

palestine

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CRISIS FOR IMPERIALISM

"The Near and Middle East remains of strategic significance to the United States because the area is a political, military and economic crossroads, and because the flow of Middle East oil is vital to the West. We, accordingly, have a large stake in the area's stability and steady development".

(Robert McNamara, U.S. Defence Secretary, 1967).

The Middle East, lying at the juncture of three continents and once the cradle of civilization, is today becoming a crucible in which the truth is being tested of Mao Tsetung's famous dictum that "the East wind is prevailing over the West wind". The region has indeed been, as McNamara said, a crossroads - not least in the sense that the Suez Canal was traditionally the transition point from the imperial west to the colonial dependencies of the Far East.

At a later time the Middle East again became a crossroads, at which all imperialist adventurers met. The lure which drew them was oil, of which the Middle East still hold 2/3rds. of the world's deposits. Oil is not only a source of energy but an increasingly important material in modern industrial production. Fabulous profits accrue to those who control the major supplies. Profit per year, as a percentage of total investment in oil, averaged during the 1950s 11% in the United States, 21% in Venezuela - and 67% in the Middle East. Control of Middle Eastern oil has shifted among the various imperialist powers, reflecting their relative dominance at different periods. Before World War II Britain controlled well over half the supplies and France also had large holdings. Now over half is controlled by the U.S.

In recent years the Arab peoples have dealt blow after blow at imperialist plunder of their resources. National bourgeois governments have come into power in several states and have demanded a larger share of the oil wealth. In many areas the people have resorted to armed struggle. In Aden the South Yemeni people drove Britain out two years ago. A liberation war is raging in Dhofar and the other states of the occupied Arabian Gulf, although hardly a word about this creeps into the official British press. But even Fleet Street cannot hide the victories being scored by the Palestinian people in their fight to regain their homeland. Imperialism has used many devices to secure its hold on the Middle East - from military aggression

to the mandates (by which Britain and France shared out the Arab lands between themselves after World War I) and to modern neo-colonialism (the buying of amenable sheiks and kings). But the most important, and certainly the most original, method has been the establishment of an outpost of imperialism in the Arab lands, covering both the northern outlet of the Suez Canal and the oil-bearing hinterlands. This outpost is the Zionist state of Israel. The struggle of the Palestinians against Zionism is the focal point of the entire Arab struggle against imperialism.

ZIONISM - A RACIST IDEOLOGY

Zionism is a particular counter-revolutionary current that emerged as a reaction to the process of assimilation of Jews in their respective nations which began to take place on a large scale in Europe and America during the late 19th Century. In general assimilation meant that Jews began to take full part in the revolutionary struggle of the masses of people. For the upper Jewish strata - the capitalists, landlords and middleman - it meant the eventual disappearance of their exclusive exploitation of the Jewish ghettos. In order to drive the Jews away from the struggle of the masses in their respective countries and to secure the Jewish bourgeoisie the exclusive exploitation of the Jewish masses, Zionism attempted to revive and revitalise Judaism, recreate and strengthen Jewish sectarianism and called for a National Home for the Jews. The whole ideology of Zionism was thus based on racism.

In his book "Auto Emancipation", Leo Pinsker in 1892 stressed that the Jews have "a common, unmixed descent..." Another leading Zionist, Achad Haam, wrote of the Jews "fulfilling their mission as a super-nation" by the establishment of Israel as a Jewish state. Herzl, the father of Zionism, attempted to persuade Jewish bankers "to give their daughters to up-and-coming vigorous young men" for what he described as "the self-fertilisation of the nation".

Zionism made use of the persecution of Jews in Russia and Eastern Europe in the second half of the 19th Century (which was by no means phenomenal, as all minorities are discriminated against in class society) as a proof that Jews cannot coexist with other races. Zionists never attempted to fight anti-semitism. On the contrary they welcomed it as "a movement useful to the Jewish character" (Herzl). Zionists and anti-semites share one important thing in common: both regard the Jews as peculiar - the first superior, the second as inferior. But both consider them as unmixable with

other races. In fact some of the main support that Zionism received in the early stages (and still receives) was from anti-semites. Herzl for instance used to write in the notorious anti-semitic magazine *Parole Libre* with full editorial support.

Apart from the anti-semites, Zionism up to the 1920s could only appeal to Jewish bankers and capitalists. Rothschild, for instance, was the first to buy land in Palestine for Jewish settlement. Zionism failed miserably to gain the support of the masses of oppressed Jews. Even today, when Zionism has succeeded in its main objective, it has only been able to gather 2½ million Jews in Israel out of 12 million Jews in the world.

Realising that they could not succeed in their schemes by themselves, the Zionists attempted to get the sponsorship of the imperialist powers dominating the Middle East. First it was the Ottoman Empire, then during the First World War and after, Britain and France. All along, the Zionists made it very clear that their Jewish state in Palestine would be a foothold of imperialist aggression and domination of the Middle East and the whole of Asia. Herzl wrote in his diaries: "We should there form a portion of the rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilisation (read imperialism) as opposed to barbarism (read national liberation)". Collaboration with imperialism has been another running theme through Zionist ideology and practice.

ISRAEL—TOOL OF IMPERIALISM

Right from the beginning, Zionism wedded itself to imperialism and undertook the job of protecting imperialist interests in the Middle East. The role that the Zionists saw themselves performing for imperialism is best illustrated by Weizmann in his autobiography "Trial and Error": "What the position would have been in the Near East, not for England alone, but for the World democratic cause if we had not provided in Palestine a foothold for England."

Britain officially incorporated the Zionist schemes within its imperialist policy on November 2, 1917, when the Balfour Declaration promised the Zionists a Jewish state in Palestine. This was the lease of life for Zionist colonisation of Palestine. Britain saw in Jewish immigration and Zionist settlement in Palestine a protection against the nationalist movement in Palestine and the Arab world as a whole.

The main objective of the Zionists, that of driving the Palestinian people out of their homes and off their land, was greatly encouraged by Britain, the mandatory government of Palestine. Attempts were made to buy the land off the Palestinians; those who refused were threatened or terrorized. Zionist organisations of a military nature such as Irgun and Hagana were set up in Palestine with the blessings of the British Government. Jewish employers, subsidised and intimidated by the Zionists, employed Jewish labour only. In spite of all that, the Zionists failed in their aim of making Palestine as "Jewish as England is English" up to 1947. Even with the massacre of Jews by Nazi Germany, the Zionists; were only able to scrape together 700,000 Jews to immigrate to Palestine up to 1947. They owned only 6% of the land while the Palestinians who numbered 1,380,000 owned 94% of the land. It was only in 1947-48, with the mass slaughter of the Palestinians and the destruction of

their homes and villages (Deir Yassin was completely destroyed and the whole of its population killed in April 1948) on a scale only comparable to the genocide of Hitler's Germany, that one million Palestinian refugees fled the country.

The 1947-48 war and the creation of Israel were the result of a crude conspiracy hatched up by British and US imperialism. Britain was unable to contain the rising tide of the Arab people's struggle for liberation, and especially the Palestinian people's. Having been weakened by World War II and subject to pressure from the US, Britain finally set up the stooge state of Israel. With British-imposed corrupt Arab regimes and the Arab armies commanded by British officers like Glubb Pasha, Britain was able to unilaterally end its mandate on Palestine despite the strategic importance of Palestine. It was an obvious invitation to the Zionists to grab what they could, and the 1948 cease-fire lines were agreed upon beforehand between the Zionists, the Arab Kings and British and US imperialism. According to the agreement Israel got an area about double that given it by the UN partition plan.

Not only was the creation of Israel a British - US plan, but Israel also is heavily subsidised by imperialism, especially by US imperialism. The economic aid alone (not including military aid) since 1947 amounted to an average of \$306 million per annum (see table). This comes to an average of \$720 (£300) per annum for an average family of four.

AMERICAN AND GERMAN ECONOMIC AID to ISRAEL

period	origin	\$million	average per annum, \$million
1945-67	Direct US	2177.8	99
	US, United Jewish Appeal		60
	Israeli bonds		50
	sales in US		
1952-65	German repatriation	862.5	66.3
up to 1965	German indemnification	525	31
	TOTAL	3565.3	306.3

Israel after its establishment has acted as a subervient tool of imperialism. Apart from the usual border provocations by the Israeli military against Arab regimes and progressive forces, Israel has on two occasions carried out a full scale invasion of neighbouring Arab countries in an attempt to protect endangered imperialist interests. In 1956, after Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez Canal, Israel was instructed by Britain and France to act as the front runner for their aggression. Israeli invasion was the excuse by which Britain and France landed troops along the Canal.

Again in 1967, when Israel invaded and occupied Sinai, the west bank of the Jordan and the Golan Heights, Israel acted in the service of imperialism. Apart from the danger from Syria to the oil pipe-lines and the Egyptian troops in the Yemen fighting the US backed royalists, there was the very imminent and far-reaching danger of the Fedayeen. Al-Fateh, which started military operations in January 1965, had gained the active support of the Palestinian and all the Arab masses. Israel knew that people's war, practiced by Al-Fateh, will ultimately spell its doom. (Eban admitted it: "Now this

ideology - people's war - has spread and it is a source of danger because the fact is, the technical answer to that kind of warfare has not been found." Eban, Nov. 1956) U.S. imperialism saw in Al-Fateh the beginning of another Vietnam in the Middle East. The Soviet Union also regarded the armed struggle of the Palestinian people as a danger to its worldwide collaboration with the U.S. Thus Israel, on June 5th, 1967, acted with the blessings of Washington and the knowledge that neither Washington nor Moscow would lift a finger to stop them.

Israel might from time to time raise a voice of discontent about far-reaching deals which the U.S. is making with the Soviet Union at the expense of some of the Israeli gains in its wars of aggression against the Arab countries. This has about the same significance as Ky, the South Vietnamese puppet, protesting against U.S. troop withdrawals. It is beyond any doubt that U.S. imperialism is quite happy about the service being done for it by Zionist Israel. The Phantom bomber deal and the recent visit of Golda Meir, the Israeli Prime Minister, to the U.S. where she received a cordial and brotherly reception are a further proof of the U.S. imperialists' confidence in the hold they have on Israel.

ROAD TO LIBERATION

The Palestinian struggle has for a long time been misdirected by various corrupt "leaders" and traitors to the Arab liberation cause. For over twenty years the Palestinian people rotted in refugee camps not able to make any headway towards their liberation, because they failed to solve the question "who are our friends and who are our enemies" correctly. It was only when this crucial question began to be answered that the Palestinian liberation struggle moved forward.

ENEMIES AND FRIENDS

The main enemy of the Palestinian people, like all oppressed people all over the world, is imperialism. In the case of Palestine, Israel is the main manifestation of imperialism and the main front on which imperialism and especially US imperialism is attacking the national liberation struggle. Israel however should not be given equal status as an enemy with imperialism. The relation between US imperialism and Israel is strictly that of a master to a flunkie.

As for the Arab regimes, they suffer from an acute contradiction. So far as they have a conflict with imperialism, they support the Palestinian struggle. So far as they have a conflict with the Arab masses, they oppose the Palestinian struggle. Typical regimes that fall in that category are the UAR, Syria and Iraq where power is in the hands of the national bourgeoisie or at least sections of them. The Arab national bourgeoisie have the ambition of exploiting the Arab proletariat. Thus on the one hand they oppose imperialism which is a rival in this exploitation, and on the other they have to fight the proletariat and all its allies, who want to end all exploitation.

The Arab regimes face a further contradiction that is common to all of them. They see in the Palestinian armed struggle a danger to their existence and thus they want to oppose it. At the same time, the widespread support that the Fedayeen enjoy among the Arab masses forces these regimes to take a posture of sup-

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port for the Palestinian struggle. Any Arab government that ventures to attack the Fedayeen or stand in their way will have to face the wrath of the masses in their country. Hussain who tried it in Nov. 1968 had to give in to Al Fateh. Lebanon have been in continuous political crisis ever since the Lebanese authorities attempted to stop the Fedayeen activities. Their recent US-backed attempt also meeting with complete defeat.

The main force that the Palestinian liberation struggle has to rely on is the Palestinian workers and peasants, and all the uprooted, displaced and oppressed Palestinians. Their permanent allies and dependable friends are the oppressed Arab masses and revolutionary people all over the world and socialist countries like China and Albania.



AL-FATEH FIGHTER IN TRAINING

THE PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION AND THE ARAB REVOLUTION

The Palestinian revolution as an anti-imperialist revolution is part of the world-wide struggle for socialism. It is a key part of the Arab revolution. The Palestinian liberation struggle is the spearhead, the vanguard of the struggle of the Arab masses against imperialist exploitation and oppression. It is reacting and will continue to react on every country in the Middle East. Unlike what the trotskyists and other opponents of Al-Fateh advocate, it is not the job of the Palestinian people to carry out the revolution inside Lebanon, Jordan or any other Arab country. These revolutions will be carried out by the Arab masses in these countries. What the Palestinian struggle will do is intensify the contradictions already existing inside the Arab countries, to their ultimate conclusion: revolution. In the course of the Palestinian revolution, many of the Arab regimes will be overthrown by the Arab masses.

ONE ROAD - PEOPLE'S WAR

"A nation, big or small, can defeat any enemy, however powerful, as long as it fully arouses its people, firmly relies on them and wages a people's war". (Mao Tsetung) This truth is being grasped by millions upon millions all over the world. This is what the Palestinian people have learned and are putting into practice every day.

The Palestinian people by putting into play the tremen-

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dous energy and ingenuity of the masses have thrown the imperialists and their stooges into deepening panic. The four "big powers": the US, the Soviet Union, Britain and France joined forces to draw plans in order to stop this threat to their interests in the Middle East. The US and the Soviet Union have gone very deep in their bargaining at the expense of the people of Palestine and have produced what is known as a "package deal". This latest deal, like all the other proposal put by the "big powers" attempts to achieve a permanent state boundaries for Israel in order to forstall the Fedayeen and liquidate their struggle. Al-Fateh and all other Palestinian liberation organisations have completely rejected all the plans which have been concocted by the imperialist powers in an attempt to smash their struggle.

Through self reliance, mobilizing the masses of people and conducting a protracted people's war, the Palestinian liberation fighters have achieved great successes. It is also the way that will bring them final victory.

AL FATEH

The Palestine National Liberation Movement (Al-Fateh) was formed in 1958. It carried out its first military operation on January 1st, 1965. The explosion that took place early that morning was to shake the whole of the Middle East and mobilize the Palestinian people for armed struggle.

Al-Fateh was the first organisation to break away from the peaceful road of the Moscow oriented communist parties, the national and religious fanaticism of Al-Shukairy and others and the reliance on the UN, the imperialist powers or the Arab regimes to solve the problems of the Palestinian people.

Since then, other Palestinian organisations have been formed jumping on the bandwagon of the support gained by Al-Fateh. While these organisations mouthed left and revolutionary slogans and swear in the name of Marx, Lenin and Mao, Al-Fateh puts it into practice.

Al-Fateh is by far the strongest and most popular liberation organisation in Palestine. It has been able to challenge Hussein and defeat his attempts to smash their struggle. It is now successfully defeating the attempts by the reactionary Lebanese authorities to stop their activities from Lebanese soil.



Abu Ammar (Yasser Arafat), Al-Fateh leader addressing the fifth congress of the General Union of Palestinian Students held in Amman last August.

EXTRACTS FROM AL-FATEH PROGRAMME

The National Liberation Movement of Palestine (Al-Fateh) is the expression of the Palestinian people and of its determination to liberate its territory from Zionist colonisation and to re-establish its national identity.

Al-Fateh is not fighting against the Jews as an ethnic and religious community. It is fighting against the Zionist and colonialist State of Israel with its racist, theocratic and expansionist structure.

Al-Fateh rejects any solution to the Palestine problem which does not recognise the existence of the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination.

Al-Fateh categorically rejects the Security Council resolution of 22 November 1967 and the Jarring mission resulting from it. This resolution disregards the existence of the Palestinian people and its national rights. Any so-called peaceful solution which disregards this basic fact is bound to fail.

Al-Faten solemnly declares that the final aim of its struggle is the restoration of an independent and democratic Palestinian State where all citizens, whatever their creed, can enjoy equal rights.

Palestine forms part of the Arab Homeland. Al-Fateh will work for the active participation of the Palestinian State in building a united and progressive Arab society.

The struggle of the Palestinian people, like that of the Vietnamese people and all the other peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America forms part of the historical process of liberating the oppressed peoples from colonialism and imperialism.

JOIN P.S.C.

PALESTINE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

SUPPORT THE STRUGGLE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND ITS AGENT ZIONISM.

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