

coming of Christ was supposed to end the Jews' state of exile; they would return to Palestine and establish their 'national presence'.

The European reformation movement concentrated on Palestine, because the Holy Land and Palestine held the ideal combination of ingredients to substantiate comprehensive Zionist interpretations. Thus, Palestine became the homeland of the Jews, and the Jews became the people of Palestine, in the eyes of western Protestants. The Jews were depicted as a 'people estranged' from the European countries they had always lived in, as a people 'removed from their rightful country' who must be 'returned' to it at the appropriate time.

Thus, the Zionist misrepresentation of modern history, based on claims of 'historical rights' in Palestine, reverts back to Protestant Evangelicalism. The history of the land of Palestine has, on the other hand, been gradually reduced to paragraphs, and even these are limited to the history of Jewish presence there. Europeans were eventually led to believe that nothing of major consequence ever occurred in Palestine, except for what was depicted in the stories of the Old Testament. More important still was that no serious efforts were made to challenge or categorize these stories, and they became accepted as true history.

The incorporation of Zionist themes into the fabric of European Protestantism reached a peak during the period of Puritanism in England in the 17th century. Puritanism was a fanatical trend which attached special priority to the Old Testament. This was converted into a guidebook even for everyday living. Thus, depiction of the Jews as the descendants of the Israelites of the Old Testament became most widespread during the 1740s. Previously it was popularly accepted that Palestine was the Christians' Holy Land which many an Englishman had sacrificed his life to «defend against the heretics.» Today, however, Palestine has been stripped of its old Christian content to become the «homeland for Jews who must return to it» according to the prophesies of the Old Testament.

It is evident that the organic connection between Zionism and European

culture originated from religious ideas. Even during the Renaissance, art and literature picked up where religious belief left off. Zionist themes can be found in the classical works of European writers and philosophers such as John Milton, William Blake, Newton, Fichte, Pascal and Rousseau. The understanding of Jews and Judaism as an 'organic nation' instead of being a religious group or religion, was one of the specialties of the philosopher Kant who said that Jews were «Palestinians living among us.»

ZIONISM CONVERGES WITH BRITISH INTERESTS

Towards the end of the 19th century, England became the ideal hotbed for political, non-Jewish Zionism, due to the convergence of three major points of British interest in the land of Palestine. These were: (a) the balance of power in Europe; (b) the security of India; and (c) the route to India through Syria. It was from this convergence that an unnatural unity between the policies of the British empire and a kind of patriarchal Christian Zionism was initiated. This unholy alliance became more evident in British policies as time went by.

It was none other than Lord Anthony Ashley Cooper, the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, who was the first to coin the slogan «a country without a nation for a nation without a country» in 1839. This was later to be picked up by prominent Jewish Zionists and rephrased as «a land for a people for a people without a land.»

The well-known Canadian geologist, Sir John William Dawson, after returning from a journey to Palestine, wrote that to date no nation had been able to establish itself as a people of Palestine, and no unity or national spirit prevailed there: «The mixture of tribes there are only temporary residents, clearly awaiting those who deserve to be permanent owners of the land.»

A decade later, an English scientist, Isaac Ash, proposed the following in order to convert Palestine into a homeland for the Jews: He said that three of four steps must be implemented immediately to «restore Jewish nationality to Palestine.» These were (1) buying land from the present owners; (2) making it valuable by in-

jecting capital, and thereafter renting it to the Jews for an unlimited period at a stable rate, after the restoration of the land; and (3) the capital injected must be directed not only to land restoration, but also to creating jobs of 'national nature and importance'. With regard to the fourth point, he advises that all these tasks and others must be carried out to enable the 'nation' to 'maintain its independence' by putting it in a position of military defense. This statement, which preceded the establishment of the Zionist National Fund by 30 years, clearly heralded the policies outlined by Jewish Zionist leaders three decades later.

PROTESTANTISM CARRIES ZIONISM TO AMERICA

It was natural that the Zionist trend emanating from Europe would constitute an important element in American thought and political life from the time of European settlement in the New World in the second half of the 17th century. In effect, English Puritanism, which had celebrated the Zionist theme, established the foundations for future English-America missionary work. According to William E. Hartpole Lecky, a prominent Irish historian and essayist, «Hebrew mortar is what established the basis of American democracy.» Evangelical missionary work in the US took on a broader form than that which prevailed in Puritan England. It developed into a widely accepted culture permeated by many Zionist principles.

At that time, the most prominent American Jew was William Blackstone, author and benefactor, who launched innumerable campaigns calling for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, despite the fact that this conflicted with the desires of many American Jews. After concluding a visit to Palestine in the 1890s, he returned to the US and in typical Zionist fashion began his work with renewed conviction that Palestine should be developed agriculturally and commercially by her 'rightful' Jewish owners. His efforts culminated in an appeal to the then US president, Benjamin Harrison, insisting on the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine.

At first glance the submission of such a petition to the US president might be ►