

Zionism and race discrimination

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Racialism is one of the ugly faces of Zionist ideology and practice.* Zionist leaders usually howl at any criticism of their policies, labelling it at random as 'anti-Semitism.' By this they try to kill three birds with one stone. Firstly, to sweeten any criticism of their policies. Secondly, to foster nationalist feeling among the Jews and, thirdly, to disguise their criminal acts. Nevertheless, one should not be caught by this old trick and whenever necessary Zionism should be unmasked.

The Arabs in Israel for many long years have been the victims of the Zionist practice of national oppression, discrimination and persecution. This policy of national oppression and discrimination against Arabs in Israel shows itself in all spheres of life and constitutes a severe bill of indictment against the Israeli authorities and the Zionist leaders who think that their boasts about humanity will obliterate the facts and lead people astray.

I. Long before the establishment of Israel the Zionist organizations started to carry out their plans for the expropriation of Arab lands and the expulsion of Arab peasants in Palestine. This was the first

*The class substance of Zionism was the subject of an article in this year's May issue: D. Burstein, 'Zionism and Israel's Rulers in the Service of Imperialism.' The present article is confined to an examination of Zionist policy towards the 320,000 Arabs in Israel since its founding in 1948. The criminal conduct of Israeli authorities against the Arab population in territories occupied in the June 1967 aggression is not dealt with here.

step towards depriving the Arab people of Palestine of their national rights.

The Zionist organizations with the protection and help of British colonial rule succeeded in uprooting tens of thousands of Arab peasants from land which they had cultivated for hundreds of years. It will be enough to give two examples – in 1925 the Zionist organizations expelled more than 1,270 Arab families from the fertile valley Marj Ibin Amer which covers an area of 400,000 Dunams. In 1929 more than 2,000 Arab peasants were expelled from the valley near Tulkaremwadi Elhawareth.

Many similar acts of eviction were carried out by the Zionist organizations that established professional fighting brigades under the supervision of the British intelligence service and committed brutal acts of terror against Arabs. One of the Zionist leaders, Ahad Haam, who visited Palestine around this period, wrote: 'The Jews are treating the Arabs very cruelly, depriving them of their legal rights and humiliating them without any reason and, what is still more, they are proud of these acts.' If a Zionist leader could not but make this accusation against his friends, then one can imagine how far the Zionist organizations went in their brutal acts against Arabs in Palestine.

After the establishment of Israel in 1948 this Zionist policy of expropriation of Arab lands and expulsion of Arab peasants acquired new momentum. The Knesset (Israeli parliament) adopted different racial laws aimed at evicting Arab peasants from their lands. The most notorious among them are the following: the law for emergency regulations and security areas (1949); the law for the property of absentees (1950); the law for the control of lands (1953); the law for the lands of Israel (1960); the law for the centralization of lands (1965).

Under the cover of these anti-Arab laws and others, and with the help of the state apparatus, the Arab peasants in Israel lost most of their lands (over 1,200,000 Dunams). Sixteen Arab villages have completely lost their lands. Around the Arab city of Nazareth 2,250 Dunams were confiscated in order to prevent the development of the city; 5,100 Dunams belonging to three Arab villages in the Galilee were confiscated in order to establish the Jewish city Carmel. An additional 3,555 Dunams were confiscated from 25 Arab villages in the Galilee and were handed over to the Zionist organization 'Hakeren Hakayemet.'

In addition to this Zionist policy of eviction, expropriation and confiscation of Arab lands, the Israeli government follows a policy of discrimination against Arab agriculture. In 1970 50 per cent of the cultivated land in the Jewish sector was irrigated, while in the Arab sector only five per cent of the cultivated land was irrigated. (In Israel the distribution of water for irrigation is controlled by the Ministry of Agriculture). This is one of the main reasons why the agricultural products from one Dunam of land in the Arab sector

barely equal 20 per cent of the agricultural products from one Dunam of land in the Jewish sector.

ii. This Zionist policy of expropriation and discrimination against Arab peasants has actually ruined Arab agriculture in Israel and accelerated the process of turning tens of thousands of Arab peasants in Israel into laborers who mainly man the branches based on physical labor, like construction and the public services.

Over 57 per cent of the Arab workers in Israel are 'mobile' and have to travel around, away from their homes, to look for jobs. Many of them live in slums under terrible conditions.

According to official figures the average annual income of an Arab worker in Israel is only 62 per cent of the average annual income of a Jewish worker. One can assume that in reality it is even much less.

Arabs in Israel constitute over 12 per cent of the whole population, but only one per cent of the government employees are Arabs. Many branches of industry are completely closed to Arab workers.

For many years Arab workers were deprived of the right of affiliation to the Histadrut (general trade unions in Israel). Even at present, with the Arab workers admitted to the general trade unions as a result of a long struggle, they are still deprived of the right to elect trade union councils in nearly all the Arab villages.

Arab workers in Israel are actually victims of multiple exploitation – as workers in a capitalist society and as Arabs in a Zionist racialist regime. The majority of Arab workers in Israel are deprived of elementary social amenities, such as recreation, or compensations.

In medical services and education there is a clear discrimination against Arabs. Official figures show that less than 40 per cent of the Arab families have medical insurance as against 97 per cent of the Jewish families. Most of the 112 Arab villages in Israel have no medical center.

The Zionist attitude to the question of education among Arabs in Israel was openly set out in the notorious statement of Lubrany, once adviser of the Israeli Prime Minister for Arab affairs. He declared: 'If there had been no Arab students at all it would have been better. If they (the Arabs – G.T.) had remained wood cutters it would have been easier to rule them.'

In the field of education the Zionist policy of discrimination against Arabs is very sharp and is illustrated clearly by the following official figures: 42.8 per cent of Arabs in Israel never attended schools as against 10.4 per cent of Jews; 28.1 per cent of the Jewish population have received a secondary education while among Arabs only 11.5 per cent; 11.9 per cent of the Jewish population received a higher education as against 1.4 per cent among Arabs.

The lack of support from the government to educational institutions in Arab towns and villages is the main reason behind this grave situation. This is evident from the fact that the governmental support to educational institutions in the Arab town of Nazareth is only 2.5 per cent.

The 'emergency regulations' which were exercised in Palestine under British colonial rule are still operative, but are actually applied only against Arabs. The 'emergency regulations' have for many years constituted the main tool of oppression and discrimination against Arabs.

According to these regulations unlimited authority is granted to military governors to carry out arbitrary sanctions against individuals and even to impose collective punishment. A military governor has the authority to arrest anyone for an unlimited period of time without bringing him to court or even without making any charges against him; he has the right to confiscate his property, confine him to his place of domicile or put him under house arrest. The victim of these emergency regulations has not even the right to appeal to higher authorities. Wide areas or a number of villages could be suddenly declared by the military governor as closed areas and such an act in fact turns the inhabitants of these areas into prisoners. All Arab villages in Israel are, in effect, in this very situation.

These emergency regulations are often used as a political weapon against Arab Communists and democrats. Hundreds of Arab Communists and democrats are confined to their places of domicile. The aim of this arbitrary act is to paralyze their political activities and for some the effect is to starve their families since it is very difficult for many victims of such arbitrary orders to find a job.

The nature and character of these emergency regulations were well defined by the Zionist leader Yackob Shapiro, who declared in 1946 immediately after these regulations were published by the British colonial authorities in Palestine:

'The regime which was set up after publishing the emergency regulations in Palestine has no similar in any civilized country... even in Nazi Germany there were no such laws... I have only to add that this Zionist leader Yackob Shapiro is at present the Minister of Justice in Israel. But when these same laws, which he so strongly denounced, are being applied by him and his government against Arabs, then the matter is different.

The Communist Party of Israel is the only party in the country which has both Arabs and Jews in its ranks on equal terms. Our Party has always fought against the Zionist policy of racialism, oppression and discrimination of the Arab population.

Books exposing racism

WILLIAM POMEROY, *Apartheid Axis. The United States and South Africa*. New York, International Publishers, 1971. 96 pp.

William Pomeroy is well known for his exposes of U.S. colonial policy in the Philippines and Asia. This time the author turns to South Africa which, like Vietnam, he believes can become one of