How PALESTINE BECAME ISRAEL

If Americans Knew Last Updated April 2013

n the late 1800s a small, fanatic movement called "political Zionism" began in Europe. Its goal was to create a Jewish state somewhere in the world. Its leaders settled on the ancient and long-inhabited land of

Palestine for the location of this state.¹

Palestine's population at this time was approximately ninety-six percent non-Jewish (primarily Muslim and Christian).²

Over the coming decades Zionist leaders used various strategies to accomplish their goal of taking over Palestine:

- 1. Encouraging Jewish immigration to Palestine, partly through the invention of such deceptive slogans as "a land without a people for a people without a land," when, in fact, the land was already inhabited. Since the majority of Jews were not Zionists until after WWII, Zionists used an array of misleading strategies, including secret collaboration with the Nazis, to push immigration.³
- 2. **Convincing a "Great Power" to back this process.** By turn, Zionists approached the Ottomans, the British, and the U.S. to further their cause. While the Ottomans turned them down, the British (being promised that American Zionists would push the U.S. to enter World War I on the side of England) eventually acceded, as did the U.S. (due to concerns of politicians like Harry Truman that they would lose elections otherwise).⁴
- 3. **Buying up the land** (sometimes through subterfuges), proclaiming it Jewish for all eternity, and refusing to allow non-Jews to live or work on the purchased land. This was called "redeeming" the land and was financed by a variety of means, including by such wealthy banking families as the Rothschilds.⁵
- Violence, if such financial dispossession should fail or prove too slow as it did.⁶

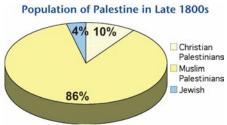
In the 1930s, Jewish land ownership had increased from approximately 1% to just over 6% of the land, and violence had increased as well. With the emergence of several Zionist terrorist gangs (whose ranks included a number of future Prime Ministers of Israel), there was violent conflict. Numerous people of all ethnicities were killed – then, as now, the large majority of them Christian and Muslim Palestinians.⁷

The Catastrophe

This growing violence culminated in Israel's ruthless 1947-49 "War of

Independence,"in which at least 750,000 Palestinian men, women, and children were expelled from their homes by numerically superior Israeli forces – half before any Arab armies joined the war. This massive humanitarian disaster is known as 'The Catastrophe,' al Nakba in Arabic.⁸





Historic Palestine, the land now occupied by the state of Israel, was a multicultural society. During the 1947-49 War, Israel committed at least 33 massacres and expelled over 750,000 Palestinians. (Click graph for large version.)

Zionist forces committed 33 massacres and destroyed 531 Palestinian towns. Author Norman Finkelstein states: "According to the former director of the Israeli army archives, 'in almost every village occupied by us during the War... acts were committed which are defined as war crimes, such as murders, massacres, and rapes'...Uri Milstein, the authoritative Israeli military historian of the 1948 war, goes one step further, maintaining that 'every skirmish ended in a massacre of Arabs.""⁹

Count Folke Bernadotte, a former official of the Swedish Red Cross who saved thousands of Jews during World War II and was appointed U.N. mediator in Palestine, said of the refugees: "It would be an offence against the principles of elemental justice if these innocent victims of the conflict were denied the right to return to their homes."¹⁰ Bernadotte was assassinated by a Zionist organization led by future Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.¹¹

Injustice Continues

Over the 70 years since Israel's founding on May 14, 1948, this profound injustice has continued. Palestinian refugees are the largest remaining refugee population in the world.

1.3 million Palestinians live in Israel as "Israeli citizens," but despite their status as citizens, they are subject to systematic discrimination. Many are prohibited from living in the villages and homes from which they were violently expelled, and their property has been confiscated for Jewish-only uses. In Orwellian terminology, Israeli law designates these internal refugees as "present absentees."¹²

In 1967 Israel launched its third war and seized still more Palestinian (and other Arab) land. Israel also attacked a U.S. Navy ship, the USS *Liberty*, killing and injuring over 200 Americans, an event that remains largely

covered-up today, despite efforts by an extraordinary array of high-level military officers and civilian officials to expose it.¹³

Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip – the final 22% of mandatory Palestine – and began building settlements for Jewish Israelis on land confiscated from Palestinian Muslims and Christians. It has demolished more than 24,145 Palestinian homes since 1967. In 2005 Israel returned Gazan land to its owners, but continues to control its borders, ports, and air space, turning Gaza into a large prison, where 1.5 million people are held under what a UN Human Rights Commissioner described as "catastrophic" conditions.

Over 7,000 Palestinian men, women, and children are imprisoned in Israeli jails under physically abusive conditions (many have not even been charged with a crime) and the basic human rights of all Palestinians under Israeli rule are routinely violated. Some prisoners tortured by Israel have been American citizens. In the violence that began in fall, 2000 through Feb. 5, 2009, Israeli forces killed 6,348 Palestinians; Palestinian resistance groups killed 1,072 Israelis. Israel's military, the fourth most powerful on earth possesses hundreds of nuclear weapons.¹⁴

American Involvement

American taxpayers give Israel more than \$10 million per day, even though surveys reveal that 73% of Americans oppose taking sides on Israel-Palestine. Because of Israel's powerful US lobby, Congress gives far

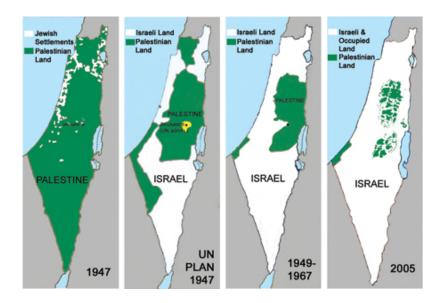






more money to Israel than to all of sub-Saharan Africa put together.¹⁵ In its 70 years of existence, Israel, the size of New Jersey, has received more U.S. tax money than any other nation. While most Americans are unaware of these facts (studies have shown that media report on Israeli deaths at rates up to 13 times greater than they report on Palestinian deaths) governmental actions are making Americans responsible for a continuing catastrophe of historic proportions – and which is, in addition, creating extremely damaging enmity to the US itself. Israel partisans have played a significant role in promoting U.S. attacks on Irag and Iran.¹⁶

As more Americans learn the facts, there is a growing bipartisan, multi-ethnic movement to counter Israel's US lobby, which has long held a vicegrip on American Mideast policies.



Palestinian Loss of Land 1946-2005

"Confusion about the origins of the conflict all too often has obscured Americans' understanding of its true dimension. It began as a conflict resulting from immigrants struggling to displace the local majority population. All else is derivative from this basic reality."

– Donald Neff, former Senior Editor, *Time Magazine*, *Fallen Pillars: U.S. Policy towards Palestine and Israel since* 1945

"[T]he story of 1948... is the simple but horrific story of the ethnic cleansing of Palestine... Retrieving it from oblivion is incumbent upon us, not just as a greatly overdue act of historiographical reconstruction or professional duty; it is... the very first step we must take if we ever want reconciliation to have a chance, and peace to take root, in the torn lands of Palestine and Israel."

- Ilan Pappe, Israeli Historian, The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine

"The Palestinian Holocaust is unsurpassed in history. For a country to be occupied, emptied of its people, its physical and cultural landmarks obliterated, its destruction hailed as a miraculous act of God, all done according to a premeditated plan, meticulously executed, internationally supported, and still maintained today..."

- Dr. Salman Abu-Sitta, Palestine Right Of Return, Sacred, Legal, and Possible

Recommended Books:

- George W, Ball & Douglas B. Ball, The Passionate Attachment
- Mazin Qumsiyeh, Sharing the Land of Canaan
- · Greg Philo and Mike Berry, Israel and Palestine: Competing Histories
- Paul Findley, They Dare to Speak Out
- Ali Abunimah, One Country
- Jonathon Cook, Blood and Religion
- Ilan Pappe, The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine
- Israel Shahak, Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel
- Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars
- Salman Abu-Sitta, Palestine Right of Return, Sacred, Legal, and Possible
- Robert John & Sami Hadawi, Palestine Diary 1914-1945
- · Kathleen Christison, Perceptions of Palestine
- · John W. Mulhall, CSP, America and the founding of Israel
- Charles D. Smith, Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict
- Nur Masalha, Expulsion of the Palestinians
- Stephen Green, Taking Sides
- Noam Chomsky, Fateful Triangle
- Sami Hadawi, Bitter Harvest
- Virginia Tilley, The One State Solution
- Norman Finkelstein, Beyond Chutzpah
- John Mearsheimer & Stephen Walt, The Israel Lobby

Selected Websites

IfAmericansKnew.org PalestineRemembered.com

Notes

There are numerous sources for the information in this brochure. We will continue to add citations to this section, so people may wish to periodically check back for additional source information.

1. Many historians write about this. Glasgow University professors Mike Berry and Greg Philo, in *Israel and Palestine*, 2006, Pluto Press, pp. 1-4 summarize the work of such diverse historians as H.M. Sachar, Justin McCarthy, Martin Gilbert, and David Hirst; as well as the *The Complete Diaries of Thedore Herzl*.

John W. Mulhall, CSP, America and the founding of Israel, 1995, Deshon Press, pp. 43-59.

Donald Neff, Fallen Pillars: U.S. Policy towards Palestine and Israel since 1945, 202, pp 7-20.

Zionists originally also considered Uganda/Kenya, Argentina, and elsewhere for the creation of a Jewish state. One

group began a project of emigrating to Texas: "...the Galveston Immigration Scheme (GIS) brought 10,000 Jews to Texas between 1906 and 1914" Mulhall, pp. 50-52. |BACK|

- 2. Mulhall, p. 48; Berry-Philo, p. 1; Mazin Qumsiyeh, PhD, author of Sharing the Land of Canaan: Human Rights and the Israeli-Palestinian Struggle, includes a number of population tables in this book, which are available in his booklet, Palestinian Refugees Right to Return and Repatriation; Justin McCarthy, author of The Population of Palestine: Population History and Statistics of the Late Ottoman Period and the Mandate, provides detailed information on population in the excerpt "Palestine's Population During The Ottoman And The British Mandate Periods." [BACK]
- 3. In many places Zionists manipulated local Jewish populations into going to Palestine/Israel, in some cases using subterfuge and terrorism.

Sami Hadawi, *Bitter Harvest*, p. 37: "Commenting, author Erskine H. Childers, wrote, "one of the most massively important features of the entire Palestine struggle was that Zionism deliberately arranged that the plight of the wretched survivors of Hitlerism should be a 'moral argument' which the West had to accept. This was done by seeing to it that Western countries did not open their doors, widely and immediately, to the inmates of the DP. (displaced persons) camps. It is incredible, that so grave and grim a campaign has received so little attention in accounts of the Palestine struggle – it was a campaign that literally shaped all subsequent history. It was done by sabotaging specific Western schemes to admit Jewish DPs."

A number of authors have discuss Zionist connections with Nazis; for example:

- Ben Hecht, Perfidy
- Edwin Black, The Transfer Agreement: The Dramatic Story of the Pact Between the Third Reich and Jewish Palestine
- Lenni Brenner, 51 Documents: Zionist Collaboration with the Nazis
- Hannah Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem
- Sami Hadawi, in *Bitter Harvest 1914-79*, pp. 35-39, discusses the use of manipulated, sometimes invented, anti-Semitism in promoting Zionism, e.g.: "Ian Gilmour [wrote] 'In the Arab countries, Jewish difficulties and emigration to Israel were the result not of anti-Semitism but of Zionist activities and the existence of the state of Israel."
- In "The Jews of Iraq," The Link, April-May 1998, Naeim Giladi describes Zionist activities to push Jews to emigrate to Israel.

He describes this in greater detail in his book: *Ben-Gurion's Scandals: How the Haganah and the Mossad Eliminated Jews*:

"I write this book to tell the American people, and especially the American Jews, that Jews from Islamic lands did not emigrate willingly to Israel; that, to force them to leave, Jews killed Jews; and that, to buy time to confiscate ever more Arab lands, Jews on numerous occasions rejected genuine peace initiatives from their Arab neighbors. I write about what the first prime minister of Israel called 'cruel Zionism.' I write about it because I was a part of it." [BACK]

4. Neff, pp. 7-26.

A number of factors were used to convince Britain, several having to do with assisting it to win the war if it promised to assist Zionists:

Mulhall, p. 62: "Britain was also trying to coax America into the war...in 1937 Lloyd George told the Palestine Royal (peel) Commission: 'Zionist leaders gave us a definite promise that, if the Allies committed themselves to giving facilities for the establishment of a national home for the Jews in Palestinbe, they would do their best to rally Jewish sentiment and support throughout the world to the Allied cause. They kept their word.'"

Robert John, Sami Hadawi, The Palestine Diary 1914-1945, p. 72: quoting Samuel Landman, a leader of the Zionist-Revisionists, in the review "World Jewry": "...it was resolved to send a secret message to Justice Brandeis that the British Cabinet would help the Jews to gain Palestine in return for active Jewish sympathy and for support in the U.S.A. for the Allied cause, so as to bring about a radical pro-Ally tendency in the United States." Regarding the US: Many writers have discussed the electoral role in Truman's assistance to Zionism, e.g.:

Mulhall, p. 131: "In November, four heads of U.S. diplomatic missions in Arab states met with Truman and warned him that his pro-Zionist statements threatened U.S. interests. He reportedly replied, I'm sorry, gentlemen, but I have to answer to hundreds of thousands who are anxious for the success of Zionism; I do not have hundreds of thousands of Arabs among my constituents."

Mulhall: p. 65, "Wilson therefore decided to risk harming U.S. relations with Turkey rather than alienate a powerful segment of his own political constituency.

Decision on Palestine, Evan N. Wilson, Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 1979: Wilson was a retired foreign service officer with thirty years' experience, much of it involved with Israel-Palestine. He provides considerable valuable information, e.g.:

"That the President's [Truman's] action was politically motivated was the thrust of a column by James Reston which appeared in the New York Times for October 7 under the heading "Truman's Palestine Plea Flouted Foreign Advisors." Reston wrote that domestic politics were responsible for the President's appeal. This interpretation is borne out by the fact that the President received letters from a number of prominent Democrats, such as Representative Emmanuel Celler, commending him for having made his appeal and predicting that it would be of material help to the party in the forthcoming elections." (p. 98)

"The files of the Truman Library show that Truman's Yom Kippur statement was drafted primarily by Eliahu Epstein (later Elath), the Washington representative of the Jewish Agency." (p. 98)

The primary books documenting the role of the Israel lobby in determining US support for Israel are:

- They Dare to Speak Out: People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby, by Paul Findley;
- The Lobby: Jewish Political Power and American Foreign Policy, by Edward Tivnan;
- Foreign Agents: The American Israel Public Affairs Committee from the 1963 Fulbright Hearings to the 2005 Espionage Scandal, by Grant F. Smith
- The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy, by John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt |BACK|
- 5. Theodor Herzl, the founder of Political Zionism wrote: "We shall try to spirit the penniless population across the border by procuring employment for it in the transit countries, while denying it any employment in our own country. The property owners will come over to our side. Both the process of expropriation and the removal of the poor must be carried out discretely and circumspectly. Let the owners of immoveable property believe that they are cheating us, selling us things for more than they are worth. But we are not going to sell them anything back." Herzl, entry for 6-12-1895, Complete Diaries, vol. 1, p. 88, as cited in Mulhall, p. 49. Mulhall states: "Herzl stipulated that his diary not be opened until twenty years after his death." P. 49.

In his autobiography, *Trial and Error*, (Illustrated Edition) p. 41, Chaim Weizmann describes how Zionists "bought land, sometimes through straw men, sometimes by bribes... Between baksheesh and an infinite variety of subterfuges, the first little colonies were created."

Mulhall, p. 53: "Like many other Zionist projects, many of these were largely funded by Rothschild family members..."

Mulhall, p. 93: "In a confidential unpublished addition to the [1930] report, [Sir John] Hope Simpson accused the Zionists of consciously trying to buy all of Palestine in such a way that the Arabs would have no way to earn a living." |BACK|

6. Nur Masalha, Expulsion of the Palestinians: The Concept of "Transfer" in Zionist Political Thought, 1882-1948

Ilan Pappe, The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine

Berry-Philo, p. 5: "Israel Zangwill, who had coined the Zionist slogan 'a land without people for a people without land', informed a meeting of Zionists in Manchester in 1905 that '[We] must be prepared either to drive out by the sword the [Arab] tribes in possession as our forefathers did or to grapple with the problem of a large alien population."

Mulhall, p. 81: "The [King-Crane Commission] noted that 'no British officer, consulted by the Commissioners, believed that the Zionist program could be carried out except by force of arms." |BACK|

- 7. Mulhall, p. 54: "In the spring of 1908, Jewish and Arab workers in Jaffa clashed. S.D. Levontin, the Jewish director of the local Anglo-Palestine Bank, complained to David Wolffsohn, the head of the World Zioist executive, that young Jewish men were largely responsible. He said that they were armed with sticks, knives and guns, and behaved toward Arabs with arrogance and contempt." [BACK]
- 8. This has been documented in great deal by numerous historians, among them Hadawi; Neff; Christison; Qumsiyeh; and Abu Sitta. The most recent, excellent history on this period is *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, by Israeli historian Ilan Pappe.

Naim Stifan Ateek, Canon of St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem, in *Justice and Only Justice: A Palestinian Theology of Liberation*, describes his own personal experiences; for example (pp.7-10):

"I had just turned eleven in 1948 when the Zionists occupied my hometown, Beisan (Beth Shean). We had no army to protect us. There was no battle, no resistance, no killing; we were simply taken over, occupied, on Wednesday, May 12, 1948...

"We lived under occupation for fourteen days. On May 26, the military governor sent for the leading men of the town; at military headquarters, he informed them quite simply and coldly that Beisan must be evacualted by all of its inhabitants within a few hours. My father pleaded with him, 'I have nowhere to go with my large family. Let us stay in our home.' But the blunt answer came, 'If you do not leave, we will have to kill you.'" [BACK]

9. Qumsiyeh - online

Norman Finkelstein, Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict;

George W. Ball & Douglas B. Ball, *The Passionate Attachment*, on p. 29: quotes a message from future prime minister Menachem Begin, head of the Irgun Zionist terrorist group, commending them on the grisly massacre of women, children, and old men at the village of Deir Yassin: "Accept my congratulations on this splendid act of conquest. Convey my regards to all the commanders and soldiers. We shake your hands. We are all proud of the excellent leadership and the fighting spirit in this great attack. We stand to attention in memory of the slain. We lovingly shake the hands of the wounded. Tell the soldiers: you have made history in Israel with your attack and your conquest. Continue thus until victory. As in Deir Yassin, so everywhere, we will attack and smite the enemy. God, God, Thou has chosen us for conquest." [BACK]

10. Neff, pp. 66-67, 131, 86-89. (p. 67)

Mulhall (p. 179): Bernadotte also said: "There have been numerous reports from reliable sources of destruction of villages without apparent military necessity. The liability of the Provisional Government of Israel to restore private property to its Arab owners and to indemnify those owners for property wantonly destroyed, is clear."

Bernadotte favored redrawing Palestine's map and urged the UN General Assembly to take prompt action to implement his recommendations. "On Sept. 17, the day after he released them, he was gunned down – by Israelis, according to eyewitnesses – in the Israeli-held part of Jerusalem. Israel never apprehended his murderers."

Stephen Green, in his fascinating book based on declassified State Department archives, *Taking Sides: America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, pp. 38-41, gives considerably more information on the assassination: "On September 18, the day after the assassination, Consul General MacDonald assured Secretary of State [George] Marshall that the maverick Stern gang was responsible, and that the Israeli government was taking every step possible to apprehend the killers, including mass arrests of Stern gang members. There is no doubt that the Stern group was involved, nor that the government did in fact round up many Sternists after the murder. But there is **strong evidence that the Israeli government was itself directly involved in the killing**, and that the U.S. government secretly investigated this involvement [emphasis added]."

Green writes that "...those involved in the murder were permitted to slip out of jail, and were flown secretly to Prague.... By mid-October, the U.S. government believed that the Israeli government, or some part of it, had directly participated in Bernadotte's assissnation.". (p. 67) [BACK]

- 11. This is available from many sources, for example, The Jewish Virtual Library. |BACK|
- 12. A number of authors describe Israel's systematic discrimination against non-Jews. Jonathon Cook's book, *Blood and Religion*, is one of the most thorough. Also, *Separate and Unequal: The Inside Story of Israeli Rule in East Jerusalem* by three Israelis, Amir S. Cheshin, Bill Hutman, and Avi Melamed, contains a great deal of information about policies of discrimination against non-Jewish residents.

Tom Segev, 1949, *The First Israelis*, p. 80: "More than half a million acres were thus expropriated from their owners. A few thousand of these owners were actually living in Israel, yet the law defined them as absentees, even if they had only left their homes for a few days and stayed with relatives in a nearby village or town, waiting for the fighting to end. Later they came to be referred to as "present absentees." [BACK]

13. Donald Neff, The Six Days War, Simon & Schuster

During the Six-Day War, Israel also attacked a US Navy ship, the USS Liberty, killing and injuring over 200 American servicemen. Many analysts believe that the fact that there were no consequences for this attack led Israeli leaders to conclude that they could commit any act of aggression without US complaint. While this attack has largely been covered up in the US media (see "American Media Miss the Boat: For USA Today, Freedom of the Press Means the Right to Report It Wrong", Alison Weir, *CounterPunch*, June 23/24, 2007) it is discussed in a number of books, including James Ennes, *The Assault on the Liberty*; William Gerhard, *Attack on the USS Liberty*; Dr. John Borne, *The USS Liberty, Dissenting History vs. Official History*; Stephen Green, *Taking Sides: America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*; James Bamford, *Body of Secrets*; and in a recent article: "New revelations in attack on American spy ship Veterans, documents suggest U.S., Israel didn't tell full story of deadly '67 incident," John Crewdson, Tribune senior correspondent, *Chicago Tribune*, October 2, 2007.

Additional information can be found at: http://www.ussliberty.org/files.htm http://ifamericansknew.org/us_ints/ussliberty.html |BACK|

14. Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions

European Parliament resolution on the humanitarian situation in Gaza, 4.10.2007: "...as a result of the blockade on the movement of people and goods, the massive devastation of public facilities and private homes, the disruption of hospitals, clinics and schools, the partial denial of access to proper drinking water, food and electricity, and the destruction of agricultural land, the humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip has reached a catastrophic level," un.org

Anne Penketh, The Independent/UK, "Gaza 'On Point of Explosion' Warns UN". Thursday, May 1, 2008,

Jerri Bird, "Special Report: Israel's Treatment of Americans," Foreign Service Journal, June 2002. [BACK]

15. http://www.ifamericansknew.org/stat/usaid.html

Paul Findley, They Dare to Speak Out John J. Mearsheimer, Stephen M. Walt, The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy [BACK]

16. In his introduction to *The Palestine Diary 1914-1945*, historian Arnold Toynbee wrote: "If the American government were to be constrained by American public opinion to take a non-partisan line over Palestine, the situation in Palestine might quickly change for the better. Is this too much to hope for?" He wrote this on June, 1968.

For a very partial list of diverse groups working on this issue go to: http://ifamericansknew.org/cur_sit/groups.html

For discussion of the importance of this issue, see: "Choosing to Act: Anti-Semitism is Wrong," Alison Weir.

"Should the U.S. End Aid to Israel: Funding Our Decline," Alison Weir, CounterPunch, April 4, 2008.

"Reflecting on Our Relationship with Israel," Paul Findley.

"Let Us Rethink Our 'Special Relationship' with Israel," Charles Black, Sterling Professor of Law Emeritus, Yale University.

For additional articles, booklets, and DVDs: http://www.ifamericansknew.org/about_us/booklets.html http://www.ifamericansknew.org/about_us/dvd.html |BACK|

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The Catastrophe - Al Nakba

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