

39 Years of Infamy

The Creation of the Zionist State

May 15th marks 39 years since the Zionist movement created its racist state by occupying the major part of Palestine. This illegal act was accomplished by brute force, like all of Zionism's major advances. The article below relates how the Zionists militarized Palestine, dispossessing the Palestinian people and turning their land into a base for further aggression and expansion, in line with imperialist interests.

The first Arab-Zionist war, the war of 1948, was not the result of inherent tension between Arabs and Jews. Rather it was minutely planned by the Zionist leaders to provide a cover for their occupation of Palestine and expulsion of the native inhabitants - crimes deemed necessary to accomplish their goal of an exclusively Jewish state, to serve as imperialism's foremost ally in the region.

The Zionists' war preparations relied to a great extent on their alliance with the colonial powers, specifically Britain, dating back to the participation of a Zionist brigade in the British expedition against Turkey in World War I. Having offered Jews as cannon fodder to the British war efforts, the Zionists secured the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917, which promised British support to «the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people,» despite the fact that 92% of Palestine's population were non-Jewish Arabs. On this background, the Zionist delegation to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference circulated a plan for the Zionist state with borders extending from Sidon (Lebanon) in the north, eastwards to include parts of Syria (roughly covering the Golan Heights) and what is now Jordan, all of Palestine and a part of Egypt's Sinai. The document defined these boundaries as essential for the state's economic viability, especially water resources. Special reference was made to the need for the fertile plains east of the Jordan River.¹ This plan foretold the 1948 and 1967 wars and occupations, as well as the 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

The Hagana, the embryo of the Israeli army, was formed in 1920, and began intensive training with the British colonial forces in Palestine in the 1930s,

to beat down the 1936-39 Palestinian revolt. At this time, the British formed three counterinsurgency units, the Night Squads, composed of Zionist settlers, and commanded by Captain Orde Wingate whom David Ben-Gurion paid tribute to as follows: «Wingate's work was not in vain. The Hagana's best officers were trained in the Special Night Squads, and Wingate's doctrines were taken over by the Israeli Defence Forces...» Moshe Dayan, who was personally trained by Wingate, said: «In some sense every leader of the Israeli army even today is a disciple of Wingate. He gave us our technique, he was the inspiration of our tactics, he was our dynamic.»²

The Palmach, the Hagana's strike force, was formed in 1941, to defend Zionist settlements in Palestine, as 32,000 Zionist settlers volunteered to serve with British units in World War II. The Jewish Agency worked to channel these volunteers into units that would get training useful to Zionism in the future. (This was, of course, in marked contrast to the Zionist movement's failure to participate in the anti-fascist resistance movement in Europe.)

Added to the arms and training acquired from the British, there was underground Zionist training in Palestine and abroad, the formation of the Irgun and Lehi (Stern Gang) terror groups alongside the Hagana, and large arms and manpower shipments to the Zionists in Palestine. «Already in 1945, the composition of the Jewish immigrants into Palestine - legal and illegal - was changing: people of military age, many of whom had already had military training and/or experience in Europe, predominated.»³ Irgun and Hagana men beat up and harassed

Jewish youth in the displaced persons camps in Europe, who didn't want to go to Palestine and fight for Zionism. Just as the composition of the immigrants belie Zionist claims of creating 'Israel' to «save» the Jews from the holocaust, so other facts refute their claims of self-reliance in creating this state: In 1948-9, the Zionist movement tried to recruit thousands of US servicemen, including officers, in the US and Europe, to serve as instructors for their new army.⁴ Most of the Israeli pilots in the 1948 war were foreigners, especially from the US. Mercenaries also participated.

Thus, the stage was set for the Zionists' first expansionist, preventive war, launched to prevent a Palestinian state which would not have allied with imperialism, as the Zionist state was intended to from the beginning.

WAR ON CIVILIANS

With their pro-Zionist slant, most bourgeois historians date the 1948 war to May 15th, when the Arab armies entered Palestine. In reality this war grew out of the Zionist militias' terror attacks on the Palestinian civilian population, which started well before, and escalated dramatically in the spring of 1948. On November 29, 1947, the UN had adopted the Partition Plan, whereby 56% of Palestine was allocated to a 'Jewish state' and 43% for an Arab state, while Jerusalem was to be a UN-administered international zone; at this time Jews were less than one-third of the population and owned about 6% of Palestine's land. Palestinians staged strikes and demonstrations in protest of this injustice, while the Zionists celebrated. The nature of their celebrations is clear from what Ben-Gurion wrote: «Arabs started fleeing from the cities almost as soon as disturbances began in the early days of December (1947)...»⁵

To rule out any rethinking of the resolution and to expand their already unjustly large territory, the Hagana, Irgun and Lehi went into action. In the areas designated for the 'Jewish state', Palestinian citizens were expelled from Tiberius, Haifa, Safad, Beisan and hundreds of villages. The Zionist forces attacked and occupied the villages of Qazaza, Salameh, Saris, Qastal and Biyar 'Adas, and the towns of Jaffa and Acre - all in the area reserved for the Arab state. In the six months before