

leader, Khalil Al Wazir (Abu Jihad). Speaking at the main celebration, Defense Minister Rabin, mastermind of the unprecedented campaign of repression mounted against the uprising, stated: «We know this is one long war that our enemies have forced upon us» (*International Herald Tribune*, April 20th). On the concluding day of the Israeli celebrations, with half the Palestinians in the 1967 occupied territories under curfew and the rest restricted from moving outside their area, Shamir could find nothing better to say than, «Look, Israel is not the sort of state where life is quiet, ideal, pastoral» (*International Herald Tribune*, April 22nd).

A senior Israeli official close to Foreign Minister Peres was a bit more articulate in expressing how the Zionists see their current situation: «We're heading back to the 1940s. The extremists are driving the whole Arab community and pushing us to the right. Everything is vanishing: their chances for an independent state and our chances for normality» (*International Herald Tribune*, April 11th). Echoes of 1948, and the Zionist crimes of that time, also figure prominently in the escalating racist threats of avowed right-wing Israeli politicians (see box).

The continuity of the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories shows that the Zionist leadership, which promised a haven for Jews from all over the world, is today unable to provide minimal security and normality for their own population. On July 3, 1950, Ben Gurion said in the Knesset, «These two laws, the Law of Return and the Citizenship Law, constitute the Bill of Rights, the Charter, guaranteed

to all Jews in the diaspora by the State of Israel.» Yet less than 20% of Jews in the world opted to live in the Zionist state, and those who did found that the 'return' posited them as colonialists fighting men, women and children who cling to their homeland, and as cannonfodder for imperialist wars to expand Israeli territory. By the early 1980s, it became apparent that the number of Israelis emigrating from the Zionist state was greater than the number of Jews who were immigrating. The reversed ratio was attributed to economic recession and to the constant state of war whose futility was heralded by the Zionists' near fiasco in the October 1973 war. Though it is too early to present statistics, the trend of increasing emigration can only be aggravated by the current Palestinian uprising which bears daily witness to the fact that Zionism, as a colonial movement, cannot offer real or lasting security for Jews.

This is especially true in as much as Zionism has also depended on brute force to build its state and resolve its own crises. Yet, as the current uprising demonstrates in very literal terms, «official Zionism, as embodied in Israeli state policy and in the discourse of its loyalists in the West, has no military option against the Palestinians, who seem destined to remain irritatingly before Israel, challenging Zionist settlements, vociferously protesting and fighting the abrogation of their rights, popping up in precisely those places (the West Bank, Gaza, and Lebanon, for instance) where they were supposed to have been defeated» (Edward Said, *Race and Class*, Winter 1988, p. 33).

Though the major political blocs

(Labor and Likud) have shown exemplary 'national unity' in endeavors to repress the uprising by brute force, this has simply not worked. Instead, Zionism's political bankruptcy has become apparent, for there is no Israeli consensus on any other type of solution.

THE IRON WALL

In contrast to Labor Zionism which tries to couch its racist, colonial ventures in liberal and even 'socialist' phraseology, Revisionist Zionism (the precursors of the Likud) has always said point blank that the struggle for Palestine is a fight for existence, whether for the Zionists or the Palestinians. Thus, Vladimir Jabotinsky wrote in 1923, «Zionist colonization, even the most restricted, must either be terminated or carried out in defiance of the will of the native population. This colonization can, therefore, continue and develop only under the protection of a force independent of the local population - an iron wall which the native population cannot break through. This is, *in toto*, our policy towards the Arabs. To formulate it any other way would only be hypocrisy» (quoted in Lenni Brenner, *The Iron Wall*, Zed Books, 1984, pp. 74-5). Moshe Dayan, a main architect of the 1967 occupation, acknowledged the same reality when he said, «There is not a single settlement that was not established in the place of a former Arab village» (*Haaretz*, April 4, 1969).

This true face of Zionism can be seen today in the resurgence of blatantly racist and aggressive statements by Israeli officials, such as the ones made by Shamir when opening an ancient castle near Bethlehem as a tourist site: «Anybody who wants to damage this fortress and other fortresses we are establishing will have his head smashed against the boulders and walls.» Addressing the Palestinians in revolt, he continued, «We say to them from the heights of this mountain and from the perspective of thousands of years history, that they are like grasshoppers compared to us» (*International Herald Tribune*, April 1st).

Such demagoguery in the face of crisis exposes Zionism's bankruptcy on several levels. From a historical perspective, such colonialist bravado is doomed. Alongside the apartheid regime in South Africa and its occupation of Namibia, 'Israel' stands as an

Echoes of 1948

In March, Rafael Eitan, former Israeli chief of staff and member of Knesset, told the *Jerusalem Post* that the uprising «could have been halted by expelling 300 of the inciters. That, plus collective punishment, would have done the trick without the need to call in the army... If war breaks out and they make trouble, we'll simply have to deport a million people... You don't need a large force for that; we had a far smaller army in 1948 and it was done wherever it was needed» (*The Middle East*, April 1988).

On March 24th, Trade Minister Ariel Sharon said «that if war breaks out

with neighboring states, Israel may expel Arabs living in the occupied territories and inside the country. Sharon told Israeli reporters in Tel Aviv that after the outbreak of the 1948 Mideast war, when thousands of Arabs fled or were expelled from Jewish-held territory, then-Prime Minister David Ben Gurion refused to let them back.» Referring to the current uprising, Sharon said, «Those who began the war in December 1987, must remember that they are fully responsible for its results. This is the deterrent. Remember it well, not just the residents of Halhoul and Qalqilyeh but also the residents of Jaffa and Jerusalem» (Associated Press, March 28th).