

THE ARABS' UPRISING IN PALESTINE

What happened in Palestine again confirms what the Communist Manifesto says about the revolutionary role of the capitalist mode of production. In Palestine, too, a backward feudal production is being displaced by the capitalist one, and this is occurring in its present modern form, equipped with means of work and transport, with production methods and organization that meet the highest standards. All the more ruthless is the repression of the old, traditional methods and customs. Uprising and resistance of the population is the result.

Palestine, which belonged to the old Turkish Empire until the end of the World War, was then made a Mandate of England. From then on, the Jews began to settle in the country. Although there were already isolated Jewish settlements before that time, this only happened on a larger scale when the new English Mandate was able to ensure their safety. From this time on, the unrest and resistance of the Arabs against the advance of the Jewish settlements dates back to this time. The last great movement, which began with the general strike and boycott of the Jews and grew into an armed struggle, was only a new link in the chain of previous struggles, but it far exceeded the earlier struggles in terms of expansion and intensity. The struggle was directed not only against the Jews, but also against English rule; Palestine was a country in revolt, and this state of affairs lasted for months.

This insurrection, like all previous attempts at resistance, was suppressed by the armed power of England, and capitalist penetration of the country, whether or not with upheavals, will continue. All capitalist conquests in colonial or semi-colonial countries have so far shown this picture. What is special about the situation in Palestine is that the English government is not itself a capitalist conqueror, but appears as the protector of the two opposing interests, Jewish and Arab. This, of course, does not alter the fact that the capitalist conquest of the country continues to advance; indeed, it is precisely the task of the English government to ensure that it is carried out "in an orderly fashion". But it has an interest in ensuring that neither of the two opposing groups gains enough autonomy to escape English rule.

This feature also sheds light on the circumstances of the victims themselves. However backward production and social conditions may be among the Arabs, there is already a ruling class which, as in capitalist countries, has organized itself into parties and uses all modern means of propaganda and influencing public opinion to maintain its rule - as well as against the invading capitalist powers of the Jews. These Arabs have organized parties, published magazines and newspapers, not only in Palestine but also in other Arab countries and even in London.

This suggests that the old ruling class in this country, with feudal and backward production relations and the maintenance of its power, has already switched to capitalist methods. This is confirmed by the data on economic conditions in Arab production. Under the Turkish regime, large parts of the land inhabited by Fellahs and Bedouins (Arab peasants) were declared the property of the Effendis (big landowners) whether through deceit or violence. This is the beginning of the well-known so-called "original accumulation". This was continued with "orderly" and less disreputable means. The primitive working methods of the Fellah and the poor condition of the soil meant that the yield of the land was hardly sufficient to support the farmer and his family. One naturally stands in the closest

connection with the other. If nothing is left for sale to get back better tools - and what else is necessary for the improvement of tillage - then a greater yield can only be achieved by extensive tillage. In other words, the Fellah has to cultivate more land in order to survive. The Effendis have enough to lease, but they demand a third, often even more of the yield. The Fellah is thus encouraged to do more work, but it helps him little, because his working day also has a natural limit, and the Effendi takes it away as rent, which could help him out of his predicament. In this way he gets deeper and deeper into debt with the Effendi, and one of the frequent crop failures gives him the final push. His land passes into the ownership of the Effendi; he now works entirely as a tenant farmer and must give up his third or even more of his entire harvest.

As a result, there was a great concentration of land ownership, which is still prevalent today, and certainly not diminished by Jewish immigration. A few figures from the time just after the war show us how large the Effendis' property holdings already were. They were:

11	Large landowners with each more than	100,000 Dunam	(9000 ha)
9	Large landowners with each more than	30,000 Dunam	(2700 ha)
120	Large landowners with each more than	10,000 Dunam	(900 ha)

The Effendis owned about three million dunam (2700 square kilometers), that is, one seventh of the surface of Palestine or most of the cultivated area.

The power of the ruling class among the Arabs is based on this dependence and subjugation of the peasants; it will fight with all means against the liberation of the rural population from its condition. And for this reason they are turning against Jewish immigration, which creates opportunities by revolutionizing the old production methods. The Jewish writings on Palestine are full of this side of the colonization work there. Describing the primitive Fellah economy, they let us see the wretched state of the Fellah village and its inhabitants; they refer proudly to the Fellah villages in the neighborhood of the Jewish settlement where, with the help of the Jewish colonists, they have already worked their way up to a higher level of production and daily life. But this was only possible because the Fellahs were able to sell a part of their land to the Jewish colony and thus were able to work the remaining land more productively. The Jewish writers themselves have to admit that it is impossible for the vast majority of the Fellahs who are not in such favorable circumstances to improve their economy because they do not have the necessary funds. The Jewish writers tell nothing about those Fellahs who return again and again to their land, on which they have worked and lived for centuries, from which they have been expelled because the Jewish colony bought this land from the Effendis. But this does not change the fact that it happens, and that the Jewish colonists often get into difficulties, which they try to overcome by giving these Fellahs a compensation in money. The Communists now believe that these Fellahs have received their "right", but the Fellah has other legal concepts. His "right" had for centuries consisted in living and working on his plot of land, where even the transition to the possession of the Effendi had not changed much. And the Jewish colony only added to the expropriation the expulsion from the land. Here the question of "right" is raised in its simplest form: The people of an old mode of production are displaced by the representatives of a new one; here there are no "rights," but the stronger prevails.

The Jews invoke their historical "right" from ancient history, which says that Palestine was the "land of their fathers". But this "right" did not take on meaning until it became useful to the British government after the World War, who recognized it and promised to realize it. Only now could the Jewish writers answer the question of who owned the land in Palestine: "The land belongs to the Jewish people and the Arab inhabitants of the country". In daylight, both are a phrase. In reality, land belongs to the large Arab landowners, who control those who cultivate it, or to those Jews who have enough money to buy it from the Effendi.

The "Communist Manifesto" speaks of capitalism having achieved "things other than crusades and migrations"; this is confirmed by the events in Palestine and Jewish immigration. The migration of the Jews in Palestine has a similarity to both: it is a migration of peoples and a crusade. It is a migration of peoples caused by the pressure of modern capitalism. In Germany, the expulsion of the Jews was a political action, but in other capitalist countries, too, the pressure exerted on the Jews is ever sharper. The main reason for this is the position that the Jewish population has occupied and still occupies to a greater or lesser extent in the economic life of the countries. They were involved in trade, though hardly admitted to the bourgeois professions for a long time, and stood in every country in prominent positions in the socio-economic organisations. Nevertheless, the services they rendered were necessary, for commerce had the function of connecting the still more or less independent areas of social life. Today, however, when this independence of the branches of commerce is becoming dangerous for the continued existence of society, when they are welded together into the nation state, to form a firmly established whole, the mediating function of the Jewish section of the population loses its significance and becomes superfluous .

But the same fact now contributes to their ejection and are faced with the task of conquering their own homeland. Their migration of peoples is now becoming a kind of crusade, as they return as "Jews" to the country from which they were expelled twenty centuries ago.

Although the Jewish religion is the imaginary bond that enables Jewish emigration to Palestine; and once they have arrived there, they have to work as modern farmers and urban planners. They build a capitalist society in miniature there. They buy land, and because modern farming requires large areas of it, the previous concentration of land ownership in the hands of the Effendis is very convenient for them. Thus, 90% of today's Jewish land is bought from the Latifundia owners, only 10% comes from the Fellah. Nearly a quarter of the Jewish land, namely 280,000 dunam (25,200 ha) were bought by one family (Sursuck), another 150,000 dunam (13,500 ha) came from the property of 13 Effendis.

As a result of the land purchases made by Jews, the price of land has risen considerably. The Arab landowners are, of course, interested in this price increase, but only to the extent that they act as sellers, i.e. their land is usable for selling to immigrants. The Fellahs, on the other hand, in the vast majority of cases, get no advantage whatsoever from these price increases since their land is more or less pawned to the Effendis. On the contrary, now that the value of the land is measured according to capitalist criteria, the rent they have to pay increases, while they cannot apply better methods of exploiting their land due to lack of capital. This leads to a further concentration of land ownership in the hands of the Effendis. Statistical data from 1920 to 1927 confirm this. During these eight years, 750,000 dunam (67,500 ha) of land was sold by Arabs, 365,000 dunam (82,850 ha) of which went into Jewish hands,

while the rest, almost half of the total area, was bought by Arabs, that is, Effendis. Thus the capitalist expropriation of the feudal farmer far exceeded the limits of Jewish colonization.

The Jewish reporters cannot and do not want to disclose what is really going on. They point to the benefits that immigration brings to the Arab population. The increase in the value of the country is one of their arguments; but we have shown above that almost only the Effendis benefit from this. But then there is the possibility of selling agricultural products to the Jewish colonists, or the opportunity for Fellahs expelled from their land to find employment with Jewish colonies or in urban development as wage laborers. Reference is made to the improvement and new construction of roadways. In 1921, there were 460 kilometers of usable roads all year round and 1000 kilometers of summer roads. By 1929, the numbers had grown to 750 kilometers and 1500 kilometers respectively. In 1920 there were about 50 cars in the whole country, in 1925 there were 1700 and in 1933 there were 3000 cars.

These are all "advantages" that are undoubtedly the result of the development of capitalist productive forces. But, are these "advantages" also perceived as such by the Arab population? This is unlikely. For the introduction of capitalist relations of production always goes hand in hand with the expropriation of the immediate producers from their means of production. The latter then confront them as capital property, and in order to stay alive, they have to sell their labor power. As long as there is a demand for this labor power and it is sufficiently paid, the laborer profits from the "advantage" of capitalist "progress" and "civilization".

Whether this is the case, and to what extent, does not depend, however, on the good will of the colonized Jews, but is determined by the economic cycle of capitalism as a whole, which proceeds according to its own laws of movement. Not even the most enthusiastic "bringer of culture", can escape these laws. This is also brought to the attention of Jewish communists and socialists who want to build a world in Palestine according to their ideals. But trying to build communist communities on a small scale quickly shows that such experiments have as little viability as the production cooperatives in the countries of modern capitalism. Even these "communist communities" have no choice but to act exactly as the capitalist enterprise must. They must take ownership of the conditions of production, must buy the land and the means of production and produce for the market. In this way, land and means of production function as capital. The work done on them can only serve to make this capital fertile or profitable.

Neither the "communist communities" nor the indigenous farmers, the Fellahs, Bedouins, etc. can escape this law. Here the other side of the capitalist mode of production comes into view; for it is not only one which works by modern means, which multiplies the yields of the land and represents a gigantic advance over the backward methods of the natives, but it is also capital production. Only when it satisfies the needs and rights of capital is it able to function. In other words, it is no longer enough to produce and increase the yield of labor; it is necessary to sell the products at sufficiently high prices. It is the market where it is determined whether production meets capital needs.

Capitalist production is for the market and not for personal needs. Thus it is subject to all fluctuations of the market, all changes of supply and demand. If there is sufficient demand for a product, the producers of it are assured of the growth of their enterprises and all who participate in this branch enjoy advantages; the capitalists receive their interest, the

entrepreneurs their profits and the workers their wages. But at the moment when the demand for a product is reduced, the branch of the economy concerned with itself and its production receives a setback. Capital interest and entrepreneurial profits disappear, the hands of the wageworkers remain empty. The dark side of the capitalist mode of production is then revealed, the development of which shows the signs of decay.

The young capitalist society that sprang from the hands of Jewish immigration, like all others, could not escape these laws. And especially not because it was engaged in production for the world market from the very beginning . It therefore had no other choice, since the modern means of production, automobiles, tractors, machines, building materials, etc., which came from abroad, could only be paid for by the turnover of Palestinian products on the world market. Among these products, oranges and other tropical fruits occupy the most important place. The world economic crisis, which began around 1930, has caused a tremendous reduction in sales of these products, which must have had a very noticeable effect on the development of Palestine. As a result, the capitalist mode of production introduced by the Jews into the feudal, backward country, even before it was able to assert itself , brought its dark side, the capitalist crisis. The blows of this crisis have mainly hit the economically weak, especially the rural Arab population, who have either been deprived of their land as wage laborers or have adapted to some extent to capitalist production for the market. Now, after 15 years of Jewish colonization, they have been wrested from their former living conditions, with no return possible. The land they lost is in the hands of the Jewish colonies; those Fellahs who were able to convert to market production do not know what to do with the products of their labor. It is well known how the Arabs react to this hopeless situation; their desperation discharges in the form of anger against Jewish immigration which appears guilty of creating the present conditions. They do not see that it is only the capitalist mode of production that first lifted them up and then pushed them back into deeper misery than ever before.

For the Arabs driven from their land, the Jews who came into the country appear to be the cause of today's misery. Even if they had not had much of a life previously, they still worked on their own property and fought their way through life. Generation after generation had lived this way; for as far back as anyone could remember, it had gone as well and as badly. To this life their customs are bound, their general framework being the teachings of Islam. They were torn out of all these their traditions in a short time, which inevitably led to resistance and rebellion. The whole press has given a picture of the tenacity of the resistance that the Arab peasants and proletarians are developing. The only thing to be said here is that all actions are hopeless. Hopeless not only because a struggle against more powerful means and methods of production is always hopeless, but also because the Fellahs driven from their land have no goal *of their own*. Even today they are still subject to the old rulers and serve them merely as tools. The rulers need them in order to maintain supremacy over the invading Jewish capital powers. The Effendis, who lead the Arab dispute, have no intention to return their old property to the Fellahs, just as they cannot seriously strive to undo Jewish immigration. Their aim is to get their hands on the land and its capital, or at least to control it. For this they would need political power. Around this, the whole struggle revolves.

Here is the motif of the Arab struggle for independence, which is directed both against the Jewish capital and against England. The fact that the Third International, whose offshoot in Palestine is of little importance, also supports the "national slogans" of the Effendis, should

come as no surprise to anyone today, 19 years after the October Revolution. Obviously they are acting in the interests of the Russian state, which is fighting England in Asia.

The Jewish workers organization in Palestine (Histadrut) is in the same position as the Arab Fellahs. It is in favor of promoting Jewish capitalist colonization and is fighting in the wake of the Jewish capitalist forces to help them succeed in their quest for political power. Only when the Jewish worker, together with the Fellahs who have become proletarians, stands up to fight against Effendis and Jewish capitalists and victoriously smashes the present mode of production will there be room for both peoples, Jews and Arabs. Until then, the old production conditions and the population bound to them will be destroyed. These are not the Effendis, but Arab farm workers, Fellahs and Bedouins.

Sources

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Transcription: GIK, Internationale Rätekorrespondenz 1934-1937, Thomas Königshofen , Hans-Peter Jacobitz (Hrsg.), ISBN-13 : 979-8551636052

Also published in Dutch language: "De opstand van de Arabieren in Palestina", in Persdienst van Groepen van Internationale Communisten, 9e jg., no. 17, November 1936, no. 1.

Original: aaap.be <http://aaap.be/Pdf/Persdienst-GIC/PIC-09-1936-17.pdf>