

# Taiwan, the “Axis of Genocide” and Holocaust amnesia

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President of the Republic of China (hereafter Taiwan) Tsai Ing-wen delivered a speech at an International Holocaust Remembrance Day event held in Taipei on 17 April 2024.

Tsai Ing-wen, who stepped down on May 20, claimed, “Every year, we come here together to remember those who perished in the Holocaust, as well as those who endured unimaginable suffering because of this tragedy.”

Vowing to “fight against discrimination and bigotry,” she went on to stress: “In the pursuit of justice and truth, we can learn from Israel and Germany: Israel in its efforts to preserve the historical accounts of the Holocaust, especially its victims, and Germany in its courage to face the past.

“The world must continue to confront anti-Semitism and authoritarian aggression. We are also seeing the horrifying effects of such aggression in Ukraine and in Hamas’ terrorist attack on Israel. This is why we stress the importance of working alongside the international community to safeguard what we fought so hard to achieve, namely, democracy, freedom, equality, and peace.”

Displaying contempt for Palestinian deaths and suffering, Tsai’s remarks were a whitewash of today’s German establishment and of the complicity of Zionist organizations along with “democratic” imperialist powers, especially the United States and Britain, in the Holocaust.

To see why Tsai’s statement had nothing to do with remembering the lesson of the Holocaust when understood as “Never again for anyone” or warning against ongoing genocides, we must examine Zionist collaboration with the Nazis and expose Germany’s supposed “coming to terms with history”, which is really all about suppressing the truth of its Nazi past and its imperialist present.

## Zionism and Anti-Semitism

As a historical and social phenomenon, the Holocaust emerged out of the imperialist powers’ reaction against the 1917 October Revolution, inter-imperialist rivalry and revolutionary uprisings across Europe. Germany became one of the imperialist states expanding its global influence and emerging as a rival to British hegemony by the turn of the twentieth century. It is Germany that committed the first genocide of the last century, the Herero and Namaqua genocide between 1904 and 1908.

For the German ruling establishment, its visceral hatred of and aversion to Jews had everything to do with socialist thoughts and movements pioneered by Karl Marx, the October Revolution advanced by Vladimir Lenin and Leon Trotsky, and the communist movements led by Rosa Luxemburg in Poland and Germany. To forestall a socialist revolution in

Germany, then Defense Minister of the Weimar Republic Gustav Noske instructed Waldemar Pabst, a far-right officer of Free Corps, to murder KPD leaders Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht.

The anti-Semitism displayed by the German bourgeoisie was inextricably linked with the existential threat to Germany posed by Marxism, Bolshevism, and communism, or what Adolf Hitler referred to as “the Jewish Bolshevization of the world” in *Mein Kampf*. He wrote that it required the NSDAP to “declare [its] position towards Soviet Russia” and to thwart the development of “dual perils of Marxism and Judaism”.

With social tensions heightening, the German ruling elite turned against its Jewish nationals. Prior to the Holocaust, the Zionist Federation of Germany, the largest Zionist organization in the country, deliberately promoted Nazi propaganda that falsely claimed that European Jews were racially distinct from and inferior to the Aryans. Zionist leaders pronounced that Jews should have emigrated from Europe to British Mandatory Palestine to find sanctuary and equality.

Nazism’s political antisemitism differed from medieval religious persecution of Jews such as the Inquisition in that, in being depicted as a race, Jews could not escape persecution by simply converting to Christianity. Large sections of the Zionist movement embraced this lie for their own purposes, with tragic consequences, and this became the basis for collaboration between Zionism and Nazism.

As envisioned by Theodor Herzl, the father of modern political Zionism, “The anti-Semites will become our most dependable friends, the anti-Semitic countries our allies.” The Zionist Federation of Germany and the Zionist-run Anglo-Palestine bank, actively brought about the 1933 Ha’avara Agreement with the Nazi Party (NSDAP). Under this arrangement, 60,000 German Jews emigrated to Palestine between 1933 and 1939.

Zionist leaders saw this pact as a means for the social construction of the Jewish people as a race in Palestine. David Ben-Gurion, later the first Prime Minister of Israel (1955–1963) proclaimed in 1933 that Zionism was “not primarily engaged in saving individuals”. He added that in case of “a conflict of interest between saving individual Jews and the good of the Zionist enterprise, we shall say the enterprise comes first.” This explained why Zionist leaders thwarted numerous refugee rescue operations while simultaneously granting certificates to 25,000 Jews whose lives were under no threat, including those in the US and other parts of the world, to live in Palestine between 1933 and 1939.

In 1935, the Zionist Federation of Germany became the sole Jewish group that supported the Nazi regime’s racist Nuremberg Race Laws, which stipulated that only those with “German or kindred blood” had the legal entitlement to German citizenship and outlawed sexual relations and marriage between Jewish and non-Jewish Germans. What the Zionist leadership had in common with anti-Semitic bourgeois gentiles such as British and Nazi ruling elites was their emphasis on racial purity. That was why German Zionist leaders embraced the Nuremberg laws.

Being complicit in the persecution of European Jews, Zionist

organizations, as early as September 1942, started to plan out the construction of Yad Vashem, later to become Israel's official memorial to the victims of the Holocaust, in an attempt to co-opt and weaponize the memory of Jewish suffering.

### **Anti-Semitic countries as allies of Zionism**

Similar to those Zionist leaders who were loath to save Jews fleeing for their lives, the British political establishment couldn't care less. Confidential internal memoranda indicated that the British government had deliberately suppressed news coverage of the Nazi regime's plan for the extermination of European Jews since 1943. Controller of the Home Service Sir Richard Maconachie later justified the complicity of the British state on the ground that "Any direct action to counter anti-Semitism would do more harm than good".

As Bernard Wasserstein documented in Britain and the Jews of Europe, 1939–1945, despite the fact that the Third Reich was bent on exterminating Jews, British officials insisted:

The not inconsiderable expanse of the British Empire was found... to have an "absorptive capacity of nil" when it came to the admission of Jewish refugees. The Labour Party Home Secretary in the wartime national coalition government [Herbert Morrison (1940–1945)] considered the danger of anti-Semitism in Britain during the war so menacing as to preclude the admission of any significant numbers of Jewish refugees to the United Kingdom. At the end of the war he urged their return to Germany on the basis that "anti-Semitism was a lesser threat there than in Britain."

The US ruling elite's indifference to the mass extermination of European Jews was on a par with that of its British counterpart. The Roosevelt administration (1933–1945), whose presidential term coincided with the rise and downfall of the German Reich, deliberately set a ceiling on refugee intake and subsequently turned away Jewish refugees due to fears for Nazi infiltration. The family of Anne Frank, author of *The Diary of Anne Frank*, first applied for US visas in 1938. The US had their application turned down. Moreover, the United States and Britain could not be bothered to bomb any railway tracks leading to Nazi concentration and extermination camps. It was Britain's and the United States' refusal to provide a sanctuary for Jews fleeing anti-Semitism and Nazism that left them with no place to go but Palestine.

The plight of Jewish refugees in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s continues to resonate in the world that migrants and refugees fleeing war, persecution, and climate catastrophe confront. The rights to seek asylum in other countries are under attack by both supposedly left "liberal democratic" governments and far-right forces. They have every interest in sowing divisions among working people of different countries and drumming up national chauvinism while directing rapidly rising social, political, and economic tensions outward.

### **The myth of "denazification"**

West Germany differed very little from the US and the UK in terms of the class nature of the state and bourgeois rule. With the onset of the Cold War and the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) in May 1949, the German ruling elite found the postwar collaboration between the Allies of World War II and German imperialism under the guise of "denazification" to be mutually beneficial.

One question immediately arises. Did "denazification" at the time constitute a "rupture" between the Nazi past and the postwar present? The answer is a definite no. In 1949, West Germany under Chancellor Konrad Adenauer (1949–1963) "ended all investigations of the past behaviour of civil servants and army officers. In Bavaria in 1951, 94 percent of judges and prosecutors, 77 percent of finance ministry employees, and 60 percent of civil servants in the regional Agriculture Ministry were ex-Nazis. By 1952, one in three Foreign Ministry officials in Bonn [the capital of the FRG] was a former member of the Nazi Party", according to Tony Judt's highly acclaimed book *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945*.

It came as little surprise that Adenauer recruited Hermann Josef Abs, a member of the board of directors of Deutsche Bank and of IG Farben during the Holocaust, as his top economic advisor. The German finance giant gained notoriety for trading tons of gold taken from Jews who were dispossessed and subsequently subjected to industrial-scale violence at ghettos and/or concentration camps, including those gold bars made from gold teeth extracted from corpses. This bank also granted loans to finance the construction of Waffen-SS sites and an IG Farben Buna-N plant, which were parts of the Auschwitz concentration and death camps, despite the full knowledge that IG Farben had been a leading manufacturer of Cyclone B, a cyanide-based pesticide used in gas chamber mass execution.

The elevation of Nazi collaborators and leaders as top-ranking officials by successive West German governments was no aberration. Postwar German governments were and are concerned with one thing only: preserving the wealth and power of the German ruling elite and extending the reach of German capitalism. Adenauer had no qualms whatsoever about appointing Hans Globke, Hitler's former henchman, as Chief of Staff of the German Chancellery (1953–1963) and Reinhard Gehlen, former Head of the Nazi military intelligence unit on the eastern front, as the founding president of the CIA- and NATO-affiliated Federal Intelligence Service of West Germany (1956–1968). This imperialist and anti-communist spy organ worked under the direct command of the Chancellor's Office.

While it was true that the federal government of Germany carried out the Frankfurt Auschwitz trials between December 1963 and August 1965, only 22 mid- or low-ranking Nazi officials were brought before the court for their roles in the Auschwitz-Birkenau death and concentration camps. Phrased differently, the court deliberately let over 6,000 camp officials off scot-free.

Playing a key role in arming the genocidal Zionist regime, Olaf Scholz' government has cracked down on working-class protests in defense of the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank and turned the so-called "security of Israel" into Germany's *raison d'Etat*. Up to this date, the stance taken by successive German governments is a continuation of a century-long collusion between German imperialism and Zionism.

### **Taiwan sides with the génocidaires**

Taiwan is no better than its western counterparts. Among the attendees at the aforementioned Taipei-held Holocaust remembrance event were Chair of the Taiwan-Israel Friendship Group in Knesset Boaz Toporovsky, Israel's top representative to Taiwan Maya Yaron, Germany's top representative to Taiwan Jörg Polster, and the sitting president of the Legislative Yuan of Taiwan Han Kuo-yu. Intending to serve as a cover for imperialist crimes and national oppression, Yaron's remembrance speech likened Hamas to the NSDAP and the anti-colonial Operation Al-Aqsa Flood to the Holocaust. This so-called Holocaust memory was instead Holocaust amnesia.

Israel, the attack dog of the United States, is a source of inspiration for the Taiwanese ruling establishment. After the Republic of China was booted out of the United Nations in 1971, the Kuomintang regime started to cozy up to Israel and then acquired the surface-to-surface Gabriel missiles from the Zionist state. The Gabriel was “equivalent to the Soviet and Chinese-made Styx, one of which sank an Israeli destroyer” in 1967. With the technical assistance of Tel Aviv, Taiwan subsequently modeled Hsiung Feng I, the island country’s subsonic antiship missiles, on the Gabriel in the late 1970s.

It is worth recalling that during the Cold War and afterward, both Taiwan and Israel insisted that the US- and UK-backed apartheid regime of South Africa had a right to exist and to oppress black people. Moreover, these three Cold War warriors had backed every war, aggression, and coup sanctioned by the United States. Taiwanese President Chiang Ching-kuo even awarded the Order of Propitious Clouds to Prime Minister of South Africa P. W. Botha in 1980 after the Soweto uprising.

The stance taken by Taiwan to boost its “international standing” has continued to this day with bipartisan support. The Taiwanese ruling elite rolls out the red carpet for US war criminals. Former US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and former US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo were respectively granted the Order of Brilliant Star with Grand Cordon in 2011 and 2022.

The Taiwanese ruling class, in the long tradition of being a frontline state and client of the US, wants the island to play a greater part on the world stage, similar to Israel. That was why Israel’s former top representative to Taiwan Omer Caspi had an affinity for the Taiwanese political establishment and likened the island of imperialist flag-waving to a “home away from home” in July 2023. This also explains why Toporovsky praised Taiwan for being “a beacon of democratic and liberal values” and saw the similarity between Israel and Taiwan as “small but strong democracies in a harsh environment”. The actual similarity between them was and is that these ruling classes are not at peace unless they are at war.

It is little wonder that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Taiwan has just donated half a million US dollars to Tel Aviv in March 2024 to back Israel’s ongoing genocide in Gaza and its annexation of the West Bank. Furthermore, the Ministry refused to suspend Taiwan’s exports of technologies with military applications to Israel. Indeed, the government stressed that such measures would have been taken only if they had been handed down by the United Nations Security Council, which, in the eyes of the international working class, is an instrument of imperialist domination. By proactively aligning its “democratic and liberal values” with the US-led Axis of Genocide, the ruling class of Taiwan will rid itself of the role of a spectator and then turn into an executioner.

## Learning the lessons of the Holocaust

Backing imperialist domination and bourgeois political reaction, the ruling circles of Taiwan had the audacity to pontificate about “democracy, freedom, equality, and peace”, namely, a euphemism for the capitalist world order that the bourgeois sections of “the international community” sought to safeguard.

Lenin reminded us of the class nature of the bourgeois conception of “equality” in a short piece, “Draft Theses on National and Colonial Questions”. Capital aspires to transcend national boundaries. As capital expands on a global scale, national inequality emerges from capitalist social relations of production. Lenin explained:

Under the guise of the equality of the individual in general, bourgeois democracy proclaims the formal or legal equality of the property-owner and the proletarian, the exploiter and the exploited, thereby grossly deceiving the oppressed classes. On the plea that all men are absolutely equal, the bourgeoisie is transforming the idea of equality, which is itself a reflection of relations in commodity production, into a weapon in its struggle against the abolition of classes. The real meaning of the demand for equality consists in its being a demand for the abolition of classes.

Lenin’s insight into inequality within nations and among nations enforced by the bourgeois sections of the world and into ever sharpening class antagonism at home and abroad is true today, more than ever. To confront imperialist savagery and class exploitation, the working masses must unite for a joint revolutionary struggle that combines the liberation of Palestine with the overthrow of capitalism. Without the unity of the international working class, it is impossible to end inequality between the exploiter and the exploited and between the oppressors and the oppressed.

Bourgeois states around the world have been rotting alive. Those “liberal democracies” that refused to lift a finger to save Jews during World War II are the exact same imperialist powers that have armed, bankrolled, and backed the Gaza Genocide. Those who wish to appeal to the ruling circles to save the Palestinians must bear in mind that it is imperialist powers that had previously engineered the “restoration” of European Jews as a “race” to Palestine, enabled the Final Solution to the Jewish Question, and then carved up historic Palestine.

They have subsequently worked in cahoots with Arab despotic regimes to prop up the apartheid state of Israel. They have now both vied with the BRIC countries to win Israel over and inflicted the final solution to the question of Palestine.

Without situating the Holocaust in the context of social uprisings across Europe and counterrevolutionary assaults on the October Revolution, the lessons of history can never be understood. Being the revolutionary class of society, we must commemorate and reclaim Holocaust Remembrance Day instead of letting imperialists, fascists, and Zionists manipulate this event in our name.

If we are to fight for a world in which “never again” means “never again for anyone” including Jews, our Palestinian and Yemeni sisters and brothers, and all oppressed nations, we must shatter what Lenin referred to as the “petty-bourgeois illusions” that “nations can live together in peace and equality under capitalism” and fight for the overthrow of capitalism.

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