



FÉDÉRATION NATIONALE DE LA LIBRE PENSÉE

Member of

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Declaration of the Libre Pensée On the occasion of the International Day of Freethought 20 September 2024

Friends, Citizens, Companions, Comrades

First of all, an essential reminder

It was at the IInd Congress of the International Association of Freethought (IAFT) in Mar-del-Plata in Argentina that it was decided to make September 20th the **International Day of the Freethought** on all continents. This date of 20 September is dear to the hearts of our **Latin American Freethinker** comrades. There is a large number of 20 September Associations in the countries of the southern cone of America.

Every 20 September is an opportunity for **Freethinkers around the world** to meet and develop activities ranging from academic and cultural activities to simple floral offerings. And they do so fraternally united in homage to a universal figure in history: **Giuseppe Garibaldi**.

Today, in dozens of towns in dozens of countries, at the foot of allusive monuments or simply in squares and public places, free men and women are remembering the *Hero of Two Worlds*, 140 years after he became immortal, highlighting what **Garibaldi** represented in the history of the freedom of peoples and citizens, but also underlining his striking relevance today.

This year marks the 217th anniversary of the birth and the 142nd anniversary of the death of **Giuseppe Garibaldi**. But we **Freethinkers** also celebrate **20 September** as one of the most emblematic dates linked to the ideals of freedom that **Garibaldi** always defended throughout his life and in all circumstances.

This is an important historical fact: on that day in 1870, in the episode of war known as the '*Porta Pia Gap*', Italian patriotic forces took **Rome**, taking a fundamental step towards Italian unification. **Garibaldi** was not personally present, but his ideals led these struggles and it was fighters inspired by these ideals who accomplished this feat.

But this episode in the war did much more than make the unity of the Italian peninsula possible. History records that it also put an end to the last bastion in the West of what were known as '*States of divine right*', i.e. political regimes based on the rule of religion, in particular **Catholicism**.

Against war and for immediate peace!
For the right of peoples to self-determination!
Against imperialism's right to control peoples!

War is everywhere, on every continent, and when it isn't, reactionary forces are preparing it in secret. **Capitalism** is in such deep crisis that the only way to continue the unbridled pursuit of **juicy capitalist profits**, leading to massive destruction of the **achievements of civilisations**, is to go to war.

Under pressure from the **United States** and its armed wing, **NATO**, military arms budgets are literally exploding in every country. In France, the recent *Military Programming Law* puts the budget for preparing for war at 414 billions euros, while public services vital to the needs of the population are being cut by the hundreds. More and more military manoeuvres are being carried out with one objective in mind: to *fight the enemy inside as well as the enemy outside*.

We are living through a period similar to that of the 1930s, which historians have called '*The Rise of Peril*'. There is a steady stream of provocations in **Ukraine, Russia, Palestine, Middle East, Latin America, Africa** and **Asia**. No continent has been spared the madness of war. People are oppressed, repressed and sometimes genocided for economic, political and military interests.

This restless world smells of gunpowder

The **Right of peoples to self-determination** is trampled underfoot and scorned. Peoples become adjustment variables for capitalist and imperialist needs of all kinds. The right of **the strongest**, imposed by bombs, guns, blood, misery and exploitation, is the right of **Imperialism**, of all **Imperialisms**, to dispose as it sees fit of peoples and their destinies, from **Ukraine to Palestine**, including **Venezuela** and **sub-Saharan Africa**.

Marguerite Yourcenar wrote: '*Every state founded on the will to power contains a dark corner where the tortured groan*'. The great German poet **Friedrich Hölderlin** proclaimed that '*Where danger believes, that which saves also believes*'. This is the basis of our determination and our optimism to prevent the inevitable barbarism to which this **Old World** in perdition is leading us, as it continues to agonise in increasingly bloody and murderous spasms.

Field Marshal Moltke (1800-1891, the uncle of Butcher **Helmuth Johann Ludwig, Count von Moltke**, barbarian-in-chief in the **First World War** of 1914), an expert on the subject, professed: '*As long as nations live apart, there will be disputes that can only be settled by arms. But, in the interests of Humanity, it is to be hoped that wars will become rarer as they become more terrible*'.

It has to be said that he was sadly mistaken: although wars are becoming increasingly terrible, they have not become rare, quite the contrary. It would seem that, in the words of **Clemenceau**, war is a too serious matter to be left to the military.

But everywhere in the world there is a desire to put an end to permanent war. In her preface to *Le Compagnon du Tour de France*, **George Sand** wrote: '*It can be said that not a single injustice, not a single violation of the principle of Equality, is committed in human society unless at that very moment the seeds of a secret society are planted in the world to repair this violation of Equality*'.

Everywhere the revolt rumbles to refuse the unacceptable. On every continent, indignation is

arousing entire peoples against the genocide of the **Palestinian people** in **Gaza**, which is now spreading to the **West Bank** in the territories occupied by Zionist settlers.

In Palestine, Humanity is being murdered

It is clear that **Zionism** is a post-dated nationalism under Germanic influence. As we used to say of **Austria**: *'Always a century late, an army late, an idea late'*. Influenced by **Pangermanism**, **Zionism** can only be racist; it is the mythology of a *'race'* that never existed. It endangers all the world's **Jews** through its criminal policies. There is also **Ashkenazi anti-Sephardic** Zionist racism.

The **Mizrahim** were considered to be *'bicots'*, their fault being that they had lived relatively well in harmony and had developed a common culture with the **Arabs**. **Zionism** crushed all local particularities and languages such as **Yiddish** and **Judeo-Arabic dialects**. The **Zionist** *'new Jew'* is nothing like the **Nazi** *'new man'*. It is a pure creation *ex nihilo* that has nothing to do with traditional Jewish culture, even in its religious aspects.

It is clear that by demanding a pseudo-country (**the State of Israel**) for Jews from all over the world and the *'right to return'* to a country to which they and their forebears have never been, **Zionists** are turning **Jews** into pariahs and foreigners in the countries where they have lived for ages, turning them into a **Fifth Column**, which justifies all discrimination and persecution, feeding the reactionary and racist formula: *'They don't belong here'*. **Zionism is anti-Semitism** by nature and by function.

Moshe Menuhin, **Yehudi's** father, was already denouncing the Zionist *'Lebensraum'* in his day; the State of Israel carries war with it like the cloud carries the storm (dixit **Jean Jaurès**). As **Henryk Erlich**, leader of the **Bund** persecuted by **Stalin**, said: *'The worse things are for the Jews, the better they are for Zionism'*. **The State of Israel** is the largest ghetto in the world, which justifies the reactionary legend of the *'wandering Jew'*.

Who owns the land of **Palestine**? To those who lived and worked there before the **Balfour Declaration (1917)**, whether **Muslims, Jews, Christians, people of other faiths or secularists**. All those who came to colonise and steal land that did not belong to them after **1917** have no right to that land. The Zionist settlers and the European and American Jews who support them *'Uber alles'* have no right to the land of **Palestine**. The fait accompli of 1917 and 1947 must be abrogated; it has no legitimacy.

The European, American and Asian imperialist powers have made **Palestine** the dustbin of their crimes and their complicity. The **Palestinian people** should not have to pay for a crime committed by some with the complicity of others. The Nazi crime gives no legitimacy to the theft of land, the extermination of **Palestinians** and the eradication of **Palestinians** on their own land. The 6 millions Jews murdered by Nazi barbarism would be appalled if the same horror were carried out - in their name - against the **Palestinians**.

If we demand - and rightly so - the **Right of return of Palestinians** to their land after the **Nakba**, should we not also question the demand for the **Duty** of those who have stolen the land since **Balfour to leave**? Yet one (**the Right**) cannot be achieved without the other (**the Duty**).

How can we not share the analysis of **Abraham Léon**, a revolutionary militant who died in **Auschwitz** in 1944: *'Far from being a product of the development of the productive forces, Zionism is precisely the consequence of the total halt in this development, the result of the petrification of capitalism. While the National Movement is the product of the ascendant period of capitalism, Zionism is the*

product of the imperialist era. The Jewish tragedy of the 20th century is a direct consequence of the decadence of capitalism'.

For a **Freethinker** and a **Secularist**, it is appropriate to ask questions about the purely religious aspect which justifies what is happening there. For example, the type of colonialism practised by **Zionism** is not '*classic*' (which in no way excuses it) and is similar to the Anglo-Saxon colonialism practised in **North America** with the massacre of **Amerindians**.

Since 7 October 2023, a real genocide of the **Palestinian people** has been under way, with tens of thousands of women, children (there is talk of almost 20,000 children and 2,100 babies), old people and men being exterminated by Zionist madness. What makes **Zionist colonial imperialism** different from other forms of colonialism is that its aim is not just to colonise, steal land, exploit the wealth stolen from the rightful inhabitants and make the colonised sweat, but to exterminate them, pure and simple.

It is the reinvented model of the '*conquest*' of the **Hebrews** of **Canaan** with its procession of murders, barbarism and extermination of the populations, recounted in the *Hebrew Bible*. The **Libre Pensée's** book '*Judéïcité, Laïcité et Libre Pensée*' (Judeïcicity, Secularism and Freethought) will provide useful information on this aspect and we strongly recommend that you buy it and, above all, read it.

You will discover the analysis of the *Balfour Declaration*, where it is rightly noted that the aim was to divert the struggle of the **Arabs** against colonialism in order to make the Jewish masses their enemy, and thus to protect British imperialism. **Zionism** cannot survive without the help of the most powerful **Imperialism**; it is one of its components and a paid agent.

Joe Biden said it clearly in 1986 in front of the **US Senate**: '*Aid to the Israeli government is an investment. If Israel did not exist, we would have to invent it to protect our interests in the region*'. The **United States** gives 3.8 billions dollars in annual military aid to the **Israeli state** to buy American weapons.' (Source: *Middle east eye*).

Our path against barbarism is clear

'There will be blood' where the pipelines, oil wells and gas fields are, as a 2007 film describes the greed of imperialist predators. Putting an end to this ambient chaos is the challenge facing Humanity, and the *Freethinkers* who are part of that Humanity.

Analysing these conflicts and determining who is responsible for them is a task that we all have to undertake if we want to help humanity get over the hump of the barbarism that surrounds us. While the solution cannot come from **Freethinkers** alone, they can play the historic role they have always played: promoting secularism, equal rights, fraternity and freedom, all of which are factors in unity and peace between peoples.

Through this **International Day on 20 September**, the **Libre Pensée** intends to celebrate all this in its struggle for the **complete Emancipation of Humanity**.

***No god, no master!
A bas la calotte et vive la Sociale!***

Thank you

(Speech prepared by Christian Eyschen with the help of José Arias)