

## Zionism's Enemies



**HATRED OF JEWISH NATIONALISM** is virulent and widespread on the left today. It goes hand-in-hand with an ingrained suspicion that Jews are in general overprivileged and unreliable. Consequently, they are not deserving of inclusion in the list of racial oppressions venerated by socialists worldwide. Jews, as such, are not oppressed, and it follows – as night follows day – that their nationalism can have no legitimate salience.

The wholesale destruction of the Yiddish-speaking world of Eastern Europe, and of European Jews in general during the 1940s, is insufficient to earn Jews a place in the lists of the oppressed. Indeed, reference to the Holocaust is often seen merely as a mendacious excuse for the crimes of Jewish nationalists. Amongst many socialists this goes together with a light-footed brushing aside of the refusal of equal rights to Jews throughout much of Europe's history.

This means that the struggle of Jews, from the late eighteenth century to the last decades of the nineteenth, for emancipation – equality with Christians in civil society – has a special role in left-wing thought. It is not talked about much, but when it is, it is used in arguments against nationalism. It is said that the Jews should not have embraced nationalism but should have simply continued their struggle for equality, despite the general movement throughout the nineteenth century amongst the Christian communities in which they lived, amongst Czechs, Poles, Ukrainians, and Lithuanians, towards national independence.

Instead, the Jews were required to opt for a self-denying ordinance in opposition to their national existence in favour of assimilation, and their eventual disappearance. This is the logic of Abram Leon in his book *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation*. It remains the argument of most of the left today. The Jews are “a non-historic people”, as Marx would have said, and should remain so.

This may have been because Jews were seen by many socialists as simply a religious community without any other ethnic value. Whatever the reason the left, particularly the Bolshevik left, were stalwart opponents of Jewish nationalism – Zionism was regarded as a thoroughly reactionary movement that should be opposed at every turn.

However, developments from the last decades of the nineteenth century up to the 1920s made it increasingly clear that murderous antisemitism rendered the old goal of emancipation obsolete. Only emigration to Britain and the United States, or Zionism, offered a plausible solution to the ‘Jewish Question’. Consequently, as the Hitler movement took hold Zionism became overwhelmingly popular amongst Jews.

This revealed something that the anti-Zionist left has never been able to confront honestly – their failure to defeat fascism during the twenties and thirties of the last century. Their opposition to Jewish nationalism

had always been couched in the language of class and class solidarity – this class struggle was supposed to defeat fascism. Consequently, Zionism was seen at best as a diversion, and at worst as a reactionary force; objectively in league with the nationalist right of European politics.

In the event, the left's class struggle rhetoric proved to be just that, rhetoric. As the rightist nationalists swept the board throughout Europe the socialist and communist movement was driven out of existence, and the Jews were left to their killers, or flight to Palestine, or anywhere else that would admit them. Zionism became the only plausible option for most of the survivors of pogroms and the tsunami of massacres, wave after wave, sweeping across Central and Eastern Europe during the 1940s.

Paradoxically, it was not the working-class movement or socialists that put a stop to the slaughter of Jews, but the Generals Eisenhower and Zhukhov, in command of heroic millions of men and women of all classes that defeated fascism and freed the surviving Jews from the camps and their partisan bands in the forests and marshes of Ukraine and Belorussia. Zionism – Jewish nationalism – not emancipation within civil society, had decisively won the argument against left-wing assimilationism. After the Holocaust the case for Israel was unanswerable.

Now it is clear that emigration to Palestine was, at least in every formal sense, a colonial or settler enterprise. This chimed in well with the *Volksgeist* – the national spirit – which Zionism has been promoting amongst Jews since its inception. Zionism was from the beginning a *Völkisch* enterprise. It was Leon Pinsker who set the ball rolling in 1882 with his pamphlet, *Selbstermanzipation* – auto-emancipation. Pinsker's views, like those of Theodore Herzl were, in common with all the national movements that surrounded them, at variance with the Enlightenment ideal of a common humanity that transcended ethnic, racial, and sexual divisions.

It remains true that Israel today – its very existence – is at variance, if not in outright opposition to the values of the Enlightenment. In giving privileged access of citizenship to Jews, and only to Jews, it violates the notion of universal rights that should apply to all regardless of race, religion, or ethnicity. It is true that indigenous Arab Israelis have citizenship, but for everyone else, it is only Jews who may be automatically accepted as citizens of Israel.

Now, today's ersatz left continues the leftist tradition of opposing Jewish nationalism, but it does so with a twist. That twist is that it gives fulsome support to Arab nationalists, and even to Islamists, neither of whom support Enlightenment values. Nationalist Palestinians do not support the freedom of Jews to equal citizenship, or to have self-government, while the Islamists may in some senses accept Jews in the Muslim lands, but only on payment of special or additional taxes and restricted rights.

Both nationalist and Islamist Palestinians are fighting for the destruction of the state of Israel, and most of the left seems to support them in this endeavour. The left throughout Europe and North America are the declared enemies of Israel because of Zionism's rejection of the Enlightenment and of universal values, and yet find themselves, unaccountably, in fulsome alliance with Arab nationalists and Islamists who are the enemies of everything that the left used to stand for: equal rights for all, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of sexual expression.

All this is side-lined in an orgy of leftist cynicism and sympathy for the civilian casualties in the war being waged by Hamas, the Palestinian Authority, Hezbollah, and the Houthis, against the existence of Israel. The left supposedly argues for universal rights and yet finds itself perpetually in league with movements and dictatorships which refuse equality to all. Left-wing politicians and

campaigners often insist that they favour a single state in Palestine in which Jews and Arabs would live in harmony, side-by-side, yet they know that this is a pipe-dream, or more truthfully, simply a fig-leaf to cover their own treachery – their collaboration with nationalists and Islamists in the struggle to destroy the Jewish state.

We have to ask ourselves two questions, why did the state of Israel come into existence, and what would be the consequence of its destruction?

The answer to the first question is that Zionism arose as a direct response to the metamorphosis of historic Jew hatred towards the explicit genocidal intent eventually popularised by the Nazis. The answer to the second question, is the completion of the last century's wholesale removal of Jews from Iraq, Syria, and North Africa, with their final removal from Palestine, between the River and the Sea, which are said by all Palestinian political entities to be intrinsically Muslim lands.

This is what the leftist enemies of Zionism seek: the destruction of Hebrew-speaking Jewish life in the only state that the Jews have. By offering “unconditional support” to Hamas and Hezbollah, socialists are, under cover of slogans against imperialism and apartheid (and a duplicitous support for universal rights), waging an age-old battle against the Jews, and their inclusion in the list of nation states.

The smashing of Israel would not result in the victory of Enlightenment values, but in their destruction. The demolition of Israel would be a victory for Islamist dictatorship, terror, and religious obscurantism. This is why Israel must survive and be defended until the realisation of equality for all becomes possible throughout the Middle East.