

# 'Israel'—Torah Myth or Imperialist Phenomenon?

*On the 12th and 13th of September, a conference was held in Havana, the second of its kind, entitled «Zionism and World Societies». Over one hundred delegates participated in this conference, from Algeria, Kuwait, Venezuela, Mexico, Panama, Libya, the PLO, Cuba and others. Representing the PFLP was the Palestinian scholar, Hussein Abu Namil, who presented a study which is printed below.*

It is most significant to hold a conference on Zionism and world societies in Havana which lies on the other side of the globe. In the light of the exact name of the conference, most people will speak of the actions and practices of Zionism and 'Israel'. I will cover the phenomenon behind this role, 'Israel' itself, since it is the material reality of Zionism and its most active instrument. The nature of Zionism's role is inseparable from the nature of 'Israel'. In order to clarify the nature of Zionism's activities, I will deal with the nature of 'Israel'. In view of this, we can explain Zionism's growing interests in world societies. At first glance, it may seem irrelevant for 'Israel' to be involved in distant countries, but what is distant from 'Israel' is in fact a main part of the broader strategy through which 'Israel' and the Zionist movement are mobilized: the strategy of world imperialism. What is most noticeable is the rapid rise in the role and influence of the Zionist movement and 'Israel' in the supreme strategy of imperialism. This reflects the ability of 'Israel' to increase its role.

The increase in the international role of the Zionist movement and 'Israel' went hand-in-hand with a corresponding increase in the popularity of the most racist and rightist forces in Israeli domestic politics. This came about amidst deep social and economic transformation, after which 'Israel' was no longer just a tool in the hands of imperialism, or a satellite. It became a full-fledged partner with direct interests, just like any other traditional imperialist power. One should not overlook the previous stages of the Zionist project. 'Israel' of 1985 is different from 'Israel' of 1967 or 1957 or 1947. What is true about the Zionist project before it established its state is not necessarily the case afterwards. In addition, how others viewed this project changed at successive stages, as did Zionism's view of itself and the roles of which it is capable. Its role has changed in accordance with the development of its capacities.

These changes, however, did not change the nature of the Zionist project. From the beginning, the Zionist movement was governed by its own narrow mentality, transforming within the bounds of the imperialist project and based on the latter's platform and interests. The Zionist project was harnessed, nourished and guided by world imperialism from the first decade of this century. It grew to the degree that it was capable of performing an important role in protecting and serving the original imperialist program. Moreover, it became a partner in its own right, with its own recognized role within the imperialist project. Once accomplished, the Zionist project was supposed to play a major role in the Middle East, guarding imperialism's interests, but this accomplishment was much bigger than originally planned. In reality, 'Israel' and the Zionist movement today play a much broader role which extends far beyond the Middle East. Wherever there is a role for imperialism, we find Zionism at its side, involved in one way or another. It claims to

be «protecting the Jews», but reality indicates that the possibility of establishing a Zionist empire is not mere imagination.

In the light of this, the aim of my speech is to give a picture of the entity behind this role. I will speak about the structural transformation that has occurred in 'Israel', forming the base for ensuing internal and external transformation. This transformation indicates that the global role of Zionism and 'Israel' is not only due to their relationship with imperialism, but is also dictated by their own internal structure. 'Israel' and the Zionist movement serve not only imperialism, but themselves as well. The time when we spoke of 'Israel' as a mere tool in the hands of imperialism is past. Despite its small size, 'Israel' has become one of the pillars of imperialism, with the same rights and duties as the other imperialist countries. 'Israel' has established a highly developed industrial economy with the same qualities as that of any other advanced bourgeois state, in terms of the degree and rate of growth, and the nature of the recurring crises. One such crisis stems from surplus production which was ultimately dealt with in the traditional imperialist manner, through expansion and involvement in the world market, facilitated by imperialism.

## Imperialism in the service of Zionism

The history of Zionist activities dates back to before the first Zionist congress in Basle in 1897. In 1917, the Balfour Declaration was issued. In 1947, there was the UN decision to partition Palestine, which paved the way for announcing the state of 'Israel'. According to official Israeli surveys, there were 56,800 Jews living in Palestine in 1917. By 1948, an estimated 600,000 Jews lived in Palestine. Comparing these two figures, we find that the number of Jews living in Palestine increased more than tenfold during the period of the British Mandate in Palestine.

The book of official Israeli accounts of the 1947-8 war in Palestine indicates that «local Jewish factories had been manufacturing the Sishin submachine gun, the mortar cannon and shells since 1939.» It also notes that «on the eve of the partition of Palestine, in October 1947, Ben Gurion issued an order to these factories to begin immediate production of 20,000 rifles, 10,000 machine guns, 5,000 pistols, 5,000 submachine guns and 4.5 million bullets.» These quotes give several facts, not least of which is that Britain not only nurtured Jewish immigration to Palestine; it also nurtured the process of establishing the Zionist state, with its economic, political, social, military and police institutions. In other words, Britain participated in building up a state within a state. The question arises: Is it just a coincidence that Britain's 1917 decision to adopt the Zionist project came at the same time as the Arab area came under the control of imperialist Britain and its allies? In fact, the Zionist project did not materialize until it became a need for ►