

Genocide in Gaza: The Bourgeois Circus of Palestinian Recognition



Le conflit arabo-juif en Palestine

L'aggravation du conflit arabo-juif en Palestine, l'accentuation de l'orientation anti-britannique du monde arabe qui pendant la guerre mondiale fut un pion de l'impérialisme anglais, nous a déterminé à envisager le problème juif et celui du mouvement nationaliste pan-arabe. Nous essayerons cette fois-ci de traiter le premier des deux problèmes.

communauté parlant un dialecte judéo-es-pagnol, alors que ceux émigrés en Pologne en Russie, en Hongrie, etc., parlent le dialecte judéo-allemand (Yiddisch). La langue hébraïque qui reste pendant cette époque la langue des rabbins fut tirée du domaine des langues mortes pour devenir la langue des juifs de Palestine avec le mouvement nationaliste juif actuel.

Top image: Gaza; bottom image: Bilan, 1936

Internationalist Voice

An unspeakable savagery is unfolding in Gaza. Starvation, bombardment, slaughter and blood expose the true face of a world in which power and capital ruthlessly sacrifice the lives of millions to their own ends. A naked and terrifying barbarism — one that no pen can capture and no words can convey in all its depth. What is happening in Gaza today is not merely a humanitarian catastrophe, but a stark image of the barbarity of the capitalist system: a system that unashamedly delivers to humanity the most merciless of crimes. This barbarism has torn apart the deceptive veil of capitalist ‘civilisation’ and ‘humanitarianism’, revealing the true nature of an order built upon war, genocide, destruction and violence. Israel, armed with the most advanced military technologies produced through the collaboration of the leading industrial powers, has embarked upon an organised massacre — while at the same time turning hunger into a deliberate weapon of genocide.¹

In September 2025, ten countries — France, Britain, Australia, Canada, Belgium, Portugal, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco and Andorra — recognised Palestine as an independent state. Thus, out of the 193 members of the den of thieves (the United Nations), 157 have so far recognised Palestine.² The main Western governments, which have only recently taken this step — and largely as a symbolic gesture — have stated that their aim is to revive the peace process between Palestinians and Israelis and to advance the so-called ‘two-state solution’.

The reality is that the genocide in Gaza does not occur in a vacuum; its material roots have been created by a degenerated capitalism. This discontent with the policies of the ruling class has coincided with growing distrust of mainstream media in Western democratic countries. The danger perceived by the bourgeoisie — particularly in these countries — is that this anger and dissatisfaction may go beyond mere pacifism and take on a class-oriented direction. For this reason, the democratic bourgeoisie seeks to present a

¹ For further information, see the article ‘*Gaza Genocide: A Product of Global Capitalism’s Organized Barbarism*’

² [Palestinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#).

façade of peace and humanitarianism in order to divert protests from a class-based path and contain them within bourgeois channels. At the same time, the recent recognition of Palestine by some key Western governments is not a humanitarian act, but part of imperialist rivalries and tensions, serving their own imperialist interests.

In this context, the same global capitalism and the same bourgeois governments that have paved the way for the genocide in Gaza are now, through diplomatic manoeuvres and token recognitions, attempting to absolve themselves of responsibility for this crime and to present themselves as peace-loving humanitarians. The recognition of Palestine by these governments is nothing but political theatre: they call Palestine a 'state' on paper, while the genocide continues unabated. Such hollow recognitions are not intended to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people, but to reproduce the legitimacy of the very order that has made Israel's barbarism possible.

We will first demonstrate, based on the criteria, standards, and functions of a bourgeois state, why the establishment of a 'State of Palestine' would be extremely difficult in practice and, at best, merely symbolic, and why such recognitions would do nothing to alleviate the suffering and oppression of the Palestinian people. Even if such a state were formed, it would bear no essential difference from other bourgeois states and would, like them, function as a repressive government. Finally, we will show that the Palestinian issue cannot be resolved within the framework of bourgeois state-building, but only within the horizon of socialism.

Within the framework of the capitalist system, the minimum criteria, standards, and functions by which a geographical area can be considered a bourgeois state were established in the Montevideo Convention (1933). According to Article 1 of the Montevideo Convention, a state must possess four main characteristics:

1. Permanent population: A population that resides continuously within the territory.
2. Defined territory: A clearly defined territory under the control of the state.
3. Effective government (political authority): The ability to exercise governance and enforce laws within its territory.
4. Capacity to enter into international relations: The ability to negotiate, conclude agreements, and interact with other states.

Taking these criteria into account, the establishment of a State of Palestine faces serious obstacles, even with a high level of international recognition. Firstly, Palestine lacks internationally agreed borders. The Palestinian Authority controls only around 40% of the West Bank; Gaza, meanwhile, is under the administration of Hamas, its infrastructure devastated, and embroiled in a destructive conflict, while effectively under Israeli blockade and occupation. In other words, Palestine does not have full control over its territory, and Israel has openly threatened to annex the West Bank. Furthermore, Palestine has neither a consolidated capital, nor an army, nor an effective bourgeois state apparatus. Even the most basic bourgeois parliamentary and presidential elections were last held in 2006. And what of the Palestinian refugees who are displaced outside Gaza and the West Bank?

Given the aforementioned problems, these recognitions are largely symbolic, rather than representing the actual establishment of a Palestinian state with a structure comparable to other bourgeois states. In other words, they will neither alleviate the suffering and oppression of the Palestinian people nor prevent ongoing or future genocides. Moreover, the so-called 'two-state solution,' which is ostensibly presented as a plan to establish peace between Israel and Palestine, envisages the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with its capital in East Jerusalem. However, Israel has occupied East Jerusalem since 1967, annexed it into its territory, and declared the entire city of Jerusalem as its unified and eternal capital.

Trump opposed the recognition of a Palestinian state by his allies and, in order to prevent Mahmoud Abbas and other Palestinian officials from attending, cancelled or suspended their visas. He had previously proposed the ‘Riviera Plan’ and has now recently put forward another peace plan.³ The United States has described the actions of its allies in recognising a Palestinian state as mere gestures and has rejected them. A spokesperson for the US State Department commented on the matter:

“Our focus remains on serious diplomacy, not performative gestures. Our priorities are clear: the release of the hostages, the security of Israel, and peace and prosperity for the entire region that is only possible free from Hama.”⁴

Netanyahu, this war criminal, in response to the recognition of Palestine by his Western allies, emphasised that he would not yield to pressure from Western or Arab countries and asserted that a Palestinian state will never be established. He stated on the matter:

“I have another message for you: It’s not going to happen. There will be no Palestinian state to the west of the Jordan River.”⁵

For years, Netanyahu has prevented the establishment of a Palestinian state and, in response to the actions of certain countries recognising Palestine, has

³ Trump had previously proposed the ‘Riviera Plan,’ under which the United States would take long-term control of Gaza, with the Palestinian Authority playing no role in its administration. Recently, another US peace plan has been proposed, summarised as follows: Hamas must lay down its arms and will have no role in governing Gaza; all hostages, whether alive or deceased, will be handed over in exchange for the release of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners. The Gaza Strip will be demilitarised, and its administration will be entrusted to a ‘Palestinian technocratic and non-political committee.’ An international ‘peace commission’ chaired by Donald Trump will oversee affairs in Gaza, with Tony Blair, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, among its members. The plan leaves open the possibility of establishing a Palestinian state in the future, while Netanyahu has emphasised that Israel will not withdraw from Gaza and that he has not agreed to the creation of a Palestinian state.

⁴ [The Guardian](#).

⁵ [Le Monde](#).

threatened not only to continue settlement expansion in the West Bank but to increase it several fold. The reality is that, contrary to the gestures of Western democracies, Netanyahu does not merely speak — he acts — and he knows that without the support of the capitalist world, he would not be able to carry out his criminal actions. He stated on the matter:

*“We have done this with determination, and with astute statesmanship. Moreover, we have doubled the Jewish settlement in Judea and Samaria, and we will continue on this path.”*⁶

Gideon Sa’ar, Israel’s Foreign Minister, knows that the recognition of Palestine by Western countries is merely a symbolic gesture and stated that Israel will continue its actions; in other words, it will continue its genocide and other crimes. He emphasised that our friends, particularly the United States, will stand by us, and the eternity of Israel will not be lie. He commented on the matter:

*“Our future will not be determined in London or Paris, it will be determined in Jerusalem. We will continue to fight resolutely on the diplomatic front against moves that would endanger Israel and its future. Our friends in the world will also stand by our side, and chief among them – the United States of America. And the eternity of Israel will not be lie!”*⁷

Let us assume that the ‘two-state solution’ is realised; that is, a country called Palestine is established in the West Bank and Gaza, even with its capital in East Jerusalem. And let us assume that, despite deep and unforgettable wounds, peace is established between Israel and Palestine. In reality, however, this would mark the beginning of new problems for the Palestinian people and refugees. What will happen to the millions of Palestinian refugees

⁶ [Prime Minister of Israel.](#)

⁷ [Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel.](#)

living outside the West Bank and Gaza? With what infrastructure and resources could this nascent state meet the human needs of the geographical area now called the State of Palestine? At best, would such a state not be little more than something akin to Lebanon?

This newly established country would be nothing more than one of the most peripheral capitalist states, a state in which the harshest pressures and conditions are imposed on the working class. Will the workers of that country not be exploited once again? Could the reconstruction and administration of this state occur by any means other than through the intensification of working-class exploitation?

In 1936, at a time when tensions between Arab and Jewish groups reached their peak, the Italian Communist Left faction, through its organ *Bilan* (Balance Sheet), examined the roots of this crisis, the role of competing imperialist powers in exacerbating ethnic divisions, and the prospects ahead. To provide a better understanding of the historical context of this issue, these articles have been included as an appendix — texts that will undoubtedly enrich the discussion and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the positions of the Communist Left.

It is evident that over the past nearly century, the conditions in the region have undergone profound changes, and, especially with the establishment of the State of Israel, many of the details and descriptions from that period no longer correspond to the current situation. Nevertheless, the Marxist analysis presented—its political orientation and the horizon it outlines—still retains its relevance and significance.

Bilan demonstrates how imperialists create the material conditions and foundations for oppression and discrimination against Jews and Arabs in accordance with their own interests, and then, by fuelling conflicts, violence, and ethnic tensions, reproduce these divisions to serve their class interests. The aim is to ensure that the oppressed classes, instead of uniting on the basis

of class identity and defending their shared interests, remain confined within false ethnic, religious, or similar identities.

Bilan's analyses also show how the ruling class, by relying on nationalism and religion, entrenches these identities within society in order to poison the political and social environment and divert the working class from its real path of struggle. Today's reality — in which Israel's working class is united behind the ruling class and mobilised in imperialist wars — has clear historical roots, roots that *Bilan's* analyses play a highly instructive role in explaining.

Bilan views Arab and Jewish nationalism as a tool for fomenting hostility among the exploited, and, in opposition to it, emphasises internationalism. From *Bilan's* perspective, the only possible horizon is the common class struggle of all the exploited, based on class identity and directed towards a communist revolution.

The undeniable reality is that the concept of a 'free' capitalist state and nation is hollow in the era of capitalism's decadence. No oppressed nation can achieve genuine freedom and independence through imperialist states. Small countries, whose ruling classes act in collusion with their counterparts in the great powers, are nothing more than pawns in the imperialist chess game. These countries are inevitably compelled to integrate into the capitalist mode of production and circulate within the global capitalist market.

The formation of Israel was the product of imperialist rivalries, and the British bourgeoisie, following the well-known 'divide and rule' policy, paved the way for the establishment of a 'Jewish homeland' in Palestine through the Balfour Declaration. The Soviet Union, aiming to counter British imperialist policy and to bring the newly established country into its sphere of influence, was among the first countries to recognise Israel, doing so just three days after its declaration of independence, on 14 May 1948.

With the onset of the Cold War, Israel gradually became not only part of the Western sphere of influence but also the West's most important ally and

gendarme in the Middle East. Initially, the British and the French, and later the Americans, armed Israel to the teeth in line with their imperialist interests. Today, the United States and Germany continue to play the leading role in arming Israel.

Israel possesses one of the most modern, formidable and fearsome armies in the world — an army made possible by the relentless arming and support of Western powers, particularly the United States, in accordance with their imperialist interests. Contrary to the deception of Western democracies, which claim they are unable to restrain Israel's crimes, the country has been able to continue its genocide solely through the unwavering backing of the West and its regional allies. Were this support to be withdrawn, Israel would move towards collapse or become a weakened state, not as a result of military defeat, but due to its own internal problems and crises. Let us remember that even the world's largest nuclear arsenal did not prevent the collapse of the Soviet Union as a result of its internal problems and crises.

It is an undeniable fact that not only the exploited Palestinians, but the Palestinian people as a whole — especially in Gaza — are facing genocide, and the situation in the West Bank is scarcely any different. The Palestinian people are effectively being crushed between two reactionary forces: on the one hand, Israel, relying on the support of Western countries and regional allies, continues its genocide; on the other hand, reactionary forces such as Iran, Hamas, and similar groups exacerbate their suffering and destruction by fuelling tensions.

The real liberation of oppressed groups is only possible through socialism. One might ask whether we must stand by and watch genocide until socialism is achieved. The answer is a resounding no. If protests are directed towards class struggle and challenge bourgeois states, then these states will be forced — not merely symbolically, but in practice — to halt the genocide.

For this reason, all of our struggle must be directed towards socialism and carried out through organised class struggle; for the proletariat has no

country to defend, and its struggle must transcend national borders and expand on an international scale. In the course of this struggle, class solidarity will be formed on the basis of class identity, not on false ethnic or religious identities.

True liberation from all forms of oppression is only possible through socialism, for in a socialist society, with the abolition of social classes, no state will remain capable of oppressing or exploiting people. The concept of ‘nationhood,’ which arises from the development of capitalism, loses its relevance in such a society, and what remains is merely the coexistence of human and ethnic groups. In a classless society where human exploitation has been abolished, oppression of ethnic minorities will also be meaningless. Under such conditions, the free development of each human group will be a precondition for the free development of all people and all human groups.

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Bilan & the Arab-Jewish conflict in Palestine

Introduction

The following articles were originally published in 1936 in issues 31 and 32 of *Bilan*, the organ of the Italian Fraction of the Communist Left. The Fraction was obliged to outline the Marxist position on the Arab-Jewish conflict in Palestine following the Arab general strike against Jewish immigration, which had degenerated into a series of bloody pogroms. Although a number of the specificities of the situation have since changed, what is striking about these articles is how profoundly applicable they are to the situation in the same region today. In particular, they demonstrate with a great deal of precision how the ‘national’ movements of both Jews and Arabs, though engendered by a real experience of oppression and persecution, had become inextricably entangled with the clash of rival imperialisms; and by the same token, how both were being used to obscure the shared class interests of Jewish and Arab proletarians, driving them into mutual slaughter for the interests of their exploiters. The articles thus demonstrate that:

- the Zionist movement only became a realistic project once it had received the backing of British imperialism, which was seeking to create what it called “a little loyal Ulster” in the Middle East, a zone of increasing strategic importance since the development of the oil industry;
- Britain, while backing the Zionist project, was also playing a dual game. It had to reckon with a huge Arab/Muslim component in its colonial empire; and it had made cynical use of Arab national aspirations during the First World War, when its main concern had been to finish off the crumbling Ottoman empire. It had therefore made all kinds of promises to the Arab population of Palestine and the rest of the region. This classic policy of ‘divide and rule’ had a

double aim: to balance out the conflicting national and imperialist aspirations in the areas under its domination, while at the same time keeping the exploited masses of the region from recognising their common material interests;

- The Arab ‘liberation movement’, though opposed to British support for Zionism, was thus by no means anti-imperialist – any more than were those elements within Zionism who were already turning to military action against the British. Both nationalist movements operated entirely inside the overall imperialist game. If a nationalist faction turned against its former imperialist backers, it could only seek support from another. By the time of the Israeli war of Independence in 1948, virtually the whole Zionist movement had become openly anti-British, but in doing so had already become a tool of the newly triumphant American imperialism, which was willing to use any instrument at hand to thrust aside the old colonial empires. Similarly, *Bilan* shows that when Arab nationalism entered into open conflict with the British, this merely opened the door to the ambitions of Italian (and also German) imperialism; and from our vantage point, we can see that the Palestinian bourgeoisie would later turn to the Russian bloc, and then France and other European powers, in its conflicts with the USA.

The principal changes that have come about since these articles were written, of course, is that Zionism succeeded in establishing its state, which fundamentally shifted the balance of forces in the region; and the leading imperialist power in the region is no longer Britain but the US. But even here the essence remains the same: the establishment of the state of Israel, which resulted in the expulsion of tens of thousands of Palestinians, only brought to its culminating point the tendency towards the expropriation of the Palestinian peasants which, as *Bilan* had noted was inherent in the Zionist project; and the USA, is itself compelled to maintain a contradictory balance between its support for the Zionist state on the one hand, and the necessity

to keep as much as possible of the 'Arab world' under its influence on the other. Meanwhile the USA's rivals continue to make whatever they can of the USA's difficulties in keeping all these balls in the air at the same time.

Most relevant of all is *Bilan*'s clear denunciation of the way that both Arab and Jewish chauvinism was used to keep the workers at each others' throats; in spite, indeed because of this, the Italian Fraction refused to make any compromise in its defence of authentic internationalism:

"For real revolutionaries, naturally, there is no 'Palestinian question', but only the struggle of all the exploited of the Near east, Arabs and Jews included, which is part of the more general struggle of the all the exploited of the entire world for the communist revolution".

It thus totally rejected the Stalinist policy of supporting Arab nationalism as an alleged means of combating imperialism. The policies of the Stalinist parties of the day are now carried on by the Trotskyists and other leftists, who make themselves the mouthpieces of the 'Palestinian Resistance'. These positions are as counter-revolutionary today as they were in 1936.

Today, when the masses of both sides are more than ever being whipped up into frenzy of mutual hatred, as the toll of massacre rises way beyond the levels reached in the 1930s, intransigent internationalism remains the only antidote to the nationalist poison.

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Arab-Jewish conflict in Palestine (part 1)

The aggravation of the Arab-Jewish conflict in Palestine, the accentuation of the anti-British orientation of the Arab world, which during the world war was a pawn of British imperialism, has induced us to consider the Jewish problem and that of the pan-Arab nationalist movement. Here we will try to treat the first of these two problems.

After the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans and the dispersion of the Jewish people, the different countries where they came from, when they weren't expelled from their territories (less for the religious reasons invoked by the Catholic authorities than for economic reasons, notably the confiscation of their goods and the annulment of their credit), in regulating their conditions of life after the Papal Bull in the mid-16th century, which was the rule in every country, obliged them to live confined in closed quarters and obliged them to wear the infamous insignia.

Expelled from England in 1290, from France in 1394, they emigrated to Germany, Italy and Poland; expelled from Spain in 1492 and from Portugal in 1498, they took refuge in Holland, Italy and above all in the Ottoman Empire which then occupied north Africa and the greater part of south east Europe; there they formed, and even form today, this community talking a Jewish-Spanish dialect, whereas those emigrants in Poland, Russia, Hungary, etc., talk the Jewish-German dialect (Yiddish). The Hebrew language, which during this epoch remains the language of the Rabbis, was drawn out from the domain of dead languages to become the language of the Jews in Palestine with the present nationalist Jewish movement.

While the Jews of the west, the least numerous, and partially those of the United States, acquired an economic and political influence through their weight on the money markets and their intellectual weight through the number of them found in the liberal professions, the great masses were concentrated in eastern Europe and already, at the end of the 18th century, grouped 80 percent of the European Jews. Through the first departure from Poland and the annexation of Bessarabia (area around Ukraine - trans.), they came under the domination of the Czars who, at the beginning of the 19th century, had the two layers of Jews on their territories. From the beginning, the Russian government adopted a repressive policy dating from Catherine II and this found its cruellest expression under Alexander III who envisaged the solution to the Jewish problem in the following way: a third must be converted, a third must emigrate and a third must be exterminated. They were

confined to a certain number of districts of the north-west provinces (White Russia), of the south-east (Ukraine and Bessarabia) and in Poland. They could not live outside of the towns and above all they could not live in the industrial areas (mining and metal working regions). But it's above all amongst the Jews who made a way for themselves in the penetration of capitalism in the 19th century and that determined a differentiation of the classes.

It was the pressure of Russian governmental terrorism which gave the first impulsion to Palestinian colonisation. However the first Jews had already returned to Palestine following expulsion from Spain at the end of the 15th century and the first agricultural colony was constituted close to Jaffa in 1870. But the first serious immigration only began after 1880, when police persecution and the first pogroms led to emigration towards America and Palestine.

This first "Aliya" (Jewish immigration) of 1882, the so-called "Biluim", was mostly composed of Russian students who could be considered as the pioneers of Jewish colonisation in Palestine. The second "Aliya" happened in 1904-05 as a repercussion of the crushing of the first revolution in Russia. The number of Jews established in Palestine which was some 12,000 in 1850, rose to 35,000 in 1882 and to 90,000 in 1914.

These were all Jews from Russia and Romania, intellectuals and proletarians, because the Jewish capitalists of the west, like the Rothschild's and the Hirsch's, limited themselves to a financial support which gave them a benevolent reputation as philanthropists, without it being necessary for them to give up their precious persons.

Among the "Biluim" of 1882, the socialists were still few in number and that because in the controversy of the time it was a question of going towards Palestine or America and they were for the latter. In the first Jewish emigration to the United States, the socialists were thus very numerous and

so this constitutes a good time for organisations, journals and even attempts at communist colonisation.

The second time that the question of seeing where Jewish immigration was leading was posed, as we have said, after the defeat of the first Russian revolution and following the aggravation of the pogroms characterised by those of Kichinev (Chisinau, Moldavia - trans.).

The Zionism which attempted to assure the Jewish people a place in Palestine and which had just set up a National Fund for acquiring territory, was, at the time of the 7th Zionist Congress in Basle, divided between the traditionalist current which remained faithful to the constitution of the Jewish state in Palestine and the territorialists who were for colonisation elsewhere and, concretely, in Uganda which was offered by the British.

Alone a minority of socialist Jews, the Poale Zion group of Ber Borochov, remained faithful to the traditionalists, all the other Jewish socialist parties at the time, as the Zionist Socialists (S.S.) and the Serpists - a sort of reproduction in the Jewish milieu of the Russian Social-Revolutionaries - declared themselves for territorialism. The oldest and the most powerful Jewish organisation of the time, the Bund, was, as we know, quite negative on the subject of the national question, at least in this period.

A decisive moment for the movement for national renaissance was opened with the world war of 1914. After the occupation of Palestine by British troops, to which the Jewish Legion of Jabotinsky rallied, the Balfour Declaration of 1917 was promulgated which promised the constitution of a Jewish national homeland in Palestine.

This promise was given its assent at the San Remo Conference of 1920 which put Palestine under British mandate.

The Balfour declaration led to a third “Aliya” but it was above all the fourth, the most numerous, which coincided with the remit of the Palestinian mandate to Britain. This “Aliya” already involved quite numerous layers of petty-bourgeois. We know that the latest immigration in Palestine which

followed the rise of Hitler to power and which is certainly the most important already contained a strong percentage of capitalists.

If the first census made in 1922 in Palestine had regard to the ravages of the world war, only registering 84,000 Jews, 11% of the total population, that of 1931 already registered 175,000 of them. In 1934, the statistics give 307,000 out of a total population of one million, one hundred and seventy one thousand. Presently the figure given is of 400,000 Jews.

Eighty per cent of the Jews are established in the towns whose development is illustrated by the rapid appearance of the mushrooming town of Tel-Aviv; the development of Jewish industry is also rather rapid: in 1928 one could count 3,505 firms of which 782 had more than 4 workers, that's to say a total of 18,000 workers with a capital invested of 3.5 million pounds sterling.

The Jews established in the countryside represented only 20% faced with the Arabs who formed 65% of the agricultural population. But the Fellahin worked their land with primitive means, while the Jews in their colonies and plantations worked according to the intensive methods of capitalism with Arab labourers on very low wages.

The figures we have given already explain one side of the present conflict. For 20 centuries the Jews had abandoned Palestine and other populations were installed on the banks of the Jordan. Although the declarations of Balfour and the decisions of the League of Nations pretended to give respect to the rights of the occupants of Palestine, in reality the growth of Jewish immigration meant driving the Arabs out of their lands even if they were bought at a low price by the Jewish National Fund.

It is not through humanity towards "a persecuted people without a country" that Great Britain choose a pro-Jewish policy. It is the interests of high British finance where Jews have a predominant influence which determined this policy. On the other hand, from the beginning of Jewish colonisation one notices a contrast between Jewish and Arab proletarians. At the beginning the Jewish colonists had employed Jewish workers because they exploited

their national fervour in order to defend themselves against Arab incursions. Afterwards, with the consolidation of the situation, the industrial and Jewish landed proprietors preferred Arab, to the more demanding Jewish labour.

Jewish workers, by setting up their unions, much more than the class struggle, took up in competition against the low Arab wages. That explains the chauvinist character of the Jewish workers' movement which is exploited by Jewish nationalism and British imperialism.

There are also naturally reasons of a political nature which are at the base of the present conflict. British imperialism, despite the hostility of the two races, wanted to make the two different states cohabit under the same roof and even create a bi-parliamentarism which envisaged a distinct parliament for Jews and Arabs.

In the Jewish camp, aside from the procrastinating directive of Weissman there are the revisionists of Jabotinsky who in fighting official Zionism, accused Great Britain of absenteeism, if not failing in its commitment, and who wanted to open Jewish immigration up to Trans-Jordan, Syria and the Sinai Peninsula.

The first conflicts which appeared in August 1929 and which unfolded around the Wailing Wall, provoked, according to the official statistics, the death of two hundred Arabs and a hundred and thirty Jews, figures certainly lower than reality, because if in the modern installations the Jews succeeded in repulsing the attacks, in Hebron, Safed and in some suburbs of Jerusalem, the Arabs went on to carry out some real pogroms.

These events marked a halt to the pro-Jewish British policy because the colonial British empire comprised many Muslims, India included, which was sufficient reason for it to be prudent.

Following this attitude of the British government towards the Jewish national homeland, the majority of the Jewish parties: the orthodox Zionists, the general Zionists and the revisionists went into opposition while the staunchest support for British policy managed at this time by the Labour

Party, was represented by the Jewish Labour movement which was the political expression of the General Confederation of Labour, organising almost the totality of the Jewish workers in Palestine.

There was recently expressed, on the surface only, a common movement of Jewish and Arab struggle against the mandatory power. But the fire smouldered under the ashes and the explosion was composed on the the events of May last.

The Italian fascist press has been up in arms against the accusation of the “sanctionist” press, that fascist agents had fomented the struggles in Palestine, an accusation already made regarding recent events in Egypt. Nobody can deny that fascism has a great interest in fanning the flames. Italian imperialism has never hidden its designs towards the Near-East, that’s to say its desire to substitute itself for the mandatory powers in Palestine and Syria. Moreover, in the Mediterranean it possesses a powerful naval and military base represented by Rhodes and the other islands of the Dodecanese (12 islands of the Aegean). British imperialism on the other hand, if it finds itself advantaged by the conflict between Arabs and Jews, because according to the old Roman formula *divide et impera*, it must divide in order to rule, it must however take account of Jewish financial power and the threat of the nationalist Arab movement.

This latter movement of which we will talk more another time, is a consequence of the world war which led to an industrialisation in India, Palestine and Syria and which strengthened the indigenous bourgeoisie which posed its candidature for government, that’s to say for the exploitation of the indigenous masses.

The Arabs accuse Britain of wanting to make Palestine the Jewish national homeland, which would mean stealing the land from the indigenous population. They have again sent emissaries to Egypt, Syria and Morocco in order to lead an agitation in the Muslim world in favour of the Palestinian

Arabs, so as to try to intensify the movement with a view of a national pan-Islamic union. They are encouraged by recent events in Syria where the mandatory power, France, has been obliged to capitulate in front of a general strike, and also by events in Egypt where agitation and the constitution of a single national front has obliged London to treat the government of Cairo as an equal. We don't know if the general strike of the Arabs in Palestine will obtain a similar success. We will examine this movement at the same time as the Arab problem in the next article.

Gatto MAMMONE

The Arab-Jewish Conflict in Palestine (Part 2)

As we saw in the first part of this article, when, after 2,000 years of "exile", the "Biluimes" acquired a sandy plain of territory to the south of Jaffa, they found other tribes, the Arabs, who took the place of those in Palestine. These latter were only some hundreds of thousands, either Arab Fellahin (peasants) or Bedouins (nomads); the peasants worked the soil with very primitive means, a soil belonging for the most part to the ground landlords (Effendi). British imperialism, as we know, in pushing these latifundists and the Arab bourgeoisie to join a struggle on its side during the world war, had promised them the constitution of an Arab national state. The Arab revolt was, in fact, of a decisive importance in the collapse of the Turko-German front in the Near-East, because it reduced to nothing the appeal from the Ottoman Calif to Holy War and held at bay numerous Turkish troops in Syria, without mentioning the destruction of the Turkish armies in Mesopotamia.

But if British imperialism had led this Arab revolt against Turkey, thanks to the promise to create an Arab state composed of all the provinces of the old Ottoman Empire (including Palestine), it didn't hesitate in the defence of its own interests to solicit, as a counter-point, the support of the Jewish Zionists

by telling them that Palestine would be in their remit as much from the point of view of administration as for colonisation.

At the same time, it gained the support of French imperialism for it to cede the mandate over Syria, thus detaching this region, which formed with Palestine, an indissoluble historic and economic historical unity.

The letter that Lord Balfour addressed to Rothschild, president of the Zionist Federation of England on November 2 1917, communicated to him that the British government would look favourably on the establishment of a Jewish national homeland in Palestine for the Jewish people and that he would use all his efforts for the realisation of this objective. Lord Balfour added that: “nothing would be done which could either harm the civil and religious rights of the non-Jewish collectives existing in Palestine, or the rights and the political statute that the Jews enjoy in other countries”.

Despite the ambiguous terms of this declaration, which allowed a new people to install themselves on their soil, the whole of the Arab population remained neutral at the beginning and even favourable to the setting up of a national Jewish homeland. The Arab proprietors, in fear that an agrarian law would be instituted, showed themselves willing to sell land. The Zionist leaders, solely absorbed with the preoccupation of the political order, did not profit from these offers and went as far as approving the defence of the Allenby government over the sale of land.

Soon, the Zionist bourgeoisie manifested tendencies to totally occupy (from the territorial and political point of view) Palestine by dispossessing the native population and pushing it towards the desert. This tendency is shown today among the “revisionist” Zionists, that’s to say in the pro-fascist current of the nationalist Jewish movement.

The area of arable land of Palestine is about 12 million metric “dounams” (one dounam = one tenth of a hectare) of which 5 to 6 million are currently under cultivation.

Here's how the area of land cultivated by the Jews in Palestine since 1899 has been established:

1899: 22 colonies, 5,000 inhabitants, 300,000 dounams.

1914: 43 colonies, 12,000 inhabitants, 400,000 dounams.

1922: 73 colonies, 15,000 inhabitants, 600,000 dounams.

1934: 160 colonies, 70,000 inhabitants, 1,200,000 dounams.

In order to judge the real value of this progression and the influence which comes from it, we mustn't forget that even today Arab cultivation of the land is of a primitive fashion, while the Jewish colonies employ the most modern cultivation methods.

Jewish capital invested in the agricultural enterprises are estimated at more than 100 million gold dollars, of which 65% is in the plantations. Although the Jews only possess 14% of the cultivated land, the value of products reaches a quarter of the total production.

For the orange plantations, the Jews manage 55% of the total crop.

It's in April 1920, in Jerusalem, and in May 1921, in Jaffa, that, under the form of pogroms, the first symptoms of Arab reaction occurs. Sir Herbert Samuel, High-Commissionaire in Palestine up to 1925, tried to appease the Arabs by stopping Jewish immigration, while promising to the Arabs a representative government and to assign to them the best land in the domain of the state.

After the great wave of colonisation of 1925, which reached its maximum with 33,000 immigrants, the situation worsened and ended up giving rise to the movements of 1929. It is at this time that the Bedouin tribes joined up with the Arab populations of Palestine, called for by Muslim agitators.

Following these events, the parliamentary commission of inquiry sent to Palestine and which is known as the Shaw Commission, concluded that the

events were due to Jewish workers' immigration and the "scarcity" of land and it proposed to the government to buy land in order to compensate the Fellah removed from his land.

Afterwards, in May 1930, the British government accepted in their entirety, the conclusions of the Shaw Commission and again suspended Jewish workers' immigration to Palestine, the Jewish workers' movement - that the Shaw Commission had even refused to listen to - responded with a 24 hour protest strike, while the Poale Zion group, in every country, as well as the large Jewish unions in America, protested against this measure through numerous demonstrations.

In October 1930, a new declaration concerning British policy in Palestine appeared and was known under the name of the "White Book".

It was equally unfavourable to Zionists arguments. But, faced with the ever-growing protests of the Jews, the Labour Government responded in February 1931, with a letter from MacDonald, which reaffirmed the right to work, to Jewish immigration and colonisation and authorised Jewish employers to hire Jewish labour when it preferred the latter rather than the Arabs - without taking into account the eventual increase of unemployment among the Arabs.

The Palestinian workers' movement hastened to put its trust in the British Labour government, whereas all the other Zionist parties remained in distrustful opposition.

We have demonstrated, in the preceding article, the reasons for the chauvinist character of the Palestinian workers' movement.

The Histadut - the main Palestinian union - only included Jews (80% of Jewish workers are organised). It is only the necessity to raise the standard of life of the Arab masses, in order to protect the high wages of Jewish labour, which has lately determined its attempts at Arab organisation. But the embryonic unions grouped in "The Alliance" remain organically separate from Histadut, the exception being the lorry drivers' union which includes the representatives of both races.

The general strike of Arabs in Palestine is now going into its fourth month. The guerrilla war continues, despite the recent decree which imposes the death penalty on anyone responsible for an attack; each day sees ambushes and raids against trains and cars, without counting the destruction and arson of Jewish property.

These events have already cost the mandatory power close to half-a-million pounds sterling, through the maintenance of the armed forces and through the reduction of budgetary duties, a consequence of the passive resistance and the economic boycott of the Arab masses. Recently, in the Commons, the Minister of the Colonies has given figures on the victims: 400 Muslims, 200 Jews and 100 police. Up to now, 1,800 Arabs and Jews have been judged and 1,200, of which 300 are Jews, condemned. According to the Minister, a hundred Arab nationalists have been deported to concentration camps.

Four communist leaders (2 Jews and 2 Armenians) are detained and 60 communists are under surveillance by the police. These are the official figures.

It is evident that the policy of British imperialism in Palestine naturally draws its inspiration from a colonial policy proper to any imperialism. This consists of basing itself on certain layers of the colonial population (by opposing races or different religious persuasions against each other, or again by arousing jealousies between chiefs or clans), which allows the imperialism to solidly establish its super-oppression over the colonial masses themselves without distinction between races or religions.

But if this manoeuvre was able to succeed in Morocco and in central Africa, in Palestine and in Syria the Arab nationalist movement presents a very compact resistance. It relies on the more or less independent countries which surround it: Turkey, Persia, Egypt, Iraq, the Arab States and, moreover, is linked to the whole of the Muslim world which accounts for 300 million individuals.

Despite some contrasts between the different Muslim states and despite the Anglophile policies of certain among them, the great danger for imperialism would be the constitution of an eastern bloc capable of imposing itself - this would be possible if the strengthening of a nationalist sentiment of the indigenous bourgeoisie could prevent the awakening of the class revolt of the colonial exploited who would have had enough of their exploiters as much as European imperialism - and which would find a rallying point around Turkey which has again just affirmed its rights over the Dardanelles and which could again take up its pan-Islamic policy.

But, Palestine is of capital importance for British imperialism. If the Zionists thought they could obtain a “Jewish” Palestine, in reality they would only ever get a “British” Palestine. The Palestinian transit routes link Europe to India. They could replace the maritime route from Suez whose security has just been weakened by the establishment of Italian imperialism in Ethiopia. Nor should we forget that the pipe-line from Mosul ends up at the Palestinian port of Haifa.

Finally, British policy will always have to take account of the 100,000,000 Muslims of the British empire. Up to now, British imperialism has succeeded in Palestine in containing the threat represented by the Arab national independence movement. It opposes Zionism to the latter which, in pushing for the Jewish masses to emigrate to Palestine, dislocates the class movement of their country of origin where they would have found their place and, finally, it makes sure of a solid support for British policy in the Near-East.

The expropriation of land at derisory prices has plunged the Arab proletarians into the blackest misery and pushes them into the arms of the Arab nationalists, the big landowners and the nascent bourgeoisie. The latter evidently profited from this in order to direct the discontent of the Fellahin and proletarians against the Jewish workers in the same way that the Zionist capitalists have directed the discontent of the Jewish workers against the Arabs. From this contrast between exploited Jews and Arabs, British

imperialism and the leading classes of the Jews and Arabs can only come out stronger.

Official communism helps the Arabs in their struggle against a Zionism which is qualified as an instrument of British imperialism.

Already, in 1929, the nationalist Jewish press published a “blacklist” from the police in which communists agitators figured alongside the Grand Mufti and some Arab nationalist chiefs. At present, numerous communist militants have been arrested.

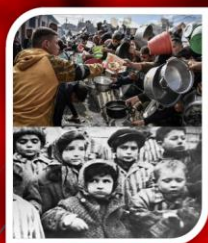
Having launched the slogan for the “Arabisation” of the party - the latter, as the C.P. of Syria and even of Egypt, has been founded by a group of intellectual Jews which was fought as “opportunist” - the centrist have today launched the slogan “Arabia for the Arabs” which is only a copy of the slogan “Federation of all the Arab peoples”, a nationalist Arab slogan, that’s to say of the big planters (Effendi) and of the intellectuals who have the support of the Muslim clergy, controlled by the Arab Congress and channelling, in the name of their interests, the reactions of the exploited Arabs.

For real revolutionaries, naturally, there is no “Palestinian” question, but solely the struggle of all the exploited of the Near-East, Arabs and Jews included, which is part of a more general struggle of all the exploited of the entire world for the communist revolution.

Gatto MAMMONE

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