

THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD

The 'Great' Powers

No 2 - The British Labour Party ... in it's own words

"so far as the underlying spirit of Imperialism is a frank acceptance of national duty exercised beyond the nation's frontier ... it cannot be condemned ... the compulsion to expand and to assume world responsibility is worthy at its origin."

James Ramsay MacDonald, Leader, Independent Labour Party, 1901

"what is the use of an Empire if it does not breed and maintain in the truest and fullest sense of the word an Imperial race?"

Sidney Webb, Founder, New Statesman Magazine, Fabian Society, 1901

"With the boom of enemy guns within earshot, the lads who have gone forth to fight their country's battles must not be disheartened by any discordant notes at home."

James Keir Hardie, First Chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party, 1914

"We do not approve armed rebellion at all ... Nor do we complain against the Government for having opposed and suppressed armed rebellion by armed force."

Socialist Review, Labour Party magazine, editorial on the Easter Rising, 1916

"it is impracticable to leave ... non adult races ... to settle their own destinies."

Labour 'Memorandum on War Aims', 1917

"Nobody contends that the black races can govern themselves. They can only make it known that the particular government under which they have been living is bad in some or all respects, and indicate the specific evils from which they desire liberation."

Sidney Webb, 1918

"By no moral right may the ownership and control of the natural and material resources of a territory be regarded as the absolute monopoly of the people who happen to be settled there."

Philip Snowden, later Labour Chancellor, 1921

"Every far sighted view of our imperial interests, and of the hope of removing them altogether from party controversy, goes to show how important it is that a Labour Government, and no other, should have the handling of the great external problems which are crowding upon us."

Leader, The Times, 1930

"Let the Arabs be encouraged to move out as the Jews move in. Let them be compensated handsomely for their land and let their settlement elsewhere be carefully organised and generously financed ..."

Labour Party conference resolution, 1944

"British socialists are not so concerned with ideals like independence and self government, but with the idea of social justice. When British socialists look at the eastern Europe of today they ask themselves whether independence is itself a worthwhile aim."

Rita Hinden, Secretary, Fabian Colonial Bureau, 1946

"By hook or by crook the development of primary production of all sorts in the colonial territories and dependent areas in the Commonwealth and throughout the world is a life and death matter for the economy of this country."

John Strachey, Labour Minister for Food, 1947

"No doubt we could have held India for two or three years longer. But we could have done so only at the cost of a great expenditure of men and money."

Clement Attlee, Labour Prime Minister, 1947

"Tribal, dynastic and religious antagonisms take more fanatical forms in the Oriental than in the Western world ... the liberal era has never dawned on these countries."

Michael Foot, on the Arabs, 1947

"For years you have been in debt to us, and you have paid up: our political control of you ensured that. Now the wheel of fortune has turned full circle: we are indebted to you. It is true that you are poor and we are rich, and that you need our funds for your economic development. But I am afraid we are not going to pay up."

Hugh Dalton, Labour Chancellor, on the post war relationship with India, 1948

"I had a horrid vision of pullulating, poverty-stricken, diseased nigger communities, for whom one can do nothing in the short run, and who the more one tries to help them, are querulous and ungrateful."

Hugh Dalton, after turning down the job of Colonial Secretary, 1950

"The government claims that the dependent territories were exploited in the past but are not being exploited now ... in fact, the Socialist Government seems to be the first government which has discovered how to exploit the colonies."

Oliver Lyttleton, just before becoming Conservative Colonial Secretary, 1951

"from the beginning we have given the Government our fullest support in any steps that are required to suppress Mau Mau."

James Griffiths, former Labour Colonial Secretary, 1953

"our policy ... operated with considerable success, having provided information leading to the discovery of numerous arms caches and to the arrest of a large number of terrorists."

George Brown, Labour Foreign Secretary, on allegations of torture by Britain, North Yemen, 1964

"I wholly understand the deep concern you must feel at the need to do anything

possible to reduce the losses of young Americans in and over Viet Nam ... our reservations about this operation will not affect our continuing support for your policy over Viet Nam."

Harold Wilson, Labour Prime Minister, 1965

"When I compare the horrors of the Viet Nam war with the election manifesto of the Labour Government, I find myself confronted with the most shameful betrayal ... Hitler, at least, seldom professed humanity, but these men who now pollute the chairs of office professed, before election the most noble and lofty ideals of human brotherhood ... I can no longer remain a member of this so called 'Labour' Party, and I am resigning after 51 years."

Bertrand Russell, Philosopher, 1965

"The British Government has repeatedly said that majority rule could not come about immediately but should be reached through merit and achievement."

Wilson, reassuring Ian Smith that white Rhodesian 'settlers' would not be suppressed like the natives, 1966

"In particular, I must remind you that the only four occasions on which my Government ... has exercised its veto in the Security Council ... has been in favour of South Africa."

British Ambassador, 1977

"It would not have been possible for a political party to be more committed to a national home for the Jews in Palestine than was Labour."

Harold Wilson, 1981

"our first concern in the Labour Party as in the country as a whole must be for their safety and success."

Michael Foot, Labour Leader, on the Falklands 'Task Force', 1982

"There is unanimity in this House on the question of opposing the aggression of the Junta. There is also unanimity on the right of self-defence against aggression."

Tony Benn, 1982

"Ordinary decent coppers using ordinary decent police methods apprehended those responsible for the Birmingham outrage."

Kevin McNamara, Labour Spokesman on Northern Ireland, 1983

"Our forces are engaged in pursuing legitimate objectives and should enjoy full support across the political spectrum."

Neil Kinnock, Labour Leader, on the massacre called 'Desert Storm', 1991

"Britain has been a major force in world affairs for several centuries ... no British patriot should be willing to give up that status."

Tony Blair, Labour Leader, 1997

"I have no doubt at all that we will win ... This is a battle over the values of Civilisation."

Tony Blair, Labour Prime Minister, while bombing Yugoslavia and Iraq, 1999

UNFAIR?? SELECTIVE??

Since 1945, Britain has engaged in military aggression against poorer countries no fewer than NINETY SIX times. Where it has not been the perpetrator, the Labour Party has supported all but one of them. The exception was Suez, 1956, when it supported imperialist America instead. There is no grass roots movement, struggle or protest, whether abroad or at home, against any imperialist war, atrocity or policy, which has been supported by the leadership of the Labour Party. As they regard the poor and the inferior elsewhere, so is their record here.

Special acknowledgement: Clough, Robert, *Labour: A Party Fit for Imperialism*, Larkin, London, 1992, ISBN 0 905400151

"utter boorish self-centred indifference to every living human struggle ... is the heart and soul of the imperialist psychology in the labour aristocracy ... looking on with contemptuous indifference to the curious incomprehensible inferior races."

R Palme Dutt, Labour Monthly, March 1927

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<https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/en/archive/20081007230011/http://pagi.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/pagi8.htm>

'History of the World' was a series of campaign leaflets issued between 1999 and 2001 by 'People Against Global Imperialism', a Merseyside group set up to counter the western war on Iraq. The group's website is archived by the British Library.

<https://nationalbolshevismcom.files.wordpress.com/2020/06/bryan-history-pagi-.pdf>

