

air force and a small but daring navy was ready to give battle.»

No such violations were recorded on the Arab side, and the Zionists' build-up turned out to be mainly a preparation for coming wars, though there are several indications that they considered a qualitative escalation at the time. The May 31, 1948 entry in Ben-Gurion's diary reads: «If there is no ceasefire, we will prepare an operation to free Jerusalem. We have decided to bomb Amman and Cairo.»⁹ In June 1948, the US military attaché in Cairo reported «reliable indications» in Tel Aviv and elsewhere that Zionist forces were preparing to use gas against the Palestinian population centers.¹⁰

As it happened, the Zionist forces used the stalemate that ensued, until armistice agreements were signed with the Arab states in 1949, to continue the expulsion of Palestinians and the destruction of their villages. By that time, another 350,000 Palestinians had been forced to leave, and the Zionists controlled 77.4% of Palestine. In the process, a less known but just as atrocious massacre as Deir Yasin occurred in Dawaymeh, west of Hebron, in October 1948. On a Friday, the Zionists entered the town in armored vehicles, firing indiscriminately. It is estimated that 70 people were killed in the mosque, while 85 were machinegunned down outside a cave where they had sought refuge. As many as 70 were later killed trying to return to their homes after the Zionists occupied and destroyed the village. The mukhtar of Dawaymeh later compiled a list of

the missing, totalling 455. The massacre in Dawaymeh was part of a larger Zionist operation, designed to extend their territory before the signing of the armistice agreements. The attack was carried out by the 89th Battalion of the Israeli army, led by Moshe Dayan.

MORE WARS TO COME

An underlying war aim for the Zionists in 1948 was showing their strength and ability to be imperialism's foremost ally in the region. The Zionists clearly stated their aims to the US in advance: On May 3, 1943, General Patrick J. Hurley, personal representative of US President Roosevelt in the Middle East, reported to the president: «The Zionist organization in Palestine has indicated its commitment to an enlarged program for: (1) a sovereign Jewish state which would embrace Palestine and probably eventually Transjordan; (2) an eventual transfer of the Arab population from Palestine to Iraq; (3) Jewish leadership for the whole Middle East in the fields of economic development and control.»¹¹ With the US having emerged from World War II as the strongest imperialist power, the Zionist leadership underscored what it could offer by allowing the US mission to have military attachés, the only state accorded this privilege.

Thus, the creation of the Zionist state not only uprooted the Palestinian people. It provided the US with a bridgehead for spreading imperialist dominance in the Middle East. The resulting US-Israeli alliance, and their

joint drive to control the area, has generated a series of wars since 1948, at the expense of peace, progress and independence for the Arab people as a whole. (See study in this issue.) Their cooperation has also taken on international dimensions: 'Israel' constitutes one station in the US's global military network. It is one of few states ready to join the most aggressive US projects - from supplying the contras in Nicaragua and shielding the apartheid regime in Pretoria from sanctions, to Reagan's nuclear-powered Star Wars.

For these reasons, the struggle to liberate Palestine is not only a just national cause concerning one people - the Palestinians. It is part of the worldwide struggle against imperialism, racism, oppression and militarization. Supporting the Palestinians' return to their homeland means supporting peace and progress in the entire area.

¹ Hadawi, Sami, *Palestine in Focus*, Beirut: PLO Research Center, 1968, pages 10-12.

² both quotes from Sayigh, Rosemary, *Palestinians from Peasants to Revolutionaries*, London: Zed Press, 1979, p. 72.

³ Green, Stephen, *Taking Sides: America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, New York: William Morrow and Co., Inc., 1984, p. 68.

⁴ *ibid*, pages 52-3.

⁵ Ben-Gurion, David, *Rebirth and Destiny of Israel*, 1954.

⁶ Hadawi, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

⁷ Ben-Gurion, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

⁸ *Jerusalem Post*, March 2, 1986.

⁹ Rabinovich, Itamar and Jehuda Reinharz (editors), *Israel in the Middle East*, Oxford University Press, 1984, p. 25.

¹⁰ Green, *op. cit.*

¹¹ Hadawi, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

The Israeli Role in the Middle East

In previous issues we have printed a study on the role of 'Israel' in the Middle East, as perceived and engineered by US imperialism. In this issue, we begin a series on how the Zionist leadership conceived and developed their state's role in practice.

From its inception, the Zionist movement clearly defined its role in the Middle East. Theodor Hertzl, father of political Zionism, argued as follows in his book, *Der Judenstaat (State of the Jews)*, published in London in 1896: «We should there form a portion of the rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilization against barbarism.» Clearly aligning with colonial expansion and interests in the East, the Zionist movement sought the help of the great powers to fulfill its project. By establishing the state of 'Israel' on occupied Palestinian land, the Zionist leadership began acting on this pledge, enforcing a geopolitical division in the heart of the

Arab world, occupying the major portion of Palestine and displacing more than half of its people. This accomplished, the Zionists turned their efforts against the rising Arab national movement, particularly its center in Nasser's Egypt, and the latter's alliance with the Soviet Union. As early as March 1952, the Israeli ambassador to the US, Abba Eban (later foreign minister during the June 1967 aggression), urged that 'Israel' be included in any Western-Oriental Middle East defense organization being planned.¹

Contrary to all demagogic about «saving the Jewish people,» the Zionists turned them into cannon fodder in order to have