over one million protesters in Great Britain and Spain.

March 20: U.S. troops begin the invasion of Iraq.

May 17: Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and his Palestinian colleague, Mahmoud Abbas, meet to discuss a new peace plan called the Road Map sponsored by the quartet comprising the United States, the European Union, the Russian Federation and the United Nations. “Phase I” is to “combat terrorism”. Abbas agrees on behalf of the PNA to suppress “terrorist acts” against Israel. Israel promises not to demolish Palestinian homes, or infrastructure, or attacking civilians. “Phase II”, when the “first” is reached, is to create a Palestinian State without defining its possible borders.

July: the Minister of Defence announces the culmination of the first phase of the wall, a total of 180 kilometres, while adding US\$ 171 million for its construction.

September 29: Israel decides to include the Jewish settlement of Ariel on the Israeli side of the separation wall that it builds in the West Bank, amputating another sector of the West Bank, despite the President of the United States, George W. Bush, saying he opposes it. Subsequently the wall includes several settlements more, up to 20 kilometres within the West Bank.

November 9: the Palestinian population protest on the day of the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, against the “separation barrier” in a series of mass demonstrations, while in 22 other countries there are demonstrations in solidarity.

December 8: the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution which calls on the International Court of Justice in The Hague to rule on the legality of the construction of a wall.

### **2004**

February 12: the Government of Israel decides not to appear before the International Court of Justice in The Hague, whose deliberations on the separation wall begin on the 23rd.

February 26: the Palestinians Zakaria Mahmoud ‘Eid Salem, 28, and Muhammad Fadel Hashem Rian, 25, die by gunfire from Israeli soldiers, making them the first Palestinians who lose their lives in a protest against the wall.

February 29: the Israeli Supreme Court judges ordered to halt the construction of a section of the “security wall” that Israel is building amid growing protests in Palestinian lands of the West Bank.

March 22: Israeli helicopters armed with missiles killed the head of Hamas in Rafah, Ahmed Yassin, along with other seven Palestinians. The founder and spiritual leader of Hamas, 67, was in his wheelchair out of the mosque in the neighbourhood of Sabra where he had gone to pray, when it was the target of an Israeli helicopter which fired three rockets in his direction, killing two others and injuring 13, including two sons of Yassin. His funeral became the largest mobilization against

the Zionist occupation in recent years. More than 200,000 Palestinians paraded crying vengeance. The mobilizations of repudiation and indignation against the United States, Israel and Arab Governments, spread to important countries in the region such as Egypt and Jordan.

April 15: the UN Human Rights Commission adopted a resolution by 27 votes in favour, 24 abstentions and 2 against — United States and the Republic Democratic of the Congo — which calls upon Israel to destroy the wall of separation from the occupied territories and put an end to its policy of settlements in these areas.

July: armed rebellion in Gaza against Palestinian authorities of the PNA. Militiamen occupy Parliament, police chief is kidnapped and forced to resign. He was accused of corruption.

July: 171 Palestinian organizations and trade unions make an international call for boycott, divestment and sanctions to Israel

July 2: in the United States 500,000 demonstrators in New York mobilized against the war in Iraq and against Bush. The largest demonstration since the time of Vietnam.

September 26: a high official of the Islamic Resistance Movement ( Hamas) died in Damascus when a bomb exploded under his vehicle; days later the Government of Israel accused Syria of providing refuge to “Palestinian terrorists”. The attack occurred in the Palestinian refugee camp of Al Zahra, where the victim, Izz Eldine Subhi Sheik Khalil, lived for three years, after having been deported by the Israeli authorities following the first Intifada (1987-1993).

October: attacks with handicraft Qassam rockets from the Gaza Strip. Israel invades Gaza with armoured vehicles and air support. Many houses are destroyed and in two weeks adding over one hundred victims among civilians and militiamen. The Zionists used Palestinians as human shields to advance in more conflicting areas.

November 2: in the United States George W. Bush is re-elected.

November 8: U.S. attack in Iraq to the city of Fallujah, with bombings, massive invasion, killing of civilians and destruction of a big portion of the houses and public buildings. Heroic popular resistance which also causes heavy casualties to U.S. troops.

November 11: Yasser Arafat dies in a clinic in Paris; his remains are buried in Ramallah. The precise reasons for his death are never known. Palestinian sources suspect that he was poisoned by Zionist agents. On November 12 the burial of Arafat in Ramallah, in the destroyed Mukata, was an impressive mass rally. “As soon as they see the Egyptian helicopters appearing in the skies of Ramallah from Cairo, the crowd broke out in tears and cheered its President. ‘Abu Ammar, Abu Ammar!’, they cried, in memory of the Arafat’s nom de guerre.” The mob broke all the protocols and took the coffin in their arms. “We don’t need bureaucrats, Abu Ammar was buried by the people”, said a teenage hoarse from yelling.

## **2005**

January 9: Abbas, candidate of Fatah, wins with 65% of the vote the elections to replace Arafat as President of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). The independent left opposition candidate is Mustafa Bargouthi, who took 23%. Hamas boycotted the election.

February 8: the President of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), Mahmud Abbas, and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon declared a cease fire in Sharm El Sheikh (Egypt) bilaterally.

March 21: Israel handed over control of the city of Tulkarem in the West Bank to the Palestinian National Authority.

May 18: Israel launched the biggest offensive in the Gaza Strip, in Rafah. The stated objective of the operation was to find and destroy underground tunnels through which Palestinian militants have access to weaponry entering smuggled from Egypt.

June: in the vicinity of Jenin Israeli troops kill Maruh Kamil, a local leader of Islamic Jihad, in what is denounced by the Palestinians as the restart of practices of selective murders, answered with more attacks on Israeli settlements.

August: starts the Israeli withdrawal from 21 settlements in the Gaza Strip and four others to the north of the West Bank. With this, they say, a 38-year occupation comes to an end to. The

reality is that it was very costly for Israel to defend the small Gaza Strip settlements, besieged by the Palestinian revolt. Following the withdrawal of the Israelis from the Gaza Strip, Israel issued an order to seize West Bank land and raise a security barrier surrounding the Jewish settlement of Ma'ale Adumim. The withdrawal triggered a political crisis in Israel. A strong movement against Sharon's "disengagement plan" starts and even clashes with soldiers who evicted the Zionist settlers.

September: Israel declared its boundary with the Gaza Strip as an international border, formally marking a division.

November: the political crisis in Israel, caused by the Gaza withdrawal, is expressed in the division of the Likud. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Ehud Olmert, and other main leaders of the Likud founded a new party called Kadima, which supports Sharon's plan against the wing of Likud who opposed the Gaza withdrawal.

December 15: Hamas achieves victory in the municipal elections in the West Bank and Gaza, defeating the Fatah movement.

December: Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, 77, suffers a stroke that leaves him in a coma. Ehud Olmert assumed functions as acting Prime Minister.

## **2006**

January 25: Palestine. Political earthquake. Hamas won the legislative elections with the program of non-recognition of Israel. It is the first time in history that Fatah loses an election. Hamas achieved 39% of the vote and 76 members (out of 132). Fatah 35% and 43 members. The Popular Front for the liberation of Palestine (PFLP) 5% and 3 members. The movement of Mustafa Barghouti received 3% and 2 members.

Ismail Haniyeh is the new Prime Minister. Hamas proposed to share the Government with Fatah in a national unity Government. Israel, the United States and the European Union enacted the total economic blockade against the new Government.

April 10: Prime Minister Ehud Olmert declares that it will complete the withdrawal of the majority of the Jewish settlers of the West Bank, will strengthen the presence in other strategic areas and define the borders of their country before 2008.

June 10: while children and adults enjoyed the maritime beach of Beit Lahia, north of Gaza, they are attacked with bombs and missiles from Israel ships. Fifteen civilians killed and there are dozens of wounded, among them children.

June 27: Hamas and the Palestinian President, Mahmoud Abbas, came to an agreement on a document that implicitly would recognize the right of Israel to exist. However the document is ambiguous enough to give rise to different interpretations. Hamas denies that recognizes Israel.

Mid June: Israeli unmanned aircraft during several days make successive attacks with missiles to Palestinian militiamen and possible points of Qassam rocket release on Sderot and other Israeli border towns. Missiles cause the death of several civilians and including children.

June 28: a joint command of Hamas, Islamic Jihad and other two Palestinian militia forces attacked by surprise the Israeli base of Telem, near the border crossing of Kerem Shalom through an underground tunnel causing three casualties and capturing Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit.

June 29: under the pretext of releasing corporal Shalit, Israel begins the invasion and bombing of Gaza, killing hundreds, destroying houses, roads, and its main power plant. The Palestinians demand the release of children and women, among the 9,000 Palestinian prisoners with Israel as a condition for release of the corporal. In subsequent weeks Israel also invades West Bank and kidnaps a large part of the legitimate Government of Palestine, headed by Hamas. In addition it produces a humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza destroying the power station, workshops and houses. The Israeli army detained 10 Ministers and 20 members of the Legislative Council. The Israeli Minister of Internal Security, Roni Baron, considered them suspects of "having participated in terrorist activities against Israel". Among the personalities arrested figure the Labour Minister, Mohammad Barghouti, the most popular leader of Fatah. In addition to Barghouti, the other

Ministers were Khaled Abu Arafam, Nayef Rajoub, Samir Abu Eishah, Issa Al-Jabari, *Omar Abdel Razeq*, Wasfi Kabha and Fakhri Al-Turkmani.

July 12 to August 15: Lebanon War; two Israeli soldiers captured by Lebanese resistance Hezbollah in a border battle, on land that Israel occupies. Israel, under that pretext, sparks a 34-day war against the Lebanon. Discharges thousands of bombs on the small country. Bombards Beirut, the capital, and other cities. The south is razed. One million Lebanese must leave their homes. Tens of thousands of homes are destroyed. Around 2000 Lebanese die and there are thousands of wounded. Israel invades to destroy Hezbollah. But they fail. The Hezbollah militia heroically resist the Israeli ground onslaught. Israel lost hundreds of its soldiers and more than 150 tanks. The Israeli genocidal army must withdraw humiliated. It is the most serious defeat of Israel in its history.

August 4: Iraq; one million demonstrators organized by the Iraqi Shiite leader Muqtada al-Sadr shouted in the streets of Baghdad “death to the United States, death to Israel! Allah, give victory to Nasrallah”, directly defying the U.S. occupants.

November 7: United States. Catastrophic electoral defeat of George W. Bush. The Democrats win the majority in the House of Representatives and the Senate. The almost exclusive subject of the election was the war. All analysts agree that it was a referendum against the war. The Democrats propose only “change of course” (without saying which course), but that was enough to get them voted against Bush.

November: Israel bombs Gaza, killing 81 people in just one week.

December 1: Lebanon; led by Hezbollah a million protesters on the streets demand the resignation of Maronite Christian Prime Minister Fuad Siniora, accused of being pro-U.S. and of having boycotted the national defence against Israel. The slogan of Hezbollah is “for a Government of national unity”.

December 15: Hamas and Fatah followers face each other with shots in Ramallah and Gaza. The clashes arise when the retinue of Haniyeh are headed to the Gaza Strip with money collected from Arab countries to break the Israeli blockade. The Hamas militia took by storm the Israeli post of Rafah to try to break the blockade. Finally, Haniyeh managed to cross the border without the money and then his entourage is attacked with bullets by Palestinian policemen. Hamas accused the police chief of Abbas of trying to assassinate Prime Minister Haniyeh. One of Haniyeh’s bodyguard died and his eldest son was wounded.

In protest against these events, there was a demonstration the next day in the Gaza Strip, involving at least 100,000 supporters of Hamas. The police of Fatah have repressed the demonstration with shots. In the clashes there were at least 13 people injured, mostly militants of Hamas. There have also been protests in Ramallah, where at least 32 people were injured by firearms. A prominent Hamas leader has accused President Abbas of starting a war by ordering his security forces to fire on the demonstration. The attacks to members of Hamas are multiplied. In Gaza, also, a judge is killed by masked men. Hamas accused Fatah.

## **2007**

February 8: Hamas and Fatah reached agreement in the Saudi city of Mecca on a unity Government, after a bloody power struggle.

April 9: Iraq, one million Shiite protesters demand U.S. withdrawal of Iraq in a new anniversary of the entry of the invaders in Baghdad.

May 1: crisis in Israel. A report from the armed forces starkly revealed the military setback suffered in Lebanon. 200,000 demonstrators demand for Olmert to get out.

May: new bombings to Gaza destroy power plants. The argument, this time, are the rockets that Palestinians shoot on the Israeli town of Sderot.

June: coup d’état of the Government of Mahmoud Abbas of Fatah against Hamas. In the Gaza Strip Mohammed Dahlan, leader of a sector Fatah, the former head of preventive security, tries to liquidate Hamas with weapons supplied by Israel, after months of attacks and murders. The coup fails. After five days of clashes, Hamas takes Gaza defeating Dahlan. In retaliation, Abbas

dismisses Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, from the majority party Hamas, and appointed by decree a Prime Minister linked to Fatah. Two antagonistic governments of the ANP are formed. In the West Bank Mahmoud Abbas, of Fatah, dominates and Hamas rules Gaza.

September: Israel declared the Gaza Strip as an “enemy entity”, deepening the blockade.

November 27: Annapolis Conference. While Israel is still blocking Gaza, in Annapolis, Egypt, a “peace” Conference is held. The leaders of Israel, Ehud Olmert, and Palestine, Mahmoud Abbas, under the umbrella of the United States, declare that they restarted negotiations that would lead to a final peace agreement before the end of 2008 and whose focal point will be the creation of an independent Palestinian State. President George W. Bush reported that the Declaration agreed in Annapolis is the beginning of finding the peace that both want to and that is the right time to avoid terrorists continuing their attacks in the region. Meanwhile, the blockade to Gaza continues. Tens of thousands of demonstrators take to the streets in Ramallah (West Bank) and Gaza to repudiate the Conference as a new deception and a new betrayal of Abbas.

## **2008**

January: Gaza is subjected to a blockade by land, air and sea. Israel has cut fuel and electricity supplies leaving all the Gaza Strip and its 1.5 million inhabitants in the dark and without any kind of energy. The blockade does not allow the transfer of the population and the exit or entry of goods, in addition to prohibiting the entry of UN humanitarian aid. Palestinians desperate reaction expressed by the launch of craft rockets is used by Israel to justify the blockade and bombing with a rain of deadly missiles of advanced technology which in only three weeks resulted in 75 dead and hundreds of injured, most civilians and, among them, children.

January 23: Palestinians in Gaza demolished the wall that separated them from Egypt, thus breaking the Israeli blockade. Hundreds of thousands enter Egypt to get resupplied. In Egypt demonstrations in solidarity with the Palestinians multiply.

13 February: Imad Fayeze Mughniyeh, a high command of the armed Hezbollah operations is killed in a bombing in the Syrian capital, Damascus. Hezbollah accuses Israel.

April 10: Israeli offensive by land and air in the Gaza Strip. At least 8 Palestinian dead and 25 others were injured, three of them children in a critical condition.

April 16: the death in combat of 3 Israeli soldiers unleashes a new massive attack. At least 18 Palestinians were killed, including several children and other unarmed civilians, and more than 30 were wounded in the Gaza Strip in attacks by Israeli aircraft and ground forces that used tanks. Among the dead is the cameraman working for the news agency Reuters, Fadel Shana'a, who was hit by gunfire from an Israeli tank while filming. He had travelled there in a car which clearly indicated that it was a vehicle of television and the press. They killed him at the start of filming the tank.

April 17: former U.S. President Jimmy Carter met the political leader of Hamas Khaled Mashal. Carter says it will negotiate as an intermediary for the Minister of Industry of Israel, Eli Yishai, on the case of the Israeli soldier Guilad Shalit, held by Palestinian militias since June 2006. The interview between Carter and Mashal was held at the headquarters of Hamas in Damascus and it was also attended by several leaders of the Palestinian group, based in the Syrian capital. The meeting was held despite the criticisms in recent days from the United States and Israel, who do not see with good eyes that Carter will meet with Hamas representatives.

April 24: demonstrations of tens of thousands of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip went to the Erez Crossing with Israel, in the north, and the Rafah border crossing with Egypt in the south, to protest against the 10-month Israeli siege that has stifled the economy of Gaza.

April 28: an incursion by the Israeli army in Gaza resulted in the death of four young children and their mother, who were in their home, when they received the impact of a shell fired from a tank. This was a few days after Hamas, ruling in Gaza, proposed a truce to Israel.

May 11 and 14: Israel makes a lacklustre celebration of its anniversary with Bush as star guest on Sunday 11. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert faces trial for corruption that could cost

him the post. The Palestinians made massive demonstrations of repudiation on May 14. In Ramallah, demonstrators released 22 thousand black balloons, one for each day since the Nakba, the catastrophe, of 60 years ago.