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War In PALESTINE

- The Fight For Oil, Colonies and War Bases.
- Why Devlin Backs Arab "Kings."
- American And Soviet Policies Contrasted.
- A Test For United Nations
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WAR IN PALESTINE

War has broken out in Palestine. Jerusalem has been the scene of fierce battle. Bombs have fallen on the beautiful modern Jewish city of Tel-Aviv.

With this new outbreak of war the threat to world peace becomes graver. A vast war already rages in China; the patriots of Vietnam and Greece are fighting for their homelands against foreign Imperialists.

Now Palestine is added to the list.

Local wars in Abyssinia, Spain and China heralded the Second World War. Those who want to stop a Third World War should see the warning signals in time.

They should arm themselves with the facts that will help them to restore peace.

The Middle East

Palestine lies in the heart of the Middle East, and the Middle East is a rich and important colonial area.

British, American, French, German and other Imperialists have all had their eyes glued on this area for a long time.

The Kaiser's drive to the Middle East, his project of the Berlin-Bagdad railway, and his threat to Britain's "road to India," helped to produce the First World War.

Then Hitler poured in his arms, money and propaganda, thus helping to set the stage for a new war, in which he nearly won the Middle East as well as Europe.

This new war over, Imperialists are fighting for the Middle East—and for Palestine—more fiercely than ever. Why?

Planning for War

(1) The Middle East is a vital base for war on Russia. It lies on Russia's southern flank, near many of her richest food and mineral resources.

With American and British leaders talking openly about war on Russia, what wonder we find American forces in Greece, Turkey, Arabia and Iran (Persia), and British forces in Greece, Egypt, Irak, Transjordan and elsewhere!

And what wonder they have pounced on the very centre of all these countries, Palestine!

Great Oil Depot

(2) The Middle East teems with oil. It has the largest remaining oil resources of the capitalist world, larger than those in U.S.A.

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Oil is the main material of modern war. It is the basis of air fleets, navies, motorised armies.

The oil of the Middle East runs through pipelines—TO PALESTINE! Haifa, Jewish port in Palestine, is the terminus of the old British pipeline from Irak, a new American pipeline from Arabia, and of the projected new Anglo-American pipeline from Transjordan.

Two great sets of oil magnates, those connected with Shell Oil (British) and Rockefeller's Standard Oil (American) have an enormous interest in Palestine—and these magnates talk to the heads of the British and American Governments.

Suppressing Arab People

(3) Palestine is the ideal central point from which to suppress the rising people's movements of the Middle East.

Like other colonial peoples, the millions of Arabs of the Middle East are demanding their independence.

Huge demonstrations in Cairo in face of regiments of armed police (December, 1946); a march of 3000 workers and students in Bagdad calling for immediate withdrawal of British troops from Irak (June, 1946); martial law in Iran when 10,000 oil workers struck against the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (July, 1946); great railway strikes in Egypt and Sudan in the summer of 1947; frequent risings of Syrians for their independence; Kurdish risings in Iran, Irak and Turkey.

All this frightens the Imperialists, who want to be able to rush troops and supplies to a threatened spot, or drop bombs, if need be, to save their oil and other investments. And look at the map—you will see that Palestine is their best centre from which to operate.

Not Anti-British

War, oil, colonies—these have no interest for the British people—for London dockers, South Wales miners, Lancashire cotton spinners, or the British middle class—or for the American people, who hate war, and in their millions are backing the peace programme of Henry Wallace.

But these things have a deep interest for the British and American war chiefs, for Shell and Standard oil millionaires, for Churchill, Bevin and Marshall.

What is said here is not anti-American or anti-British, but anti-the millionaires and warmongers who are the worst enemies of the American and British people.

"Divide and Rule"

In 1919, Britain got her "mandate" over Palestine from the League of Nations. In fact, Palestine became her colony.

The policy of the British conquerors from the beginning was the old policy of "Divide and Rule." This policy began even before the "mandate."

Jew was pitted against Arab, and Arab against Jew, in order that the Imperialists could exploit them both.

In July, 1915, the British High Commissioner in Egypt signed a treaty with the Sheriff of Mecca, promising him, in return for armed support against the Turks, a new kingdom embracing Syria, Palestine and part of Arabia. The deal was clinched by the British agent, "Lawrence of Arabia." On the basis of this deal, the Sheriff led a rising against the Turks in 1916, and helped to bring about the fall of Jerusalem to the Allied forces next year.

But the British Government desired the help of the Jews also.

So, on November 2, 1917, Lord Balfour sent his famous note to Lord Rothschild, in which he said, "His Majesty's Government views with favor the creation of a national homeland for the Jews in Palestine."

Palestine was thus promised to both Jews and Arabs. This was the first act in the British "Divide and Rule" policy.

First Stage

At first the British overlords applied this policy mainly by favoring and encouraging the Zionist Movement, a movement which believed in the return of the Jews to Palestine, there to establish an all-Jewish State.

This policy led to a series of conflicts and uprisings unknown even under the barbarous rule of the old Turkish Empire. Turmoil broke out in 1920, in 1921, in 1925, 1929, 1933, and 1936.

Meanwhile, the Jewish population in Palestine increased from 60,000 to 600,000.

Second Stage

Then came the British Government's White Paper of 1939, which stopped any further large-scale migration of Jews to Palestine. A new phase of the "Divide and Rule" policy had begun. Instead of pitting the most reactionary circles of Jews against the Arabs, British Imperialism had begun to pit the most reactionary circles of Arabs against the Jews.

The "effendi," or Arab landlords, often absentee landlords, usually large money-lenders as well, grinding their own people into utter poverty—these were a better pillar for Imperialism than the Jews. The Jews had brought with them modern industry, modern farming, an organised labor movement, and a new culture. This upset the age-long semi-feudal order of the

Middle East. The "effendi" were the guardians of this old order.

" Police State "

During the war, when the Jews fought against Hitler, the Arab rulers, headed by the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, were many of them in the pay of Hitler and Mussolini. But this did not worry the British Foreign Office, which, under Bevin, has formed a close economic and military alliance with these rulers and their "Arab League" and "Arab Higher Committee."

In the first two decades of the "mandate," the British used the Zionists as their main instrument. In the third decade they used the "effendi." But they gave no real power to either.

Even the recent Anglo-American Mission of Inquiry reported: "Palestine is a semi-military or police State. Neither Jews nor Arabs have been included in the highest ranks of the administration. British officials hold all the important positions."

Arab, Jewish Workers Unite

The "Divide and Rule" policy had some success, but not all the success the Imperialists had hoped for.

It did NOT prevent the growth of widespread co-operation between the Arab and Jewish masses, particularly between the Arab and Jewish trade unions.

At the end of the Second World War there were about 150,000 trade unionists in Palestine, three-quarters of them Jewish, one-quarter Arab. Jewish workers are organised in the Histadruth, or Jewish Federation of Labor, the Arabs have separate union organisations, but they began to co-operate.

At the end of 1945, both Jewish and Arab workers in the British Army workshops outside Tel-Aviv went on strike following dismissals in the workshops and the refusal of the Army to recognise the elected Workers' Committee. They were backed both by the Histadruth and by the Arab Workers' Society. They marched 1300 strong through the streets of Tel-Aviv. And they won their demands.

Later, there were joint Arab-Jewish strikes in the Government service, against Shell Oil and against Imperial Chemical Industries, which controls the potash production of the Dead Sea.

" Common Interests "

After the army workshops strike victory, Al Ittehad, Arab socialist paper, wrote:—"The strike proves, above everything

else, the existence of common interests between Arab and Jewish workers, interests that will become manifest more and more, contrary to the wishes of reactionary elements among both communities, who have always striven and continued to strive for concealment of these interests."

A Jewish business man who was in Palestine before the war and since in Melbourne, said:—

"There is very little animosity between the Arab and Jewish working man. People try to stir up trouble between them from time to time, but it never lasts long. Throughout the whole of the 'disturbances' of 1936-39, I had on my daily payroll between 1000 and 1200 men. There was no time when we did not work with mixed gangs of both Arabs and Jews, despite many attempts by British officials to try to split them up into Arab gangs and Jewish gangs."

An ex-serviceman who was in Palestine for six months during the war, writes in the Victorian Guardian of May 28, 1948:—"During World War Two the Arab effendi were not allowed to provoke discord, because it would not have suited the British Imperialists. That is why, during the war, I found no evidence of Arab-Jewish hatred among the ordinary people. Left alone by the capitalist powers after the war, Arabs and Jews could have continued to live side by side in peace."

One fact stands out. Though Palestine Arabs outnumber the Jews by two to one, they could not be incited to violence against them on any large scale. The present war on the Jews is being waged by "kings" from outside the country.

British Terror

Here was a movement, which pointed the way to Jewish-Arab co-operation against Imperialism for the winning of independence and prosperity for the whole people of Palestine.

What was the answer of the British Imperialists to be?

They did not leave us long in doubt. In 1946 and 1947 they let loose an intense reign of terror against the Palestine Jews.

They raised their occupation force from 60,000 to 100,000, one to every twenty of the population.

They used the British Navy to round up Jewish refugees from Hitler's concentration camps, and put them into new British-controlled concentration camps for the crime of coming to seek a new home in Palestine.

They arrested and placed behind barbed wire members of the Jewish Agency, conservative governing body of the Palestine Jews, on fantastic charges that they were responsible for

terrorist actions, such as bomb explosions in Government buildings.

They arrested and placed behind barbed wire practically every leader of the Palestine trade union and co-operative movements.

They ordered the disarmament of the Haganah, or Jewish defence force, and raided thousands of Jewish homes in search of arms. (The Haganah had been formed and trained before the war by the British General Wingate.)

They proclaimed martial law and a curfew; they imprisoned people for long periods without trials, burnt down Jewish villages in reprisal actions, and killed and tortured Jewish people.

By these actions the British Imperialists fanned the anti-Jewish feelings of Arab reactionaries and strengthened the influence of the reactionary Jewish terrorist gangs, whose actions were then made the excuse for more crimes against the Jewish people.

Who Are the Jewish Terrorists?

The Jewish terrorist gangs, the Irgun Stern gang and the I.Z.L., have played a sinister role in Palestine. Many of their rank and file have been misguided young idealists burning with indignation over the Imperialist outrages against their people. But the leadership of the gangs is extreme Zionist and near-Fascist.

They are the anti-labor wreckers, burning union buildings, beating up workers, acting as scabs during strikes.

They are inciters against the Arabs, demanding an all-Jewish government in both Palestine and Transjordan without any Arab representation.

They even disrupted a Communist rally held in Jerusalem to commemorate the heroes of the Warsaw Ghetto fallen in heroic struggle against Hitler. They called out that "Jews who stayed in Europe deserved what they got, anyway."

Traitors to Freedom

They did not really fight the Imperialists, but aimed to show by their terrorist acts how strong they were, and what good help they could give the Imperialists if given the chance.

One of their own statements read: "Our purpose is not to drive the British from Palestine, but to prove to them that compromise with us is to their benefit." The Palestine Communist Party condemned them as "traitors to the Jewish people and the cause of freedom."

They had little support among the Palestine people. A Palestine journalist, Mr Laquer, who toured the country with the recent United Nations Special Committee on Palestine, said that at least 80 per cent. of the people dissociated themselves from the gangs, and leaders of the Jewish community again and again repudiated their actions.

The only thing which gave them strength was the reign of terror of the British army.

Race Hatred Cultivated

Race hatred was cultivated against the Jews as part of the British terror.

General Sir Evelyn Barker issued his order to "show contempt" for the Jewish people—to "punish them in a way the race dislikes as much as any—by striking at their pockets." The late Sir Isaac Isaacs, in a fine protest, said these were "undisguised anti-Semitic words," "unworthy of any person holding a responsible position," and as an "indiscriminate slur cast upon the whole Jewish people throughout the world."

The general was withdrawn, but other senior Army officers carried on his anti-Jewish propaganda.

Former members of Sir Oswald Mosley's "British Union of Fascists" were allowed in the Palestine force to take part in the raids on Jewish settlements, according to the London newspaper, "The Week."

Even Nazi prisoners of war took part. German prisoners captured by the Haganah said they had been released from British internment camps in Egypt on condition that they went to fight the Jews.

Such was the hideous last stage of the British mandate in Palestine.

The Last Card

British rule finally aroused such hatred in Palestine and in other countries that it could not continue. The United Nations ended the "mandate."

Then the Imperialists proceeded to play their last card through their puppet Arab "kings" with their British arms, officers and money.

They carried their "Divide and Rule" policy to its logical conclusion in open war.

No one can pretend the "kings" moved without British consent. Abdullah of Transjordan has British troops quartered in his territory. His so-called "Arab Legion" is armed, trained and commanded by British officers. Its leader is the British General Glubb.

Abdullah is bound to Britain by a recently signed treaty of military alliance. According to reliable Arab sources in London, there were secret as well as open clauses of that treaty, and the secret clauses provide that Abdullah should take over the proposed new Arab state in Palestine and the most vital part of the new Jewish state, including the oil port of Haifa.

Thus, threatened with removal from Palestine at the one end, the British Imperialists planned to come in again at the other.

King Farouk

King Farouk of Egypt, the other chief "invader" of Palestine, is kept on his tottery throne by a British occupation force. Evacuation of this force was promised 19 times between 1882 and 1939, and was again promised "freely and without conditions" by Mr. Attlee in March, 1947. But it is still there.

During the war Farouk served Berlin and Rome. When the German and Italian forces marched into Egypt, he withdrew his army from the front to fight a plague of locusts. He was personally caught trying to escape to Italy on his yacht.

Farouk still serves Imperialism, but he has a new set of imperialist masters. His planes bombing Tel-Aviv are Spitfires. When he speaks it is the voice of Bevin and the Shell Oil Company, except in so far as they are getting eased out by Mr. Marshall and Mr. Rockefeller.

Blood of Jews on Bevin's Hands

Before the mandate ended, Mr. Bevin had let the Arab rulers bring their forces and artillery over the Palestine border, bombard Jerusalem, and spread out over the country. Meanwhile, it still strove to disarm the Haganah, fought the Jews for the possession of the ports of Palestine, and aimed to cut them off from all reinforcements and from all arms and munitions.

On April 28, Mr. Bevin declared in the House of Commons, "the intention is that the withdrawal of the Arab Legion from Palestine should be completed before the termination of the 'mandate'." The Legion was NOT withdrawn. When war broke out, Bevin continued sending arms to aggressor King Abdullah on the ground that this was only fulfilling treaty obligations!

One last act of the British overlords should be mentioned. Early this year they suppressed Al Ittehad, the organ of the Arab National Liberation League. This paper had heroically

raised its voice for Arab-Jewish unity in building a free and independent Palestine.

For this crime it was banned.

Truman's Bid

Meanwhile, where were the other Great Powers? What was their stand on Palestine?

First America. When the British reign of terror was at its height, President Truman bid for Jewish support by promising "an independent Jewish State in Palestine." Many Jews who had been shocked out of their friendship with the British Imperialists began to look to the American Imperialists in their place.

We Communists pointed out the danger of such an attitude. The men of Wall Street, we showed, were economically and politically enslaving one country after another, and had their fighting forces in Arabia, Persia, China, Greece, Iceland, and many other countries.

We pointed to their Hitler-like theories of "race superiority" as practised against their own millions of negroes at home. We pointed to Standard Oil's grab of Saudi Arabia, to American bankers and high-ranking military officers in Turkey, to the American police chief who commands the Persian military police, to the American fleet, which displays the might of Wall Street in the Mediterranean. We warned against trust in Wall Street and its servants.

And what happened?

American Aims

The American rulers first supported the United Nations' decision for free and independent States for both Arabs and Jews in Palestine.

Then, feeling their oil and strategic interests would be served better by relying on Arab princes, they flouted the United Nations' decision, which they themselves had helped to make, and proposed a so-called "trusteeship," which would only be the enslavement of the people of Palestine under another name, under American overlords instead of British.

Then they came back to the United Nations' decision, and suddenly recognised the new Jewish State of Israel. Through all these changes they have one aim — to exploit and dominate the whole Middle East, including Israel.

Their whole record shows that they are supporting the Jews now to exploit and dominate them later.

The Jews, if they accept American aid in their crisis, should beware of making humiliating concessions, as many other countries have done. Otherwise, even if they win the military battle, they will lose their dream of a free Jewish State.

Soviet Stands for Peace

Alone among the Great Powers, the Soviet Union has consistently supported the right of Arabs and Jews in Palestine to their freedom and independence.

The Soviet Union is a socialist country. It does not fight for markets abroad. Its planned economy, under which living standards rise rapidly from year to year, provides an ever-expanding market at home.

It does not fight for places to invest surplus capital, because it uses its own revenue in a planned way to develop the resources of its own country. It has no private oil magnates.

It has no fear of depressions, but will prosper more each year while peace can be preserved.

Such a country has no motive for war, and every motive for wanting peace.

Throughout its existence it has stood for the self-determination of nations, for the right of each nation to decide its own future.

Nations Liberated

Tsarist Russia was called the "prison of nations." It bitterly oppressed the Ukrainians, Georgians, Uzbeks, Tartars and other nationalities, which made up half the population of the Tsar's empire.

That was completely ended in 1917. All peoples under the Soviet flag were accorded completely equal rights. Not even the Capitalist Press has been able to invent race persecutions or conflicts in the Soviet Union.

So great is the transformation that Stalin, a member of the formerly oppressed Georgian people, became head of the Soviet State.

Such is the respect of the Soviet Union for the rights of all nations that, when Finland fought with Hitler, and the Red Army twice had Finland at its feet, though Finland had been part of the Tsar's Empire, the Soviet Union never questioned its right to continued independence.

To-day, American and British Imperialist forces are scattered over the globe, but no Red Army man stands outside the Soviet Union and ex-enemy countries, except for a small garrison force guarding lines of communication in Poland.

Gromyko's Statement

In keeping with this policy, when the question of Palestine arose, the Soviet Union, through Mr. Gromyko, told the United Nations that it stood for a free, independent Palestine—if possible, a united Palestine, including both Jews and Arabs, with equal democratic rights, or, if this was not possible, for a free, independent Jewish State and a separate free, independent Arab State, in place of the existing British mandate.

Unwillingly forced to conclude that the atmosphere had been too far poisoned by the policy of "Divide and Rule" to permit of the establishment of a single free State, it voted and fought for separate free States for Jews and Arabs.

It was thanks to the great influence of the Soviet Union that an Anglo-American imperialist deal over Palestine was avoided and a collective United Nations settlement reached.

Once the United Nations' decision was made, the Soviet Union demanded its enforcement. Its policy never wavered.

United Nations Must Act!

We now arrive at the present situation in Palestine.

The new State of Israel was no sooner proclaimed, in accordance with the United Nations' decision, and within the territory allotted by the United Nations, than it was barbarously attacked.

No Arab Palestine State has been proclaimed, the Arab area has been invaded by Arab "kings" from outside Palestine.

Thus the United Nations' decision has been doubly violated.

There are two alternatives in this situation. Either we can let the situation drift, as we let similar situations drift in the nineteen-thirties, encouraging the Anglo-U.S. Imperialists and Arab and other aggressors, and asking for another World War.

Or we can demand action to stop the aggressors, military action if necessary. This would force a climb down by the British Foreign Office, which could not force the British people into war against the United Nations.

This is the only course that can be followed by true democrats and lovers of peace.

We should demand also that our Australian Government recognise Israel, as the Soviet Union, America, South Africa and other countries have already done.

What We Should Demand

The reason given in the Press why Britain does not recognise Israel is that if she recognised Israel as a State, she would have to admit that the war on Israel is a war. Surely Australia cannot condone such an attitude.

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We should demand Australian recognition of Israel and Australian efforts to force British recognition also.

We should say, "No more oil agreements affecting Palestine except by consent of freely elected Governments of the Arab and Jewish people."

We should demand the resignation of the British Foreign Minister, Mr. Bevin, who has led the British people against their will into a war of aggression worthy of Hitler.

No Happy Future Unless . . .

Australians, and especially the Jews in Australia, should seek to influence the policy of the new Jewish State along anti-imperialist lines, and along the lines of co-operation with the masses of the Arab people.

There can be no happy future for the Jews in Palestine unless they win the friendship of the millions and millions of Arabs who surround them on every side.

Anti-Arab influence of extreme Zionists and terrorists must be resisted, and appeals must be made again and again over the heads of the Arab kings to the Arab people. Even in the heat of war there should be no indiscriminate acts against the Arabs.

And there can be no happy future for the Jews in Palestine unless they set out, together with the Arabs, to break the power of the Imperialists in the Middle East.

Friendly relations with the Soviet Union are vital. Dr. Snee, who was leader of the Haganah, recently resigned his post in protest against the anti-Soviet and pro-Imperialist policy of the Jewish Agency. That policy would now be fatal.

Act Now !

Finally, and above all, let us recognise that the aggression in Palestine, like the aggressions in Greece, China and elsewhere, threatens world peace and the peace of our own country.

We must act now to save our own future.



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