

# Palestine

For the No-State solution

*An Anthology*



World Wide Wisdom



# Palestine

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*For the No-State solution*

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*with*

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## **Palestine**

For the No-State solution

(2026)

Palestine - Israel - State - Statism - Territorialism - Aterritorialism - Autonomy -  
Voluntary Communities - Future

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*For Alessandra*



# Contents

|              |      |
|--------------|------|
| Introduction | xvii |
|--------------|------|

## 1. The Early Documents

|                                                                                                                                        |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR<br><i>The Balfour Declaration</i><br>(2 November 1917)                                                            | 3  |
| EDWIN MONTAGU<br><i>The Anti-Semitism of the Present Government (Against the Balfour Declaration)</i><br>(23 August 1917)              | 5  |
| EMIR FEISAL & CHAIM WEIZMANN<br><i>Agreement between Emir Feisal and Chaim Weizmann</i><br>(3 January 1919)                            | 13 |
| STATEMENT OF THE ZIONIST ORGANIZATION<br>REGARDING PALESTINE<br><i>(Presented at the Peace conference - Paris)</i><br>(1919)           | 17 |
| EMIR FEISAL & FELIX FRANKFURTER<br><i>Correspondence</i><br>(3-5 March 1919)                                                           | 23 |
| GENERAL SYRIAN CONGRESS<br><i>Memorandum Presented to the King-Crane Commission</i><br>(2 July 1919)                                   | 27 |
| INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON MANDATES<br>IN TURKEY<br><i>Report of the American Section (King-Crane Commission)</i><br>(28 August 1919) | 31 |

## 2. Jews - Judaism

|                                                      |    |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|
| ERNEST RENAN                                         | 39 |
| <i>Judaism as a Race and as a Religion</i><br>(1883) |    |
| BERNARD LAZARE                                       | 44 |
| <i>The Jews</i><br>(1894)                            |    |
| MARTIN BUBER                                         | 50 |
| <i>Nationalism and Judaism</i><br>(1921)             |    |
| CAMILLO BERNERI                                      | 55 |
| <i>The character of the Jews</i><br>(1935)           |    |
| ELIAS CANETTI                                        | 61 |
| <i>The Jews</i><br>(1962)                            |    |
| ROBERT ARDREY                                        | 64 |
| <i>From Jews to Israelis</i><br>(1966)               |    |
| GIORGIO AGAMBEN                                      | 73 |
| <i>The End of Judaism</i><br>(2024)                  |    |

## 3. Zion - Zionism

|                                         |    |
|-----------------------------------------|----|
| THE BASEL PROGRAM                       | 79 |
| <i>First Zionist Congress</i><br>(1897) |    |
| THEODOR HERZL                           | 81 |
| <i>Mauschel</i><br>(1897)               |    |
| KARL KRAUS                              | 89 |
| <i>A Crown for Zion</i><br>(1898)       |    |
| INTERNATIONALIST                        | 98 |
| <i>National Atavism</i><br>(1906)       |    |

|                                                                                          |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| AVRAHAM (YAIR) STERN<br><i>National Revival Principles</i><br>(1940)                     | 107 |
| ARTHUR KOESTLER<br><i>The Zionists as Suprematist Exploiters</i><br>(1949)               | 113 |
| MURRAY ROTHBARD<br><i>War Guilt in the Middle East</i><br>(1967)                         | 119 |
| ROGER GARAUDY<br><i>Definition of Zionism</i><br>(1996)                                  | 131 |
| THE JERUSALEM PROGRAM<br><i>The Platform of the World Zionist Organization</i><br>(2024) | 136 |

## 4. Dissenting Voices

|                                                                              |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| LEV TOLSTOY<br><i>On Zionism</i><br>(1907)                                   | 141 |
| SIGMUND FREUD<br><i>On Zionism</i><br>(1930)                                 | 144 |
| MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI<br><i>On Jews and Zionists</i><br>(1931-1947)     | 146 |
| ALBERT EINSTEIN<br><i>On Jews in Palestine</i><br>(1932-1949)                | 152 |
| LORD MOYNE<br><i>Parliamentary debate on Zionists in Palestine</i><br>(1942) | 159 |
| NETUREI KARTA<br><i>Zionism is not Judaism</i><br>(1975)                     | 163 |

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| YEUDA ELKANA                 | 165 |
| <i>The Need to Forget</i>    |     |
| (1988)                       |     |
| ISAAC ASIMOV                 | 171 |
| <i>On Jewish intolerance</i> |     |
| (1994)                       |     |

## 5. The State of Israel

|                                                                |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| THE BILTMORE CONFERENCE                                        | 177 |
| (1942)                                                         |     |
| DAVID BEN-GURION                                               | 181 |
| <i>Rebirth and Destiny of Israel</i>                           |     |
| (1931-1952)                                                    |     |
| MASSACRES AND MASS EXPULSIONS IN<br>PALESTINE                  | 190 |
| <i>Plan C and Plan D</i>                                       |     |
| (1946-1948)                                                    |     |
| THE DECLARATION OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF<br>THE STATE OF ISRAEL | 209 |
| (1948)                                                         |     |
| HANNAH ARENDT ET ALII                                          | 215 |
| <i>Letter to the Editors of the New York Times</i>             |     |
| (1948)                                                         |     |
| MAXIM GHILAN                                                   | 219 |
| <i>Behind the Scenes in Israel</i>                             |     |
| (1964)                                                         |     |
| BERTRAND RUSSELL                                               | 231 |
| <i>On expansionist Israel</i>                                  |     |
| (1970)                                                         |     |
| ANONYMOUS                                                      | 234 |
| <i>I Am Israel</i>                                             |     |
| (2008)                                                         |     |
| URI AVNERY                                                     | 237 |
| <i>Eyeless in Gaza</i>                                         |     |
| (2018)                                                         |     |

## 6. Arabs - Palestinians

|                                                                                    |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| CAMILLO BERNERI<br><i>Bloodstained Palestine</i><br>(1929)                         | 245 |
| EDMOND RABBATH<br><i>The Arabs</i><br>(1937)                                       | 250 |
| T. R. FEIWEL<br><i>The Arab does not exist</i><br>(1938)                           | 257 |
| KING ABDULLAH OF JORDAN<br><i>The Truth about Palestine</i><br>(1947)              | 263 |
| GHASSAN KANAFANI<br><i>Letter from Gaza</i><br>(1956)                              | 275 |
| CECIL HOURANI<br><i>Towards a Middle East Dialogue</i><br>(1967)                   | 282 |
| PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION<br><i>Palestinian National Charter</i><br>(1968) | 302 |
| HAMAS<br><i>General principles and objectives on Palestine</i><br>(2017)           | 311 |

## 7. United Nations Resolutions

|                                          |     |
|------------------------------------------|-----|
| UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION 194<br>(1948)  | 325 |
| UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION 2443<br>(1968) | 330 |
| UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION 2546<br>(1969) | 333 |
| UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION 3236<br>(1974) | 336 |

|                                           |     |
|-------------------------------------------|-----|
| UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION 3379<br>(1975)  | 339 |
| UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION 3415<br>(1975)  | 342 |
| UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION 32/5<br>(1977)  | 345 |
| UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION 34/89<br>(1979) | 348 |

## 8. Peace Proposals

|                                                                               |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| RABBI YOSEF CHAIM SONNENFELD<br><i>Message of Peace and Truth</i><br>(1929)   | 353 |
| JUDAH L. MAGNES<br><i>Toward Peace in Palestine</i><br>(1943)                 | 358 |
| COUNT FOLKE BERNADOTTE<br><i>Suggestions on Palestine</i><br>(1948)           | 373 |
| HAL DRAPER<br><i>To Break the Vicious Spiral in Palestine</i><br>(1956)       | 379 |
| NAHUM GOLDMANN<br><i>A plan for peace in Palestine</i><br>(1978)              | 394 |
| YOSSI WOLFSON<br><i>Palestine and the so-called "peace process"</i><br>(1995) | 402 |
| THE HAIFA DECLARATION<br>(2007)                                               | 406 |

## 9. One-State Solution

|                                                                                           |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| SIMON DUBNOW<br><i>The Doctrine of Jewish Nationalism</i><br>(1897-1906)                  | 419 |
| HASHOMER HATZAIR WORKERS' PARTY<br><i>The Case for a Bi-National Palestine</i><br>(1946)  | 430 |
| MARTIN BUBER<br><i>The Bi-National Approach to Zionism</i><br>(1947)                      | 436 |
| MOHAMMAD RASHEED<br><i>Towards a Democratic State in Palestine</i><br>(1969-1970)         | 447 |
| SAIF AL-ISLAM GADDAFI<br><i>Isratine (The Israelis-Palestinians Federation)</i><br>(2000) | 457 |
| THE OLGA DOCUMENT<br>(2004)                                                               | 479 |
| VARIOUS AUTHORS<br><i>The One State Declaration</i><br>(2007)                             | 484 |

## 10. No-State Solution

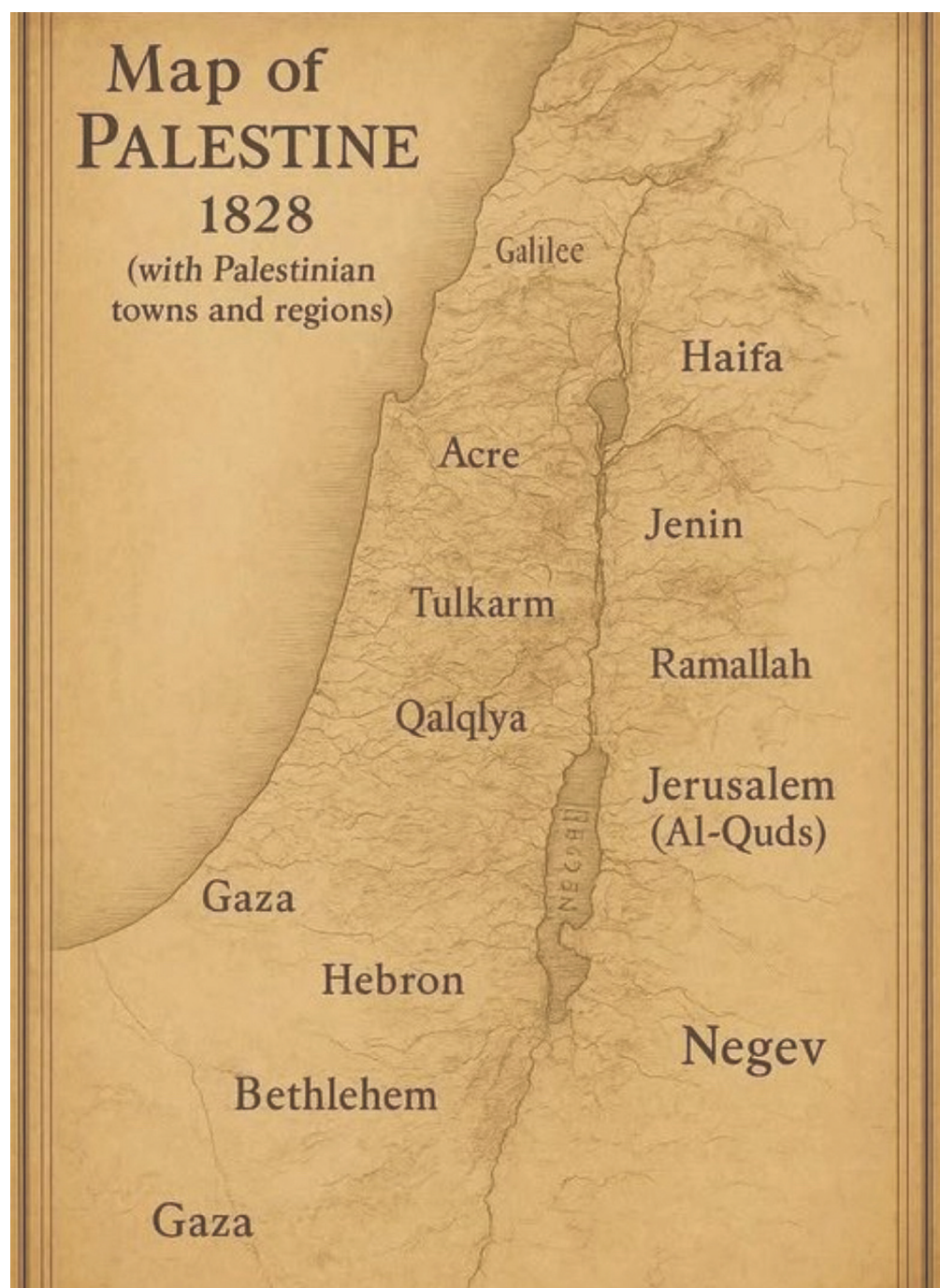
|                                                                              |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| EMMA GOLDMAN<br><i>Beyond national territorialism in Palestine</i><br>(1938) | 489 |
| VARIOUS AUTHORS<br><i>The Palestine Crisis</i><br>(1946-1948)                | 495 |
| ALEX COMFORT<br><i>Whither Israel?</i><br>(1948)                             | 499 |
| ALFREDO BONANNO<br><i>No to the Palestinian State</i><br>(1988)              | 503 |

|                                                       |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| JAMES HEROD                                           | 507 |
| <i>Palestine: The No-State Solution</i>               |     |
| (2009)                                                |     |
| YUVAL BEN-AMI                                         | 513 |
| <i>Introducing the no-state solution</i>              |     |
| (2010)                                                |     |
| CHAD ASHTON BROWN                                     | 520 |
| <i>Unlocking Peace in Palestine</i>                   |     |
| (2023)                                                |     |
| MOHAMMED A. BAMYEH                                    | 544 |
| <i>The No-State Solution: Histories and Realities</i> |     |
| (2025)                                                |     |
| Selected Writings and Web Sites                       | 579 |

# Map of PALESTINE

1828

(with Palestinian  
towns and regions)





# Introduction

The main aim of this anthology is to present the proposal of the No-State solution as the way to promote peace and well-being for all the inhabitants of Palestine.

To address this very desirable and feasible outcome a series of documents and texts that deal with the subject of Palestine/Israel have been selected and are presented here. They seem to lead quite inevitably to this solution because all the previous ones that have been suggested and supported seem to be either impractical, impossible to realize or conducive to even worse outcomes (e.g. generalised and protracted war between two State entities).

To move towards the No-State solution there are basic steps to be undertaken that involve, to different degrees, all the individuals and communities inhabiting the region.

In particular, there are six nefarious features that are present in Palestine/Israel to a very high degree and that wreak havoc for the populations. With reference to these nefarious features, there are six

**NOs** that should be proclaimed and implemented to set up a new social scenario and a new cultural paradigm. They are:

- **No supremacism.** All the people presently living in Palestine have the right to remain there provided that none of them, as individuals or as group, claims a non-existent superiority. In other words, there are no chosen people.

- **No racism.** It follows that there are no superior races because, in actual reality, we are all of mixed blood, in other words, mongrels. The practice of apartheid, that probably finds in Palestine its last remnant, must disappear totally.

- **No nationalism.** Nationalism is a quite recent idea. As pointed out by Elie Kedourie: "Nationalism is a doctrine invented in Europe at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It pretends to supply a criterion for the determination of the unit of population proper to enjoy a government exclusively its own, for the legitimate exercise of power in the state, and for the right organization of a society of states." Nationalism leads to violence because it breeds supremacism and racism

- **No victimism.** The tendency to play the victims to justify terrible actions must disappear. The past and current victims need to find a way out of their condition without taking psychological advantage of it in terms of revenge or as pretext for becoming the new persecutors. Reconciliation, however arduous, lengthy and difficult it may be, is the watchword.

- **No territorialism.** The monopolistic occupation of a territory considered as a vital space (*Lebensraum*), to be continuously expanded, is the pre-condition that makes supremacism, racism and nationalism possible. For this reason, it has no place whatsoever in the new scenario in Palestine.

- **No statism.** The overcoming of the preceding features leads to

the disappearance of the final one that sums them all up: the State and its ideology, statism.

So, to go beyond Statism means to go beyond Jewish Zionism and Arab Nationalism.

And this is what the most enlightened individuals (Jews, Muslims, Christians, Seculars, etc.) who have lived or live in the region have expressed and stressed many times on many occasions.

Their voices and actions should now be allowed to construct a new reality in the form of a variety of free individuals and voluntary communities, living side by side in peace and prosperity.

Palestine and all its inhabitants could then become a splendid practical example for the entire world.



# 1. The Early Documents

---

The documents included here cover the years 1917-1919.

They offer glimpses into the future of Palestine after the First World War.

On the one hand, they show broken promises (by the Zionists and the so-called Great Powers); on the other, a certain lucidity in wanting to avert a predictable humanitarian and political disaster in the event of one population dominating another.

Unfortunately, that lucidity was lost because of the decisions of the Paris Peace Conference, which, by imposing heavy reparations on Germany (Treaty of Versailles, 1919), paved the way for the rise of National Socialism and the terrible consequences for Jews in Europe. In the years to come, this was also going to have tragic repercussions for the Palestinian people.



# Arthur James Balfour

## The Balfour Declaration

(2 November 1917)

This is the famous letter by the British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour to Lord Rothschild in which he declares the sympathy of the British Government for “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.”

However he adds that nothing should be done “which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine.”

Unfortunately, in the course of time the Zionists interpreted all this as an assent to establish their National State on the entire area of Palestine and to subject the people living there to expulsion and subjection. And they were supported in this by the Governments of many Western States following the Holocaust suffered by the Jews in Europe during the Second World War. So, in order to remedy an abominable crime another abominable injustice was allowed to take place.

---

Foreign Office  
November 2nd, 1917

Dear Lord Rothschild,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

Yours sincerely,

Arthur James Balfour

# Edwin Montagu

## The Anti-Semitism of the Present Government (Against the Balfour Declaration)

(23 August 1917)

Edwin Montagu (1879-1924) was a British Liberal politician who served as Secretary of State for India between 1917 and 1922. In this text the author, a Jew, declares openly to be against the Balfour Declaration seeing it as a sort of anti-semitic document intended to displace a semitic population (the Palestinians) currently living there in order to create a Jewish Ghetto.

According to the author, with the formation of a Nationalistic State Ghetto, the rulers of other States will feel authorised to get rid of the local Jewish population seen as an alien element. And this is considered by Montagu as the main anti-semitic aspect of the Balfour declaration. As a matter of fact, the same Lord Balfour, as Prime Minister, had previously introduced the *Aliens Bill* (which became law in 1905), aimed specifically at restricting admission of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, warning the Parliament, at the time, that the Jews “remained a people apart.”

---

I have chosen the above title for this memorandum, not in any hostile sense, not by any means as quarrelling with an anti-Semitic view which may be held by my colleagues, not with a desire to deny that anti-Semitism can be held by rational men, not even with a view to suggesting that the Government is deliberately anti-Semitic; but I wish to place on record my view that the policy of His Majesty's Government is anti-Semitic in result and will prove a rallying ground for Anti-Semites in every country in the world.

This view is prompted by the receipt yesterday of a correspondence between Lord Rothschild and Mr. Balfour.

Lord Rothschild's letter is dated the 18th July and Mr. Balfour's answer is to be dated August 1917. I fear that my protest comes too late, and it may well be that the Government were practically committed when Lord Rothschild wrote and before I became a member of the Government, for there has obviously been some correspondence or conversation before this letter. But I do feel that as the one Jewish Minister in the Government I may be allowed by my colleagues an opportunity of expressing views which may be peculiar to myself, but which I hold very strongly and which I must ask permission to express when opportunity affords.

I believe most firmly that this war [First World War] has been a death-blow to Internationalism, and that it has proved an opportunity for a renewal of the slackening sense of Nationality, for it has not only been tacitly agreed by most statesmen in most countries that the redistribution of territory resulting from the war should be more or less on national grounds, but we have learned to realise that our country stands for principles, for aims, for civilisation which no other country stands for in the same degree, and that in the future, whatever may have been the case in the past, we must live and fight in peace and in war for those aims and aspirations, and so equip and regulate our lives and industries as to be ready whenever and if ever we are challenged.

To take one instance, the science of Political Economy, which in its purity knows no Nationalism, will hereafter be tempered and viewed in the light of this national need of defence and security.

The war has indeed justified patriotism as the prime motive of political thought.

It is in this atmosphere that the Government proposes to endorse the formation of a new nation with a new home in Palestine.

This nation will presumably be formed of Jewish Russians, Jewish Englishmen, Jewish Roumanians, Jewish Bulgarians, and Jewish citizens of all nations — survivors or relations of those who have fought or laid down their lives for the different countries which I have mentioned, at a time when the three years that they have lived through have united their outlook and thought more closely than ever with the countries of which they are citizens.

Zionism has always seemed to me to be a mischievous political creed, untenable by any patriotic citizen of the United Kingdom.

If a Jewish Englishman sets his eyes on the Mount of Olives and longs for the day when he will shake British soil from his shoes and go back to agricultural pursuits in Palestine, he has always seemed to me to have acknowledged aims inconsistent with British citizenship and to have admitted that he is unfit for a share in public life in Great Britain, or to be treated as an Englishman.

I have always understood that those who indulged in this creed were largely animated by the restrictions upon and refusal of liberty to Jews in Russia.

But at the very time when these Jews have been acknowledged as Jewish Russians and given all liberties it seems to be inconceivable that Zionism should be officially recognised by the British Government, and that Mr. Balfour should be authorised to say that Palestine was to be reconstituted as the “national home of the Jewish people.”

I do not know what this involves, but I assume that it means that Mahommedans and Christians are to make way for the Jews, and that the Jews should be put in all positions of preference and should be peculiarly associated with Palestine in the same way that England is with the English or France with the French, that Turks and other Mahommedans in Palestine will be regarded as foreigners, just in the same way as Jews will hereafter be treated as foreigners in every country but Palestine. Perhaps also citizenship must be granted only as a result of a religions test.

I lay down with emphasis four principles:

1. I assert that there is not a Jewish nation.

The members of my family, for instance, who have been in this country for generations, have no sort or kind of community of view or of desire with any Jewish family in any other country beyond the fact that they profess to a greater or less degree the same religion. It is no more true to say that a Jewish Englishman and a Jewish Moor are of the same nation than it is to say that a Christian Englishman and a Christian Frenchman are of the same nation: of the same race, perhaps, traced back through the centuries — through centuries of the history of a peculiarly adaptable race. The Prime Minister and Mr. Briand [Prime Minister of France during the French Third Republic] are, I suppose, related through the ages, one as a Welshman and the other as a Breton, but they certainly do not belong to the same nation.

2. When the Jews are told that Palestine is their national home, every country will immediately desire to get rid of its Jewish citizens, and you will find a population in Palestine driving out its present inhabitants, taking all the best in the country, drawn from all quarters of the globe, speaking every language on the face of the earth, and incapable of communicating with one another except by means of an interpreter.

I have always understood that this was the consequence of the building of the Tower of Babel, if ever it was built, and I certainly do not dissent from the view, commonly held, as I have always understood, by the Jews before Zionism was invented, that to bring the Jews back to form a nation in the country from which they were dispersed would require Divine leadership.

I have never heard it suggested, even by their most fervent admirers, that either Mr. Balfour or Lord Rothschild would prove to be the Messiah.

I claim that the lives that British Jews have led, that the aims that they have had before them, that the part that they have played in our public life and our public institutions, have entitled them to be regarded, not as British Jews, but as Jewish Britons.

I would willingly disfranchise every Zionist.

I would be almost tempted to proscribe the Zionist organisation as illegal and against the national interest.

But I would ask of a British Government sufficient tolerance to refuse to endorse a conclusion which makes aliens and foreigners by implication, if not at once by law, of all their Jewish fellow-citizens.

3. I deny that Palestine is to-day associated with the Jews or properly to be regarded as a fit place for them to live in.

The Ten Commandments were delivered to the Jews on Sinai.

It is quite true that Palestine plays a large part in Jewish history, but so it does in modern Mahommedan history, and, after the time of the Jews, surely it plays a larger part than any other country in Christian history.

The Temple may have been in Palestine, but so was the Sermon on the Mount and the Crucifixion. I would not deny to Jews in Palestine equal

rights to colonisation with those who profess other religions, but a religious test of citizenship seems to me to be only admitted by those who take a bigoted and narrow view of one particular epoch of the history of Palestine, and claim for the Jews a position to which they are not entitled.

If my memory serves me right, there are three times as many Jews in the world as could possibly get into Palestine if you drove out all the population that remains there now.

So that only one-third will get back at the most and what will happen to the remainder?

4. I can easily understand the editors of the *Morning Post* and of the *Now Witness* being Zionists, and I am not in the least surprised that the non-Jews of England may welcome this policy. I have always recognised the unpopularity, much greater than some people think, of my community.

We have obtained a far greater share of this country's goods and opportunities than we are numerically entitled to.

We reach on the whole maturity earlier, and therefore with people of our own age we compete unfairly.

Many of us have been exclusive in our friendships and intolerant in our attitude, and I can easily understand that many a non-Jew in England wants to get rid of us.

But just as there is no community of thought and mode of Life among Christian Englishmen, so there is not among Jewish Englishmen.

More and more we are educated in public schools and at the Universities, and take our part in the politics, in the Army, in the Civil Service, of our country.

And I am glad to think that the prejudices against inter-marriage are breaking down.

But when the Jew has a national home, surely it follows that the impetus to deprive us of the rights of British citizenship must be enormously increased.

Palestine will become the world's Ghetto.

Why should the Russian give the Jew equal rights? His national home is Palestine.

Why does Lord Rothschild attach so much importance to the difference between British and foreign Jews?

All Jews will be foreign Jews, inhabitants of the great country of Palestine.

I do not know how the fortunate third will be chosen, but the Jew will have the choice, whatever country he belongs to, whatever country he loves, whatever country he regards himself as an integral part of, between going to live with people who are foreigners to him, but to whom his Christian fellow-countrymen have told him he shall belong, and of remaining as an unwelcome guest in the country that he thought he belonged to.

I am not surprised that the Government should take this step after the formation of a Jewish Regiment, and I am waiting to learn that my brother, who has been wounded in the Naval Division, or my nephew, who is in the Grenadier Guards, will be forced by public opinion or by Army regulations to become an officer in a regiment which will mainly be composed of people who will not understand the only language which he speaks — English.

I can well understand that when it was decided, and quite rightly, to force foreign Jews in this country to serve in the Army, it was difficult to put them in British regiments because of the language difficulty, but that was because they were foreigners, and not because they were Jews, and a Foreign Legion would seem to me to have been the right thing to establish.

A Jewish Legion makes the position of Jews in other regiments more difficult and forces a nationality upon people who have nothing in common.

I feel that the Government are asked to be the instrument for carrying out the wishes of a Zionist organisation largely run, as my information goes, at any rate in the past, by men of enemy descent or birth, and by this means have dealt a severe blow to the liberties, position and opportunities of service of their Jewish fellow-countrymen.

I would say to Lord Rothschild that the Government will be prepared to do everything in their power to obtain for Jews in Palestine complete liberty of settlement and life on an equality with the inhabitants of that country who profess other religious beliefs. I would ask that the Government should go no further.

E. S. M.

23rd August 1917

# Emir Feisal & Chaim Weizmann

## Agreement between Emir Feisal and Chaim Weizmann

(3 January 1919)

As it emerges from this text, originally the terms of the signed agreement between the Arabs (represented by the Emir Feisal) and Chaim Weizmann, the leader of the Zionist movement, were totally different from what has subsequently taken place. If those terms had been implemented, Palestine would have become a land where different communities could have lived side by side, helping each other in view of a common development from the moral, cultural and social point of view.

---

3 January 1919

His Royal Highness the Emir Feisal, representing and acting on behalf of the Arab Kingdom of Hedjaz, and Dr. Chaim Weizmann, representing and acting on behalf of the Zionist Organization, mindful of the racial kinship and ancient bonds existing between the Arabs and the Jewish people, and realizing that the surest means of working out the consummation of their natural aspirations is through

the closest possible collaboration in the development of the Arab State and Palestine, and being desirous further of confirming the good understanding which exists between them, have agreed upon the following articles:

### **Article I**

The Arab State and Palestine in all their relations and undertakings shall be controlled by the most cordial goodwill and understanding, and to this end Arab and Jewish duly accredited agents shall be established and maintained in the respective territories.

### **Article II**

Immediately following the completion of the deliberations of the Peace Conference [the Paris Peace Conference after the end of WWI], the definite boundaries between the Arab State and Palestine shall be determined by a Commission to be agreed upon by the parties hereto.

### **Article III**

In the establishment of the Constitution and Administration of Palestine, all such measures shall be adopted as will afford the fullest guarantees for carrying into effect the British Government's Declaration of the 2nd of November, 1917.

### **Article IV**

All necessary measures shall be taken to encourage and stimulate immigration of Jews into Palestine on a large scale, and as quickly as possible to settle Jewish immigrants upon the land through closer settlement and intensive cultivation of the soil. In taking such measures the Arab peasant and tenant farmers shall be protected in their rights and shall be assisted in forwarding their economic development.

**Article V**

No regulation or law shall be made prohibiting or interfering in any way with the free exercise of religion; and further, the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever be allowed. No religious test shall ever be required for the exercise of civil or political rights.

**Article VI**

The Mohammedan Holy Places shall be under Mohammedan control.

**Article VII**

The Zionist Organization proposes to send to Palestine a Commission of experts to make a survey of the economic possibilities of the country, and to report upon the best means for its development. The Zionist Organization will place the aforementioned Commission at the disposal of the Arab State for the purpose of a survey of the economic possibilities of the Arab State and to report upon the best means for its development. The Zionist Organization will use its best efforts to assist the Arab State in providing the means for developing the natural resources and economic possibilities thereof.

**Article VIII**

The parties hereto agree to act in complete accord and harmony on all matters embraced herein before the Peace Congress.

**Article IX**

Any matters of dispute which may arise between the contracting parties shall be referred to the British Government for arbitration.

Given under our hand at London, England, the third day of January,  
one thousand nine hundred and nineteen.

Chaim Weizmann  
Feisal Ibn-Hussein

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### **Reservation by the Emir Feisal**

If the Arabs are established as I have asked in my manifesto of January 4th, addressed to the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, I will carry out what is written in this agreement. If changes are made, I cannot be answerable for failing to carry out this agreement.

Feisal Ibn-Hussein

# Statement of the Zionist Organization regarding Palestine

(Presented at the Peace conference - Paris)  
(1919)

On February the 3rd, 1919, the Zionist delegation presented some Proposals to the Peace Conference held in Paris after the end of the Second World War. There is no mention of establishing a Jewish State and plenty of assurances that the existing population will be safeguarded and their well-being promoted. Empty promises that will be completely renegaded with the support and cover of most of the State rulers of the entire world.

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The Zionist Organization respectfully submits the following draft resolutions for the consideration of the Peace Conference:

1. The High Contracting Parties recognise the historic title of the Jewish people to Palestine and the right of the Jews to reconstitute in Palestine their National Home.
2. The boundaries of Palestine shall be as declared in the Schedule annexed hereto.

3. The sovereign possession of Palestine shall be vested in the League of Nations and the Government entrusted to Great Britain as Mandatory of the League.

4. (Provision to be inserted relating to the application in Palestine of such of the general conditions attached to mandates as are suitable to the case.)

5. The mandate shall be subject also to the following special conditions:

I. Palestine shall be placed under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment there of the Jewish National Home and ultimately render possible the creation of an autonomous Commonwealth, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.

II. To this end the Mandatory Power shall *inter alia*:

a. Promote Jewish immigration and close settlement on the land, the established rights of the present non-Jewish population being equitably safeguarded.

b. Accept the cooperation in such measures of a Council representative of the Jews of Palestine and of the world that may be established for the development of the Jewish National Home in Palestine and entrust the organization of Jewish education to such Council.

c. On being satisfied that the constitution of such Council precludes the making of private profit, offer to the Council in priority any concession for public works or for the development of natural resources which it may be found desirable to grant.

III. The Mandatory Power shall encourage the widest measure of self-government for localities practicable in the conditions of the country.

IV. There shall be for ever the fullest freedom of religious worship for all creeds in Palestine There shall be no discrimination among the inhabitants with regard to citizenship and civil rights, on the grounds of religion, or of race.

V. (Provision to be inserted relating to the control of the Holy Places).

## **The Boundaries of Palestine**

### **SCHEDULE**

The boundaries of Palestine shall follow the general lines set out below:

Starting on the North al, a point on the Mediterranean Sea in the vicinity South of Sidon, and following the watersheds of the foothills of the Lebanon as far as JISR EL KARAON, thence to EL BIRE following the dividing line between the two basins of tile WAD: EL Kook and the Wadi ET TEIM thence in a southerly direction following the dividing line between the Eastern and Western slopes of the HERMON, to the vicinity West of BEIT JENN, thence Eastward following the northern watersheds of the NAHR MUGHANIYE close to and west of the Hedjaz Railway

In the East a line close to and West of the Hedjaz Railway terminating in the Gulf of Akaba.

In the South a frontier to be agreed upon with the Egyptian Government.

In the West the Mediterranean Sea.

The details of the delimitations, or any necessary adjustments of detail, shall be settled by a Special Commission on which there shall be Jewish representation.

**Statement: The historic title**

The claims of the Jews with regard to Palestine rest upon the following main considerations:

1. The land is the historic home of the Jews; there they achieved their greatest development from that centre, through their agency, there emanated spiritual and moral influences of supreme value to mankind. By violence they were driven from Palestine, and through the ages they have never ceased to cherish the longing and the hope of a return.

2. In some parts of the world, and particularly in Eastern Europe, the conditions of life of millions of Jews are deplorable, forming often a congested population, denied the opportunities which would make a healthy development possible, the need of fresh outlets is urgent, both for their own sake and in the interest of the population of other races, among whom they dwell. Palestine would offer one such outlet. To the Jewish masses it is the country above all others in which they would most wish to cast their lot. By the methods of economic development to which we shall refer later, Palestine can be made now as it was in ancient times, the home of a prosperous population many times as numerous as that which now inhabits it.

3. Palestine is not large enough to contain more than a proportion of the Jews of the world. The greater part of the fourteen million or more scattered through all countries must remain in their present localities, and it will doubtless be one of the cares of the Peace Conference to ensure for them, wherever they have been oppressed, as for all peoples, equal rights and humane conditions. A Jewish National Home in Palestine will, however, be of high value to them also. Its influence will permeate the Jewries of the world, it will inspire these millions, hitherto often despairing, with a new hope, it will hold out before their eyes a higher standard; it will help to make them even more useful citizens in the lands in which they dwell.

4. Such a Palestine would be of value also to the world at large, whose real wealth consists in the healthy diversities of its civilisations
5. Lastly the land itself needs redemption. Much of it is left desolate. Its present condition is a standing reproach. Two things are necessary for that redemption – a stable and enlightened government, and an addition to the present population which shall be energetic, intelligent, devoted to the country, and backed by the large financial resources that are indispensable for development. Such a population the Jews alone can supply.

Inspired by these ideas, Jewish activities, particularly during the last thirty years, have been directed to Palestine within the measure that the Turkish administrative system allowed. Some millions of pounds sterling have been spent in the country particularly in the foundation of Jewish agricultural settlements. These settlements have been for the most part highly successful.

With enterprise and skill, the Jews have adopted modern scientific methods and have shown themselves to be capable agriculturists. Hebrew has been revived as a living language: it is the medium of instruction in the schools and the tongue is in daily use among the rising generation. The foundations of a Jewish University have been laid at Jerusalem and considerable funds have been contributed for the creation of its building and for its endowment. Since the British occupation, the Zionist Organization has expended in Palestine approximately £50,000 a month upon relief, education and sanitation. To promote the future development of the country great sums will be needed for drainage, irrigation, roads, railways, harbours and public works of all kinds, as well as for land settlement and house building. Assuming a political settlement under which the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine is assured, the Jews of the world will make every effort to provide the vast sums of money that will be needed.

Hundreds of thousands of Jews pray for the opportunity speedily to begin life anew in Palestine. Messengers have gone out from many places, and groups of young Jewish men proceeding on foot have already reached Trieste and Rome on their weary pilgrimage to Zion.

The historic title of the Jews to Palestine was recognised by the British Government in its Declaration of November 2nd, 1917, addressed by the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to Lord Rothschild and reading as follows:

“His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.”

# Emir Feisal & Felix Frankfurter

## Correspondence

### (3-5 March 1919)

A further text showing that the premises for a mutual understanding between Arabs and Jew were present if only the ultra-nationalist and openly racist policy of many Zionist leaders had not emerged and strengthened their hold on the entire Zionist movement.

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*Letter from Emir Feisal (Son of Hussein bin Ali, Sharif of Mecca) to Felix Frankfurter, associate of Dr. Chaim Weizmann*

DELEGATION HEDJAZIENNE, Paris, March 3, 1919

Dear Mr. Frankfurter

I want to take this opportunity of my first contact with American Zionists to tell you what I have often been able to say to Dr. Weizmann in Arabia and Europe.

We feel that the Arabs and Jews are cousins in race, having suffered similar oppressions at the hands of powers stronger than themselves,

and by a happy coincidence have been able to take the first step towards the attainment of their national ideals together.

We Arabs, especially the educated among us, look with the deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement. Our deputation here in Paris is fully acquainted with the proposals submitted yesterday by the Zionist Organization to the Peace Conference, and we regard them as moderate and proper. We will do our best, in so far as we are concerned, to help them through: we will wish the Jews a most hearty welcome home. With the chiefs of your movement, especially with Dr. Weizmann, we have had and continue to have the closest relations. He has been a great helper of our cause, and I hope the Arabs may soon be in a position to make the Jews some return for their kindness. We are working together for a reformed and revived Near East, and our two movements complete one another. The Jewish movement is national and not imperialist. Our movement is national and not imperialist, and there is room in Syria for us both. Indeed I think that neither can be a real success without the other.

People less informed and less responsible than our leaders and yours, ignoring the need for cooperation of the Arabs and Zionists, have been trying to exploit the local difficulties that must necessarily arise in Palestine in the early stages of our movements. Some of them have, I am afraid, misrepresented your aims to the Arab peasantry, and our aims to the Jewish peasantry, with the result that interested parties have been able to make capital out of what they call our differences.

I wish to give you my firm conviction that these differences are not on questions of principle, but on matters of detail such as must inevitably occur in every contact of neighbouring peoples, and as are easily adjusted by mutual goodwill. Indeed nearly all of them will disappear with fuller knowledge. I look forward, and my people with me look forward, to a future in which we will help you and you will help us, so that the countries in which we are mutually interested

may once again take their place in the community of civilized peoples of the world.

Believe me  
Yours sincerely  
Feisal

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*Letter of reply from Felix Frankfurter to Emir Feisal*

Paris Peace Conference, 5th March 1919

Royal Highness

Allow me, on behalf of the Zionist Organisation, to acknowledge your recent letter with deep appreciation.

Those of us who come from the United States have already been gratified by the friendly relations and the active cooperation maintained between you and the Zionist leaders, particularly Dr. Weizmann. We knew it could not be otherwise; we knew that the aspirations of the Arab and the Jewish peoples were parallel, that each aspired to reestablish its nationality in its own homeland, each making its own distinctive contribution to civilisation, each seeking its own peaceful mode of life.

The Zionist leaders and the Jewish people for whom they speak have watched with satisfaction the spiritual vigour of the Arab movement. Themselves seeking justice, they are anxious that the just national aims of the Arab people be confirmed and safeguarded by the Peace Conference.

We knew from your acts and your past utterances that the Zionist movement — in other words the national aims of the Jewish people —

had your support and the support of the Arab people for whom you speak.

These aims are now before the Peace Conference as definite proposals by the Zionist Organisation. We are happy indeed that you consider these proposals “moderate and proper,” and that we have in you a staunch supporter for their realisation. For both the Arab and the Jewish peoples there are difficulties ahead — difficulties that challenge the united statesmanship of Arab and Jewish leaders. For it is no easy task to rebuild two great civilisations that have been suffering oppression and misrule for centuries. We each have our difficulties we shall work out as friends, friends who are animated by similar purposes, seeking a free and full development for the two neighbouring peoples.

Arabs and Jews are neighbours in territory; we cannot but live side by side as friends.

Very respectfully,  
Felix Frankfurter

# General Syrian Congress

## Memorandum Presented to the King-Crane Commission (2 July 1919)

In this text the General Syrian Congress opposes any partition imposed by the current powers with the creation of a Zionist State. At the same time, the members of the Congress stress the fact that “our Jewish compatriots shall enjoy our common rights and assume the common responsibilities”.

The members of the Congress declare that they are confident that “President Wilson and the free American people will be our supporters for the realization of our hopes thereby proving their sincerity and noble sympathy with the aspiration of the weaker nations in general and our Arab people in particular.”

A confidence that would be betrayed so many times in the following years, right up to now.

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July 2, 1919

1. We the undersigned members of the General Syrian Congress, meeting in Damascus on Wednesday, July 2nd, 1919, made up of representatives from the three Zones, viz., the Southern, Eastern, and Western, provided with credentials and authorizations by the inhabitants of our various districts, Moslems, Christians, and Jews, have agreed upon the following statement of the desires of the people of the country who have elected us to present them to the American Section of the International Commission; the fifth article was passed by a very large majority; all the other articles were accepted unanimously.

1. We ask absolutely complete political independence for Syria within these boundaries: the Taurus System on the North; Rafah and a line running from Al Jauf to the south of the Syrian and the Hejazian line to Akaba on the south; the Euphrates and Khabur Rivers and a line extending east of Abu Kamal to the east of Al Jauf on the east; and the Mediterranean on the west.

2. We ask that the Government of this Syrian country should be a democratic civil constitutional Monarchy on broad decentralization principles, safeguarding the rights of minorities, and that the King be the Emir Feisal, who carried on a glorious struggle in the cause of our liberation and merited our full confidence and entire reliance.

3. Considering the fact that the Arabs inhabiting the Syrian area are not naturally less gifted than other more advanced races and that they are by no means less developed than the Bulgarians, Serbians, Greeks, and Romanians at the beginning of their independence, we protest against Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, placing us among the nations in their middle stage of development which stand in need of a mandatory power.

4. In the event of the rejection by the Peace Conference of this just protest for certain considerations that we may not understand, we,

relying on the declarations of President Wilson that his object in waging war was to put an end to the ambition of conquest and colonization, can only regard the mandate mentioned in the Covenant of the League of Nations as equivalent to the rendering of economical and technical assistance that does not prejudice our complete independence. And desiring that our country should not fall a prey to colonization and believing that the American Nation is farthest from any thought of colonization and has no political ambition in our country, we will seek the technical and economical assistance from the United States of America, provided that such assistance does not exceed 20 years.

5. In the event of America not finding herself in a position to accept our desire for assistance, we will seek this assistance from Great Britain, also provided that such assistance does not infringe the complete independence and unity of our country and that the duration of such assistance does not exceed that mentioned in the previous article.

6. We do not acknowledge any right claimed by the French Government in any part whatever of our Syrian country and refuse that she should assist us or have hand in our country under any circumstances and in any place.

7. We oppose the pretensions of the Zionists to create a Jewish commonwealth in the southern part of Syria, known as Palestine, and oppose Zionist migration to any part of our country; for we do not acknowledge their title but consider them a grave peril to our people from the national, economical, and political points of view. Our Jewish compatriots shall enjoy our common rights and assume the common responsibilities.

8. We ask that there should be no separation of the southern part of Syria, known as Palestine, nor of the littoral western zone, which includes Lebanon, from the Syrian country. We desire that the unity

of the country should be guaranteed against partition under whatever circumstances.

9. We ask complete independence for emancipated Mesopotamia and that there should be no economical barriers between the two countries.

10. The fundamental principles laid down by President Wilson in condemnation of secret treaties impel us to protest most emphatically against any treaty that stipulates the partition of our Syrian country and against any private engagement aiming at the establishment of Zionism in the southern part of Syria; therefore we ask the complete annulment of these conventions and agreements.

The noble principles enunciated by President Wilson strengthen our confidence that our desires emanating from the depths of our hearts, shall be the decisive factor in determining our future; and that President Wilson and the free American people will be our supporters for the realization of our hopes thereby proving their sincerity and noble sympathy with the aspiration of the weaker nations in general and our Arab people in particular.

We also have the fullest confidence that the Peace Conference will realize that we would not have risen against the Turks, with whom we had participated in all civil, political, and representative privileges, but for their violation of our national rights, and so will grant us our desires in full in order that our political rights may not be less after the war than they were before, since we have shed so much blood in the cause of our liberty and independence.

We request to be allowed to send a delegation to represent us at the Peace Conference to defend our rights and secure the realization of our aspirations.

# International Commission on Mandates in Turkey

Report of the American Section  
(King-Crane Commission)

(28 August 1919)

The report of the American Section of the International Commission on Mandates in Turkey presided by Charles R. Crane and Henry C. King formulated a series of recommendations about Palestine. All of them has been ignored and overturned. This shows not only the power of Zionist propaganda in the course of time but also the predominant conventional thinking of the time based on the universalization of territorial state sovereignty. The tragic consequences of having ignored those recommendations have been in front of everybody's eyes since the foundation of the State of Israel, if not earlier.

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Paris, August 28, 1919

## **Recommendations**

(1) The Commissioners began their study of Zionism with minds predisposed in its favor, but the actual facts in Palestine, coupled

with the force of the general principles proclaimed by the Allies and accepted by the Syrians have driven them to the recommendation here made.

(2) The Commission was abundantly supplied with literature on the Zionist program by the Zionist Commission to Palestine; heard in conferences much concerning the Zionist colonies and their claims; and personally saw something of what had been accomplished. They found much to approve in the aspirations and plans of the Zionists, and had warm appreciation for the devotion of many of the colonists, and for their success, by modern methods, in overcoming great natural obstacles.

(3) The Commission recognized also that definite encouragement had been given to the Zionists by the Allies in Mr. Balfour's often quoted statement, in its approval by other representatives of the Allies. If, however, the strict terms of the Balfour Statement are adhered to — favoring “the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people”, “it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine” — it can hardly be doubted that the extreme Zionist Program must be greatly modified. For “a national home for the Jewish people” is not equivalent to making Palestine into a Jewish State; nor can the erection of such a Jewish State be accomplished without the gravest trespass upon the “civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine”. The fact came out repeatedly in the Commission's conference with Jewish representatives, that the Zionists looked forward to a practically complete dispossession of the present non-Jewish inhabitants of Palestine, by various forms of purchase.

In his address of July 4, 1918, President Wilson laid down the following principle as one of the four great “ends for which the associated peoples of the world were fighting”: “The settlement of every question, whether of territory, of sovereignty, of economic arrange-

ment, or of political relationship upon the basis of the free acceptance of that settlement by the people immediately concerned, and not upon the basis of the material interest or advantage of any other nation or people which may desire a different settlement for the sake of its own exterior influence or mastery." If that principle is to rule, and so the wishes of Palestine's population are to be decisive as to what is to be done with Palestine, then it is to be remembered that the non-Jewish population of Palestine — nearly nine-tenths of the whole — are emphatically against the entire Zionist program. The tables show that there was no one thing upon which the population of Palestine were more agreed than upon this. To subject a people so minded to unlimited Jewish immigration, and to steady financial and social pressure to surrender the land, would be a gross violation of the principle just quoted, and of the peoples' rights, though it kept within the forms of law.

It is to be noted also that the feeling against the Zionist program is not confined to Palestine, but shared very generally by the people throughout Syria, as our conferences clearly showed. More than 72 per cent — 1350 in all — of all the petitions in the whole of Syria were directed against the Zionist program. Only two requests — those for a united Syria and for independence — had a larger support. This general feeling was only voiced by the "General Syrian Congress", in the seventh, eighth and tenth resolutions of their statement [see previous document: *Declaration by the members of the General Syrian Congress*, meeting in Damascus on Wednesday, July 2nd, 1919].

The Peace Conference should not shut its eyes to the fact that the anti-Zionist feeling in Palestine and Syria is intense and not lightly to be flouted. No British officer, consulted by the Commissioners, believed that the Zionist program could be carried out except by force of arms. The officers generally thought that a force of not less than fifty thousand soldiers would be required even to initiate the program. That of itself is evidence of a strong sense of the injustice of

the Zionist program, on the part of the non-Jewish populations of Palestine and Syria. Decisions, requiring armies to carry out, are sometimes necessary, but they are surely not gratuitously to be taken in the interests of a serious injustice. For the initial claim, often submitted by Zionist representatives, that they have a “right” to Palestine, based on an occupation of two thousand years ago, can hardly be seriously considered.

There is a further consideration that cannot justly be ignored, if the world is to look forward to Palestine becoming a definitely Jewish state, however gradually that may take place. That consideration grows out of the fact that Palestine is “the Holy Land” for Jews, Christians, and Moslems alike.

Millions of Christians and Moslems all over the world are quite as much concerned as the Jews with conditions in Palestine, especially with those conditions which touch upon religious feeling and rights. The relations in these matters in Palestine are most delicate and difficult. With the best possible intentions, it may be doubted whether the Jews could possibly seem to either Christians or Moslems proper guardians of the holy places, or custodians of the Holy Land as a whole.

The reason is this: the places which are most sacred to Christians — those having to do with Jesus — and which are also sacred to Moslems, are not only not sacred to Jews, but abhorrent to them. It is simply impossible, under those circumstances, for Moslems and Christians to feel satisfied to have these places in Jewish hands, or under the custody of Jews. There are still other places about which Moslems must have the same feeling.

In fact, from this point of view, the Moslems, just because the sacred places of all three religions are sacred to them, have made very naturally much more satisfactory custodians of the holy places than the Jews could be. It must be believed that the precise meaning, in this respect, of the complete Jewish occupation of Palestine has not been

fully sensed by those who urge the extreme Zionist program. For it would intensify, with a certainty like fate, the anti-Jewish feeling both in Palestine and in all other portions of the world which look to Palestine as “the Holy Land.”

In view of all these considerations, and with a deep sense of sympathy for the Jewish cause, the Commissioners feel bound to recommend that only a greatly reduced Zionist program be attempted by the Peace Conference, and even that, only very gradually initiated. This would have to mean that Jewish immigration should be definitely limited, and that the project for making Palestine distinctly a Jewish commonwealth should be given up.

Charles R. Crane

Henry C. King



## 2. Jews - Judaism

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The essays collected here aim to highlight the fact that Jews, considered by many to be a pure Semitic race, are in reality a mixture of peoples with the most diverse origins.

Hence, the opposition between Jews and Gentiles or between Jews and Aryans is nothing more than an invention of the ruling political classes, always in need of creating divisions and inventing enemies in order, by doing so, to build up armies of loyal followers.

Many Jews, defined as such by others or who define themselves as such, have lent themselves to this deception for a variety of reasons, ranging from their unfounded belief that they are God's chosen people to the legitimate desire to preserve their unique history and cultural characteristics over the centuries.



# Ernest Renan

## Judaism as a Race and as a Religion

(1883)

The author, an expert on Orientalism and Semitic peoples, highlights the fact that many adherents to Judaism became so through conversion. Hence his conviction that “the Jewish population as a whole, as it exists today, has a considerable amount of non-Semitic blood; so that this race, which is considered the ideal of pure ethnicity, preserved through the centuries by the prohibition of mixed marriages, has been strongly influenced by foreign influences, much as has been the case with all other races.”

Source: Ernest Renan, *Le Judaïsme comme Race et comme Religion*, Lecture given at the Cercle Saint-Simon, 27 January 1883

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Gregory of Tours has preserved invaluable information about Judaism in Gaul. There were many Jews in Paris, Orléans, and Clermont. Gregory of Tours fought them as heretics. He had no idea that they were people of a different race. You might say that ethnography was not very familiar to such a simple mind. That is

true, but where did these Jews from Orléans and Paris come from? Can we assume that they were all descendants of Orientals who came from Palestine at some point and founded colonies in certain cities? I do not believe so. There were undoubtedly Jewish emigrants in Gaul who travelled up the Rhône and Saône rivers and served as a kind of leaven, but there were also many people who converted to Judaism and had no ancestors in Palestine. And when one considers that the Jewish communities of Germany and England came from France, one regrets not having more information about the origins of Judaism in France. We would probably see that the Gallic Jews in the time of Gontran and Chilpéric were, for the most part, simply Gauls professing the Jewish religion.

Let us leave aside these obscure facts; there are much clearer ones, first of all the conversion of Arabia and Abyssinia, which no one denies. Judaism had made immense gains in Arabia before Muhammad; a multitude of Arabs had converted to it. Arabia was within a hairbreadth of turning Jewish. Muhammad was a Jew at a certain point of his life, and it can be said, to a certain extent, that he always remained so. The Falaschas, or Jews of Abyssinia, are Africans, speaking an African language and reading the Bible translated into that African idiom.

But there is a more important historical event, closer to us in time, which seems to have had very serious consequences: the conversion of the Khazars, about which we have precise information. The Khazar kingdom, which occupied almost all of southern Russia, adopted Judaism around the time of Charlemagne. This historical fact is linked to the Karaites of southern Russia and the Hebrew inscriptions found in Crimea, where, as early as the 8th century, we find Tatar and Turkish names such as Toktamish. Would a Jew of Palestinian origin ever have called himself Toktamish, instead of Abraham, Levy or Jacob? Obviously not; this Toktamish was a Tatar, a converted Nogai or the son of a convert.

This conversion of the Khazar kingdom is of considerable importance in the question of the origin of the Jews living in the Danube countries and southern Russia. These regions are home to large Jewish populations who probably have little or nothing in common with Jewish ethnography.

A particular circumstance must have brought many non-Jewish people into Judaism. That circumstance was slavery or domestic servitude. We see that in all Christian countries, especially in Slavic countries, the great concern of bishops and councils was to forbid Jews from having Christian servants. Domestic service encouraged proselytism, and Jewish slaves were more or less drawn into the practice of Judaism.

There is therefore no doubt that Judaism initially represented the tradition of a particular race. There is also no doubt that primitive Palestinian blood contributed to the formation of the current Israeli race; but at the same time, I am convinced that the Jewish population as a whole, as it exists today, has a considerable amount of non-Semitic blood; so that this race, which is considered the ideal of pure ethnicity, preserved through the centuries by the prohibition of mixed marriages, has been strongly influenced by foreign influences, much as has been the case with all other races.

In other words, Judaism was originally a national religion; it has now reverted to being a closed religion; but in the meantime, for many centuries, Judaism was open. Very large numbers of non-Israelite populations embraced Judaism, so that the meaning of this word, from an ethnographic point of view, has become highly questionable.

One might object by referring to what is known as the Jewish type. There is much to be said on this point. My opinion is that there is no such thing as a Jewish type, but that there are Jewish types. I have acquired considerable experience in this regard, having spent ten years at the National Library, attached to the Hebrew manuscript collection, so that Jewish scholars from all over the world would

come to me to consult our precious collection. I quickly recognised my clients, and from one end of the room to the other, I could guess who was coming to my desk. Well, the result of my experience is that there is no single Jewish type, but several, which are absolutely irreducible to one another.

How did this race become confined to a certain number of types? As a result of what we were saying earlier, through segregation, ghettos, and the prohibition of mixed marriages. Ethnography is a very obscure science, because it is impossible to conduct experiments in this field, and the only things that are certain are those that can be tested.

What I am about to say is not meant to prove anything, but simply to explain my thinking. I believe that if we took thousands of people at random, for example those who are currently walking up and down the Boulevard Saint-Germain, and transported them to a desert island where they were free to multiply, I believe that after a certain amount of time, the types would be reduced, grouped together, so to speak, concentrated into a certain number of types which thus would have survived and triumphed over the others. Such concentration of types is the result of marriages taking place within a restricted circle for centuries.

The similarity of customs and habits is also cited in favour of the ethnic unity of the Jews. Whenever you bring together people of any race and force them to live in a ghetto, you will get the same results. There is, if one may put it this way, a psychology of religious minorities, and this psychology is independent of race.

The position of Protestants in a country such as France, where Protestantism is a minority religion, is very similar to that of Jews, because Protestants were forced to live among themselves for a very long time and were forbidden from doing many things, just like the Jews. This creates similarities that are not based on race, but are the result of certain similarities in their situations. The habits of a

concentrated, constrained life, full of prohibitions, sequestered in a way, are the same everywhere, regardless of race.

The slander spread among the less educated sections of the population against Protestants and Jews is the same. The professions that a sect excluded from community life is forced to take up are the same. Like the Jews, Protestants have neither people nor peasants; they have been prevented from having them. As for the similarity of spirit within the same sect, it can be sufficiently explained by the similarity of education, reading material and religious practices.

# Bernard Lazare

## The Jews

(1894)

A powerful text that sweeps away all the nonsense about racial purity (Semitic and Aryan) and the superiority that some would like to attribute to their own race. As the author says: “The opposition between Aryans and Semites is artificial; it is not true to say that the Aryan race and the Semitic race are pure races, and that the Jews were a single, unchanging people. Semitic blood has mixed with Aryan blood, and Aryan blood with Semitic blood.”

Source: Bernard Lazare, *L'antisémitisme. Son histoire et ses causes*, 1894.

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[...] to those who assert the purity of the Aryan race, we have pointed out that this race, like all races, was the product of countless intermingling. Without even mentioning prehistoric times, we have shown that the Persian, Macedonian and Roman conquests exacerbated the ethnological confusion that grew even further in Europe during the invasions. The so-called Indo-Germanic races, already

burdened with alluvial deposits, mixed with the Chudes, the Ongrians and the Uro-Altaic peoples. Those Europeans who believe themselves to be direct descendants of the Aryan ancestors do not think about the diverse countries these ancestors crossed during their long exoduses, nor about all the peoples they brought with them, nor about all those they found settled wherever they stayed, peoples of unknown races and uncertain origin, obscure and unknown tribes whose blood still flows in the veins of men who call themselves the heirs of the legendary and noble Aryans, just as the blood of the yellow Dacyans and the black Dravidians flows beneath the skin of the white Aryo-Indians.

But the idea of Semitic superiority is no more justified than the idea of Aryan superiority, and yet it has been supported with equal plausibility. There have been theorists who have asserted, and even proved, that the Semites were the flower of humanity and that everything good in Aryanism came from them; surely one day, if it has not already happened, the patriotism of some ethnologist will demonstrate with the same evidence that the Turanian must occupy the highest rank in history and anthropology.

Today, those who consider themselves the highest embodiment of Semitism, the Jews, contribute to perpetuating this belief in racial inequality and hierarchy. Ethnological prejudice is universal, and those who suffer from it are its most tenacious defenders. Anti-Semites and Philo-semites unite to defend the same doctrines; they only disagree when it comes to attributing supremacy. While anti-Semites accuse Jews of belonging to a foreign and vile race, Jews consider themselves to be a chosen and superior race; they attach the utmost importance to their nobility and antiquity, and even today they are still prey to patriotic pride. Although they are no longer a people, although they protest against those who want to see them as representatives of a nation encamped among foreign nations, they nevertheless retain this vain conviction deep within themselves and are thus similar to chauvinists in all countries. Like them, the Jew

claims to be of pure origin, without any better evidence to support this pretence, and we must closely examine the assertion of Israel's enemies and of Israel itself: namely, that the Jews are the most united, the most stable, the most impenetrable, and the most unyielding people.

We lack the documents needed to determine the ethnology of the nomadic *Bene Israel* [« children of Israel » in Hebrew], but it is likely that the twelve tribes which, according to tradition, made up this people, did not belong to a single stock; they were undoubtedly heterogeneous tribes because, like other nations, the Jewish nation cannot boast, despite its legends, of having been created by a single couple. The common conception that the Hebrew tribe was divided into sub-tribes is only a legendary and traditional conception, that of Genesis, which has been mistakenly accepted by some historians writing about the Hebrews. Already composed of diverse units, among which were undoubtedly Turanian and Kushite groups, i.e. yellow and black, the Jews added other foreign elements during their stay in Egypt and in the land of Canaan, which they conquered. Later, Gog and Magog, the Scythians, coming under Josiah to the gates of Jerusalem, may have left their mark on Israel.

But it was from the first captivity onwards that intermingling increased. "During the Babylonian captivity," says Maimonides, "the Israelites mingled with all kinds of foreign races and had children who, thanks to these alliances, formed a kind of new confusion of languages." And yet this Babylonia, in which there were cities such as Mahuza, almost entirely populated by Persians converted to Judaism, was considered to contain Jews of a purer race than the Jews of Palestine. "As for the purity of the race," said an old proverb, "the difference between the Jews of the Roman provinces and those of Judea is as noticeable as the difference between poor-quality dough and fine flour dough; but Judea itself is like poor-quality dough compared to Babylonia."

Judea had experienced many vicissitudes. It had always been a country of passage for Egypt and Assyria; then, when the Jews returned from captivity, they allied themselves with the Samaritans, the Edomites and the Moabites. After the conquest of Idumea by Hyrcanus, there had been Jewish and Idumean alliances, and during the war with Rome, the Latin victors had, it was claimed, fathered sons. "Are we quite sure," Rabbi Ulla said melancholically to Judah ben Yehisquil, "that we are not descended from the pagans who, after the capture of Jerusalem, dishonoured the young girls of Zion?"

But what most favoured the introduction of foreign blood into the Israelite nation was proselytism. The Jews were a people of propagandists par excellence, and from the construction of the Second Temple onwards, especially after the dispersion, their zeal was considerable. They were indeed those of whom the Gospel says that they ran "through land and sea to make proselytes," and Rabbi Eliezer could rightly exclaim: "Why did God scatter Israel among the nations? To recruit proselytes everywhere." There is abundant evidence of this proselytising zeal among the Jews, and during the first centuries before the Christian era, Judaism spread with the same power that later characterised Christianity and Islam. In Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, almost all the Jews were converted Gentiles. Damascus and Cyprus were centres of intermixing of people, as I have already shown. Moreover, the Hasmonean conquerors forced the defeated Syrians to be circumcised; kings, bringing their subjects with them, converted, as did the family of Adiabene, and in certain districts of Palestine itself, the population was very mixed, as in Galilee, in that 'circle of Gentiles' where Jesus was to be born.

[...]

Thus, this Jewish race, presented by Jews and anti-Semites as the most unassailable and homogeneous of races, is in fact highly diverse. Anthropologists could first divide it into two distinct groups: dolicho-

cephalics and brachycephalics. The first type includes Sephardic Jews, Spanish and Portuguese Jews, as well as most Jews from Italy and southern France; the second type includes Ashkenazi Jews, i.e. Polish, Russian and German Jews. But the Sephardim and Ashkenazim are not the only two known varieties of Jews; there are many more.

In Africa, there are Jewish farmers and nomads, allied with the Kabyles and Berbers near Sétif, Guelma and Biskra, on the borders of Morocco; they travel in caravans as far as Timbuktu, and some of their tribes on the edge of the Sahara are black tribes, such as the Daggatouns, just as the Falacha Jews of Abyssinia are black. In India there are white Jews in Bombay and black Jews in Cochin, but the white Jews have Melanesian blood. They settled in India in the fifth century, after the persecutions of the Persian king Pheroches, who drove them out of Baghdad; however, their settlement is reported to date back further: to the arrival of the Jews in China, that is, before Jesus. As for the Jews of China, they are not only related to the Chinese who surround them, but they have also adopted the practices of the religion of Confucius.

Thus, the Jew has been constantly transformed by the different environments in which he has lived. He has changed because the various languages he has spoken have introduced different and opposing concepts into him. He has not remained a united and homogeneous people; on the contrary, he is now the most heterogeneous of all peoples, the one with the greatest variety, and this so-called race, whose stability and resilience are praised by both friends and enemies alike, presents us with the most diverse and contrasting types, ranging from white Jews to black Jews, including yellow Jews, not to mention secondary divisions such as blond or red-haired Jews and brown-haired Jews with black hair.

Consequently, the ethnological grievance of anti-Semites has no serious or real basis.

The opposition between Aryans and Semites is artificial; it is not true to say that the Aryan race and the Semitic race are pure races, and that the Jews were a single, unchanging people. Semitic blood mixed with Aryan blood, and Aryan blood with Semitic blood. Aryans and Semites have both received the addition of Turanian blood and Chamite, Negro or Negroid blood, and in the Babel of nationalities and races that the world currently is, the concern of those who seek to recognise which of their neighbours are Aryan, Turanian and Semitic is a futile one.

# Martin Buber

## Nationalism and Judaism

### (1921)

The author underlies the important fact that Judaism cannot be confused with conventional nationalism. This conviction is stressed many times in this text. In the end the author states very clearly that “A foundation on which the nation is regarded as an end in itself has no room for supernational ethical demands [as expressed in Judaism] because it does not permit the nation to act from a sense of true supernational responsibility.” And this, for Judaism, is a question of life and death.

Source: *Address delivered during the twelfth Zionist Congress at Karlsbad*, September 5, 1921.

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Judaism is not merely being a nation. It is being a nation, but because of its own peculiar connection with the quality of being a community of faith, it is more than that. Since Jewry has a character of its own, and a life of its own, just like any other nation, it is entitled to claim the rights and privileges of a nation. But we must never forget that it

is, nevertheless, a *res sui generis*, which, in one very vital respect, goes beyond the classification it is supposed to fit into.

A great event in their history moulded the Jews into a people. It was when the Jewish tribes were freed from the bondage of Egypt. But it required a great inner transformation to make them into a nation. In the course of this inner change, the concept of the government of God took on a political form, definitive for the time being, that of the "anointed" kingdom, i.e., the kingdom as the representative of God.

From the very beginning of the Diaspora, the uniqueness of Judaism became apparent in a very special way. In other nations, the national powers in themselves vouch for the survival of the people. In Judaism, this guarantee is given by another power which, as I have said, makes the Jews more than a nation: the membership in a community of faith.

From the French Revolution on, this inner bond grew more and more insecure. Jewish religion was uprooted, and this is at the core of the disease indicated by the rise of Jewish nationalism around the middle of the nineteenth century. Over and over this nationalism lapses into trends toward "secularization" and thus mistakes its purpose. For Israel cannot be healed, and its welfare cannot be achieved by severing the concepts of people and community of faith, but only by setting up a new order including both as organic and renewed parts.

A Jewish national community in Palestine, a *desideratum* toward which Jewish nationalism must logically strive, is a station in this healing process. We must not however forget that in the thousands of years of its exile Jewry yearned for the Land of Israel, not as a nation like others, but as Judaism (*res sui generis*), and with motives and intentions which cannot be derived wholly from the category "nation." That original yearning is behind all the disguises which modern national Judaism has borrowed from the modern nationalism of the West. To forget one's own peculiar character, and accept the slogans and paroles of a nationalism that has

nothing to do with the category of faith, means national assimilation.

When Jewish nationalism holds aloof from such slogans and words, which are alien to it, it is legitimate, in an especially clear and lofty sense. It is the nationalism of a people without land of its own, a people which has lost its country. Now, in an hour rife with decision, it wants to offset the deficiency it realized with merciless clarity only when its faith became rootless; it wants to regain its natural holy life.

Here the question may arise as to what the idea of the election of Israel has to do with all this. This idea does not indicate a feeling of superiority, but a sense of destiny. It does not spring from a comparison with others, but from the concentrated devotion to a task, to the task which molded the people into a nation when they attempted to accomplish it in their earlier history. The prophets formulated that task and never ceased uttering their warning: If you boast of being chosen instead of living up to it, if you turn election into a static object instead of obeying it as a command, you will forfeit it!

And what part does Jewish nationalism play at the present time? We — and by that I mean the group of persons I have belonged to since my youth, that group which has tried and will continue to try to do its share in educating the people — we have summoned the people to turn, and not to conceit, to be healed, and not to self-righteousness. We have equipped Jewish nationalism with an armor we did not weld, with the awareness of a unique history, a unique situation, a unique obligation, which can be conceived only from the supernational standpoint and which — whenever it is taken seriously — must point to a supernational sphere.

In this way we hoped to save Jewish nationalism from the error of making an idol of the people. We have not succeeded.

Jewish nationalism is largely concerned with being “like unto all the nations,” with affirming itself in the face of the world without

affirming the world's reciprocal power. It too has frequently yielded to the delusion of regarding the horizon visible from one's own station as the whole sky. It too is guilty of offending against the words of that table of laws that has been set up above all nations: that all sovereignty becomes false and vain when in the struggle for power it fails to remain subject to the Sovereign of the world, who is the Sovereign of my rival, and my enemy's Sovereign, as well as mine. It forgets to lift its gaze from the shoals of "healthy egoism" to the Lord who "brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, and Aram from Kir" (Amos 9:7).

Jewish nationalism bases its spurious ideology on a "formal" nationalistic theory which — in this critical hour — should be called to account. This theory is justified in denying that the acceptance of certain principles by a people should be a criterion for membership in that people. It is justified in suggesting that such a criterion must spring from formal common characteristics, such as language and civilization. But it is not justified in denying to those principles a central normative meaning, in denying that they involve the task—posed in time immemorial — to which the inner life of this people is bound, and together with the inner, the outer life as well.

I repeat: this task cannot be defined, but it can be sensed, pointed out, and presented. Those who stand for that religious "reform" which— most unfortunate among the misfortunes of the period of emancipation! — became a substitute for a reformation of Judaism which did not come, certainly did all they could to discredit that task by trying to cram it into a concept. But to deny the task its focal position on such grounds is equivalent to throwing out the child along with the bath water. The supernational task of the Jewish nation cannot be properly accomplished unless — under its aegis — natural life is reconquered. In that, formal nationalism disclaims the nation's being based on and conditioned by this more than national task; in that, formal nationalism has grown overconscious and dares to disengage Judaism from its connection with the world and to isolate it; in

that, formal nationalism proclaims the nation as an end in itself, instead of comprehending that it is an element. By doing so formal nationalism sanctions a group egoism which disclaims responsibility.

It is true that, in the face of these results, attempts have been made from within the nationalistic movement to limit this expanding group egoism from without, and to humanize it on the basis of abstract moral or social postulates rather than on that of the character of the people itself. However, all such efforts are bound to be futile. A foundation on which the nation is regarded as an end in itself has no room for supernational ethical demands because it does not permit the nation to act from a sense of true supernational responsibility. If the depth of faith, which is decisive in limiting national action, is robbed of its content of faith, then inorganic ethics cannot fill the void, and the emptiness will persist until the day of the turning.

We, who call upon you, are weighed down with deep concern lest this turning may come too late. The nationalistic crisis in Judaism is in sharp, perhaps too sharp, relief in the pattern of the nationalistic crises of current world history. In our case, more clearly than in any other, the decision between life and death has assumed the form of deciding between legitimate and arbitrary nationalism.

# Camillo Berneri

## The character of the Jews

### (1935)

This is an extract from a text written in French and published in Paris in 1935. The author, through various quotations and personal impressions, makes a portrait of the character of the Jews. In synthesis, for Berneri “Jews have faults and qualities like everyone else, but these faults and qualities are more clearly defined.”

Source: Camillo Berneri, *Le Juif antisémite*, 1935.

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### **Part Three: What We Mean By ‘Jewish’**

The Jew does not exist, by which I mean that there is no consistent racial type that can be called the Jewish race. However, Jews do exist. They exist as a historical social entity, which is not clearly ethnic and has a collective psychology, but which is nevertheless a self-aware community.

Schopenhauer put it very well: “The homeland of the Jew is other Jews,” and Renan, freed from racist myths, came to contrast Jewish

tradition with the Jewish race. Salomon Reinach, in an open letter addressed to an anti-Semite, said: "To speak of Jews as a conscious community, a physiological or psychological entity, is to be fooled by words." (*Le Nouveau Mercure*, Paris, October 1922). Reinach is right to deny the ethnic entity of the Jews, but he might end up by denying their historical entity.

Élisée Reclus rightly observed that the Jews constitute a nation, "since they are conscious of a collective past of joys and sufferings, the repository of identical traditions, and the more or less illusory belief in a common ancestry." (Élisée Reclus, *L'Homme et la Terre*, 1908).

Bernard Lazare, who is doubly authoritative here, both as a Jew and as a specialist in Jewish affairs, expressed the same point of view when he wrote: "With the laws abolished and the Talmud disregarded, it seems that the Jewish nation should inevitably have died out, and yet Western Jews are still Jews. They are Jews because they have kept their national consciousness alive and vibrant. They still believe that they are a nation, and by believing this, they preserve themselves. When Jews cease to be conscious of their nationality, they disappear; as long as they have this consciousness, they 'remain'. The Jew has no longer religious faith, he no longer practises, he is irreligious, he is sometimes atheistic, but he 'persists' because he believes in his race. He has retained his national pride, he still imagines himself to be a superior individual, a being different from those around him, and this conviction prevents him from assimilating, for, being always exclusive, he generally refuses to intermarry with the peoples around him. Modern Judaism claims to be nothing more than a religious denomination, but in reality it is still an ethnos, since it believes itself to be so, since it has retained its prejudices, its selfishness, and its vanity as a people." (Bernard Lazare, *L'antisémitisme. Son histoire et ses causes*, 1894).

From a psychological point of view, I regard anyone who considers himself Jewish to be Jewish, and I consider as an individual anyone who, based on this awareness, whether illusory or not, develops an inferiority or superiority complex. Naturally, when it comes to an individual influenced by certain hereditary biological characteristics that, for lack of a better term, we are forced to call Semitic, I will also consider this individual in its objective nature. Tradition has its objective correlation: heredity.

#### **Part Four: The Inferiority Complex Among Jews**

Jews are a nation not only because of their national consciousness, but also because of certain predominant psychological characteristics that define them. Among the dolichocephalic Jews of North Africa, Italy, the Iberian Peninsula and the South of France, as well as among the brachycephalic Jews of Poland, Russia and Germany, certain psychological traits can be observed that cannot be explained by race alone. They must be explained by the historical factor, which is the sum of heredity and reflexes caused by the current social environment.

Heredity is biological tradition, the current social situation is history continuing, the sum of ancestral psychological and physical residues and life experiences. Jews are steeped in history, in their history as a floating, incestuous nation, made up of exoduses, mergers, waves of emigration, and stagnation in inaccessible ghettos. It is the history of a large family, full of marriages between cousins, close cooperation between families, and federations of communities. It is the history of a voyage, where we see crews disembarking in Western cities, later finding themselves in the East or vice versa, sometimes on rafts after shipwrecks, sometimes on golden ships.

A family among peoples, a nation among states, a nation without a homeland, grafted onto the economic and political life of nations,

unable to absorb them or merge with them. The Jews have known the weight of the chains of slavery, the stinking shadow of the ghettos, the screaming shame of the wheel. Those of today know the weight of emancipation. One is never more of a slave than when one is aware of being one. It is in trying to break the chains that one realises how strong they are. It is hard, having become emancipated, to be not yet free men.

The Jew sees himself dying as a Jew. At the same time as he sees the dawn of his social liberation, he sees the sunset of his race: for him, social emancipation means disappearing as a nation. Leon Pinsker, in *Auto-Emancipation*, expresses a state of mind common to many Jews when he writes: "The Jew is, to the living, a dead man; to the natives, a stranger; to the sedentary, a vagabond; to the wealthy, a beggar; to the poor, an exploiter and a millionaire; to patriots, a stateless person; to all classes of society, a hated competitor." And here is our own image: "Our homeland: foreign lands; our unity: dispersion; our solidarity: general hostility; our weapon: humility; our tactic: flight; our originality: adaptation; our future: the next day."

### **Part Five: The Jewish Protest**

Throughout the centuries, Jews have been, and still are, either rulers or slaves, millionaires or paupers, highly educated or ignorant. Gifted with the meticulous patience of women and Chinese people, they also have the destructive tendencies of Slavs. They can be practical or dreamy, terribly selfish or sublimely generous, tender or harsh. If they are modest, they are so to the point of humility; if they are proud, their pride is an outrage that walks among us. If they are stingy, their avarice is sordid; if they are charitable, their hands are full of holes. Jews have faults and qualities like everyone else, but these faults and qualities are more clearly defined. Jews are either despicable or adorable. This singularity of character is understand-

able if we consider it as a phenomenon of protest. Their faults are their weaknesses. Their qualities are their faults sublimated.

Pride is the characteristic of Jews. Baruch Spinoza (*Tractatus theologico-politicus*, 1670) noted this in the 17th century in Holland. Bernard Lazare noted it in the 19th century in France.

Among the typical moral characteristics of Jews, Lombroso (*L'antisemitismo e le Scienze Moderne*, 1894), himself a Jew, cites petulance, "perhaps natural in those who have long been oppressed, the need to dominate others, to assert oneself, to make oneself felt." As Lombroso says, Jews find in the will to power a defence against their inferiority complex and against their real social inferiority. As school-child, the Jew wants to be top of the class, to be above his classmates who despise him.

"His heart is closed, and his only joy is in study. He will fill his mind, since he cannot love. And since he cannot be loved, he will at least amaze. And he is always ahead of the others, and becomes the one who worries the teachers, whom his classmates envy and hate. He hates them too. He no longer believes in anyone but his parents, his true friends, his true teachers." (André Spire, *Quelques Juifs et demi-juifs*, 1913).

As a young man, if he is wealthy, he will dazzle the golden youth and the women with his carriages, his elegance, and his distinguished manners. Bohemian and intelligent, he will be a non-conformist, a virulent polemicist, and will have a reputation for being a nihilist. He may be proud of his origins. Did not the Jewish hat, a mark of infamy, become a kind of national symbol as early as the 14th century? It can be seen on seals, and families of converted Jews who became nobles adopted it in their coats of arms. Jews suffering from an inferiority complex would lean towards nationalism, which would take on the character of a veritable delusion of entitlement. Excluded from political and military careers, the Jews would dream of becoming great

industrialists, financiers, or rabbis. If poor, they will aspire to be the best in their workshop, the best in their department, the best in their choir, the best in their sports club. The inferiority complex and the resulting protest can lead Jews to escape from Judaism.

# Elias Canetti

## The Jews

(1962)

An image of the Jews that stresses their dissimilarities more than their homogeneity. The only common aspect seems to be their strong persistence to be considered “a people”. And in this they are quite like other populations classified as semitic, namely the Palestinians.

Source: Elias Canetti, *Crowds and Power*, 1962

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No people is more difficult to understand than the Jews. Debarred from their country of origin, they have spread over the whole of the inhabited earth. Their talent for adaptation is well known, but the degree of their adaptation is immensely variable. Among them were to be found Spaniards, Indians and Chinese. They carry languages and cultures with them from one country to another and guard them more tenaciously than their possessions. Fools may tell stories of their sameness everywhere, but anyone who knows them well will be inclined to think that there are more varied types among them than among any other people. The extent of variation between Jews, both

in their nature and their appearance, is one of the most extraordinary phenomena there is. The popular saying that both the best and the worst men are to be found amongst them is a naïve way of expressing this fact. Jews are different from other people, but, in reality, they are most different from each other.

The Jews have been admired for continuing to exist. They are not the only people who are found everywhere; the Armenians are certainly equally far-spread. Nor are they the oldest people; the history of the Chinese goes back much further than theirs. But, of the old peoples, they are the only one which has been wandering for so long. They have had most time in which to disappear without trace and, in spite of this, they are more here now than they ever were.

Until a few years ago, they had no territorial or linguistic unity. Most of them no longer understood Hebrew; they spoke in a hundred tongues. To millions of them their old religion had become an empty sack. Even the number of Christians amongst them was gradually increasing, especially among intellectuals; and the number of those without any religion at all was far larger still. Speaking superficially, from the point of view of self-preservation in the vulgar sense, they should have done everything possible to let it be forgotten that they were Jews, and to forget it themselves. But they cannot forget it; nor do most of them want to. One is driven to ask in what respect these people remain Jews; what makes them into Jews; what is the ultimate nature of the bond they feel when they say 'I am a Jew'.

This bond has existed from the beginning of their history and has been re-formed over and over again with astounding monotony during its course: it is the Exodus from Egypt. Let us visualize the actual content of this tradition: a whole people, numbered, it is true, but none the less a multitude, wanders for forty years through the desert. Their legendary forefather had been promised progeny numerous as the sand on the shores of the sea. Now this progeny exists and wanders, sand through the sand of the desert. The sea

allows them to pass, but it closes over their enemies. Their goal is a promised land, which their swords will conquer for them.

The image of this multitude moving year after year through the desert has become the crowd symbol of the Jews. It has remained to this day as distinct and comprehensible as it was then. The people see themselves together before they settled and then dispersed; they see themselves on their migration. In this state of density they received their law. If ever a crowd had a goal, they had. They had many adventures and these were common to all of them. The crowd they formed was a *naked crowd*; of all the many things which normally enmesh men in their separate lives scarcely any existed in these surroundings. Around them was nothing but sand, the barest of all crowds; nothing is more likely than the image of sand to emphasize the feeling of being alone with itself which this wandering procession must have had. Often its goal was obliterated and the crowd, threatening to disintegrate, had to be roused, gripped and held together by chastisement or exhortation. The number of people in the procession – 600,000 - 700,000 – was enormous, and not only by the modest standards of remote antiquity. The duration of their wanderings is of particular importance. What this crowd sustained for forty years can later be stretched to cover any period of time. This long wandering inflicted as a punishment contains all the torments of later migrations.

# Robert Ardrey

## From Jews to Israelis

(1966)

The thesis of this author is that the State of Israel was born through a policy aimed at fomenting the enmity of the local populations, the Palestinians. This policy had the desired effect of cementing a group of people under a flag (the Jews as Zionists), making possible the establishment of a territorially sovereign nation. As a matter of fact, the State, any State, is born out of violence against other people qualified as enemies. In this specific case, the result has been the transformation of the celebrated cosmopolitan wanderer Jew into a racist ultra-nationalist territorialist Zionist.

Source: Robert Ardrey, *The Territorial Imperative*, 1966.

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If you program the territorial computer with the amity-enmity equation, and you feed into the machine the State of Israel and the Jewish people, then the monster will cough twice and give out the lunatic answer that there never was any such thing as a Jew, and that if it were not for the Arab League there would probably be no State

of Israel, either. And no matter how many repairmen you call in, or how viciously you accuse the computer of drinking too much or how many cold cloths you wrap about its head, the computer will still grind out the same answer.

According to the computer, the story goes like this: For a very long time human nature has been playing a grotesque joke on Jew and Gentile alike. He and we have joined in regarding him as a race. And yet he has less racial distinctiveness than the southern Italian or the Swede. He is a descendant of a mixed bag of Middle Eastern tribes, as I am a descendant of a mixed bag of Scottish clans, and he has no more genetic distinction than you or I or the next man. But nevertheless there has existed a profound difference between us. We have had territories, he has had none. Among modern, civilized peoples he has been unique. And what we have described as a Jew has been nothing other than a de-territorialized man.

Jewish difficulties with territory, it seems, began a very long time ago, when God promised Abraham, leader of some wandering pastoral tribes, title to a most unremarkable piece of real estate on the Mediterranean littoral. No people ever took a promise harder. They managed to gain it, and to settle down, but they were such a quarrelsome, rebellious lot that somebody was always carting them off into slavery. First it was Egypt, where they made out very well but still dreamed of nothing but the Promised Land. After some hair-raising experiences they managed to regain their territory, but then it was the Chaldeans. Nebuchadnezzar hauled most of them away to Babylon. Later it was the Roman Empire that found itself unequal to Jewish argument and so dispersed them by force to a variety of Western destinations. For almost 2000 years the Jew of the West and the Jew of the East had one thing in common: they never saw their Promised Land again.

By the waters of Babylon the Jew sang his song: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem . . ." And he never did.

Jews call it the Diaspora – the dispersal of the people. As a population they were denied a social territory; as individuals in most times and places they were denied even the right to own land, to possess private territories. Despite all indignities heaped upon him, the Jew of the East had the easier life, since Mohammed out of respect for Jewish and Christian religion decreed him a “People of the Book.” It was not the Moslem but the Christian, we may remember, who drove the Jew out of Spain. Through all Christian lands his fate was a harsh one; perhaps Christian amity demanded an enemy to complete its own complex. Should this be so, then secular society was not one to abjure the Christian creation of an omega fish.

The suspicion must exist that if anti-Semitism had pleasant conveniences for Christians it had certain unpleasant conveniences for Jews as well. The Jew faced a genetic problem confronting no other Western people: How, without the reproductive isolation of territory, could he maintain his genetic integrity? He owned nothing but memories. Anti-Semitism helped. He accepted the grim ghetto. He forbade marriage or intercourse with Gentiles. His rabbis and scholars maintained the memories. The Jewish family became the impregnable equivalent of a Greek phalanx. Spectacularly, the Jew refused to conform, cultivated outlandish costume, beard, headgear, cultivated outlandish dietary customs. He pursued the arts while we pursued each other; he reveled in education while we still reveled in illiteracy. He overlooked nothing, forgot nothing. As century passed into century, millennium into millennium, like some ancient magician the Jew made memories from the dust of the years.

The Jew was different, let there be no doubt. And he maintained that difference with unflagging resolution. We regarded him as a race apart; it was to Jewish interest to agree. We derided the Jewish personality; he exaggerated the personality. None of us guessed, of course, he or we, that the “Jewish personality” was nothing but a bundle of mannerisms preserving the identity of a de-territorialized man. And then came Zionism.

Let us pause for a warning: My sympathies have been always with Zionism. But neither my sympathies nor those of the computer at my elbow have the smallest effect on the workings of the amity-enmity equation. We shall see, in due course, what happens when sympathies are reversed.

Zionism, in any event, enlisted my imagination as the next man's dream or the next man's adventure might enlist one's imagination in the reading of a good novel. As the great day of British withdrawal from Palestine approached, my Washington friends panicked. They foresaw an Arab massacre of defenseless Jews beyond anything in the history of pogroms. I was skeptical. I knew nothing about territory in those days, of course, but a playwright tends to give weight to the irrational. It seemed to me that the history of pogroms cast little light on what would happen when a people homeless for two thousand years had again the opportunity to defend its Promised Land.

What happened to the Arabs, then, did not surprise me. But many, many years later, when I had still not visited Israel but my computer and I were beginning to wonder about man and territory, I made a little list. If a territorial interpretation of the Jew carried validity, then certain theoretical consequences should have come about in reality.

First, a territory is a defended area. To defend it one must have hostile neighbors. The Arab League, happily for the Jew, presented him not only with a wealth of hostile neighbors but with the opportunity to make legitimate his territory in the strictest biological sense.

Second, if civilized man is to respect someone else's title to a territory, he needs evidence other than a questionable, long-ago deal with God. He needs, in other words, to see the proprietors in defense of their land slaughter a maximum number of their fellow human beings. Here again the Arab League co-operated splendidly with Jewish purposes. They bared their bodies, they died in piles.

Third, such an astonishing reversal of what we had always regarded as the “Jewish personality” should have shaken the West. It did. From that date in 1948 anti-Semitism may have retained a nostalgia or two, but it ceased to be a workable institution. We flatter ourselves that the Hitler outrages awakened the conscience of mankind. They did nothing of the sort. I recall that in America immediately after World War II anti-Semitism reached peaks never before attained despite all Nazi contributions to our universal conscience; and the literature of the period will bear me out. It was the photographs of dead Arabs, not of cremated Jews, that awakened our famed conscience. It was in 1948 that a stunned world realised that Jews could behave just like anyone else.

Fourth, acquisition and defense of a territory should have brought the usual enhancement of energy to the Israeli. It did. The Promised Land was as unpromising a collection of rocks, gravel, malarial swamps, and out-and-out desert as the Mediterranean littoral can provide, and had I been Abraham I should have demanded a better deal. Yet a people who for 2000 years had been denied ownership of land, had lived almost entirely in towns, and lacked both farming tradition and experience, have made themselves very nearly self-sufficient in food supply and are capturing one European market after another with their agricultural exports. I have mentioned the kibbutz. One understands why the collective farm has succeeded here and nowhere else in the Western World. You may visit a kibbutz called Sha’ar Hagolan, near the Sea of Galilee and within gunshot of the Jordan border. You may inspect the Neolithic antiquities which in the spare time the members have dug from their fields and which they display in a convenient bomb shelter; and you will have no need to examine the beaver to confirm the enhancement of energy in a territorial defender.

Fifth, a most important point. If the Jew never existed but was simply a de-territorialized man, then in theory he should cease to be a Jew when he becomes re-territorialized. When you visit Israel you will

discover that it is the new nation's favorite joke. There is the story of the visiting French-Jewish doctor met on the dock at Haifa by a friend. The doctor looked in puzzlement at the barrel-chested porters throwing luggage around. "Who are they?" he asked. "Jews," said his host.

It is not just physique. It is posture, a manner of walking, a manner of speaking, a manner of thought. The "Jewish personality" has vanished, replaced by that of the Israeli, a being as confident, as resolute, and as willing to do battle as a roebuck on his wooded acres. You go to a party in Tel-Aviv and someone asks the inevitable question, "How do you like Israel?" and you answer, "Fine. But where are the Jews?" And the party goes off into the greatest laughter, for it is the nation's joke.

Sixth, if territory has transmuted the Jew, physically and psychically, into another being called the Israeli, then in theory there should be a widening breach between the Israeli and the Jew of the Diaspora. The breach is far from theoretical; it is regarded by many in Israel as the second most severe problem that the new nation suffers. Many a thoughtful British or American or Continental Jew reproaches the Israeli as a chauvinist, as a man who has lost his world view and no longer acts according to his conscience, as one who has somehow betrayed the most profound ideals of a people. To the Israeli, his fellow of the Diaspora is a moralizer whose sermons if put into practice would mean death to Israel. Since it has been the financial generosity of world Jewry which has made Zion possible, there is anguish on both sides. What neither understands is that natural law has intervened; that they are no longer the same people sharing the same conscience and the same amity-enmity complex. Life would be easier for both if they understood.

The same division between Jew and Israeli witnessed a heart-rending demonstration during the Eichmann trial. I had not anticipated it with my theoretical list, but the Israeli elders with their intu-

itions had, for they dreaded what would happen when the inevitable documentation of Nazi atrocities unfolded. The dread was well founded. As the trial progressed, the bewildered young people – the sabras, the Israeli-born – confronted their parents in household after household. “Why didn’t you do something?” “You don’t understand,” said the parents, “there was nothing to do.” “But if you were going to die – if somebody knew he was going to die anyway – why didn’t he die fighting?” “You don’t understand,” said the parents. And it is true that the *sabra* [Jew born in the State of Israel] will never understand, for unlike the Jew of the gas chamber, he is a territorial animal.

The final point I did not anticipate, the Israeli did not anticipate, none but the computer could have anticipated. It is the first of all Israeli problems, and it will be solved or it will destroy the nation. The Arab, of course – as he well knows – scarcely constitutes a problem at all beyond the military expense that he adds to the nation’s budget. Israel’s problem is race.

Had I been a Jew and a pioneer Zionist, I too should have had no inkling as to the horror that would raise its ugly head someday. The Zionist in his innocence accepted the Jew as a Jew, even as did the Gentile. He anticipated difficulties in the welding together of peoples from a hundred different lands speaking a hundred different tongues. He recognized his people as an opinionated lot, and foresaw quarrels. But he foresaw no transcendent problems once all were together in the Promised Land, once all spoke Hebrew as a common language, and once all children grew up in common schools. That the racial reality of the Jew did not exist did not enter his calculation, nor that out of the conglomeration of background would come two entirely different peoples, the Jew of the East and the Jew of the West.

The Zionist fallacy was at first not revealed. Of the 650,000 Israeli who in 1948 fought the War of Independence, almost all were of the West. For eighty or so generations they had survived the hard condi-

tions of environmental selection imposed by Christian lands: they were tough, resourceful, educated, and none paled at confrontation with a hard day's work. The Arab League, with its generous gift of blood to sanctify their legitimate union, launched successfully the Israeli ship. Then and only then arrived the other Jew in his massive migration. Israel braced itself, embraced the brother who had sung by the rivers of Babylon. It occurred to no one that the Oriental Jew, after one hundred generations of survival and natural selection in environments from Casablanca to Baghdad so different from those of the West, in societies for example where work if possible is left to women and study if possible left to scribes, might bear a genetic scar or two which no classroom could immediately erase.

Today at Hebrew University, Oriental Jewish students are so few that they are outnumbered by Arabs. Abba Eban, until recently Minister of Education, has stated that 30 percent of Oriental children who have reached the age of fourteen and have had eight years of Israeli schooling are unable to write a simple Hebrew text or a legible letter, or to perform the four basic calculations of arithmetic. The attitude toward education differs as does the eagerness to work. While the Western Jew, renouncing the ghetto, has accomplished the agricultural miracle, the Eastern Jew, creating a new ghetto, has crowded over half of his numbers into the Tel-Aviv area. There is little intermarriage. Less than 5 percent of Western women marry Eastern men. The comment of a girl at Hebrew University that the Oriental Jew is "not of our sort" sounds like discrimination; but the Eastern male, of course, is even more unlikely to tolerate a wife with education than he is to seek it himself.

The Oriental Jew is today in a 55-percent majority. He makes bitter charges of racial discrimination. Israeli leadership recoils at a phrase that for any Jew is a blow to memory's solar plexus. Yet discrimination exists. Michael Selzer, writing in London's *Jewish Observer*, describes a housing development in Jerusalem which excludes *schwarzim*, the blacks. Epithets like *Cushim* and *Frankim* are

common; they correspond to the British *kaffir*. Zionist leadership in its innocence failed to reckon that when the Jew became an Israeli he would take on his newly straightened shoulders all the common burdens of mankind.

Yet despite all: despite disillusionment in the immediate efficacy of education, despite the failure of social conditioning, despite the entrenchments of “racial” animosities, despite deepening pessimism in many informed Israeli circles: despite all, Israel thrives and will achieve integration long before its pessimists believe. Why? Because of the amity-enmity complex; because the Arab League, persistent to the end in its animosities, will further accomplish the opposite of its purposes and in the end succeed in creating what no Israeli resource can produce, a truly permanent and united nation.

As the knowledgeable Israeli must dread the day when the Arab League appears on the Promised Land's doorstep, in its hands an olive branch, so the South African must dread the day when like the apocalypse itself there appears below the Limpopo the unheralded cordiality of nations. He could, just possibly, be destroyed.

# Giorgio Agamben

## The End of Judaism

(2024)

The author highlights very interesting aspects of the current situation of Israeli Zionism, the most relevant being the assimilation of the Zionist Jews of Israel under the Nation-State model of the Western societies. Moreover, by negating the reality of the exile, a general condition of the people of the world, the essence of Judaism is obliterated. These two negations constitute, for the author, the end of Judaism. This seems to be plausible, at least for the Zionist supporters of the State of Israel.

Source: Giorgio Agamben, *La fine del giudaismo* (<https://www.quodlibet.it/giorgio-agamben-la-fine-del-giudaismo>)

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One cannot understand the meaning of what is happening in Israel today if one does not understand that Zionism constitutes a double negation of the historical reality of Judaism. First, by transferring to the Jews the Nation-State of the Christians, Zionism represents the culmination of that process of assimilation that, since the end of the

18th century, has progressively erased Jewish identity. Decisively, as *Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin* [1] has shown in an exemplary study, at the foundation of Zionist consciousness lies another negation, the negation of *Galut*, that is, of exile as a principle common to all historical forms of Judaism as we know it. The premises of the concept of exile predate the destruction of the Second Temple and are already present in biblical literature.

Exile is the very form of Jewish existence on earth, and the entire Jewish tradition, from the *Mishnah* to the *Talmud*, from the architecture of the synagogue to the memory of biblical events, was conceived and lived from the perspective of exile. For an Orthodox Jew, the Jews living in the State of Israel are also in exile. And the State according to the Torah, which the Jews await at the coming of the Messiah, has nothing to do with a modern Nation State, so much so that at its core are precisely the rebuilding of the Temple and the restoration of the sacrifices, which the State of Israel does not even want to hear about. And it is good not to forget that exile, according to Judaism, is not only the condition of the Jews but concerns the failing condition of the world in its entirety. According to some Kabbalists, including *Luria* [2], exile defines the very situation of the deity, who created the world by exiling himself, and this exile will last until the advent of *Tiqqun* [3], that is, the restoration of the original order.

It is precisely this unreserved acceptance of exile, with the rejection it entails of any present form of statehood, that grounds the superiority (high-mindedness) of the Jews over religions and peoples who have compromised with the State. The Jews are, along with the gypsies, the only people who have rejected the State form, have not waged wars and have never stained themselves with the blood of other peoples.

By denying the root of exile and diaspora in the name of a Nation-State, Zionism has therefore betrayed the very essence of Judaism.

No wonder then that this removal has produced another exile, the Palestinians, and led the State of Israel to identify itself with the most extreme and ruthless forms of the modern Nation-State. The tenacious vindication of history, from which the diaspora, according to the Zionists, would have excluded the Jews, goes in the same direction. But this may mean that Judaism, which did not die at Auschwitz, perhaps knows its end today.

30 September 2024

### Notes

[1] *Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin* (1958) is an Israeli lecturer at the Ben Gurion University where he has been teaching History of Judaism. He is the author of *Exil et souveraineté: judaïsme, sionisme et pensée binationale* (French Edition)

[2] *Isaac Luria* (1534–1572) was a Jewish rabbi who produced an account of Kabbalistic thought. He is considered the father of contemporary Kabbalah.

[3] *Tikkun olam* ('repairing of the world') is a concept in Judaism which refers to various forms of action by the Jews intended to repair and improve the world.



### 3. Zion - Zionism

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Zionism is a relatively new conception in the Jewish world. It has managed to supplant aspects that were much more deeply rooted in the historical Jewish vision and practice.

For example, it has replaced (a) religion with politics, (b) cosmopolitanism with nationalism, (c) diaspora (dispersion) with territorialism (concentration).

These substitutions have completely altered the profound characteristics of the Jews, which were original and valuable. The result is that Jews who become Zionists and establish their own territorial State take on all the negative aspects that already characterise those individuals who are in positions of power in all the States of the world.

These negative aspects are then magnified by the fact that the Zionists consider themselves to be the expression of a chosen people, singled out by God to rule others. The result is continuous violence against all those who do not accept either this conception or the practices that follow from it. And among those who refuse Zionism we find many genuine Jews.



# The Basel Program

## First Zionist Congress

### (1897)

This is the short memorandum drafted at the First Zionist Congress (Basel, August 29-31, 1897). The Congress was held in Basel and not in Munich, as originally planned by Theodor Herzl, because many Jews, belonging to the Orthodox and Reform communities, had expressed strong objections to Zionism.

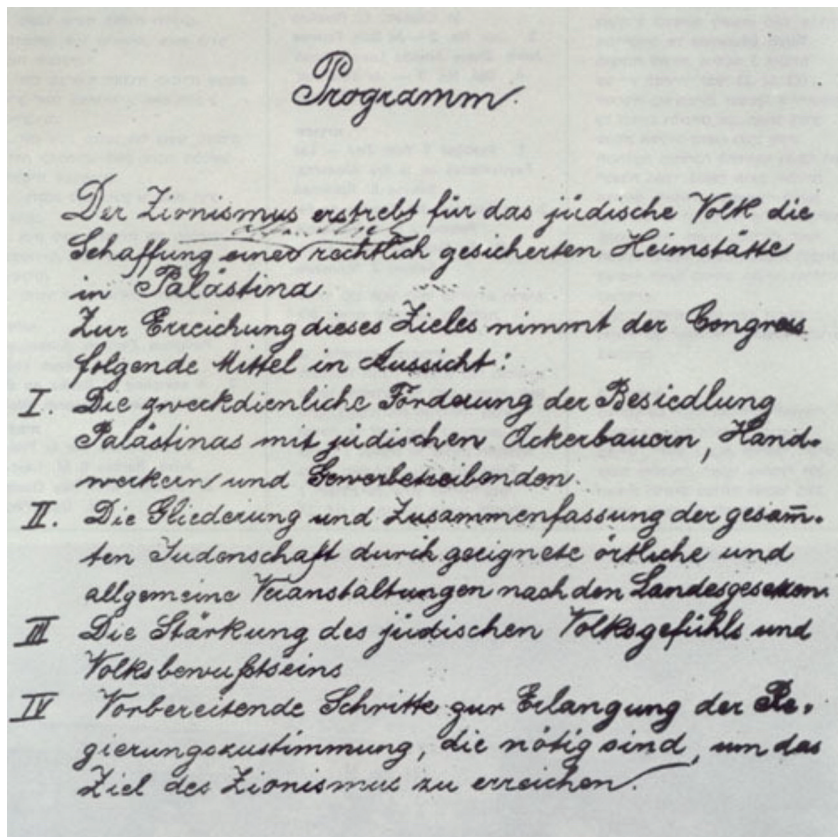
In this Congress, which was attended by 208 participants from seventeen countries, there is no mention of setting up a Zionist State in Palestine. The professed aim was that of promoting “a legally secure homeland for the Jewish people in Palestine” with the approval by a non specified foreign government.



Zionism seeks to establish a legally secure homeland for the Jewish people in Palestine.

To achieve this goal, the Congress envisages the following measures:

- I. The appropriate promotion of the settlement in Palestine by Jewish farmers, craftsmen and tradesmen.
- II. The organisation and consolidation of the entire Jewish community through appropriate local and general events in accordance with national laws.
- III. The strengthening of Jewish national sentiment and consciousness.
- IV. Preparatory steps to obtain the government approval necessary to achieve the goal of Zionism.



# Theodor Herzl

## Mauschel

(1897)

*Mauschel* is an article written and published by Theodor Herzl in 1897. The text appeared in his newspaper, *Die Welt*, which was to become the principal outlet for the Zionist Movement down to 1914, and was published roughly a month after the conclusion of the First Zionist Congress held in the city of Basel on August 29–31, 1897.

Herzl believed that there were two types of Jews, the *Jiden* (Yids) and the *Juden* (Jews), and considered almost any Jew who openly contested his proposals for a Zionist solution to the Jewish question, i.e. the foundation of a Jewish State in Palestine, to be a *Mauschel*. At that time the number of Jews opposing Zionism was overwhelming.

Mauschel is attested from the 17th century as a word for a haggling Jewish trader, but the term's meaning was then extended to refer pejoratively to Judeo-Germans generally. The connotative sense of both forms extends from hustling and swindling to insincerity and duplicitous or generally dishonourable behaviour.

Source: *Die Welt*, 15 October 1897.

Mauschel is an anti-Zionist. We have known him for a long time, and we have always been disgusted when we looked at him, when life brought us close to him or even into contact with him. But the disgust we felt for him was always accompanied by pity; we looked for mild, historical explanations for the fact that he was such a distorted, deformed and shabby fellow.

And yet: he is, after all, our fellow countryman – even if there is not the slightest reason for us to think anything of his comradeship. We told ourselves that we had to put up with him, indeed that it was our high task to ennoble him, that we would all grow from this task, and with a kind of romantic tenderness or weakness we took care of him because he was a rascal. If Mauschel did a mean thing, we endeavoured to cover it up. When Mauschel was base, we reminded the world of the great figures of our people. When Mauschel compromised us all, we were ashamed or secretly outraged – but we kept quiet.

Mauschel has finally done something worthy of praise, something that brings us honour and through which he compensates us for many things that we had to endure because of him. He has renounced us. Mauschel, that's a nice move!

But we are talking about Mauschel without having properly introduced him. Who is this Mauschel? A type, my dear friends, a figure that recurs throughout the ages, the dreadful companion of the Jew, and so inseparable from the Jew that the two have always been confused. The Jew is a man like others, no better, no worse, at most intimidated and embittered by persecution, and of great steadfastness in suffering. Mauschel, on the other hand, is a distortion of human character, something unspeakably base and repulsive. Where the Jew feels pain or pride, Mauschel has only abject fear or a sneer on his face.

In hard times, the Jew straightens himself up, while Mauschel, on the other hand, debases himself even more. When times get better, it is a reminder for the Jew to be lenient, to tolerate others, to work for the common good; Mauschel, however, becomes insolent and arrogant. The Jew harbours in his tormented heart an inextinguishable longing for the attainment of higher levels of culture; Mauschel pursues only his own dirty business under the cover of progress and reaction. The Jew endures poverty with dignity and trust in God; in wealth, his heart opens wide to the weary and burdened, and he voluntarily taxes his well-being through great gifts. Mauschel is a miserable scrounger in poverty and an even more miserable show-off in wealth.

The Jew loves art and scholarly endeavours; these were often and for a long time his entire consolation in the seclusion imposed on him by a hostile society. On the contrary, even art and science are practised by Mauschel for the sake of mean advantage. Thus, at all times, one could even see among our people merchants and craftsmen shamefully concealing their profound learning – the Jew appeared in such guises. Once his name was Baruch Spinoza, he ground spectacles and gazed at the world *sub specie aeterni*. And in the same way one could and can still see rabbis, writers, lawyers and doctors who are merely mischievous profit-seekers. Mauschel appears in such guises.

The Jew is capable of rigidly and honestly resisting the government of his country out of conviction, or of openly professing to be its supporter. Mauschel hides behind the most anti-state oppositions and secretly stirs them up when he doesn't like the ruling authority, or he takes refuge under police protection and shows off his servility when he fears a coup. That is why the Jew has always despised Mauschel – and Mauschel again calls the Jew a fool. And these two, who have always been separated by the deepest enmity of their natures, have always been confused with each other. Isn't that a terrible misunderstanding?

It's as if, at some dark moment in our history, an inferior mass of people had dropped into our unfortunate nation and been mixed with it – this is how irreconcilable and inexplicable these contrasts appear. Since we have always been the weakest of the weak as long as the nations have remembered, the representative of our national character was not the Jew, but Mauschel. Strong nations are judged by their best sons, weak ones by their worst.

The Germans are a nation of poets and thinkers because they produced Goethe, Schiller and Kant. The French are the brave and witty ones because they gave rise to Bayard [1] and Duguesclin [2], Montaigne, Voltaire and Rousseau. We are a nation of hagglers and crooks because Mauschel proliferates and manipulates the stock market. Mauschel has always provided the excuses for attacking us. Mauschel is the curse of the Jew. The Jew has always instinctively felt this, and it may often have happened that good Jews have distanced themselves from the people and the faith of their fathers because they were no longer able to endure this community. Thus, Mauschel weakened Judaism internally and externally.

But the time has come, our time, when even the escape from religion can no longer free the Jew from solidarity with Mauschel. The race! As if Jew and Mauschel were of the same race. Of course, it was difficult to prove otherwise, and before anti-Semitism, the Jew and Mauschel seemed forever, indissolubly, irrevocably linked. In such times, many a Mauschel is likely to distance himself from Judaism, but certainly not a Jew. Then Zionism emerged – the Jew and Mauschel had to take a stand on this question. And now, for the first time, Mauschel has rendered the Jew a moral service of unexpected greatness. Mauschel renounces the community, Mauschel is an anti-Zionist!

Let us not be misunderstood. We are not as stubborn and crazy as some people would like to portray us. We do not declare every opponent of our views and our movement to be a bad guy. There are very

honourable, very respectable reasons why a Jew cannot or will not personally participate in this popular movement; but that does not mean he has to suspect and fight against it. The attitude of a Jew who does not want to go along with the Zionist movement is actually self-evident: he sets himself apart. He is so completely assimilated into his environment of other faiths that the fate of the Jews no longer concerns him.

Perhaps it was only out of decency and pride that he did not break the outermost connection. He doesn't care about his former compatriots, so he can be sure that they don't want to know anything more about him either. But the further he has already strayed from Judaism, the more respectfully he will have to regard the stirrings of the consciousness of this people so alien to him. Perhaps he will also understand that this movement will not make his situation worse, but better. It enables him to break away from the old people, to join another, to which he feels more akin, without shameful concession. He is simply not a Zionist, but he is not an anti-Zionist either. He remains neutral, cool, foreign. And if he is inwardly very balanced, he will, as a foreigner, approve and support the philanthropic intentions of the Zionists, as do our Christian friends who belong to the most diverse peoples.

Mauschel, on the other hand, is an anti-Zionist, and he is so in a loud, obnoxious way. Mauschel sneers, scolds, slanders and denounces. That's because Mauschel senses that now he is finally in trouble. He guessed this immediately in an almost brilliant way, even before Zionism blew all his covers. Mauschel has also hastily issued a treacherous catchphrase against the Zionists: they are Jewish anti-Semites. We? We, who, regardless of our acquired position and our advancement, profess to be Semites before the whole world, uphold the cultivation of our old ethnicity, stand by our poor brothers. But he realized in a flash what we are. We are Mauschel's enemies. Mauschel had already practically resigned himself to anti-Semitism.

In civilised countries, Jews are only concerned with honour. Mauschel shrugs his shoulders: what does honour mean? Why do you need honour? As long as business is good and you are healthy, you can put up with the rest. If worse comes to worst, Mauschel turns his gaze into the distance, however not to Zion, but to some country where he might be able to take refuge with another nation. Once there, he soon plays the chauvinist, lectures on the new patriotism and suspects everyone who is not like him. In doing so, he commits the strange inconsistency of renouncing the Jews and at the same time speaking in their name. So it happens that we sometimes have to hear from serious friends of our cause the remark: 'The Jews themselves don't want to know anything about Zionism.' The Jews? Not at all. Only Mauschel does not! No true Jew can be an anti-Zionist, only Mauschel is.

So be it. That frees us from him. That is one of the first, one of the most beneficial consequences of our movement. We will breathe a sigh of relief when we are completely rid of these people, whom we had to treat with secret shame as fellow citizens. They don't belong with us – but neither do we belong with them! Are we beginning to see what a healthy people's movement our Zionism is; how will we manage to purge ourselves of the disgraceful elements? Away with the rotten toleration. We need no longer blush at Mauschel's manipulations, we need not conceal them, we need not sensitively defend them.

Ah, are we fools? Well, we're not so crazy as to take responsibility for Mauschel any longer. Even more: the enemy should be treated like an enemy.

Get down from the pulpit, Mauschel, which you are misusing as a rebel rabbi! Let us first return to the cleaned-up synagogues where good Jews also pray as rabbis for the poor. Get out, Mauschel, of all the institutions representing the Jewish people whom you claim not to know. And if it is true that only the oppressed, not the powerful,

are attached to Zionism, then let's mobilise the combined strength of the unfortunate. Let's see how things turn out when we boycott Mauschel in all areas. When we officially exclude all those who oppose our national community, these outcasts will make up a strangely mixed society.

There's the financier who has such a bad conscience that he is afraid of that other suspicious Mauschel, the blackmailing journalistic, and feeds him. There's the lawyer whose clientele is on the edge of the law. There's the politician wearing red make-up who now practices, exploits and debases socialism. There are the shady businessmen, the fake dignitaries, the hypocritical pious, the lying bystanders, the cunning exploiters . . .

Mauschel, watch out! There is a movement that even the enemies of the Jews admit is not contemptible. The idea is to initiate an outflow of unhappy, economically and politically severely threatened people to a permanent home with legal safeguards. Are you against that, Mauschel? You want to prevent this through perfidy because you see no immediate benefit to yourself? What have you ever done for your 'brothers'?

You have dishonoured them, you have harmed them, and now when they want to help themselves, you stab them in the back.

Mauschel, watch out! Zionism could do as Tell does in the legend. When Tell prepares to shoot the apple from his son's head, he has a second arrow ready to use. If the first shot misses, the other is to serve as revenge. Friends, the second arrow of Zionism is destined for Mauschel's chest!

**Notes**

[1] Bayard is a magical bay horse in the legends derived from the medieval epic poem *Chansons de geste*.

[2] Bertrand du Guesclin (c. 1320 – 13 July 1380) was a Breton knight and an important military commander on the French side during the Hundred Years' War.

# Karl Kraus

## A Crown for Zion

(1898)

Karl Kraus (1874-1936) was an Austrian-Jewish writer. In this extract he shows his dislike for Zionism seen as virulent anti-semitism, in other words, a plan to promote the departure of the Jews from Europe (as wanted by the antisemites) and the creation of a new Jewish ghetto in Palestine. Kraus was in favour of the Jews assimilating and fermenting, with their own culture, the social and cultural environment of the countries in which they lived.

Original Title: *Eine Krone für Zion*

The title is a play on words. *Krone* means “crown” and refers also to the currency of Austria-Hungary from 1892 to 1918. One *Krone* was the minimum donation required to participate in the *First Zionist Congress* held in Basel, Switzerland, in August 1897.

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Some time ago, one of the gentlemen who now position themselves as advocates of the Jewish people and, with eyes strangely twisted towards the sunrise, agitate for the return of all remaining Jews to

their ancestral homeland of Palestine, asked me to contribute a bit to those causes that are called Zionist or, to use a good old-fashioned word, anti-Semitic. It seemed to be a campaign similar to the one recently suggested by Mr. Schneider [1] in the Lower Austrian parliament. At first I really believed that the friendly collector, as ultimate executor of the Christian-social will – not, as he believes, of the Old Testament – had come to collect the famous ‘bounty on Jews’, but I was soon instructed that anti-Semitism, as preached by the Zionists, refrained from such barbaric measures for the time being and was content to raise the funds necessary for the mere expulsion of the Jews. I had already been told earlier that the Member of Parliament Schneider was sincerely sympathetic to the endeavours of the Zionists, even though they were Jews; however, he had already become impatient in view of the lack of success of Zionist aid to date and had finally, as his motion in the Lower Austrian Parliament proves, energetically taken the matter into his own hands. Since then, it is said, there has been a certain degree of discord between Zionists and Christian Socialists; the former had to put up with accusations of lukewarmness, while the latter have been repeatedly accused of breaking the common bond. In addition, there was the performance of *The New Ghetto*, a play which, although portraying a thoroughly corrupt Jewish society, disappointed audiences by unexpectedly foregrounding a single noble-minded Israelite, thereby depriving the author of the sympathy of influential anti-Semitic circles.

But these skirmishes only seemed likely to weaken both parties, which, as it soon turned out, were dependent on each other. However, the anti-Semites, who could do nothing without the influx of Zionists, were the first to suffer from the rift. The Christian-social agitation fell silent and, in view of the parliamentary battles which consumed all the energy of the parties, one could indulge in the hope that even the lowest Viennese would perhaps soon move beyond the most obtuse anti-Semitism. It was only the appearance of a few anti-

cles in the main Zionist organ, especially the one entitled *Mauschel* [2], that brought about the reconciliation secretly longed for by both groups, and the cry 'Out with the Jews!' spread from the camp of the Jewish nationalist student body into those regions whose ever-ready political inertia was receptive to this convenient slogan. And soon the Jewish anti-Semites were again seen to be heading towards the common goal with a fervour never witnessed among the Aryan anti-Semites.

Referring to the example of numerous literary figures who did not belong to the Zionist party, the friendly collector in Ischl [3] asked me to give my contribution to the emigration fund in September. He called the sum requested a 'shekel' but assured me that, despite the unusually biblical name, this donation did not commit me to any party affiliation and merely 'entitled me to participate in the election of delegates for the next congress and to receive the notices to be issued by the congress office'. Because this right did not seem to me to be a particularly oppressive one – since I did not see why I should deny my sympathy to a pernicious cause that would never be realised – and because, after the probable failure of the Zionist idea, I foresaw material compensation for the deceived Polish proletariat as the only possible and laudable end to the whole hullabaloo, a monetary contribution in the spirit of that human charity which is the enemy of Zionism did not seem at all inappropriate to me. After all, why should I refuse a cheap favour to a colleague who goes around with his notepad and wants to become the finance minister of the Jewish State by distributing as many of those little yellow stickers as possible, which entitle the holder to enter the new ghetto? Nevertheless, it was only after much protest and an explicit promise that I would never be coerced into the new faith that I agreed to pay the shekel. I did the right thing, but it did not help. The power of the Zionist promise is so compelling that even those who wish to escape it will soon find their names on a printed list of party members.

[...]

This is not the place, nor it is necessary, to pin the doctrine of assimilation against the attacks of the Jewish nationalists and to counter the adaptability of the Jewish tribe against the rigidity of Zionist minds. But I would like to advise those gentlemen who have not yet tried it on themselves to finally give it a go. Even the most stubborn Zionist should be able to be civilised into a European in just a few years. The irrefutable belief in the adaptability of the Jewish character is the best orthodoxy; it just needs to start becoming the faith of the fathers. Destined to become inextricably intertwined with all surrounding cultures and yet to always remain a ferment, it proves stronger than its overzealous proclaimers. It is not this faith that anti-Semitism has chosen as its object of struggle, but the circumstances surrounding it. After all, what is at stake are only certain outward appearances created within the confines of the ghetto, which our harassing rabbis would like to preserve as the holy of holies, in the parodistic awareness of their 'mission'. Judaism will have to sacrifice them; it will not be difficult to deprive its opponents of these few pitiful tools at their disposal.

[...]

The centre of gravity of Zionist agitation naturally rests in Galicia [4]; once it finally forgoes the support for the 'cowardly assimilationists' of the European West, the plan to remove the Polish Jews will make the great amount of feeling that Zionism has set in motion appear completely out of place. Where a sober settlement project is under consideration, messianic rapture is entirely dispensable. Let those who despair of the possibility of solving the Eastern Jewish question on the spot make friends with this project. It seems to me that the woes and aches of Basel [5] can be cured in one fell swoop, and I would bet that, if treated systematically, it would take little more than two generations to transform a Galician Jewish primary

school into a luxury casino. If one has higher aims, the money now being collected for Zionist purposes will certainly suffice to acquire a decent education. The gentlemen would only have to decide to stop helping the Polish aristocracy, for whom anti-Semitism is the only source of income. With a thorough rejection of orthodox influences and a complete renunciation of certain ancestral prejudices in clothing and hairstyle, which have long since gone out of fashion, the thought of a final colonisation in one's own country seems to me to have much less of a utopian quality than the planned radical cure of an exodus. We would have to be given very compelling reasons for the latter, as have recently been put forward by authoritative Zionist sources. We heard that the governments were so cruel as to extend the law of Sunday rest to Jewish workers as well. But the latter did not want to abandon the observance of the Sabbath and, because they now have two days off work per week, are doomed to perish miserably in Europe. In Palestine – so ends the logical line of Zionism – of course no obligation to rest on Sunday awaits them.

It is ill-fitting to try to counter the irresistible force of such reasoning with heretical objections. The Zionist pathos of resignation, rekindled in Basel in front of a Jewish flag that beckons fulfilment, overcomes all obstacles that reason and reality might place in its way. Many more shekels will flow into the National Fund before the more reasonable realisation dawns on the authorities that world suffering does not require specialists and that all that oppresses us is everywhere only misguided socialism that is destined to make a return on itself even before the Jews return to Palestine. Would it not be possible to improve European culture more quickly than to found a Jewish national one? Until now the Jews have been scattered all over the world; so have the Christians – they forgot for a time that the Jews were citizens. Nevertheless, I believe that the Christians, if the others only give them time, will succeed in overcoming their forgetfulness with a little cultural enlightenment, and the gentlemen in Basel, who presumed to want to rush the historical development of a

people, may then have contributed to the regeneration of the operetta genre after all.

In any case, I imagine that the time is still far away when, whenever there is talk of a crown donated for Zionist purposes, one is led to reflexively think of the attributes of the kingdom of Zion. Offenbach's orchestra, which plays the urgent invitation 'Off to Crete!', turns out to be, as is well known, unaware of any plan or precise itinerary. Let the journalists who telegraph promising news from Basel to the uninterested world be patient and not go around with a face as if they had been reporters at Bethlehem's massacre of the innocents [6]. The game of nations may well continue for a while yet, and – arm in arm with the political admirers of 'medieval music' – this enthusiastically fabricated Judaism, which pretentiously flaunts a kind of right to persecution, may put the last few months of the century back in its place. If Zionists and anti-Semites share a worldview that is already poor to begin with, then that worldview must soon be over.

It seems so shallow and so easy to refute with the most commonplace arguments that one must be ashamed to be opposing it so emphatically. Even the most remote humanitarian phrases are liable to regain the appearance of tantalising originality when set against the ghetto tendencies. However, abstracting from all possibilities of political danger, good taste still has the right to protest against the fact that the wealth of thought out of which the drunken grocer in the Viennese district of Hernals draws his shout 'Out with you, Jews!' is simply repeated in Zionism, and that the answer 'Yes, out with us Jews!' offers too little variety despite its more solemn tone.

[...]

Ischl has recently become a popular transit station for Zionist race researchers who want to take their latest experiences or disappointments with them on their way to Basel. The only Zionist who was

able to stay here for a longer period of time was bound to Ischl by professional considerations; he is a dentist and as such lived only in thoughts of the thousand-year-old toothache of Judaism ...

The friendly coffee house on the Esplanade might seem like the last refreshment stop before the final departure. On closer inspection, however, one discovers that this is where the prototypes of sedentarieness have gathered, who could truly upset even the most inveterate anti-Zionist; people who want no disturbance whatsoever of the peace guaranteed to them by MP Noske [7], but who are still fighting tooth and nail against any attempt at assimilation. Nature seems to have shown a greater ability to adapt. When I went out recently, I was able to observe how, over time, it has adopted the habits of the people who visit it every day. I heard a little stream murmuring, and when, in astonishment, I called out into the forest, the echo answered me with a question ...

As you can see, this is a minor change in nature, which is insignificant compared to the devastation that the 300 delegates may have caused in the Swiss countryside. All those who did not heed the call from Basel must be defended against them. Come here, all of you – I would like to say to them – who are weary and burdened; shake the grouchiness from your foreheads and don't let the Zionist promises of a better future make you sad! Do not look longingly towards the land to which they want to lead you – for this is the land of Uz [8]. This is how I would like to speak to the people who live on the Ischl Esplanade, in the land of servitude, where the Traun flows and where the tourist tax is high ...

But this warning is not directed solely at the people of Ischl, at those settled souls who can only be roused by a social nudge; it is directed with much more justification and more love at the countless who stand to lose nothing, or at most a deceptive hope. The propertied classes, feudal Jews and bourgeois alike, will respond to the Zionist plea with a broad smile. In the weary hearts of the Galician prole-

tariat it will kindle pernicious embers. The longing only warms as long as the ignorance of the real facts lasts. The creation of a Fata Morgana, i.e a mirage, is not social reform, but false pretence, and for the wanderer in the desert every illusion must prolong the path of suffering. It is hardly to be expected that the Jews will enter the promised land with dry feet this time; another Red Sea, social democracy, will block their way there.

A few gentlemen at present feel disturbed by the sluggishness of their surroundings; being finely organised natures, blasé about the early successes that have endowed them with an abundance of talent and good fortune, they urgently need a new, more serious purpose in life. Without doubt, this requires the participation of the public. One may well be worried about the development of Dr. Theodor Herzl, the finest of the younger Viennese prose writers. But the fact that, for the mere reason that he needed a transition from the feature pages to the editorial page, hundreds of thousands, fooled by a glimmer of vain splendour, had to sink back into their old lot in redoubled misery, was certainly not the course of events predetermined by the order of the world. Where is Mr. Nordau [9], the great literary doctor, who always thought he had, with rare urgency, to feel the pulse of the dying century at the slightest anomaly of the times? ...

Oh, he is the chairman of the Zionist Congress!

## Notes

[1] Ernst Schneider, an Austrian politician who, in the Diet of Lower Austria, said that the government should offer a premium for the shooting of Jews similar to that offered for shooting wolves.

[2] Theodor Herzl, *Mauschel*, *Die Welt*, 15 October 1897.

[3] Town in Austria.

[4] Galicia is a historical and geographic region spanning what is now southeastern Poland and western Ukraine.

[5] The First Zionist Congress was held in Basel on August 29–31, 1897. Two hundred and eight delegates and twenty-six press correspondents attended the event. It was convened and chaired by Theodor Herzl, the founder of the modern Zionism movement.

[6] The reference is to the killing of the newborns ordered by Herod in Bethlehem and surrounding area, as recounted in the Gospel of Matthew.

[7] Gustav Noske (1868-1946) was a German politician, one of the leading members of the German Social Democratic Party. He became famous, in a negative sense, for using army and paramilitary forces to suppress the socialist/communist uprising of 1919 that led to the killing of around 165 people.

[8] The land of Uz is a location mentioned several times in the Hebrew Bible, most prominently in the *Book of Job* which begins: “There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job”.

[9] Max Nordau (1849-1923) was a physician, essayist, social critic and Zionist leader. He was co-founder, with Theodor Herzl, of the Zionist Organization, and was president or vice-president of several Zionist Congresses.

# Internationalist

## National Atavism

### (1906)

This short text beautifully clarifies the fact that the ideology of Nationalism and the practice of Territorialism (state monopolistic sovereignty) are the two faces of the same coin, namely of Statism and State oppression. And for the cosmopolitan enlightened Jews to embrace Zionism (Nationalism and Territorialism) is equivalent to a moral and cultural suicide.

Source: *Mother Earth*, Vol. 1, No. 1, March 1906, New York

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The Jewish circles in New York, Boston, Philadelphia and other cities in America are aroused over the visit of a spectre called Nationalism, alias Territorialism. Like all spectres, it is doing a lot of mischief and causing much confusion in the heads of the Jewish population.

The spirit of our ancestor, Abraham, has come to life again. Like Abraham, when Jehovah commanded him to go in quest of the

promised land, the Jewish Nationalists make themselves and others believe that they long for the moment, when with wife and child and all possessions, they will migrate to that spot on earth, which will represent the Jewish State, where Jewish traits will have a chance to develop in idyllic peace.

Natural science calls retrogression of species, which shows signs of a former state already overcome, atavism. The same term may be applied to the advanced section of the Jewish population, which has listened to the call of the Nationalists. They have retrogressed from a universal view of things to a philosophy fenced in by boundary lines; from the glorious conception that "the world is my country" to the conception of exclusiveness. They have abridged their wide vision and have made it narrow and superficial.

The Zionism of Max Nordau and his followers never was more than a sentimental sport for the well-to-do in the ranks of the Jews. The latter-day Nationalists, however, are bent on reaching those circles of the Jewish race that have so far followed the banner of Internationalism and Revolution; and this at a moment when revolutionists of all nationalities and races are most in need of unity and solidarity. Nothing could be more injurious to the Russian revolution, nothing prove a lack of confidence in its success, so much as the present nationalistic agitation.

The most encouraging and glorious feature of revolutions is that they purify the atmosphere from the thick, poisonous vapors of prejudices and superstition.

From time immemorial revolutions have been the only hope and refuge of all the oppressed from national and social yokes. The radical nationalistic elements seem to have forgotten that all their enthusiasm, their faith and hope in the power of a great social change, now falters before the question: Will it give us our own territory where we can surround ourselves with walls and watch-towers?

Yes, the very people, who once spoke with a divine fire of the beauty of the solidarity of all individuals and all peoples, now indulge in the shallow phrases that the Jew is powerless, that he is nowhere at home, and that he owns no place on earth, where he can do justice to his nature, and that he must first obtain national rights, like all nations, ere he can go further.

These lamentations contain more fiction than truth, more sentimentality than logic.

The Poles have their own territory; still this fact does not hinder Russia from brutalizing Poland or from flogging and killing her children; neither does it hinder the Prussian government from maltreating her Polish subjects and forcibly obliterating the Polish language. And of what avail is native territory to the small nations of the Balkans, with Russian, Turkish and Austrian influences keeping them in a helpless and dependent condition. Various raids and expeditions by the powerful neighboring states forced on them, have proven what little protection their territorial independence has given them against brutal coercion. The independent existence of small peoples has ever served powerful states as a pretext for venomous attacks, pillage and attempts at annexation. Nothing is left them but to bow before the superior powers, or to be ever prepared for bitter wars that might, in a measure, temporarily loosen the tyrannical hold, but never end in a complete overthrow of the powerful enemy.

Switzerland is often cited as an example of a united nation which is able to maintain itself in peace and neutrality. It might be advisable to consider what circumstances have made this possible.

It is an indisputable fact that Switzerland acts as the executive agent of European powers, who consider her a foreign detective bureau which watches over, annoys and persecutes refugees and the dissatisfied elements.

Italian, Russian and German spies look upon Switzerland as a hunting ground, and the Swiss police are never so happy, as when they can render constable service to the governments of surrounding States. It is nothing unusual for the Swiss police to carry out the order of Germany or Italy, to arrest political refugees and forcibly take them across the frontier, where they are given over into the hands of the German or Italian gendarmes. A very enticing national independence, is it not?

Is it possible that former revolutionists and enthusiastic fighters for freedom, who are now in the nationalistic field, should long for similar conditions? Those who refuse to be carried away by nationalistic phrases and who would rather follow the broad path of Internationalism, are accused of indifference to and lack of sympathy with the sufferings of the Jewish race. Rather it is far more likely that those who stand for the establishment of a Jewish nation show a serious lack of judgment.

Especially the radicals among the Nationalists seem to be altogether lost in the thicket of phrases. They are ashamed of the label "Nationalist" because it stands for so much retrogression for so many memories of hatred, of savage wars and wild persecutions, that it is difficult for one who claims to be advanced and modern to adorn himself with the name. And who does not wish to appear advanced and modern? Therefore the name of Nationalist is rejected, and the name of Territorialist taken instead, as if that were not the same thing. True, the Territorialists will have nothing to do with an organized Jewish State; they aim for a free commune. But, if it is certain that small States are subordinated to great powers and merely endured by them, it is still more certain that free communes within powerful States, built on coercion and land robbery, have even less chance for a free existence. Such cuckoos' eggs the ruling powers will not have in their nests. A community, in which exploitation and slavery do not reign, would have the same effect on these powers, as a red rag to a bull. It would

stand an everlasting reproach, a nagging accusation, which would have to be destroyed as quickly as possible. Or is the national glory of the Jews to begin after the social revolution?

If we are to throw into the dust heap our hope that humanity will some day reach a height from which difference of nationality and ancestry will appear but an insignificant speck on earth, well and good! Then let us be patriots and continue to nurse national characteristics; but we ought, at least, not to clothe ourselves in the mantel of Faust, in our pretentious sweep through space. We ought at least declare openly that the life of all peoples is never to be anything else but an outrageous mixture of stupid patriotism, national vanities, everlasting antagonism, and a ravenous greed for wealth and supremacy.

Might it not be advisable to consider how the idea of a national unity of the Jews can live in the face of the deep social abysses that exist between the various ranks within the Jewish race?

It is not at all a mere accident that the Bund, the strongest organization of the Jewish proletariat, will have nothing to do with the nationalistic agitation. The social and economic motives for concerted action or separation are of far more vital influence than the national.

The feeling of solidarity of the working-people is bound to prove stronger than the nationalistic glue. As to the remainder of the adherents of the nationalistic movement, they are recruited from the ranks of the middle Jewish class.

The Jewish banker, for instance, feels much more drawn to the Christian or Mohammedan banker than to his Jewish factory worker, or tenement house dweller. Equally so will the Jewish workingman, conscious of the revolutionizing effect of the daily struggle between labor and money power, find his brother in a fellow worker, and not in a Jewish banker.

True, the Jewish worker suffers twofold: he is exploited, oppressed and robbed as one of suffering humanity, and despised, hated, trampled upon, because he is a Jew; but he would look in vain toward the wealthy Jews for his friends and saviors. The latter have just as great an interest in the maintenance of a system that stands for wage slavery, social subordination, and the economic dependence of the great mass of mankind, as the Christian employer and owner of wealth.

The Jewish population of the East side has little in common with the dweller of a Fifth Avenue mansion. He has much more in common with the workingmen of other nationalities of the country — he has sorrows, struggles, indignation and longings for freedom in common with them. His hope is the social reconstruction of society and not nationalistic scene shifting. His conditions can be ameliorated only through a union with his fellow sufferers, through human brotherhood, and not by means of separation and barriers. In his struggles against humiliating demands, inhuman treatment, economic pressure, he can depend on help from his non-Jewish comrades, and not on the assistance of Jewish manufacturers and speculators. How then can he be expected to co-operate with them in the building of a Jewish commonwealth?

Certain it is that the battle which is to bring liberty, peace and well-being to humanity is of a mental, social, economic nature and not of a nationalistic one. The former brightens and widens the horizon, the latter stupefies the reasoning faculties, cripples and stifles the emotions, and sows hatred and strife instead of love and tenderness in the human soul. All that is big and beautiful in the world has been created by thinkers and artists, whose vision was far beyond the Lilliputian sphere of Nationalism. Only that which contains the life's pulse of mankind expands and liberates. That is why every attempt to establish a national art, a patriotic literature, a life's philosophy with the seal of the government attached thereto is bound to fall flat and to be insignificant.

It were well and wholesome if all works dealing with national glory and victory, with national courage and patriotic songs could be used for bonfires. In their place we could have the poems of Shelley and Whitman, essays of Emerson or Thoreau, the *Life of the Bee* by Maeterlink, the music of Wagner, Beethoven and Tschaikovsky, the wonderful art of Eleanora Duse.

I can deeply sympathize with the dread of massacres and persecutions of the Jewish people; and I consider it just and fair that they should strain every effort to put a stop to such atrocities as have been witnessed by the civilized world within a few years. But it must be borne in mind that it is the Russian government, the Russian reactionary party, including the Russian Church, and not the Russian people, that are responsible for the slaughter of the Jews.

Jewish, Socialists and Anarchists, however, who have joined the ranks of the Nationalists and who have forgotten to emphasize the fundamental distinction between the people of Russia and the reactionary forces of that country, who have fought and are still fighting so bravely for their freedom and for the liberation of all who are oppressed, deserve severe censure. They have thrown the responsibility of the massacres upon the Russian people and have even blamed the Revolutionists for them, whereas it is an undisputed fact that the agitation against the Jews has been inaugurated and paid for by the ruling clique, in the hope that the hatred and discontent of the Russian people would turn from them, the real criminals, to the Jews. It is said, "we have no rights in Russia, we are being robbed, hounded, killed, let the Russian people take care of themselves, we will turn our backs on them."

Would it not show deeper insight into the condition of affairs if my Jewish brethren were to say, "Our people are being abused, insulted, ill-treated and killed by the hirelings of Russian despotism. Let us strengthen our union with the intellectuals, the peasants, the rebellious elements of the people for the overthrow of the abom-

inable tyranny; and when we have accomplished that let us co-operate in the great work of building a social structure upon which neither the nation nor the race but Humanity can live and grow in beauty."

Prejudices are never overcome by one who shows himself equally narrow and bigoted. To confront one brutal outbreak of national sentiment with the demand for another form of national sentiment means only to lay the foundation for a new persecution that is bound to come sooner or later. Were the retrogressive ideas of the Jewish Nationalists ever to materialize, the world would witness, after a few years, that one Jew is being persecuted by another.

In one respect the Jews are really a "chosen people." Not chosen by the grace of God, nor by their national peculiarities, which with every people, as well as with the Jews, merely prove national narrowness. They are "chosen" by a necessity, which has relieved them of many prejudices, a necessity which has prevented the development of many of those stupidities which have caused other nations great efforts to overcome. Repeated persecution has put the stamp of sorrow on the Jews; they have grown big in their endurance, in their comprehension of human suffering, and in their sympathy with the struggles and longings of the human soul.

Driven from country to country, they avenged themselves by producing great thinkers, able theoreticians, heroic leaders of progress. All governments lament the fact that the Jewish people have contributed the bravest fighters to the armies for every liberating war of mankind.

Owing to the lack of a country of their own, they developed, crystallized and idealized their cosmopolitan reasoning faculty. True, they have not their own empire, but many of them are working for the great moment when the earth will become the home for all, without distinction of ancestry or race. That is certainly a greater, nobler and sounder ideal to strive for than a petty nationality.

It is this ideal that is daily attracting larger numbers of Jews, as well as Gentiles; and all attempts to hinder the realization thereof, like the present nationalistic movement, will be swept away by the storm that precedes the birth of the new era — mankind clasped in universal brotherhood.

# Avraham (Yair) Stern

## National Revival Principles

### (1940)

The Lehi group (Fighters for the Freedom of Israel), better known as the Stern Gang from the name of its leader Avraham Stern, was a Zionist paramilitary organization founded in 1940 with the aim of evicting the British mandate rulers from Palestine and declaring Zionist sovereignty on the region, from the River of Egypt, the Nile River, to the Euphrates River.

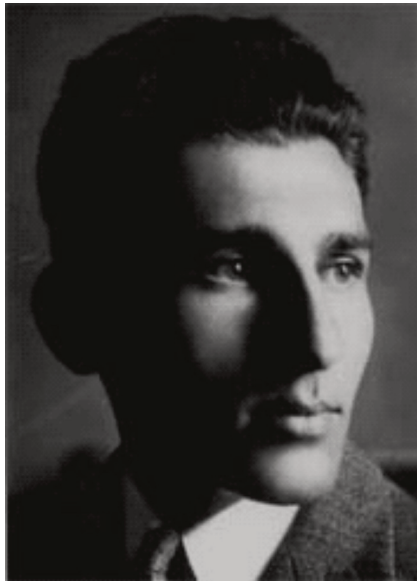
The methods employed were terrorist acts, first against the British authorities and then against the local Palestinian population. Amongst them we have:

- the assassination (1944) of Lord Moyne, the British Minister of State in the Middle East.
- the Deir Yassin massacre (1948) when they attacked the village of Deir Yassin killing at least 107 Palestinians, including women and children.
- the assassination (1948) of Count Folke Bernadotte, the United Nations mediator in the Arab-Israeli conflict.

To justify their methods the member of the group openly declared in their underground paper *He Khazit* (The Front) that

“Neither Jewish ethics nor Jewish tradition can disqualify terrorism as a means of combat. We are very far from having any moral qualms as far as our national war goes. We have before us the command of the Torah whose morality surpasses that of any other body of laws in the world: Ye shall blot them out to the last man.”

Their manifesto of principles lists the aims of their organization, making absolutely clear that Palestine is a Zionist land and that all extraneous people should be expelled or eliminated to make room for masses of Zionist immigrants.



*Avraham Stern*

## 1. THE NATION

The Jewish people is a covenanted people, the originator of monotheism, formulator of prophetic teachings, standard bearer of human culture, guardian of glorious patrimony. The Jewish people is schooled in self-sacrifice and suffering; its vision, survivability and faith in redemption are indestructible.

## 2. THE HOMELAND

The homeland is the Land of Israel within the borders delineated in the Bible ("To your descendants, I shall give this land, from the River of Egypt to the great Euphrates River." *Genesis* 15:18). This is the land of the living, where the entire nation shall live in safety.

## 3. THE NATION AND ITS LAND

Israel conquered the land with the sword. There it became a great nation and only there it will be reborn. Hence Israel alone has a right to that land. This is an absolute right. It has never expired and never will.

## 4. THE GOALS

1. Redemption of the land.
2. Establishment of sovereignty.
3. Revival of the nation.

There is no sovereignty without the redemption of the land, and there is no national revival without sovereignty.

*These are the goals of the organization during the period of war and conquest.*

## **5. EDUCATION**

Educate the nation to love freedom and zealously guard Israel's eternal patrimony. Inculcate the idea that the nation is master to its own fate. Revive the doctrine that "The sword and the book came bound together from heaven." (*Midrash Vayikra Rabba* 35:8)

## **6. UNITY**

The unification of the entire nation around the banner of the Hebrew freedom movement. The use of the genius, status and resources of individuals and the channeling of the energy, devotion and revolutionary fervor of the masses for the war of liberation.

## **7. PACTS**

Make pacts with all those who are willing to help the struggle of the organization and provide direct support.

## **8. FORCE**

Consolidate and increase the fighting force in the homeland and in the Diaspora, in the underground and in the barracks, to become the Hebrew army of liberation with its flag, arms, and commanders.

## **9. WAR**

Constant war against those who stand in the way of fulfilling the goals.

## **10. CONQUEST**

The conquest of the homeland from foreign rule and its eternal possession.

*These are the tasks of the movement during the period of sovereignty and redemption.*

## **11. SOVEREIGNTY**

Renewal of Hebrew sovereignty over the redeemed land.

## **12. RULE OF JUSTICE**

The establishment of a social order in the spirit of Jewish morality and prophetic justice. Under such an order no one will go hungry or unemployed. All will live in harmony, mutual respect and friendship as an example to the world.

## **13. REVIVING THE WILDERNESS**

Build the ruins and revive the wilderness for mass immigration and population increase.

## **14. ALIENS**

Solve the problem of alien population by exchange of population.

## **15. INGATHERING OF THE EXILES**

Total in-gathering of the exiles to their sovereign state.

## **16. POWER**

The Hebrew nation shall become a first-rate military, political, cultural and economical entity in the Middle East and around the Mediterranean Sea.

## 17. REVIVAL

The revival of the Hebrew language as a spoken language by the entire nation, the renewal of the historical and spiritual might of Israel. The purification of the national character in the fire of revival.

## 18. THE TEMPLE

The building of the Third Temple as a symbol of the new era of total redemption.



*Ein Nazi fährt nach Palestina (A Nazi travels to Palestine)*

*This medaillon commemorates a 1933 visit to Zionist Palestine by SS officer Leopold von Mildenstein and Zionist Federation official Kurt Tuchler.*

# Arthur Koestler

## The Zionists as Suprematist Exploiters (1949)

An extremely clear portrait of the attitude and practice of supremacism and exploitation that Zionist settlers showed towards the local population in Palestine in view of the founding of the State of Israel.

Source: Arthur Koestler, *Promise and Fulfilment. Palestine 1917-1949*, 1949.

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We have discussed at some length the positive aspects of the Jewish colonizatory enterprise in its repercussions on the Arab population. The negative aspects are more difficult to substantiate by statistics or concrete facts. Once again we have to switch from one historical plane to another, from a system of values expressed in health statistics and economic standards to a different system defined by psychological relations and cultural patterns.

We said before that, unlike other colonists, the Jews brought no glass beads or rum; but they brought no missionary Bibles either. This

absence of the missionary approach is a characteristic of Zionist colonization. It bestowed considerable benefits on the Arabs; but these benefits were not intentional, and thereby lost much of their moral value and their convincingness as a political argument. The patronizing tone of Zionist propaganda produced an effect contrary to its aim and psychologically neutralized any material advantage which the Arabs derived from the advent of the Jews. The Jews argued and proved that by developing the country's derelict wastes and industrial potential they were not taking the Arabs' house away but adding a new storey to it, as it were. The Arabs answered that this may or may not be so, but that in any case they refused to have an alien nation living "on top of them". The Jews argued and proved that by their building up and moving in the Arabs were much better off than before. The Arabs answered that this may or may not be so, but that in any case they hadn't asked the Jews to bestow benefits on them; and that all they wanted was to be left alone. I have tried to sum up elsewhere this very strong and natural reaction of the average educated Arab to Zionist arguments; it boils down to this:

"We don't care whether you pay and we don't care for your hospitals and schools. You must understand that this is our country. We want no foreign benefactors. We don't want to be patronized. We want to live in our own way, and we want no foreign teachers and no foreign money and no foreign habits and no smiles of condescension and no pats on the shoulder and no arrogance and none of your shameless women wriggling their buttocks in our holy places. We don't want your honey and we don't want your sting, get that straight. Neither your honey nor your sting..."

The novel from which this speech of a member of the Arab intelligentsia is quoted was written in 1945. A short time later, Azzam Pasha, Secretary of the Arab League, put the Arab case in the following words before the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry:

“The Zionist, the new Jew, wants to dominate, and he pretends that he has got a particular civilizing mission with which he returns to a backward, degenerate race in order to put the elements of progress into an area which has no progress. Well, that has been the pretension of every power that wanted to colonize and aimed at domination. The excuse has always been that the people are backward and that he has got a human mission to put them forward.... The Arabs simply stand and say ‘NO’. We are not reactionary and we are not backward. Even if we are ignorant, the difference between ignorance and knowledge is ten years in school. We are a living, vitally strong nation, we are in our renaissance; we are producing as many children as any nation in the world. We still have our brains. We have a great heritage of civilization and of spiritual life. We are not going to allow ourselves to be controlled either by great nations or small nations or dispersed nations.”

On its own level the argument is unanswerable. It is based on the premise that every people has a right to live in its own way, even if it is a primitive, anachronistic way which carries its own doom. To ask whether this premise is “right” or “wrong” is meaningless. History carries a whip in its hand, and in this case the Jews, its traditional victim, were the whip. No effort of humanity and understanding on their part could have possibly hidden this fact from the native Arabs. As it happens, the operation was less painful than in other cases, and in a crudely material sense even beneficial to the victim. But only in this crudely material sense. No effort on the part of the Jews could have induced the Arabs voluntarily to acquiesce in their fate.

But the point is that the Jews hardly made any effort in that direction at all. “The Arabs” represented for them a political headache, not a human and moral problem. They paid lip-service to the necessity of a mutual *rapprochement*, but in practice did little about it. Palestine was their promised land, doubly promised from Mount Sinai and

Downing Street, and they came to take possession of it as its masters. The presence of the Arabs was a mere accident like the presence of some forgotten pieces of furniture in a house which has been temporarily let to strangers. They had no intention of removing them unless they got in their way. They meant no harm to the Arabs; all they expected of them was to sit still and watch them taking the country over and running it in their own efficient way to everybody's benefit.

Unlike other colonizers, they did not exploit cheap native labour; they simply excluded the Arabs from their own hermetically sealed economy. This was hardly to be avoided, because one of the fundamental aims of Zionism was to reverse the top-heavy social pyramid of the Jews in the Diaspora; the Jews, as a nation, must have their own solid base of farmers and manual workers in all spheres of production. Only the planters of the pre-Zionist Jewish immigration employed Arab labour in their orange groves; but this was regarded as a betrayal of the national ideal, and the old planters, too, were gradually forced to replace Arab by Jewish labour. Theoretically, the Jewish trade unions were open to Jew and Arab alike; practically, little effort was made to attract Arab members. Theoretically, the extreme Zionist left preached a united front of the Arab and Jewish proletariat to liberate the fellaheen from their feudal exploiters. In fact, however, each Jew, Marxist or not, regarded himself as a member of the chosen race, and the Arab as his inferior.

Except for Jewish doctors and health service personnel, who played a considerable part in the improvement of Arab health standards, particularly in the rural areas, the Jews took no active steps to bring modern culture and civilization to the native population and to narrow the gap between the two races. The material benefits which came to the Arabs were an accidental by-product of Jewish economic expansion. The language of the Jewish schools and university, of books and newspapers, was Hebrew and hence inaccessible to the

Arabs. The Jews published no books or periodicals in Arabic. The cultural life of the two communities was confined to watertight compartments, as their respective economies were.

The Jews made no effort to bring European culture to the Arab masses, nor to adapt themselves to those aspects of oriental life which would have enriched their own cultural pattern and at the same time made them appear less provocatively alien to the country. They did not learn from the Arabs to build cool and spacious houses which would fit the climate and landscape; they brought with them their architecture of the Polish small town and of German functionalism of the 'twenties. Their dress, food, manners and general way of life were transplanted like a prefabricated pattern from their lands of origin. Some of these were improvements in the country's way of life; others unfitting and in bad taste. There was no cultural symbiosis between the two races. The Jews came as conquerors. It was a fair and humane conquest, but a conquest nevertheless.

Most of these things were objectively inevitable. The illiterate Arab masses, living under the complete spiritual sway of the village priest, were impervious to the voice of the twentieth century. They had no desire to organize themselves into trade unions, nor to study Marxist pamphlets and fight feudalism. The Jews were a minority, and to assert themselves against a hostile and backward majority they had to show their physical strength or perish. Their Marxist phrases and their talk of mutual understanding were bound to remain lip-service, for had they conceded the subjective justice of the Arab case they would have had to renounce their aim. Short of that, they could in fact do very little to alter the course of events.

Nevertheless, had they shown a little more discretion and less self-righteousness, more adaptability and a broader interpretation of their pioneer mission – the effort, even if rejected, even if ultimately hopeless, would have made a great difference, particularly for the later

internal development of the State of Israel. For the narrow and self-satisfied cultural isolationism with which Israel became imbued during this period of pre-natal conditioning has left a strong mark on its character and spirit as will be seen later in more detail.

# Murray Rothbard

## War Guilt in the Middle East

(1967)

A powerful reconstruction of the events that are at the basis of the conflict in Palestine and a short proposal on how to attempt to solve it. This clearly means to go beyond Zionism and remind all the people living in Palestine that “Jew and Arab had always lived well and peacefully together in the Middle East.”

Source: *Left and Right: A Journal of Libertarian Thought*, Spring-Autumn 1967.

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The chronic Middle East crisis goes back – as do many crises – to World War I. The British, in return for mobilizing the Arab peoples against their oppressors of imperial Turkey, promised the Arabs their independence when the war was over. But, at the same time, the British government, with characteristic double-dealing, was promising Arab Palestine as a “National Home” for organized Zionism. These promises were not on the same moral plane: for in the former case, the Arabs were being promised their own land freed

from Turkish domination; and in the latter, world Zionism was being promised a land most emphatically not its own. When World War I was over, the British unhesitatingly chose to keep the wrong promise, the one to world Zionism. Its choice was not difficult; if it had kept its promise to the Arabs, Great Britain would have had to pull gracefully out of the Middle East and turn that land over to its inhabitants; but, to fulfill its promise to Zionism, Britain had to remain as a conquering, imperial power ruling over Arab Palestine. That it chose the imperial course is hardly surprising.

We must, then, go back still further in history: for what was world Zionism? Before the French Revolution, the Jews of Europe had been largely encased in ghettos, and there emerged from ghetto life a distinct Jewish cultural and ethnic (as well as religious) identity, with Yiddish as the common language (Hebrew being only the ancient language of religious ritual). After the French Revolution, the Jews of Western Europe were emancipated from ghetto life, and they then faced a choice of where to go from there. One group, the heirs of the Enlightenment, chose and advocated the choice of casting off narrow, parochial ghetto culture on behalf of assimilation into the culture and the environment of the Western world. While assimilationism was clearly the rational course in America and Western Europe, this route could not easily be followed in Eastern Europe, where the ghetto walls still held. In Eastern Europe, therefore, the Jews turned toward various movements for preservation of the Jewish ethnic and cultural identity. Most prevalent was Bundism, the viewpoint of the Jewish Bund, which advocated Jewish national self-determination, up to and including a Jewish state in the predominantly Jewish areas of Eastern Europe. (Thus, according to Bundism, the city of Vilna, in Eastern Europe, with a majority population of Jews, would be part of a newly-formed Jewish state.) Another, less powerful, group of Jews, the Territorialist Movement, despairing of the future of Jews in Eastern Europe, advocated preserving the Yiddish Jewish identity by forming Jewish colonies

and communities (not states) in various unpopulated, virgin areas of the world.

Given the conditions of European Jewry in the late 19th and turn of the 20th centuries, all of these movements had a rational ground-work. The one Jewish movement that made no sense was Zionism, a movement which began blended with Jewish Territorialism. But while the Territorialists simply wanted to preserve Jewish-Yiddish identity in a newly developed land of their own, Zionism began to insist on a Jewish land in Palestine alone. The fact that Palestine was not a virgin land, but already occupied by an Arab peasantry, meant nothing to the ideologues of Zionism. Furthermore, the Zionists, far from hoping to preserve ghetto Yiddish culture, wished to bury it and to substitute a new culture and a new language based on an artificial secular expansion of ancient religious Hebrew.

In 1903, the British offered territory in Uganda for Jewish colonization, and the rejection of this offer by the Zionists polarized the Zionist and Territorialist movements, which previously had been fused together. From then on, the Zionists would be committed to the blood-and-soil mystique of Palestine, and Palestine alone, while the Territorialists would seek virgin land elsewhere in the world.

Because of the Arabs resident in Palestine, Zionism had to become in practice an ideology of conquest. After World War I, Great Britain seized control of Palestine and used its sovereign power to promote, encourage, and abet the expropriation of Arab lands for Zionist use and for Zionist immigration. Often old Turkish land titles would be dredged up and purchased cheaply, thus expropriating the Arab peasantry on behalf of European Zionist immigration. Into the heart of the peasant and nomadic Arab world of the Middle East there thus came as colonists, and on the backs and on the bayonets of British imperialism, a largely European colonizing people.

While Zionism was now committed to Palestine as a Jewish National Home, it was not yet committed to the aggrandizement of

an independent Jewish state in Palestine. Indeed, only a minority of Zionists favored a Jewish state, and many of these had broken off from official Zionism, under the influence of Vladimir Jabotinsky, to form the Zionist-Revisionist movement to agitate for a Jewish state to rule historic ancient Palestine on both sides of the Jordan River. It is not surprising that Jabotinsky expressed great admiration for the militarism and the social philosophy of Mussolini's fascism.

At the other wing of Zionism were the cultural Zionists, who opposed the idea of a political Jewish state. In particular, the Ihud (Unity) movement, centered around Martin Buber and a group of distinguished Jewish intellectuals from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, advocated, when the British should leave, a binational Jewish-Arab state in Palestine, with neither religious group to dominate the other, but both to work in peace and harmony to build the land of Palestine.

But the inner logic of Zionism was not to be brooked. In the tumultuous World Zionist convention at New York's Hotel Biltmore in 1942, Zionism, for the first time, adopted the goal of a Jewish state in Palestine, and nothing less. The extremists had won out. From then on, there was to be permanent crisis in the Middle East.

Pressured from opposite sides by Zionists anxious for a Jewish state and by Arabs seeking an independent Palestine, the British finally decided to pull out after World War II and to turn the problem over to the United Nations. As the drive for a Jewish state intensified, the revered Dr. Judah Magnes, president of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and head of the Ihud movement, bitterly denounced "Zionist Totalitarianism," which, he charged, is trying to bring

"the entire Jewish people under its influence by force and violence. I have not yet seen the Zionist terrorists called by their rightful names: Killers – brutalized men and women. ... All Jews in America

share in the guilt, even those not in accord with the activities of this new pagan leadership, but who sit at ease with folded hands....”

Shortly afterward, Dr. Magnes felt it necessary to exile himself from Palestine and emigrate to the United States.

Under unbelievably intense pressure from the United States, the UN – including an enthusiastic U.S. and USSR – reluctantly approved a Palestine partition plan in November 1947, a plan that formed the basis of the British pullout and the Israel declaration of existence on May 15 of the following year. The partition plan granted the Jews, who had a negligible fraction of Palestine’s land, almost half the land area of the country. Zionism had succeeded in carving out a European Jewish state over Arab territory in the Middle East. But this is by no means all. The UN agreement had provided (a) that Jerusalem be internationalized under UN rule, and (b) that there be an economic union between the new Jewish and Arab Palestine states. These were the basic conditions under which the UN approved partition. Both were promptly and brusquely disregarded by Israel – thus launching an escalating series of aggressions against the Arabs of the Middle East.

While the British were still in Palestine, the Zionist paramilitary forces began to crush the Palestinian Arab armed forces in a series of civil war clashes. But, more fatefully, on April 9, 1948, the fanatical Zionist-Revisionist terrorists grouped in the organization Irgun Zvai Leumi massacred a hundred women and children in the Arab village of Deir Yassin. By the advent of Israel’s independence on May 15 the Palestinian Arabs, demoralized, were fleeing in panic from their homes and from the threat of massacre. The neighboring Arab states then sent in their troops. Historians are wont to describe the ensuing war as an invasion of Israel by the Arab states, heroically rebuffed by Israel, but since all of the fighting took place on Arab territory, this interpretation is clearly incorrect. What happened, in fact, is that Israel managed to seize large chunks of territory assigned to the

Palestinian Arabs by the partition agreement, including the Arab areas of Western Galilee, Arab west-central Palestine as “corridor” to Jerusalem, and the Arab cities of Jaffa and Beersheba. The bulk of Jerusalem – the New City – was also seized by Israel and the UN internationalization plan discarded. The Arab armies were hampered by their own inefficiency and disunity and by a series of UN-imposed truces broken only long enough for Israel to occupy more Arab territory.

By the time of the permanent armistice agreement of Feb. 24, 1949, then, 600,000 Jews had created a state which had originally housed 850,000 Arabs (out of a total Palestinian Arab population of 1.2 million). Of these Arabs, three-quarters of a million had been driven out from their lands and homes, and the remaining remnant was subject to a harsh military rule which, two decades later, is still in force. The homes, lands, and bank accounts of the fleeing Arab refugees were promptly confiscated by Israel and handed over to Jewish immigrants. Israel has long claimed that the three-quarters of a million Arabs were not driven out by force but rather by their own unjustified panic induced by Arab leaders – but the key point is that everyone recognizes Israel’s adamant refusal to let these refugees return and reclaim the property taken from them. From that day to this, for two decades, these hapless Arab refugees, their ranks now swollen by natural increase to 1.3 million, have continued to live in utter destitution in refugee camps around the Israeli borders, barely kept alive by meager UN funds and CARE packages, living only for the day when they will return to their rightful homes.

In the areas of Palestine originally assigned to the Arabs, no Palestinian Arab government remained. The acknowledged leader of the Palestinian Arabs, their Grand Mufti Haj Amin el-Husseini, was summarily deposed by the longtime British tool, King Abdullah of Trans-Jordan, who simply confiscated the Arab regions of east-central Palestine, as well as the Old City of Jerusalem. (King Abdul-

lah's Arab Legion had been built, armed, staffed, and even headed by such colonialist British officers as Glubb Pasha.)

On the Arab refugees, Israel takes the attitude that the taxpayers of the world (i.e., largely the taxpayers of the United States) should kick in to finance a vast scheme to resettle the Palestinian refugees somewhere in the Middle East – i.e., somewhere far from Israel. The refugees, however, understandably have no interest in being resettled; they want their own homes and properties back, period.

The armistice agreement of 1949 was supposed to be policed by a series of Mixed Armistice Commissions, composed of Israel and her Arab neighbors. Very soon, however, Israel dissolved the Mixed Armistice Commissions and began to encroach upon more and more Arab territory. Thus, the officially demilitarized zone of El Auja was summarily seized by Israel.

Since the Middle East was still technically in a state of war (there was an armistice but no treaty of peace), Egypt, from 1949 on, continued to block the Strait of Tiran – the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba – to all Israeli shipping and to all trade with Israel. In view of the importance of the blocking of the Gulf of Aqaba in the 1967 war, it is important to remember that nobody griped at this Egyptian action: nobody said that Egypt was violating international law by closing this “peaceful international waterway.” (Making any waterway open to all nations, according to international law, requires two conditions: (a) consent by the powers abutting on the waterway, and (b) no state of war existing between any powers on the waterway. Neither of these conditions obtained for the Gulf of Aqaba: Egypt has never consented to such an agreement, and Israel has been in a state of war with Egypt since 1949, so that Egypt blocked the Gulf to Israeli shipping unchallenged from 1949 on.)

Israel's history of continuing aggression had only begun. Seven years later, in 1956, Israel, conjoined to British and French imperialist armies, jointly invaded Egypt. And oh how proudly Israel

consciously imitated Nazi blitzkrieg and sneak-attack tactics! And oh how ironic that the very same American Establishment that had for years denounced Nazi blitzkriegs and sneak-attacks was suddenly lost in admiration for the very same tactics employed by Israel! But in this case, the United States, momentarily abandoning its intense and continued devotion to the Israeli cause, joined with Russia in forcing the combined aggressors back from Egyptian soil. But Israel did not agree to pull its forces out of the Sinai Peninsula until Egypt agreed to allow a special UN Emergency Force to administer the Sharm-el Sheikh fortress commanding the Strait of Tiran. Characteristically, Israel scornfully refused the UNEF permission to patrol its side of the border. Only Egypt agreed to allow access to the UN forces, and it was because of this that the Gulf of Aqaba was opened to Israeli shipping from 1956 on.

The 1967 crisis emerged from the fact that, over the last few years, the Palestinian Arab refugees have begun to shift from their previous bleak and passive despair and begun to form guerrilla movements which have infiltrated the Israeli borders to carry their fight into the region of their lost homes. Since last year, Syria has been under the control of the most militantly anti-imperialist government that the Middle East has seen in years. Syria's encouragement to the Palestinian guerrilla forces led Israel's frenetic leaders to threaten war upon Syria and the conquest of Damascus – threats punctuated by severe reprisal raids against Syrian and Jordanian villages. At this point Egypt's premier, Gamal Abdel Nasser, who had been an anti-Israel blowhard for years, but had concentrated instead on demagogic, statist measures that wrecked Egypt's domestic economy, was challenged by the Syrians to do something concrete to help: in particular, to end UNEF control – and hence continuing Israeli shipping – in the Gulf of Aqaba. Hence, Nasser's request for the UNEF to leave. Pro-Israeli griping at U Thant's swift compliance is grotesque, when we consider that the UN forces were there only at Egyptian request, and that Israel

has always adamantly refused to have the UN forces on its side of the border. It was at that point, with the closing of the Strait of Tiran, that Israel evidently began to set the stage for its next blitzkrieg war.

While giving lip-service to peaceful negotiation, the Israeli government finally knuckled under to “hawk” pressure within the country, and the appointment of the notoriously warmongering Gen. Moshe Dayan as minister of defense was obviously the signal for the Israeli blitz attack that came a few days later. The incredibly swift Israeli victories; the press glorification of Israeli tactics and strategy; the patent unreadiness of the Arab forces despite the hoopla; all this indicates to all but the most naive the fact that Israel launched the war of 1967 – a fact that Israel scarcely bothers to deny.

One of the most repellent aspects of the 1967 slaughter is the outspoken admiration for the Israeli conquest by almost all Americans, Jew and non-Jew alike. There seems to be a sickness deep in the American soul that causes it to identify with aggression and mass murder – the swifter and more brutal the better. In all the spate of admiration for the Israeli march, how many people were there to mourn the thousands of innocent Arab civilians murdered by the Israeli use of napalm? As for Jewish chauvinism among so-called “antiwar” people on the Left, there is no more sickening demonstration of a total lack of humanity than that displayed by Margot Hentoff in the left-liberal *Village Voice*:

Is there any war you DO like? If so, are you Jewish? Lucky. What a time to be Jewish. Have you ever known any Jewish pacifists? Did you know any last week? ... Besides, this was a different war – an old kind of war, a kind of war in which death was life-giving and Arab deaths didn’t count. What a pleasure to be, once again, in favor of a war. What a good clean wholesome feeling to cheer those jeeps careening across the television screen filled with tough, lean, hard-faced, gun-bearing, JEWISH soldiers.

‘Look at them go! WOW! ZAP! Nothing’s gonna stop them now!’ said an old time radical pacifist. ‘This is an army of Jews!’

Another (whose major contribution to Judaism until now has been to write articles disowning Israel and announcing that Judaism is dead and deserves to be) spent the week confusing his nationality. ‘How are we doing?’ he kept asking. ‘How far have we gotten now?’

(Margot Hentoff, *Tomorrow, the World*, Village Voice, June 15, 1967, p. 9)

What a “clean wholesome feeling” indeed when “Arab deaths don’t count!” Is there any difference at all between this kind of attitude and that of the Nazi persecutors of the Jews whom our press has been attacking, day in and day out, for well over twenty years?

When this war began, the Israeli leaders proclaimed that they were not interested in “one inch” of territory; their fighting was purely defensive. But now that Israel sits upon its conquests, after repeated violations of UN cease-fires, it sings a very different tune. Its forces still occupy all of the Sinai Peninsula; all of Palestinian Jordan has been seized, sending another nearly 200,000 hapless Arab refugees to join their hundreds of thousands of forlorn comrades; it has seized a goodly chunk of Syria; and Israel arrogantly proclaims that it will never, never return the Old City of Jerusalem or internationalize it; Israeli seizure of all of Jerusalem is simply “not negotiable.”

If Israel has been the aggressor in the Middle East, the role of the United States in all this has been even more unlovely. The hypocrisy of the U.S. position is almost unbelievable – or would be if we were not familiar with U.S. foreign policy over the decades. When the war first began, and it looked for a moment as if Israel were in danger, the U.S. rushed in to avow its dedication to the “territorial integrity of the Middle East” – as if the borders of 1949-67 were somehow embalmed in Holy Writ and had to be preserved at all costs. But – as soon as it was clear that Israel had won and conquered once again,

America swiftly shed its supposed cherished “principles.” Now there is no more talk of the “territorial integrity of the Middle East”; now it is all “realism” and the absurdity of going back to obsolete *status quo* borders and the necessity for the Arabs to accept a general settlement in the Middle East, etc. How much more evidence do we need that an approving United States has always stayed in the wings, ready to come to the aid of Israel if necessary? How much more evidence do we need that Israel is now the ally and satellite of the U.S., which in the Middle East as in so many other areas of the world has assumed the mantle once worn by British imperialism?

The one thing that Americans must not be lured into believing is that Israel is a “little” “underdog” against its mighty Arab neighbors. Israel is a European nation with a European technological standard battling a primitive and undeveloped foe; furthermore, Israel has behind it, feeding it, and financing it the massed might of countless Americans and West Europeans, as well as the Leviathan governments of the United States and its numerous allies and client states. Israel is no more a “gallant underdog” because of numerical inferiority than British imperialism was a “gallant underdog” when it conquered far more populous lands in India, Africa, and Asia.

And so, Israel now sits, occupying its swollen territory, pulverizing houses and villages containing snipers, outlawing strikes of Arabs, killing Arab youths in the name of checking terrorism. But this very occupation, this very elephantiasis of Israel, provides the Arabs with a powerful long-range opportunity. In the first place, as the militant anti-imperialist regimes of Syria and Algeria now see, the Arabs can shift their strategic emphasis from hopeless conventional war with a far better armed foe to a protracted mass people’s guerrilla war. Armed with light weapons, the Arab people could carry out another “Vietnam,” another “Algeria” – another people’s guerrilla war against a heavily armed occupying army. Of course, this is a long-run threat only, because to carry it out the Arabs would have to overthrow all of their stagnant, reactionary monarchies and form a united pan-Arab

nation – for the splits into nation-states in the Arab world are the consequence of the artificial machinations and depredations of British and French imperialism. But for the long run, the threat is very real.

Israel, therefore, faces a long-run dilemma which she must someday meet. Either to continue on her present course and, after years of mutual hostility and conflict be overthrown by Arab people's guerilla war. Or – to change direction drastically, to cut herself loose completely from Western imperial ties, and become simply Jewish citizens of the Middle East. If she did that, then peace and harmony and justice would at last reign in that tortured region. There is ample precedent for this peaceful coexistence. For in the centuries before 19th- and 20th-century Western imperialism, Jew and Arab had always lived well and peacefully together in the Middle East. There is no inherent enmity or conflict between Arab and Jew. In the great centuries of Arab civilization in North Africa and Spain, Jews took a happy and prominent part – in contrast to their ongoing persecution by the fanatics of the Christian West. Shorn of Western influence and Western imperialism, that harmony can reign once more.

# Roger Garaudy

## Definition of Zionism

### (1996)

This is an extract from the Introduction of Roger Garaudy, *Les Mythes Fondateurs de la Politique Israélienne* (1996). Because of this book, the author was sentenced by a French Court to a suspended jail sentence of several year and to the payment of a huge fine. The paradoxical fact is that most of the statements contained in the text are quotations from Jews and Zionists writers and from Israeli historians dealing with Zionism and the Zionist State of Israel.

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What is the Zionism that I denounced (and not the Jewish people) in my book? It has often defined itself:

#### **1. It is a political doctrine**

“Since 1896, Zionism refers to the political movement founded by Theodor Herzl.”

(Source: *Encyclopaedia of Zionism and Israel*, Herzl Press, New York, 1971, volume 2, p. 1262)

## 2. It is a nationalist doctrine

This doctrine was not born out of Judaism but out of the European nationalism of the 19th century. Herzl, the founder of political Zionism, did not claim to belong to a religion:

“I do not obey a religious impulse.”

“I am an agnostic.” (p. 54)

(Source: Theodor Herzl, *Diaries*, Ed. Victor Gollancz, 1958)

He was not interested in the “Holy Land” in particular: for his nationalist objectives, he would have equally accepted Uganda or Tripoli, Cyprus or Argentina, Mozambique or the Congo.

(Source: Theodor Herzl, *Diaries*, passim)

But in the face of the opposition of his Jewish friends, he realized the importance of the “Mighty Legend” (June 9, 1895, *Diaries* I, p. 56) as “a rallying cry of irresistible power.”

(Source: Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*, p. 45)

This is a mobilizing slogan that this eminently realistic politician could not ignore. Transposing this “mighty Legend” of the “Return” into historical reality, he declared: “Palestine is our unforgettable historical homeland ... The name alone will be a powerful rallying cry for our people.”

(Source: Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State*, p. 209)

“The Jewish Question is for me neither a social question nor a religious question ... it is a national question.”

### 3. It is a colonial doctrine

Here too, the lucid Theodor Herzl does not hide his objectives. The first step is to set up a “Charter Company” under the protection of England, or any other power, as a stepping stone toward the formation of “the Jewish State.” That is why he called on the master of this type of operation, the colonial trafficker, Cecil Rhodes, who used his Charter Company to carve out of South Africa a subsidiary bearing his name: Rhodesia.

Theodor Herzl wrote him on January 11, 1902:

“Please send me a letter stating that you have examined my program and that you approve it. You may be wondering why I am calling on you, Mr. Rhodes. It is because my program is a political program.”

(Source: Theodor Herzl, *Diaries*, Vol. III, p. 105)

The Zionist doctrine adopted at the August 1897 Basle Congress had three dimensions: political, nationalist, colonial. Due to his Machiavellian genius, Theodor Herzl could justifiably say:

“I founded the Jewish State.”

(Source: Theodor Herzl, *Diaries*, p. 224)

Half a century later, his disciples applied exactly the same policies, used the same methods and followed the same political line to create the State of Israel (after W.W. II).

But this political, nationalist, colonialist enterprise was never a fulfillment of Jewish faith and spirituality. At the same time as the Congress of Basle, which could not be held in Munich (as predicted by Herzl) because of opposition from the German Jewish community, a Conference of American Rabbis was held in Montreal (1897),

where Rabbi Isaac Meyer Wise, the most representative Jewish personality in America, initiated a motion against the political and tribal Zionist interpretation of the Bible and for a spiritual and universalist interpretation of the Prophets.

We totally disapprove of the initiative aiming at the creation of a Jewish State. Attempts of this type highlight an erroneous conception of the mission of Israel ... that the Jewish Prophets were the first to proclaim ... It aims at a Messianic time when men recognize belonging to one great community for the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth.

(Source: *Conference of American Rabbis*, Yearbook VII, 1897, p. xii)

This opposition to political Zionism, inspired by the attachment to the spirituality of the Jewish faith, did not cease from expressing itself. Following W.W.II, using the U.N. and at the same time taking advantage of rivalries among nations and, especially, of the unconditional support of the United States, Israeli Zionism managed to impose itself as a dominant force. Thanks to its lobby, it succeeded in reversing an admirable prophetic tradition. But it did not manage to stifle the criticism of great spiritual men.

Martin Buber, one of the great Jewish voices of this century, during his entire lifetime and until his death in Israel, did not stop denouncing the degeneracy and even the inversion of religious Zionism into political Zionism.

Martin Buber declared in New York:

The feeling I had 60 years ago when I entered the Zionist movement is essentially the same feeling I have today ... I hoped that this nationalism would not follow the path of others, beginning with a great hope and degenerating later to become a *sacred egoism*, as

proclaimed by Mussolini, as though collective egoism could be more sacred than individual egoism. When we returned to Palestine, the decisive question was: Do you want to come here as a friend, a brother, a member of the community of people of the Middle East or as the representatives of colonialism and of imperialism?

The contradiction between the end and the means to reach it divided the Zionists: some wanted to receive political privileges from the Great Powers, others, especially the youth, wanted to be allowed to work in Palestine with their neighbors, for Palestine and for the future.

All was not always perfect in our relations with the Arabs, but there was, in general, good neighborliness between Jewish villagers and Arab villagers.

This organic phase of establishment in Palestine lasted until the time of Hitler. It was Hitler who pushed the masses of Jews to come to Palestine, and not a group of individuals who came to carry on with their lives and prepare for the future. Thus, a selective organic development was replaced by a mass immigration requiring a political force for its security ... The majority of Jews preferred to learn from Hitler rather than from us ...

Hitler showed that history does not follow the path of the mind, but that of power, and that when a people is quite strong, it can kill with impunity ...

This is the situation that we had to combat ... Within the association *Ihud* [Unity] we formulated the proposal ... for Jews and Arabs not only to coexist but to cooperate ... This would make possible an economic development of the Middle East, thanks to which the Middle East could bring a great essential contribution to the future of humanity.

(Source: *Jewish Newsletter*, June 2, 1958)

# The Jerusalem Program

## The Platform of the World Zionist Organization (2024)

The *Jerusalem Program*, the latest successor of the *Basel Program*, is the official platform of the World Zionist Organization and the global Zionist movement. It has been amended and adopted in February 2024.

It reaffirms Zionism as the sole ideology to be shared by all Israelis and the necessity for all of its inhabitants to be recruited into the Israel Defense Forces, even those who were previously exempted.

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Zionism, the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, brought about the establishment of the State of Israel, and views a Jewish, Zionist, democratic and secure State of Israel to be the expression of the common responsibility of the Jewish people for its continuity and future.

The Jerusalem Program's foundations of Zionism are:

- The unity of the Jewish people, its bond to its historic homeland *Eretz Yisrael* [the Land of Israel], and the centrality of the State of Israel and Jerusalem, its capital, in the life of the nation;
- *Aliyah* [Immigration] to Israel from all countries and the effective integration of all immigrants into Israeli society.
- Strengthening Israel as a Jewish, Zionist and democratic state and shaping it as an exemplary society with a unique moral and spiritual character, marked by mutual respect for the multi-faceted Jewish people, rooted in the vision of the prophets, striving for peace and contributing to the betterment of the world.
- Ensuring the future and the distinctiveness of the Jewish people by furthering Jewish, Hebrew and Zionist education, fostering spiritual and cultural values and teaching Hebrew as the national language;
- Nurturing mutual Jewish responsibility, defending the rights of Jews as individuals and as a nation, representing the national Zionist interests of the Jewish people, and struggling against all manifestations of anti-Semitism;
- Settling the country as an expression of practical Zionism.
- Encouraging recruitment and service in the Israel Defense Forces [IDF] and the security forces and strengthening them as the protective force of the Jewish people living in Zion, as well as encouraging full National Service for anyone exempted in law from service in the IDF.



## 4. Dissenting Voices

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As previously emphasised, Jews are neither a race nor a homogeneous group.

The same can be said with regard to views concerning the future of Jewish individuals and communities.

First of all, not all Jews are Zionists eager to establish their State in Palestine.

Furthermore, even within the Zionist movement, not everyone was in favour of establishing a State or an exclusively Zionist State, as can be seen from the short texts presented here.

Opposition to this solution was expressed by prominent figures of international standing, whose voices, however, had no effect whatsoever, being drowned out and crushed by the propaganda of those Zionists who were territorialists and nationalists, in one word: statists.



# Lev Tolstoy

## On Zionism

### (1907)

This is a very powerful rejection on the very ideas on which the Zionist project is based, namely nationalism and imperialism. For Tolstoy, the Zionists are committing “a great sin. It borders on blasphemy against the most sacred things that we have in life now.”

Source: *Emanu-El*, San Francisco, California, 1895, Volume XXIII, Number 13, 8 February 1907

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In reply to a request for his views on Zionism, Count Leo Tolstoy writes:

“There is no progressive spirit in this movement, which is cut out according to European fashion — it has not even the character of progress of which they speak so eloquently at their congresses. And this is the most amazing feature of it all. If the leaders of Zionism, generally sensitive and sensible men, but far from their people, were unable to create a healthy national movement, they are not to be blamed. They are eager to do something, but they can not. But if all

these people, with their quick understanding of everything that is progressive and striking, did not understand what really moves the higher life of Europe and what constitutes the power of the summits of the European minds, they can not be excused under any circumstances. Believing that the strength of Europe lies in its imperialism — that is in its gun powder, with all the horrors of militarism — they have decided to array their old man also in the armor of a warrior and give him a rifle in his hands. They felt like creating a new *Juden-Staat*. The best minds in Europe, and also in America, all those that think truthfully and sincerely, are agitated to the very depths of their souls at the madness and horror of this abyss whither savage mankind, so-called civilized, is drifting head foremost.

“All that is right, sensible, and not enslaved by fear of money is striving with all its might to undeceive the people and to remind them that the strength of mankind does not at all lie in the cannon power of imperialism, and that the future of mankind is not in the passion to separate themselves and to live in small states. Those that are truly progressive see the happiness of mankind in just the reverse, in broad union and in the complete absence of cannon and mortars and of those groups which are now held together only by the power of mortars, thus ruining the life of the people. All the rational work of the rational portion of mankind is against such imperialism. And they, the leaders of Zionism, want to give life to this antiquity and call such a wild aspiration — progress.

“This is a great sin. It borders on blasphemy against the most sacred things that we have in life now. We need no new government; we need loving people who see in their love the mission of life and love of God. What is it that tempted them, what is it that they like so much in this nationalist, which is in reality a military movement among the European little nations which the leaders of Zionism are apparently trying to imitate with all their might? Is it the toy freedom of Serbia, where the word of the Austrian ambassador is of greater importance than the orders of the King, and where all their freedom

comes to nothing but endless slaughter and intrigues among the parties, and finally to the ruination of the peasants and the exhaustion of the land, which is overburdened with taxes in order to maintain the great number of officials and soldiers, who could be mowed down by two or three volleys from a small battery? Do they like this? Or do they like the seeming freedom of Bulgaria, which is also torn asunder by riots on account of their temporary little Czars, and which will soon be swallowed up by some other power? Or do they like Rumania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Crete, Greece — which of these does Zionism like? I say nothing of Italy, France, England, Germany, and some of the countries still nearer to us, where the cry also goes up to Heaven from the tortured people who are becoming savage and impoverished, thanks to militarism and organization.

“The healthy seed of immigration which is striving to break up the congestion of the Jews and to bring them back to long-forgotten agriculture — this undoubtedly a pure and beautiful movement, which the Zionists now claim as their own — does not at all belong to the Zionists. The tendency toward colonization existed before; Zionism has boldly usurped it and given it an unnatural and unnecessary political coloring, and has thus completely checked the return of the Jews to agriculture. The vision of a Jewish State was started, and this has only complicated the simple and clear desire of the people to leave the cities and take up the only proper, healthy living, and honest work of God — the tilling of the soil.”

# Sigmund Freud

## On Zionism

### (1930)

This is a letter Freud wrote to a Zionist, Dr. Chaim Koffler, who had tried to recruit him to the Zionist cause. While sympathetic to the Jews and to Jewish institutions, like the University of Jerusalem, he did not agree, at all, with the fanaticism of many Zionists who wanted to establish their own State in a land already inhabited by other people.

And this position emerges very clearly in this letter.

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Vienna, 26 February 1930

Dear Sir,

I cannot do as you wish [i.e., become a Zionist].

I am unable to overcome my aversion to burdening the public with my name, and even the present critical time does not seem to me to warrant it. Whoever wants to influence the masses must give them

something rousing and inflammatory and my sober judgement of Zionism does not permit this.

I certainly sympathise with its goals, I am proud of our University in Jerusalem and I am delighted with our settlement's prosperity.

But, on the other hand, I do not think that Palestine could ever become a Jewish state, nor that the Christian and Islamic worlds would ever be prepared to have their holy places under Jewish care.

It would have seemed more sensible to me to establish a Jewish homeland on a less historically-burdened land. But I know that such a rational viewpoint would never have gained the enthusiasm of the masses and the financial support of the wealthy.

I concede with sorrow that the baseless fanaticism of our people is in part to be blamed for the awakening of Arab distrust. I can raise no sympathy at all for the misdirected piety which transforms a piece of a Herodian wall [i.e., the Wailing Wall] into a national relic, thereby offending the feelings of the natives.

Now judge for yourself whether I, with such a critical point of view, am the right person to come forward as the solace of a people deluded by unjustified hope.

Your obedient servant,

Freud

# Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

## On Jews and Zionists

(1931-1947)

In these interviews and newspaper articles, Gandhi expresses his sincere sympathy for the Jews and his deep aversion to Zionism, which he considers to be based on an ultra-nationalist ideology and on terrorist methods.

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Interview to *The Jewish Chronicle*, London (October 2, 1931)

My attitude towards Jews is one of great sympathy. I am very much attracted to the Jews, firstly, because of selfish motives, since I have very many Jewish friends; secondly, for a far deeper one – they have got a wonderful spirit of cohesion. That is to say, wherever you find Jews there is a spirit of comradeship among them. Moreover, they are a people with a vision, if I may put it without impertinence, they do not themselves realise.

I am sometimes asked whether I regard Jews as the Chosen People, and I say, well, in a sense, yes. But then all peoples consider themselves to be chosen.

Zionism in its spiritual sense is a lofty aspiration. By spiritual sense I mean they should want to realise the Jerusalem that is within. Zionism meaning reoccupation of Palestine has no attraction for me. I can understand the longing of a Jew to return to Palestine, and he can do so if he can without the help of bayonets, whether his own or those of Britain. In that event he would go to Palestine peacefully and in perfect friendliness with the Arabs. The real Zionism of which I have given you my meaning is the thing to strive for, long for and die for. Zion lies in one's heart. It is the abode of God. The real Jerusalem is the spiritual Jerusalem. Thus he can realise this Zionism in any part of the world.

Mr. Gandhi added that unfortunately he had not been to Palestine yet, but that he hoped to go there some day.

I should love to go, for I have read so much about the Holy Land. Anti-Semitism is really a remnant of barbarism. I have never been able to understand this antipathy to the Jews. I have read Zangwill's *Children of the Ghetto*, and when I read it, I realised what unmerited persecution Jews had already gone through and I felt then as I feel now that this persecution is, if I can again say so in all humility, a reflection upon those who, in the name of Christianity, have persecuted this long-suffering race.

The remedy? My remedy is twofold. One is that those who profess to be Christians should learn the virtue of toleration and charity, and the second is for Jews to rid themselves of the causes for such reproach as may be justly laid at their door.

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*The Jews* (November 26, 1938)

Several letters have been received by me asking me to declare my views about the Arab-Jew question in Palestine and the persecution of the Jews in Germany. It is not without hesitation that I venture to offer my views on this very difficult question.

My sympathies are all with the Jews. I have known them intimately in South Africa. Some of them became life-long companions. Through these friends I came to learn much of their age-long persecution. They have been the untouchables of Christianity. The parallel between their treatment by Christians and the treatment of untouchables by Hindus is very close. Religious sanction has been invoked in both cases for the justification of the inhuman treatment meted out to them. Apart from the friendships, therefore, there is the more common universal reason for my sympathy for the Jews.

But my sympathy does not blind me to the requirements of justice. The cry for the national home for the Jews does not make much appeal to me. The sanction for it is sought in the Bible and the tenacity with which the Jews have hankered after return to Palestine. Why should they not, like other peoples of the earth, make that country their home where they are born and where they earn their livelihood?

Palestine belongs to the Arabs in the same sense that England belongs to the English or France to the French. It is wrong and inhuman to impose the Jews on the Arabs. What is going on in Palestine today cannot be justified by any moral code of conduct. The mandates have no sanction but that of the last war. Surely it would be a crime against humanity to reduce the proud Arabs so that Palestine can be restored to the Jews partly or wholly as their national home.

The nobler course would be to insist on a just treatment of the Jews wherever they are born and bred. The Jews born in France are

French. If the Jews have no home but Palestine, will they relish the idea of being forced to leave the other parts of the world in which they are settled? Or do they want a double home where they can remain at will? This cry for the national home affords a colourable justification for the German expulsion of the Jews.

[...]

And now a word to the Jews in Palestine. I have no doubt that they are going about it in the wrong way. The Palestine of the Biblical conception is not a geographical tract. It is in their hearts. But if they must look to the Palestine of geography as their national home, it is wrong to enter it under the shadow of the British gun. A religious act cannot be performed with the aid of the bayonet or the bomb. They can settle in Palestine only by the goodwill of the Arabs. They should seek to convert the Arab heart. The same God rules the Arab heart who rules the Jewish heart. They can offer *satyagraha* ["holding firmly to truth" or nonviolent resistance] in front of the Arabs and offer themselves to be shot or thrown into the Dead Sea without raising a little finger against them. They will find the world opinion in their favour in their religious aspiration. There are hundreds of ways of reasoning with the Arabs, if they will only discard the help of the British bayonet. As it is, they are co-shares with the British in despoiling a people who have done no wrong to them.

I am not defending the Arab excesses. I wish they had chosen the way of non-violence in resisting what they rightly regarded as an unwarrantable encroachment upon their country. But according to the accepted canons of right and wrong, nothing can be said against the Arab resistance in the face of overwhelming odds.

Let the Jews who claim to be the chosen race prove their title by choosing the way of non-violence for vindicating their position on earth. Every country is their home including Palestine, not by aggres-

sion but by loving service. A Jewish friend has sent me a book called *The Jewish Contribution to Civilisation* by Cecil Roth. It gives a record of what the Jews have done to enrich the world's literature, art, music, drama, science, medicine, agriculture, etc. Given the will, the Jew can refuse to be treated as the outcaste of the West, to be despised or patronised. He can command the attention and respect of the world by being man, the chosen creation of God, instead of being man who is fast sinking to the brute and forsaken by God. They can add to their many contributions the surpassing contribution of non-violent action.

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On Jews and Palestine – *Harijan Magazine* (July 21, 1946)

Hitherto I have refrained practically from saying anything in public regarding the Jew-Arab controversy. I have done so for good reasons. That does not mean any want of interest in the question, but it does mean that I do not consider myself sufficiently equipped with knowledge for the purpose. For the same reason I have tried to evade many world events. Without airing my views on them, I have enough irons in the fire. But four lines of a newspaper column have done the trick and evoked a letter from a friend who has sent me a cutting which I would have missed but for the friend drawing my attention to it. It is true that I did say some such thing in the course of a long conversation with Mr. Louis Fischer on the subject. I do believe that the Jews have been cruelly wronged by the world. "Ghetto" is, so far as I am aware, the name given to Jewish locations in many parts of Europe. But for their heartless persecution, probably no question of return to Palestine would ever have arisen. The world should have been their home, if only for the sake of their distinguished contribution to it.

But, in my opinion, they have erred grievously in seeking to impose themselves on Palestine with the aid of America and Britain and now with the aid of naked terrorism. Their citizenship of the world

should have and would have made them honoured guests of any country. Their thrift, their varied talent, their great industry should have made them welcome anywhere. It is a blot on the Christian world that they have been singled out, owing to a wrong reading of the New Testament, for prejudice against them. "If an individual Jew does a wrong, the whole Jewish world is to blame for it." If an individual Jew like Einstein makes a great discovery or another composes unsurpassable music, the merit goes to the authors and not to the community to which they belong.

No wonder that my sympathy goes out to the Jews in their unenviably sad plight. But one would have thought adversity would teach them lessons of peace. Why should they depend upon American money or British arms for forcing themselves on an unwelcome land? Why should they resort to terrorism to make good their forcible landing in Palestine? If they were to adopt the matchless weapon of non-violence whose use their best Prophets have taught and which Jesus the Jew who gladly wore the crown of thorns bequeathed to a groaning world, their case would be the world's and I have no doubt that among the many things that the Jews have given to the world, this would be the best and the brightest. It is twice blessed. It will make them happy and rich in the true sense of the word and it will be a soothing balm to the aching world.

# Albert Einstein

## On Jews in Palestine

### (1932-1949)

Letters and excerpts from Albert Einstein's writings in which he repeatedly reiterated his opposition to the creation of a State for Jews, preferring the formation of a simple spiritual and cultural centre to serve the Jewish world and all humanity.

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#### **Addresses on reconstruction in Palestine** (1932)

The crisis which the work of construction has had to face in the last few years has lain heavy upon us and is not yet completely surmounted. But the most recent reports show that the world, and especially the British government, is disposed to recognize the great things which lie behind our struggle for the Zionist ideal. Let us at this moment remember with gratitude our leader Weizmann, whose zeal and circumspection helped the good cause to success.

The difficulties we have been through have also brought some good in their train. They have shown us once more how strong is the bond which unites the Jews of all countries in a common destiny. The

crisis has also purified our attitude to the question of Palestine, purged it of the dross of nationalism. It has been clearly proclaimed that we are not seeking to create a political society, but that our aim is, in accordance with the old tradition of Jewry, a cultural one in the widest sense of the world. That being so, it is for us to solve the problem of living side by side with our brother the Arab in an open, generous, and worthy manner. We have here an opportunity of showing what we have learned in the thousands of years of our martyrdom. If we choose the right path, we shall succeed and give the rest of the world a fine example.

[...]

We need to pay great attention to our relations with the Arabs. By cultivating these carefully we shall be able in future to prevent things from becoming so dangerously strained that people can take advantage of them to provoke acts of hostility. This goal is perfectly within our reach, because our work of construction has been, and must continue to be, carried out in such a manner as to serve the real interests of the Arab population also.

In this way we shall be able to avoid getting ourselves quite so often into the position, disagreeable for Jews and Arabs alike, of having to call in the mandatory power as arbitrator. We shall thereby be following not merely the dictates of Providence but also our traditions, which alone give the Jewish community meaning and stability. For our community is not, and must never become, a political one; this is the only permanent source whence it can draw new strength and the only ground on which its existence can be justified.

[...]

The object which the leaders of Zionism have before their eyes is not a political but a social and cultural one. The community in Palestine

must approach the social ideal of our fore-fathers as it is laid down in the Bible, and at the same time become a seat of modern intellectual life, a spiritual center for the Jews of the whole world. In accordance with this notion the establishment of a Jewish university in Jerusalem constitutes one of the most important aims of the Zionist organization.

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25 January 1936

Dear Mrs. Leibowitz:

It is indeed good that we Jews have a home in Palestine. There are also Jews who are quite smart, for instance Justice Brandeis, who see a Jewish future only in a unification of the Jews within a cohesive stretch of land. I, for my part, do not think so. I believe that the unique durability of the Jewish community is to a large degree based on our geographical dispersion, and the fact that we consequently do not possess instruments of power that will allow us to commit great stupidities out of national fanaticism. The persecutions will never cause us to perish.

Cordially

Your

A. Einstein

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### **Our debt to Zionism** (1938)

Just one more personal word on the question of partition. I should much rather see reasonable agreement with the Arabs on the basis of living together in peace than the creation of Jewish state. Apart from

practical consideration, my awareness of the essential nature of Judaism resists the idea of a Jewish state with borders, an army, and a measure of temporal power no matter how modest. I am afraid of the inner damage Judaism will sustain – especially from the development of a narrow nationalism within our own ranks, against which we have already had to fight strongly, even without a Jewish state.

We are no longer the Jews of the Maccabee period. A return to a nation in the political sense of the word would be equivalent to turning away from the spiritualization of our community which we owe to the genius of our prophets. If external necessity should after all compel us to assume this burden, let us bear it with tact and patience.

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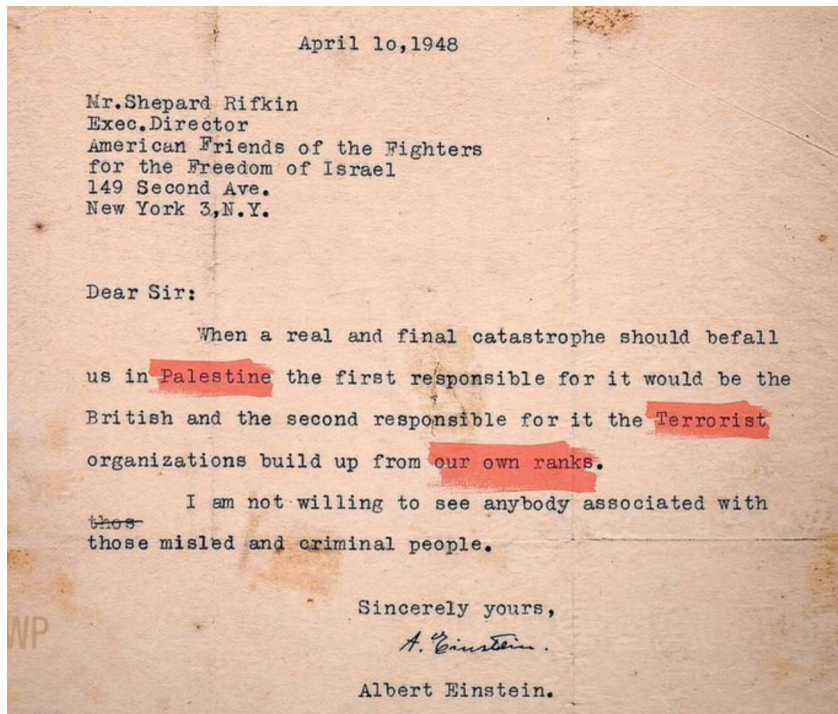
to Mr. Henry J. Factor  
January 21, 1946

Dear Sir

I have served as witness before the Anglo-American Inquiry Commission on Palestine for the sole purpose to act in favor of our just cause. But it is, of course, impossible to prevent distortion by the press. I am in favor of Palestine being developed as a Jewish Homeland but not as a separate State. It seems to me a matter for simple common sense that we cannot ask to be given the political rule over Palestine where two thirds of the population are not Jewish. What we can and should ask is a secured bi-national status in Palestine with free immigration. If we ask more we are damaging our own cause and it is difficult for me to grasp that our Zionists are taking such an intransigent position which can only impair our cause.

Very truly yours,

A. Einstein



To Shepard Rifkin,  
Executive Director of American Friends of the  
Fighters for the Freedom of Israel,  
April 1948

Dear Sir,

When a real and final catastrophe should befall us in Palestine the first responsible for it would be the British and the second responsible for it the Terrorist organizations build [sic] up from our own ranks. I am not willing to see anybody associated with those misled and criminal people.

Sincerely yours,

Albert Einstein

*Note: This letter was written when news filtered through about the Der Yassin massacre in West Jerusalem in April 1948. Around 120 terrorists from Menachem Begin's Irgun and the Stern Gang (headed by another terrorist who went on to become prime minister of Israel, Yitzhak Shamir), entered the Palestinian village and slaughtered between 100 and 250 men, women and children. There were also reports of rape, torture and mutilation.*

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### **The Jews of Israel** (1949)

There is no problem of such overwhelming importance to us Jews as consolidating that which has been accomplished in Israel with amazing energy and an unequalled willingness for sacrifice. May the joy and admiration that fill us when we think of all that this small group of energetic and thoughtful people has achieved give us the strength to accept the great responsibility which the present situation has placed upon us.

When appraising the achievement, however, let us not lose sight of the cause to be served by this achievement: rescue of our endangered brethren, dispersed in many lands, by uniting them in Israel; creation of a community which conforms as closely as possible to the ethical ideals of our people as they have been formed in the course of a long history.

One of these ideals is peace, based on understanding and self-restraint, and not on violence. If we are imbued with this ideal, our joy becomes somewhat mingled with sadness, because our relations with the Arabs are far from this ideal at the present time. It may well be that we would have reached this ideal, had we been permitted to work out, undisturbed by others, our relations with our neighbors, for we *want* peace and we realize that our future development depends on peace.

It was much less our own fault or that of our neighbors than of the Mandatory Power that we did not achieve an undivided Palestine in which Jews and Arabs would live as equals, free, in peace. If one nation dominates other nations, as was the case in the British Mandate over Palestine, she can hardly avoid following the notorious device of *Divide et Impera*. In plain language this means: create discord among the governed people so they will not unite in order to shake off the yoke imposed upon them. Well, the yoke has been removed, but the seed of dissension has borne fruit and may still do harm for some time to come – let us hope not for too long.

# Lord Moyne

## Parliamentary debate on Zionists in Palestine

### (1942)

This is the final part of an intervention by Lord Moyne (Minister for the Middle-East, 1942-1944) before the English Parliament. In this text we find a clear opposition to any idea of letting the Zionists to occupy and dominate Palestine. For this reason, on the 6th of November 1944, he was assassinate by members of the Zionist group *Lehi* (known also as the Stern Gang). In the Parliamentary Debate following his assassination, the U.K. Prime Minister Winston Churchill qualified the members of the Lehi group as “a new set of gangsters worthy of Nazi Germany.” (17 November 1944).

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Over and over again Commissions and White Papers have expressed the opinion that neither the Mandate nor the Balfour Declaration intended Palestine to be converted into a Jewish State against the will of the Arab population. The tragedy of the Palestinian question is, as was said by the Royal Commission, that it is a conflict between two rights. When Jerusalem was destroyed and its site ploughed up in the year 135 A.D., the Jews had occupied the country for about

1,300 years. Since the Mahomedan invasion of 632 the Arabs have occupied Palestine for practically the same period. To these Arabs, the Jews are not only alien in culture but also in blood. It is very often loosely said that Jews are Semites, but anthropologists tell us that, pure as they have kept their culture, the Jewish race has been much mixed with Gentiles since the beginning of the Diaspora. During the Babylonian captivity they acquired a strong Hittite admixture, and it is obvious that the Armenoid features which are still found among the Sephardim have been bred out of the Ashkenazim by an admixture of Slav blood.

The Zionist movement has its main spring among those Jews of Poland and Eastern Europe. Their leaders demand that an already overcrowded Palestine should be trebled in its population by the admixture of another three million Jews immediately after the war. Now it is not a matter of putting a quart into a pint pot, it is a matter of putting exactly three pints into a pint pot. Successive inquiries have shown that immigration on this scale would be a disastrous mistake, and is indeed an impracticable dream. A far smaller measure of immigration led to the Palestine disturbances which lasted from 1936 to 1939, and showed that the Arabs, who have lived and buried their dead for fifty generations in Palestine, will not willingly surrender their land and self-government to the Jews. We may deplore it, but there is the stark naked fact, and you cannot get away from it by sentimental appeals to the hardship on the Jews. This country [the United Kingdom] is responsible for law and order in Palestine, and we cannot possibly wash our hands of the country and let Jews and Arabs wage a civil war, as suggested by Lord Wedgwood.

But Lord Wedgwood's effort has a far greater power of mischief in being addressed to America. It must surely have a deplorable effect upon our Allies to be told by an ex-Cabinet Minister that the Palestine Administration do not like Jews, and that there are enough Anti-Semites in Great Britain to back up the Hitler policy and spirit.

This suggestion is a complete reversal of the truth. If a comparison is to be made with the Nazis it is surely those who wish to force an imported *régime* upon the Arab population who are guilty of the spirit of aggression and domination. Lord Wedgwood's proposal that Arabs should be subjugated by force to a Jewish *régime* is inconsistent with the Atlantic Charter, and that ought to be told to America. The second principle of that Charter lays down that the United States and ourselves desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned; and the third principle lays down that they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live.

Surely it is time for the Zionists to abandon this appeal to force, and to seek a settlement with the Arabs by consent. The Zionist leaders expect about 7,000,000 Jews to be surviving in Eastern Europe at the end of the war, and they reject the policy of re-establishing Jewish communities under civilized conditions in Europe. They apparently expect the loss of half this number if the other half can get control of Palestine. The war will end with the heavy problem of trying to resettle these most pitiable victims of Nazi abominations. Millions of people cannot be left indefinitely the objects of charity in refugee camps. A merciful settlement must be a quick settlement. We ought, therefore, to look at once in all directions to find means to re-establish these martyrs to Nazi oppression in a new life. The Zionists look only to Palestine. On May 25, at the annual dinner of the Anglo-American Palestine Committee, Dr. Weizmann again declared that Palestine alone could absorb and provide for the homeless and stateless Jews uprooted by the war. It is to canalize all the sympathy of the world for the martyrdom of the Jews that the Zionists reject all schemes to re-settle these victims elsewhere — in Germany, or Poland, or in sparsely populated regions such as Madagascar.

But even in their wish to occupy the pre-Christian home of the Jewish race, the Zionists are far too narrow in their outlook. Palestine itself is but a small fraction of the ancient land of Syria. I do not believe that the problem of overcrowding applies to Syria and the Lebanon and Transjordan as it does to Palestine. It would be physically possible for those States, if they were willing, to absorb large numbers of Jews to mutual advantage, and without any threat to their own political independence. If the fear of Jewish domination could be removed they might indeed be glad to welcome the Jewish immigrants, with their well-known industry and intelligence and with their capital. So far as I know, no effort has been made to explore these possibilities, and we ought surely, without waiting for the peace, to see how far the regions to the north of Palestine can offer asylum for the Jewish immigration, within the old limits of historic Syria. I hope the Government will give serious consideration to the possibility of negotiations with the neighbouring States of the Levant to take part in re-settling the Jews. It is obvious that the fear of political domination by immigrant Jews will be decreased if they can be spread over a wider area and shared among different administrations. A Federation of the Northern Arab States might well assist such a solution, but federation may be long in coming, and we ought at once to discuss with the Governments concerned to what extent and under what conditions they could admit Jewish immigration without swamping their own nationalities and independence.

# Neturei Karta

## Zionism is not Judaism

### (1975)

This is a Letter addressed to UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim by the American members of *Naturei Karta*, an organization that is the voice of the Religious Jews who consider the State of Israel an abomination and a total distortion of the Jewish faith.

They stress the fundamental distinction between Judaism and Zionism and would like that internationally, “in the negotiations, communiqués, and resolutions a clear, semantic distinction be expressed between “Zionist-Israeli” and “Jewish”. Unfortunately this has never happened, but it is never too late to make it happen.

Source: <https://nkusa.org/historic-letter-to-un-secretary-general-kurt-waldheim/>

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His Excellency

Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim

United Nations, N.Y.

Honorable Sir,

We would like to call to your attention the fact that, even today after 27 years of the State of Israel's existence, there are large numbers of Jews in the Holy land and in the entire world who are opposed to Zionism and to the Zionist State, and therefore we respectfully request your Excellency to use your influence at the forthcoming debate in the General Assembly to achieve the following:

(a) That in the negotiations, communiqués, and resolutions a clear, semantic distinction be expressed between "Zionist-Israeli" and "Jewish". This will not only serve the truth, which the Arab peoples recognize, but will furthermore exonerate the United Nations position, inasmuch as it would clarify the issue and relieve tensions.

(b) That within the appropriate administrative framework, the former independence be again accorded to the old settlers known as the "Old Yishuv", who, long before the advent of Zionism, have been the legitimate non-political representatives of the Torah-Loyal Jewish people in the Holy Land.

The Zionist State has usurped, without any Justification, the holy name of Israel.

Torah true Jews wish to live in peace and harmony with their neighbors and with the community of nations and deplore the policies carried out by those who misuse the name of Israel.

The Zionist fraud and deception is increased by its usurpation of the name of Israel and by the Zionist pretence of representing the Jewish people and Zionist-Israeli.

With the blessing of Torah Loyal Jewry,

Neturei Karta of U.S.A.

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# Yeuda Elkana

## The Need to Forget (1988)

This article, which caused a stir when it was written and published in the newspaper *Ha'aretz* (March 1988), should be seen as a painful criticism of the State of Israel unscrupulous and propagandistic use of the Holocaust. Over the last few decades, this use (“exploiting past suffering as a political argument”) has allowed the Israeli State to justify any atrocity it has committed by presenting it as an act of defence of the Jewish people. In doing so, the historical lesson of the Holocaust, which must be remembered and learned, has been forgotten and distorted by those very people who should have preserved and promoted it.

Source: *Ha'aretz*, 2nd of March 1988.

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I was carried off to Auschwitz as a boy of ten, and survived the Holocaust. The Red Army freed us, and I spent a number of months in a Russian “Liberation Camp.” Later I concluded that there was not much difference in the conduct of many of the people I encoun-

tered: Germans, Austrians, Croats, Ukrainians, Hungarians, Russians, and others. It was clear to me that what happened in Germany could happen anywhere, and to any people, also to my own. On the other hand, I concluded that it is possible to prevent such horrible events by means of appropriate education and in the right political setting. There is not now, and never has been any historical process that necessarily leads to genocide.

For decades after my immigration to Israel, in 1948, I paid no conscious attention to whether there is a well-defined political and educational message to be derived from the Holocaust. Pre-occupied with my own future, I avoided theoretical generalizations about the uses of the past. It is not that I repressed or refused to speak about what had happened to me. I spoke often with my four children about the past and the lessons I had drawn from it. I shared emotions and thoughts with them - but only on the personal level. My reluctance to follow the Eichmann trial [1] at all; my strong opposition to the Demjanjuk trial [2], my refusal to accompany my children on visits to Yad Vashem [3] - these seemed to me mere personal preferences, perhaps somewhat idiosyncratic. Today, however, I see the matter in a different light.

Talking with my friends during recent weeks, I have felt a strange advantage over those who were born here and did not experience the Holocaust. Whenever there is a report of some "anomalous incident," their initial reaction is a refusal to believe that it happened; only after reality slaps them in the face do they yield to the facts. Many then lose all sense of proportion and are willing to accept the line that "they're all like that" or "the Israeli Army is like that"; or they loathe both the perpetrators of such deeds and hate the Arabs who have brought us to that. Many believe that the majority of Israelis are consumed by a profound hatred of the Arabs, and are equally convinced that the Arabs feel a profound hatred for us. None of this happens to me. First of all, there is no "anomalous incident" that I have not seen with my own eyes. I mean this literally: I

was an eye-witness to incident after incident; I saw a bulldozer bury people alive, I saw a rioting mob tear away the life-support system from old people in the hospital, I saw soldiers breaking the arms of a civilian population, including children. For me all this is not new. At the same time I do not generalize: I do not think that they all hate us; I do not think that all Jews hate the Arabs; I do not hate those responsible for the “anomalies” – but that does not mean that I condone their acts or that I do not expect them to be punished with the full severity of the law.

On the other hand, I am searching for deeper roots of what is happening these days. I am not one of those who believe that half of this nation are brutes. Most definitely I am not one of those who see brutality as an ethnic phenomenon. First of all I see no link between unrestrained conduct and ideological extremism. Furthermore, ideological extremism is more a characteristic of the Jews from Russia, Poland, and Germany much more so than of those whose origins are in North Africa or Asia. Some hold that lack of security, economic, and social pressures have produced a frustrated generation, seeing no future for themselves, individually and existentially – no hope of acquiring higher education and a profession, of supporting themselves respectably, of attaining suitable housing and a reasonable quality of life. It is difficult to estimate the veracity of this assumption, and especially to assess the number of people to whom this sort of frustration ostensibly applies. That personal frustration can lead to “anomalous” behavior is well known.

Lately I have become more and more convinced that the deepest political and social factor that motivates much of Israeli society in its relations with the Palestinians is not personal frustration, but rather a profound existential *Angst* fed by a particular interpretation of the lessons of the Holocaust and the readiness to believe that the whole world is against us, and that we are the eternal victim. In this ancient belief, shared by so many today, I see the tragic and paradoxical victory of Hitler. Two nations, metaphorically speaking, emerged

from the ashes of Auschwitz: a minority who assert, "this must never happen again," and a frightened and haunted majority who assert, "this must never happen to us again." It is self-evident that, if these are the only possible lessons, I have always held to the former and seen the latter as catastrophic. Here I am not supporting one of these two positions, but rather wish to assert normatively that any philosophy of life nurtured solely or mostly by the Holocaust leads to disastrous consequences. Without ignoring the historic importance of collective memory, a climate in which an entire people determine its attitude to the present and shapes its future by emphasizing the lessons of the past, is fraught with peril for the future of that society, if it wants to live in relative tranquillity and relative security, like all other peoples.

History and collective memory are an inseparable part of any culture, but the past is not and must not be allowed to become the dominant element determining the future of society and the destiny of the people. The very existence of democracy is endangered when the memory of the dead participates actively in the democratic process. Fascist regimes understood this very well and acted on it. We understand it today, and it is no accident that many studies of Nazi Germany deal with the political mythology of the Third Reich. Relying on the lessons of the past in order to build the future, exploiting past suffering as a political argument - this means involving the dead in the political life of the living. Thomas Jefferson once wrote that democracy and worship of the past are incompatible. Democracy fosters the present and the future. Too much of *Zechor!* (Remember) and an addiction to the past undermine the foundations of democracy.

Had the Holocaust not penetrated so deeply into the national consciousness, I doubt whether the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians would have led to so many "anomalies," and even whether the political peace process would have been today in a blind alley. I see no greater threat to the future of the State of Israel than

the fact that the Holocaust has systematically and forcefully penetrated the consciousness of the Israeli public, even that large segment that did not experience the Holocaust, as well as the generation that was born and grew up here. For the first time I understand the seriousness of what we were doing when, decade after decade, we sent every Israeli child on repeated visits to *Yad Vashem*. What did we want those tender youths to do with the experience? We declaimed, insensitively and harshly, and without explanation: "Remember!" "*Zechor!*" To what purpose? What is the child supposed to do with these memories? Many of the pictures of those horrors are apt to be interpreted as a call to hate. "*Zechor!*" can easily be understood as a call for continuing and blind hatred.

It may be that it is important for the world at large to remember. I am not even sure about that, but in any case it is not our problem. Every nation, including the Germans, will decide their own way and on the basis of their own criteria, whether they want to remember or not. For our part, we must learn to forget! Today I see no more important political and educational task for the leaders of this nation than to take their stand on the side of life, to dedicate themselves to creating our future, and not to be preoccupied from morning to night, with symbols, ceremonies, and lessons of the Holocaust. They must uproot the domination of that historical "Remember!" over our lives.

What I have written here is harsh, and, unlike my custom, stated in black-and-white. This is no accident or a transient mood on my part. I have found no better way to indicate the seriousness of the problem. I know full well that no nation does or should totally forget its past, with all that is included therein. Of course there are some myths that are essential for building our future, like the myth of excellence or the myth of creativity; certainly it is not my intention that we cease teaching our history. What I am trying is to displace the Holocaust from being the central axis of our national experience.

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**Notes**

[1] Otto Adolf Eichmann (1906 – 1962) was a German-Austrian official of the National-Socialist Party, an officer of the SS, and one of the major organisers of extermination of the Jews. The process before a special tribunal of the Jerusalem District Court began on 11 April 1961. On 15 December 1961, Eichmann was sentenced to death.

[2] John Demjanjuk (1920 – 2012), was a Nazi guard in various concentration camps. Demjanjuk's trial took place before a special tribunal in the Jerusalem District between November 1986 and April 1988. In July 1993 he was acquitted following a decision by the Israeli Supreme Court for lack of definitive evidence that the person on trial was the one who had committed the atrocities for which he was accused.

[3] *Yad Vashem* is Israel's official memorial institution to the victims of the Nazi extermination, known in Hebrew as the Shoah. It was established in 1953.

# Isaac Asimov

## On Jewish intolerance

### (1994)

Isaac Asimov (1920-1992) was a prolific writer and a professor of biochemistry at Boston University. In this extract he stresses very clearly the fact that the Jews are people like all the others, and cannot claim any implicit moral superiority. They were victims because they were “in a position of weakness. If the Jews were in a position of strength, who knows if they wouldn’t become persecutors?” As a matter of fact this is what has happened the moment the Zionists came into the scene, and especially when they established their own ultra-nationalistic State.

Source: I. Asimov, *A Memoir*, 1994.

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Although I was Jewish and poor as well, I benefited from the American education system at its best and attended one of its finest universities; I wondered, how many African-Americans would have had the same opportunity at that time? Denouncing antisemitism without denouncing human cruelty in general troubled me

constantly. The general blindness was such that I heard Jews condemn unreservedly the phenomenon of antisemitism, and then without skipping a beat move on to the African-American question, and talk about it as if they were little Hitlers. If I pointed this out to them and objected strenuously, they turned on me. They were completely unable to see what they were doing.

I once heard a lady speak passionately about the Gentiles who had done nothing to save the Jews of Europe. "You just can't trust them", she claimed.

I let it pass for a while, and then I suddenly asked: "And what are you doing to help the Blacks achieve their civil rights?"

"Listen", she retorted. "I have enough problems of my own".

And I said: "That's exactly what the Gentiles of Europe said". I saw a complete lack of comprehension in her face. She couldn't see what I was getting at. What can we do about it? The whole world seems to be permanently waving a banner that reads: "Freedom! ... but not for others".

I publicly expressed my view on this only once, and in delicate circumstances. It was in May 1977. I was invited to a round-table discussion whose participants included Elie Wiesel, who survived the Holocaust and hasn't spoken about anything else since. That day, he irritated me by claiming that you couldn't trust academics, or technicians, because they had helped make possible the Holocaust. What a sweeping generalization that is! And precisely the kind of remark that antisemites might make: "I don't trust Jews, because once, Jews crucified my Saviour".

I let the others argue for a moment while I brooded over my resentment; then, unable to contain myself any longer, I spoke up: "Mr. Wiesel, you're wrong; the fact that a group of people has suffered appalling persecution does not mean it is inherently good and innocent. All that the persecution proves is that this group was in a posi-

tion of weakness. If the Jews were in a position of strength, who knows if they wouldn't become persecutors?"

To which Wiesel replied, very angrily: "Give me one example of the Jews persecuting anyone!"

Naturally, I was expecting this. "At the time of the Maccabees, in the second century BCE, John Hyrcanus of Judea conquered Edom and gave the Edomites the choice of conversion to Judaism, or death. Not being idiots, the Edomites converted, but afterwards they were still treated as inferiors because even though they had become Jews, they were still originally Edomites".

Wiesel, even more upset, said: "There is no other example."

"There is no other period in history where Jews have exercised power", I replied. "The only time they had it, they behaved just like the others."

That put an end to the discussion. I would add however that the audience was entirely on the side of Elie Wiesel.

I could have gone further. Alluded to the fate of the Canaanites at the hands of the Israelites in the time of David and Solomon, for example. And if I'd been able to predict the future, I could have mentioned what is happening in Israel today. The Jews of America would have a clearer understanding of the situation if they could imagine the roles reversed: with Palestinians governing the country and Jews throwing stones at them with the energy of despair.

I had the same kind of argument with Avram Davidson, author of brilliant science fiction, who is of course Jewish, and was – at least at one time – conspicuously Orthodox. I wrote an essay on the Book of Ruth, which I saw as an appeal for tolerance in opposition to the cruel edicts of Ezra the scribe, who encouraged Jews to "renounce" their foreign wives. Ruth was a Moabite, a people the Jews clearly detested; yet she is portrayed in the Old Testament as a female role

model, and is even listed as an ancestor of David. Avram Davidson took offense at my insinuation (that Jews could be intolerant), and I was treated to a very sarcastic letter in which he too asked me if the Jews had ever been persecutors. I replied in part: "Avram, you and I live in a country that is 95% non-Jewish, and that doesn't pose any particular problem for us. What would happen to us on the other hand if we were Gentiles living in a country that was 95% Jewish Orthodox?"

I never received a reply.

Even as I write, Jews are immigrating from the former Soviet Union into Israel. They are fleeing their country because they fear religious persecution. But the moment they set foot on Israeli soil, they become Zionist extremists who are merciless toward the Palestinians. They change from persecuted to persecutors in the blink of an eye.

That said, the Jews are not alone in this. If I'm sensitive to this particular problem, it's because I'm Jewish myself. In fact, this phenomenon is universal. In Roman times, when the first Christians were persecuted, they pleaded for tolerance. But when Christianity prevailed, did tolerance reign? Not on your life. Instead, persecution was soon going on in the opposite direction. Or take the case of the Bulgarians, who demanded freedom from their dictatorial regime, but once they had it used it to aggress against their Turkish minority. Or the people of Azerbaijan, who demanded of the Soviet Union the freedom denied it by the central government, only to immediately attack the Armenian minority.

The Bible teaches that the victims of persecution must in no circumstances become persecutors in their turn: "Do not mistreat an alien or oppress him, for you were aliens in Egypt." (Exodus 22:21). But who follows this teaching? Personally, whenever I try to spread the word, I get hostile looks and make myself unpopular....

## 5. The State of Israel

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In a world governed by States, the birth of the State of Israel in the ancient territories of the Jewish people appears as an inevitable outcome. Inevitable especially after the horror of the extermination carried out by the Nazis and because of the strong determination of a group of Jews promoting the ideology of Zionism.

However, a further inevitable result is the disappearance of the Jewish people, of their deepest and most significant characteristics, and their transformation into a state population that increasingly resembles all other state populations. Indeed, it can be said that, due to its more recent formation, the people inhabiting the State of Israel show the signs of statehood in an even more extreme and nefarious way: territorialism, nationalism, bellicism.

Hence the tragedy of the Palestinians, and the need to find a real solution that goes beyond the state form in order not to repeat endless cycles of violence and oppression.



# The Biltmore Conference

## (1942)

The Biltmore Conference was held from May 6 to May 11, 1942 in New York at the Biltmore Hotel. Participants from a wide variety of Zionist organizations were represented at the Conference. The joint statement issued at the end of the session was known as the Biltmore Program. The Program reiterated Zionist demands for unrestricted Jewish immigration to Palestine. It is considered the Conference where the project of establishing a Zionist State in Palestine (“their country”) was truly envisaged.

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### **Declaration Adopted by the Biltmore Conference**

1. American Zionists assembled in this Extraordinary Conference reaffirm their unequivocal devotion to the cause of democratic freedom and international justice to which the people of the United States, allied with the other United Nations, have dedicated themselves, and give expression to their faith in the ultimate victory of humanity and justice over lawlessness and brute force.

2. This Conference offers a message of hope and encouragement to their fellow Jews in the Ghettos and concentration camps of Hitler-dominated Europe and prays that their hour of liberation may not be far distant.

3. The Conference sends its warmest greetings to the *Jewish Agency Executive* in Jerusalem, to the *Va'ad Leumi* [The Jewish National Council], and to the whole *Yishuv* [Collective name of the Jewish population of the Land of Israel, until the establishment of the State of Israel] in Palestine, and expresses its profound admiration for their steadfastness and achievements in the face of peril and great difficulties. The Jewish men and women in field and factory, and the thousands of Jewish soldiers of Palestine in the Near East who have acquitted themselves with honor and distinction in Greece, Ethiopia, Libya and other battlefields, have shown themselves worthy of their people and ready to assume the rights and responsibilities of nationhood.

4. In our generation, and in particular in the course of the past twenty years, the Jewish people have awakened and transformed their ancient homeland; from 50,000 at the end of the last war their numbers have increased to more than 500,000. They have made the waste places to bear fruit and the desert to blossom. Their pioneering achievements in agriculture and in industry, embodying new patterns of cooperative endeavour, have written a notable page in the history of colonization.

5. In the new values thus created, their Arab neighbours in Palestine have shared. The Jewish people in its own work of national redemption welcomes the economic, agricultural and national development of the Arab peoples and states. The Conference reaffirms the stand previously adopted at Congresses of the World Zionist Organization, expressing the readiness and the desire of the Jewish people for full cooperation with their Arab neighbours.

6. The Conference calls for the fulfilment of the original purpose of the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate which “*recognizing the historical connection of the Jewish people with Palestine*” was to afford them the opportunity, as stated by President Wilson, to found there a Jewish Commonwealth.

The Conference affirms its unalterable rejection of the White Paper of May 1939 and denies its moral or legal validity. The White Paper seeks to limit, and in fact to nullify Jewish rights to immigration and settlement in Palestine, and, as stated by Mr. Winston Churchill in the House of Commons in May 1939, constitutes “a breach and repudiation of the Balfour Declaration.” The policy of the White Paper is cruel and indefensible in its denial of sanctuary to Jews fleeing from Nazi persecution; and at a time when Palestine has become a focal point in the war front of the United Nations, and Palestine Jewry must provide all available manpower for farm and factory and camp, it is in direct conflict with the interests of the allied war effort.

7. In the struggle against the forces of aggression and tyranny, of which Jews were the earliest victims, and which now menace the Jewish National Home, recognition must be given to the right of the Jews of Palestine to play their full part in the war effort and in the defence of their country, through a Jewish military force fighting under its own flag and under the high command of the United Nations.

8. The Conference declares that the new world order that will follow victory cannot be established on foundations of peace, justice and equality, unless the problem of Jewish homelessness is finally solved.

The Conference urges that the gates of Palestine be opened; that the Jewish Agency be vested with control of immigration into Palestine and with the necessary authority for upbuilding the country, including the development of its unoccupied and uncultivated lands;

and that Palestine be established as a Jewish Commonwealth integrated in the structure of the new democratic world.

Then and only then will the age-old wrong to the Jewish people be righted.

# David Ben-Gurion

## Rebirth and Destiny of Israel

### (1931-1952)

These are some passages taken from the writings and addresses of David Ben-Gurion, the main architect of the foundation of the State of Israel. The image that appears is that of a reasonable and peaceful man, with a spirit full of tolerance and good intentions. Unfortunately, this was only a mask covering the aims and actions of a person considered as the true Mastermind behind the massacres and mass expulsion of the Palestinian population. In other words, the foundation of the State of Israel rests on mass deception and mass graves of whom David Ben-Gurion was the primary responsible.

Source: David Ben Gurion, *Rebirth and Destiny of Israel*, London, 1959.

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### **Zionism - The Hard Way and the Easy**

*Opening Debate of the 17th Congress of Basle, June-July 1931*

We are not blind withal, to the fact that Palestine is no void. Some million Arabs inhabit both sides of the Jordan, and not since yesterday. Their right to live in Palestine, develop it and win national autonomy is as incontrovertible as is ours to return and, by our own means and merit, uplift ourselves to independence. The two can be realized. We must, in our work in Palestine, respect Arab rights, and if our first contact was unhappy, we were not in the wrong. Nor, perhaps, were the Arabs, for there are historic imponderables. (p. 35)

The education imparted to our youth by 'easy' Zionism, that chauvinism steeped in racial animosity and a phobia of labor, darkens the moral value of Zionism and brands us as adversaries of the Arabs.

The moral content of Zionism and its necessary practical objects demand a policy of rapprochement and mutual understanding toward the Palestinian Arabs, in economics, enlightenment and politics. (p. 37)

Here to the Jewry, to Labor, and to the Arab nation, we vow that we shall never agree to one national group in Palestine dominating the other, now or evermore.

We dissent from dominion of present majority over present minority ... So, too, shall we dissent from Jewish dominion over Arabs when the dynamism of *Aliyah* (immigration) alters the balance of power in our favor. (p. 38)

### **Jewish Labor: The Origin of Settlement**

*An address before the Elected Assembly, March 2, 1932*

The Jewish people is trekking back homeward, but no one in his senses dreams of evicting the people that settled here when we were driven forth. We accept the Arab populations a fact and base our future on new means and sources of livelihood, not replacing what

exists but over and above it, so that we may plant our myriads deep-rooted on the land, side by side with the Arabs. (p. 71)

Tomorrow or the next day Arab labor will echo the demand, for who is so short-sighted as to think that the Arab will meekly consent to be robbed forever of his right, to be exploited mercilessly, and never once claim a plot and patrimony of his own? (p. 81)

### **On Three Fronts**

*August 3, 1938*

The first principle is not mere negation, It means we reject the infamy of assailing an Arab just because he is one. It means we reject revenge wreaked upon Arabs that had no hand in terrorism. We will not play the terrorists' beastly game. (p. 90)

The Arabs are fighting to keep this country Arab; why should our ambush and killing of Arabs stampede the Arab terrorists, when the [British] Army's many killings and hangings failed to? The Arabs gangs murder without distinction any Jew they can lay hands on. Are we to be as vile? Is not exactly what the Mufti would have us to do – kill every Arab that crosses our path, innocent or guilty? Those who protest against the policy of 'self-restraint' are really not asking for self-defense or an organized campaign against the gangs, but for retaliation, which is no earthly good to us, let alone being morally wrong. (pp. 92-93)

What is wrong for Arabs is wrong for Jews; if we insist on Government suppressing Arab terrorism, how can we not insist on it suppressing Jewish terrorism?

... if an Arab 'patriot' who kills a Jew is a murderer, so is the Jewish 'patriot' who kills harmless Arabs. (p. 93)

We must cast out any that would spill innocent blood in the name of the 'kingdom of Israel.' (p. 94)

Our strength lies in the one great asset we possess – the moral asset, the moral purity of our lives and works, our aspirations and our philosophy. Given these three – courage, understanding and clean hands – we shall win. (p. 104)

### **Test of Fulfillment**

*From an Address delivered at an Extraordinary Zionist Congress in New York, May 1942*

Mass immigration and colonization on the largest possible scale such as we must expect after this war, can be effected without the slightest need to displace the present population. (p. 120)

The Arab problem really means political opposition by the Arabs to Jewish immigration. Many people, ignoring this simple but unpleasant truth, try to solve the problem where it does not exist. One solution offered is a bi-national State. If this means simply that all the inhabitants of Palestine, Jews and Arabs alike, must enjoy complete equality of rights not merely as individuals but also as national entities, which means the right freely to develop their language, culture, religion and so forth, then certainly no Jew, much less a Zionist, will hesitate to support it. (p. 121)

It is an historical fact that there are a million Arabs in Palestine, who legitimately regard themselves as its children, whether we like it or not. (p. 123)

Complete equality, civil, political and religious, of all inhabitants of Palestine; self-government in all municipal affairs; autonomy for the different Jewish and Arab communities in the management of all their internal affairs, educational, religious and so forth. (p. 127)

There must be a continued willingness to cooperate closely with the Arabs in Palestine as well as in neighboring countries, (p. 128)

**Reply to Aneurin Bevin** (Welsh Labour Party politician)

*An Address delivered at an extraordinary session of the Elected Assembly, held at the Hebrew University on Mount Scopus, November 28, 1945*

Mr. Bevin ... declared war on Zionists, while paying compliments to the Jews, as if they were different breeds. ... he tries to muster against Zionism the few Jews dissidents and renegades, the Quislings of our nation. (p. 165)

We know that there are Jews who are not merely non-Zionists but anti-Zionists. (p. 166)

**Address to the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry, 1946**

There is tension at the moment, perhaps a little more than tension, between us and the Arabs. It is very unfortunate. But it is transient. It is not a danger. We may be of great help to them as they to us. I believe we need each other. We have something to offer each other as equals, but only as equals. (p. 208)

**The Southern Front**

*At the twenty-fourth session of the Provisional State Council, October 28, 1948*

We believe that our interest as Jews and as men is to enhance the jurisdiction and the efficacy of the United Nations. Were the United

Nations to perish, it would be the blackest day in man's history, and the most tragic in ours. No less than other nations, maybe more, we are concerned with world peace, with international cooperation, with the universal rule of law, with peaceful settlement of international squabbles, with amity between East and West. (pp. 281-282)

[Note: The State of Israel has contravened over 30 United Nations Resolutions during the years 1968-2022]

### **Mission and Dedication**

*An Address to the General Staff and Commanding Officers the Israel-Defense Force, 1950*

Saul of Tarsus [Saint Paul] was perhaps the most potent assimilationist the Jewish people ever had. He denied the practical precepts which constitute the essence and foundation of Judaism and based all religion on faith alone. He recognised only the individual and not the nation. He tried to destroy the faith and hope of the Jewish people in national and territorial redemption. Rejecting the ultimate vision of the Prophets, which looks far into the future and there makes one the redemption of the nation and of the whole world, the dignity of Israel and the kingdom of peace and justice on earth, Saul founded Christianity on faith in heavenly redemption through a Messiah already come. (pp. 324-325)

We shall not shut ourselves up in our shell. We shall be open to take in all cultures of the world, all the conquests of the spirit. We shall not segregate or isolate ourselves. We shall maintain our bond with the great world: a bond but not bondage in any form. The criterion of spiritual and moral freedom is free judgment and free conscience.

The Jewish people have always spurned physical supremacy. (p. 339)

To us human life is sacred and dear. Men created in God's image are equal. They are an end in themselves, not a means. No wonder then that our sages based the Torah on the golden rule – 'Love thy neighbor as thyself.' Not only the fellow Jew: 'But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.'

From the earliest time Judaism held a universal outlook and embraced all of humanity. (p. 341)

Not a feeble craving for a fictional splendor of the past, but a vision of the future, of a reign of justice and peace between all nations – that was the historical philosophy which the Prophets of Israel instilled into their people, and which was handed down by the people to the best among the nations in all lands. (p. 342)

### **The Call of Spirit in Israel**

*From The Government Yearbook, October 1951*

The State of Israel will be judged not by its riches or military power, nor by its technical skills, but by its moral worth and human values. (p. 399)

But one thing history granted us from the very start –incomparable moral strength. (p. 402)

First of all let us rid ourselves of the foolish error that with the Army alone we can maintain the security of the State. (p. 404)

Security rests on a foreign policy of peace: a sincere intention to be at peace with our neighbors, and with all the nations; a determined effort to establish relations of friendship with countries great and small, in east and west. (p. 405)

Aspiring to peace, freedom and justice as we do, we condemn all domination, save over the elements. (p. 418)

... 'and you shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' Here is crystallized the eternal law of Judaism, and all the written ethics in the world can say no more. The State will be worthy of its name only if its systems, social and economic, political and legal, are based upon these imperishable words.

Human relations must be constructed on partnership in destiny, mutual aid, reciprocal attraction; on a comradeship of equals and on love of mankind. Only on the rock of the commandment 'love thy neighbor as thyself' will a State arise, faithful to the great call. This is the one and only key to the legislation and laws of Israel. (p. 420)

The terrible instruments of destruction which modern science has created may blast our whole civilization to pieces, perhaps the very globe itself, unless, while there is yet time, a sure way to peace and unity among nations is revealed, and to liberty and equality for every human being. (p. 430)

Only being true to mission and vision shall we live on. Small but in ethics and intellect marvellous, Israel walks with the greatest among the nations. (p. 441)

### **Israel Among the Nations**

*From The Government Yearbook, October 1952*

Israel does not believe that any powerful State has the right to impose its will on a weaker, even under the cloak of reforms. (p. 473)

These two Semitic people, Jews and Arab, share one mission in this corner of the world. The Jews will not budge hence, nor will the Arab change his place. History has pronounced us neighbor, and it is not merely a geographical proximity. There is much nearness in

language, culture and history. Cooperation between the Jewish people in its land and independent Arabia is an historical necessity, and it will come about, for the Arab people need it no less than does Israel. It is feasible only on a basis of equality, mutual respect and reciprocal aid. It will convert the Middle East into one of the cultural centers of the world, as in Bible time it was. Each of the two peoples has something to offer to the other, without giving up anything of its own. This fertilizing exchange will be a boon to both, to the Middle East and to the whole world.

History makes necessary a Jewish-Arab league, and when conditions are ripe for it, it will come. (p. 488)

# Massacres and Mass Expulsions in Palestine

## Plan C and Plan D (1946-1948)

The foundation of the State of Israel was preceded by an extensive military organization by the Zionist forces in order to be able to occupy as much territory as possible and repel any possible attack. This led to the carrying out of a series of massacres and mass expulsions of the Palestine population, with atrocities and destruction paralleled, in modern times, by what the Nazi did against the Jews. The statement that “violence begets violence” seems then perfectly applicable in the case of the Nazis and the Zionists. And in both instances only the total overcoming of their poisonous ideologies and inhuman projects represents the solution to their insane plans of dominance.

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### **Plan Gimmel (Plan C)**

May 1946: Section on Countermeasures

A. The aim of a counterattack is to strike at each source at the beginning of an Arab outbreak in order to deter the instigators of the inci-

dents and to prevent the participation and support of the Arab masses. Forceful and severe blows will serve to identify and isolate the active elements.

B. Because of the difficulty in directly engaging the active Arab forces while they are carrying out their activities, the countermeasures we will adopt will mostly take the form of retaliatory operations. Like all retaliatory operations, they will not always be directed only against the executors of a particular action, but will also be aimed at other active groups or those who provide them with assistance.

C. Counterattacks must be appropriate in kind to the operations which led to the retaliation. These attacks must be as immediate as possible, and must affect large areas. The reasons for the retaliation must be detailed to the Arabs in full, using all available means of communication: leaflets, announcements, radio broadcasts, etc.

D. It is preferable that these operations should strike the Arab rear in order to undermine the Arab sense of security.

E. Counterattacks must be divided into two kinds: warning operations and strike operations.

Warning operations will come in response to limited or single Arab operations, and their aim will be to warn the Arabs of what may be expected in the future. These operations will mostly be executed in the same area in which the Arabs were active but they must be accompanied by the widest possible media coverage.

The aim of strike operations will be to punish serious operations carried out against us. These strike operations will be more extensive in nature and at the regional or country-wide level, their goal being severe punishment. For example, if they strike one of the Jewish means of transportation by destroying vehicles along with their passengers, the response should be comprehensive and aim at the destruction of all Arab means of transportation.

F. Strikes must be carried out against the following targets:

1. Striking at the political leadership.
2. Striking at agitators, their financial backers, and others.
3. Striking at the executors of operations and those who provide them with shelter.
4. Striking at high-ranking Arab officers and officials.
5. Striking at Arab transportation.
6. Striking at vital economic targets (water installations, flour mills, etc.).
7. Attacks on villages, neighborhoods, and farms used as bases for the Arab armed forces or for their organization, launching, and retreat, etc.
8. Striking at clubs, cafés, meetings, assemblies, and the like.

G. The aim of striking at the political leadership is the following:

1. Doing damage to their property.
2. Imprisoning members in order to hold them hostage or prevent them from performing their activities.
3. Expelling them or physically harming them in some other way.

These operations will be carried out by (Arabist) individuals, or by units the size of a squad or sub-squad which are equipped with light arms and whose line of retreat is as secure as possible.

H. The aim of striking at agitators and financial backers is the following:

1. Doing damage to their property.
2. Doing damage to their printing presses.

3. Harming them physically.
4. Expelling or imprisoning them in certain cases.

These objectives will be realized along the line specified in section G.

I. The aim of striking at the executors of operations and those who shelter them is the following:

1. Expelling them.
2. Doing damage to their property.
3. Imprisoning them in certain cases in order to collect information or hold them hostage. Such operations will be executed by units the size of a squad or sub-squad if the site of the operation is small and close to our bases, and will be executed by units the size of a platoon or larger if the site is far from our bases.

J. High-ranking Arab officers and officials will be targeted as specified in section G, above.

K. The aim of striking at Arab transportation is the following:

1. Carrying out punitive measures against a particular service route or an individual vehicle through sabotage.
2. Striking at services by damaging vehicles and targeting suspected travelers.
3. Destroying the Arab transportation network either wholly or in part.

The operations mentioned in 1 above will be carried out by damaging the service stations along that route, or by sabotaging its vehicles, or by stopping one or more vehicles on the road, evacuating the passengers, and destroying them. The operations mentioned in 2 above will be carried out by setting up ambushes on the road, evacuating passengers,

and physically harming the passengers suspected of active assistance against us, and destroying the vehicles. The operation will be executed by about one or two squads. The operations mentioned in 3 above will be executed by carrying out attacks on the service stations and destroying the vehicles. The force needed for such missions is one or two platoons.

L. The aim of operations directed against clubs, cafés, meetings and assemblies, etc. is the following:

1. Dispersal of inflammatory gatherings.
2. Encircling the places mentioned above when they contain known leaders and agitators in order to imprison them or expel them.
3. In some cases, it is necessary to demolish one of the above-mentioned places after evacuating people from it.

The force needed to carry out such operations will be determined by the particular circumstances and will range from a sub-squad to a platoon or more.

M. Striking at Arab economic targets is difficult because of the scarcity of vital projects which, if hit, would paralyze or severely damage the Arab economy. There are few industrial projects and most are of a non-vital nature for the manufacture of tobacco, soap, etc. Striking at such establishments is not always in our interest because it may result in swelling the ranks of the Arab force by scores of unemployed workers. This does not mean that these targets should be removed from consideration, but establishments must be sought which, if hit, would lead to the most effective consequences possible, such as water reservoirs in urban areas, flour mills, the [olive] oil industry, and the like. The importance of strikes against such targets lies in their implementation on a wide scale, whether locally or regionally. Striking at such targets does not require a large force; in most cases a force the size of a squad or sub-squad is enough to mount an operation against a single specific target.

N. The aim of launching attacks against villages, neighborhoods, farms, and hamlets is the following:

1. Kidnapping or expelling leaders and members of gangs and those who assist them.
2. Punishing villages that provide gangs with shelter, by destroying their property.
3. Attacking villages where an armed Arab force is located.

For the execution of operations mentioned in 1 above, see Section I above.

For the execution of operations mentioned in 2 above, the village will be surrounded by a force whose size will vary with the circumference of the village and the resistance expected from it (the size of the force will range from a platoon to a company). A part of this force — at least half — will enter the village and carry out acts of sabotage by setting fire to and blowing up targets. If the objective is general punitive action, everything possible should be set on fire and the houses of the instigators and participants in operations must be demolished.

As for the operations in 3 above, they will be implemented according to the principles relating to attacks on an entrenched hostile force.

O. Most operations should be carried out under cover of darkness because of the difficulty of movement [in the daytime]. In addition, due consideration should be given to returning men and equipment to their bases.

P. In order to implement the countermeasures detailed in this chapter in an effective manner, active and extensive intelligence and reconnaissance networks must be set up and the Arabist units must be developed.

Q. Propaganda will have a large effect on the extent to which inci-

dents are publicized and on the deterrent value this will have on the Arab masses.

Therefore, an extensive propaganda network must be organized by the following means:

1. Radio.
2. Leaflets.
3. Whispering campaigns diffused by Arabs or Arabists.

Each of our countermeasures should be widely publicized and reverberate in every Arab village.

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### **Plan Dalet (Plan D)**

10 March 1948: General Section

#### **1. Introduction**

(a) The objective of this plan is to gain control of the areas of the Hebrew State and defend its borders. It also aims at gaining control of the areas of Jewish settlement and concentration which are located outside the borders [of the Hebrew State] against regular, semi-regular, and small forces operating from bases outside or inside the State.

(b) This plan is based on three previous plans:

1. Plan B, September 1945.
2. The May 1946 Plan Gimmel or Plan C
3. Yehoshua Plan, 1948, an early version of Plan D

(c) Since these plans were designed to deal with the situation inside the country (the first two plans deal with the first phase of incidents,

while the third plan deals with the possibility of invasion by regular armies from the neighboring countries), the aim of Plan D is to fill the gaps in the previous three plans and to make them more suitable for the situation expected to obtain at the end of British rule in the country.

## **2. Basic Assumptions**

This plan is based on the following basic assumptions:

### *(a) The Enemy*

#### 1. Expected composition of forces:

— The semi-regular forces of the Liberation Army affiliated with the Arab League, which operate from already occupied bases or bases to be occupied in the future.

— The regular forces of neighboring countries, which will launch an invasion across the borders, or will operate from bases inside the country (the Arab Legion).

— Small local forces which operate, or will operate, from bases inside the country and within the borders of the Hebrew state.

All three forces will be activated at the same time in accordance with a joint operational plan and will sometimes engage in tactical coordination.

#### 2. Actual operations expected from the enemy:

— Isolation and, if possible, occupation of the eastern Galilee, western Galilee, and the Negev.

— Infiltration into the heart of the area of Sharon and Emek Hefer in the direction of Qalqiliyyah-Herzliya and Tulkarm-Netanya, roughly.

— Isolation of the three major cities (especially Tel Aviv).

— Disruption of food supply lines and other vital services such as water, electricity, etc.

3. Expected tactical methods:

— Attacks by the regular and semi-regular forces on settlements, using heavy infantry weapons, as well as field artillery, armored vehicles, and the air force.

— Air strikes against centers within our cities (especially Tel Aviv).

— Harassment operations carried out by small forces against transportation arteries and settlements to give the operations mentioned above direct or tactical support. These forces will also carry out sabotage operations against vital economic facilities and terrorist raids within cities.

(b) *The Authorities*

This plan rests on the general assumption that during its implementation, the forces of the [British] authorities will not be present in the country.

In the event that British forces continue to control certain bases and areas, the plan must be modified to deal with this situation in these areas.

Additional instructions will be issued in this regard.

(c) *International Forces*

This plan rests on the assumption that there will be no international forces stationed in the country which are capable of effective action.

(d) *Operational Objectives*

1. Self-defense against invasion by regular or semi-regular forces. This will be achieved by the following:

— A fixed defensive system to preserve our settlements, vital economic projects, and property, which will enable us to provide governmental services within the borders of the State (based on defending the regions of the State on the one hand, and on blocking the main access routes from enemy territory to the territory of the State, on the other).

— Launching pre-planned counter-attacks on enemy bases and supply lines in the heart of his territory, whether within the borders of the country [Palestine] or in neighboring countries.

2. Ensuring freedom of military and economic activity within the borders of the [Hebrew] State and in Jewish settlements outside its borders by occupying and controlling important high-ground positions on a number of transportation arteries.

3. Preventing the enemy from using frontline positions within his territory which can easily be used for launching attacks. This will be effected by occupying and controlling them.

4. Applying economic pressure on the enemy by besieging some of his cities in order to force him to abandon some of his activities in certain areas of the country.

5. Restricting the capability of the enemy by carrying out limited operations: occupation and control of certain of his bases in rural and urban areas within the borders of the State.

6. Controlling government services and property within the borders of the State and ensuring the supply of essential public services in an effective manner.

### **3. Assignment of Duties**

In view of the operational objectives outlined above, the various armed services are assigned the following duties:

- (1) Strengthening the fixed defensive system designed to defend the zones, and coordinating its deployment on the regional level. In addition, the main enemy access routes to the lands of the State must be blocked through appropriate operations and measures.
- (2) Consolidation of the defensive apparatus.
- (3) Deployment in major cities.
- (4) Control of the main transportation arteries country-wide.
- (5) Encirclement of enemy cities.
- (6) Occupation and control of frontline enemy positions.
- (7) Counterattacks inside and outside the borders of the country.

(a) *The Fixed Defensive System*

1. The fixed defensive system in rural areas depends on two main factors: using protected areas for the purpose of defending the circumference, on the one hand, and blocking main transportation routes used by the enemy, on the other hand.
2. The security arrangements pertaining to the zones in rural areas, which were originally designed to repel small enemy forces, must be modified in terms of planning and reinforcement to suit the tactical measures expected to be employed by semi-regular or regular enemy forces.

This will be effected according to instructions issued by the operations branch in charge of defense and planning in rural areas.

3. In addition, if we take into consideration the tactical measures expected to be employed by the enemy, efforts must be made to make a transition from a positional defense to a regional defense, so that the unit of defense is the region and not the zone.
4. In order to achieve this objective, the following steps must be taken:

a) Transformation of the regional staff from an administrative staff to a general staff (selection of a location, setting up a communications network, etc.)

b) Formation of a regional mobile reserve, to be recruited from the forces appointed to the zones, which would reinforce the forces or carry out counterstrikes in the zones within each region according to pre-arranged plans.

c) Adaptation and incorporation of the plans concerning fortification and opening fire in the zones to those of the region, as far as possible, taking into consideration geographical circumstances and types of weapons used. These plans must also be coordinated with the operations of the regional mobile reserves.

5. Settlements which because of their geographical location cannot be included in a fixed regional defense plan must be organized into local defense zones. Accordingly, they must be equipped to block transport roads used by the enemy, or if tactical circumstances permit, to control the heights, setting up fortifications and barricades and laying mines, etc. This will be done in addition to activating the zone's defensive apparatus.

Additional forces must be assigned to carry out these duties, as will be detailed below. These specifications also apply to isolated regions.

6. Blocking the main enemy transportation routes.

a) The main enemy transportation routes which link his lands to the lands of the State, such as roads, bridges, main passes, important crossroads, paths, etc. must be blocked by means of: acts of sabotage, explosions, series of barricades, mine fields, as well as by controlling the elevations near roads and taking up positions there.

b) A system of barricades must be set up in addition to the fixed defensive system. The tactical plans concerning barricades must be adapted to and coordinated with the defensive plans concerning the

zones located near these barricades. They must also be coordinated with the regional defense plans if this is possible from the geographical point of view.

*(b) Consolidation of Defense Systems and Barricades*

The following operations must be carried out if the fixed defensive system is to be effective and if the rear of this system is to be protected:

1. Occupation of police stations.
2. Control of government installations and provision of services in each and every region.
3. Protection of secondary transportation arteries.
4. Mounting operations against enemy population centers located inside or near our defensive system in order to prevent them from being used as bases by an active armed force. These operations can be divided into the following categories:

— Destruction of villages (setting fire to, blowing up, and planting mines in the debris), especially those population centers which are difficult to control continuously.

— Mounting combing and control operations according to the following guidelines: encirclement of the village and conducting a search inside it. In the event of resistance, the armed force must be wiped out and the population must be expelled outside the borders of the State.

The villages which are emptied in the manner described above must be included in the fixed defensive system and must be fortified as necessary.

In the absence of resistance, garrison troops will enter the village and take up positions in it or in locations which enable complete tactical control. The officer in command of the unit will confiscate all

weapons, wireless devices, and motor vehicles in the village. In addition, he will detain all politically suspect individuals. After consultation with the [Jewish] political authorities, bodies will be appointed consisting of people from the village to administer the internal affairs of the village. In every region, a [Jewish] person will be appointed to be responsible for arranging the political and administrative affairs of all [Arab] villages and population centers which are occupied within that region.

*(c) Deployment in Major Cities*

Positions will be taken in the large cities according to the following principles:

1. Occupation and control of government facilities and property (post offices, telephone exchanges, railroad stations, police stations, harbors, etc.)
2. Protection of all vital public services and installations.
3. Occupation and control of all isolated Arab neighborhoods located between our municipal center and the Arab municipal center, especially those neighborhoods which control the city's exit and entry roads. These neighborhoods will be controlled according to the guidelines set for combing villages. In case of resistance, the population will be expelled to the area of the Arab municipal center.
4. Encirclement of the central Arab municipal area and its isolation from external transportation routes, as well as the termination of its vital services (water, electricity, fuel, etc.), as far as possible.

*(d) Control of Main Transportation Arteries on the Regional Level*

1. Occupation and control of locations which overlook main regional transportation arteries, such as police stations, water pumps, etc.

These elevated locations will be transformed into fortified

surveillance posts to be used, when the need arises, as bases for a mobile defensive force.

(In many cases, this operation will be coordinated with the occupation of police stations, which aims at consolidating the fixed defensive system.)

2. Occupation and control of Arab villages which constitute a serious obstruction on any of the main transportation arteries. Operations against these villages will be carried out according to the specifications given under the item pertaining to the combing of villages.

*(e) Enemy Cities Will Be Besieged according to the Following Guidelines:*

1. By isolating them from transportation arteries by laying mines, blowing up bridges, and a system of fixed ambushes.

2. If necessary, by occupying high points which overlook transportation arteries leading to enemy cities, and the fortification of our units in these positions.

3. By disrupting vital services, such as electricity, water, and fuel, or by using economic resources available to us or by sabotage.

4. By launching a naval operation against the cities that can receive supplies by sea, in order to destroy the vessels carrying the provisions, as well as by carrying out acts of sabotage against harbor facilities.

*(f) Occupation and Control of Frontline Enemy Positions*

Generally, the aim of this plan is not an operation of occupation outside the borders of the Hebrew State. However, concerning enemy bases lying directly close to the borders which may be used as springboards for infiltration into the territory of the State, these must be temporarily occupied and combed according to the above guide-

lines, and they must then be incorporated into our defensive system until operations cease.

Bases located in enemy territory which are intended to be temporarily occupied and controlled will be listed among the operational targets for the various brigades.

*(g) Counterattacks Inside and Outside the Borders of the State*

Counterattacks will be used as auxiliary measures for the fixed defensive system in order to abort the organized attacks launched by semi-regular and regular enemy forces, whether from bases inside the country or from outside the borders.

Counterattacks will be launched according to the following guidelines:

1. Diversionary attacks; i.e., while the enemy is launching an attack against one of our areas, [our forces will launch] a counterattack deep inside another area controlled by the enemy with the aim of diverting his forces in the direction of the counterattack.
2. Striking at transportation and supply routes deep inside enemy territory, especially against a regular enemy force which is invading from across the border.
3. Attacking enemy bases in his rear, both inside the country [Palestine] and across its borders.
4. Counterattacks will generally proceed as follows: a force the size of a battalion, on average, will carry out a deep infiltration and will launch concentrated attacks against population centers and enemy bases with the aim of destroying them along with the enemy force positioned there; alternatively, this force may split up to carry out secondary operations, such as acts of sabotage and diversion on the enemy's military transportation routes and arteries.

5. A detailed list of counterattacks will be included in the [list of] operational targets of the Strategic Mobile Force [PALMACH = short for *Plugot Machatz*: crushing battalions].

#### 4. **Duties of the Armed Services**

(a) Allocation of duties in the fixed defensive system:

1. The following duties are the responsibility of the Garrison Force

[KHIM is short for Khayl Matzav, the second line troops. By fall 1947, they numbered about 32,000]: defense of the zones and of isolated and fortified posts and formation of the regional reserves.

2. Within the framework of the fixed defensive system, the Field Force [KHISH is short for Khayl Sadeh, the front-line troops. By 1 May 1948, they numbered about 30,000] are responsible for the following duties:

Operations to block enemy transportation routes. For this purpose, every blocking operation will be assigned, on the basis of its importance and type, a specified Field Force unit whose size is appropriate to the nature of the mission.

— In addition, the Field Force brigade in question will be responsible for duties related to consolidating the fixed defensive system, as outlined in section 3 (b).

3. In special and exceptional circumstances, Field Force units may be positioned in the regions or zones, or in isolated and fortified positions, in order to reinforce zonal or regional defense. Efforts must be made to decrease the number of such cases, as far as possible.

4. In addition to the duties detailed above, the Field Force's responsibilities in the context of the fixed defensive system generally consist in mounting local counterattacks involving units no smaller than a company (larger units should be used if possible) against enemy units while they are attacking the fixed defensive

system in order to block their lines of retreat and destroy them. These counterattacks will usually be launched from fixed operational bases which will be specified for the Field Force in the context of the duties for which it is responsible in the region as a whole.

These instructions require that the Field Force units be concentrated as much as possible, and not be divided up into secondary units.

5. The chain of command in the cases mentioned above will be in accordance with Addendum 1 to the Order concerning Regional Infrastructure, November 1947.

6. In circumstances in which the blocking system (which the Field Force is responsible for defending) is incorporated into the zonal or regional defensive system, the commander of the Field Force battalion concerned will appoint the commander in charge of the entire defensive system.

(b) 1. In addition to the duties assigned to the Field Force brigade in question concerning the consolidation of the fixed defensive system, the brigade will also carry out the following duties:

- Consolidation of positions in the cities.
- Control of main transportation arteries country-wide.
- Encirclement of enemy cities.
- Occupation and control of enemy frontline positions. This will be effected in accordance with the operational duties assigned to the various Field Force brigades.

In order to carry out one or all of these duties, the supreme command can assign units of the Strategic Mobile Force [PALMACH], which constitute the country-wide reserves, to the Field Force.

2. During the implementation of joint missions with the Field Force, units of the Strategic Mobile Force [PALMACH] will fall under the

command of the Field Force brigade that controls the area in which these units are operating.

3. After completion of the mission, the units of the Strategic Mobile Force [PALMACH] will rejoin the country-wide reserves.

4. Efforts must be made to ensure that the period during which units of the country-wide reserves are assigned to the Field Force is as short as possible.

(c) 1. The Strategic Mobile Force [PALMACH] is responsible for carrying out counterattacks inside and outside the borders of the country.

2. The supreme command may reduce the number of duties assigned to one or another of the Field Force brigades as it sees fit (i.e. those related to the siege of enemy cities, control of transportation routes and occupation of frontline positions) and allocate them directly to the Strategic Mobile Force [PALMACH] instead.

(d) The various departments and services of the general staff are required to complete the above planning instructions in their various areas of responsibility and to present the plans to the Field Force brigades.

# The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel

(1948)

The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel was proclaimed by the prime minister David Ben-Gurion, on May 14, 1948, in Tel Aviv, on behalf of the Provisional Government of Israel.

Most of the statements contained in this declaration (*complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex*) have been completely disregarded by the Zionists in order to create their own ultra-nationalistic State by way of ethnic cleansing followed by strict apartheid and repeated massacres of the Palestinian population.

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The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained to statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal Book of Books.

After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom.

Impelled by this historic and traditional attachment, Jews strove in every successive generation to re-establish themselves in their ancient homeland. In recent decades they returned in their masses. Pioneers, defiant returnees, and defenders, they made deserts bloom, revived the Hebrew language, built villages and towns, and created a thriving community controlling its own economy and culture, loving peace but knowing how to defend itself, bringing the blessings of progress to all the country's inhabitants, and aspiring towards independent nationhood.

In the year 5657 (1897), at the summons of the spiritual father of the Jewish State, Theodor Herzl, the First Zionist Congress convened and proclaimed the right of the Jewish people to national rebirth in its own country.

This right was recognized in the Balfour Declaration of the 2nd November, 1917, and re-affirmed in the Mandate of the League of Nations which, in particular, gave international sanction to the historic connection between the Jewish people and Eretz-Israel and to the right of the Jewish people to rebuild its National Home.

The catastrophe which recently befell the Jewish people – the massacre of millions of Jews in Europe – was another clear demonstration of the urgency of solving the problem of its homelessness by re-establishing in Eretz-Israel the Jewish State, which would open the gates of the homeland wide to every Jew and confer upon the Jewish people the status of a fully privileged member of the community of nations.

Survivors of the Nazi holocaust in Europe, as well as Jews from other parts of the world, continued to migrate to Eretz-Israel, undaunted

by difficulties, restrictions and dangers, and never ceased to assert their right to a life of dignity, freedom and honest toil in their national homeland.

In the Second World War, the Jewish community of this country contributed its full share to the struggle of the freedom and peace-loving nations against the forces of Nazi wickedness and, by the blood of its soldiers and its war effort, gained the right to be reckoned among the peoples who founded the United Nations.

On the 29th November, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution calling for the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz-Israel; the General Assembly required the inhabitants of Eretz-Israel to take such steps as were necessary on their part for the implementation of that resolution. This recognition by the United Nations of the right of the Jewish people to establish their State is irrevocable.

This right is the natural right of the Jewish people to be masters of their own fate, like all other nations, in their own sovereign State.

Accordingly we, members of the People's Council, representatives of the Jewish Community of Eretz-Israel and of the Zionist Movement, are here assembled on the day of the termination of the British Mandate over Eretz-Israel and, by virtue of our natural and historic right and on the strength of the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly, hereby declare the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz-Israel, to be known as the State of Israel.

We declare that, with effect from the moment of the termination of the Mandate being tonight, the eve of Sabbath, the 6th Iyar, 5708 (15th May, 1948), until the establishment of the elected, regular authorities of the State in accordance with the Constitution which shall be adopted by the Elected Constituent Assembly not later than the 1st October 1948, the People's Council shall act as a Provisional Council of State, and its executive organ, the People's Administra-

tion, shall be the Provisional Government of the Jewish State, to be called "Israel."

**The State of Israel will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.**

The State of Israel is prepared to cooperate with the agencies and representatives of the United Nations in implementing the resolution of the General Assembly of the 29th November, 1947, and will take steps to bring about the economic union of the whole of Eretz-Israel.

We appeal to the United Nations to assist the Jewish people in the building-up of its State and to receive the State of Israel into the community of nations.

**We appeal – in the very midst of the onslaught launched against us now for months – to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions.**

We extend our hand to all neighbouring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighbourliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared

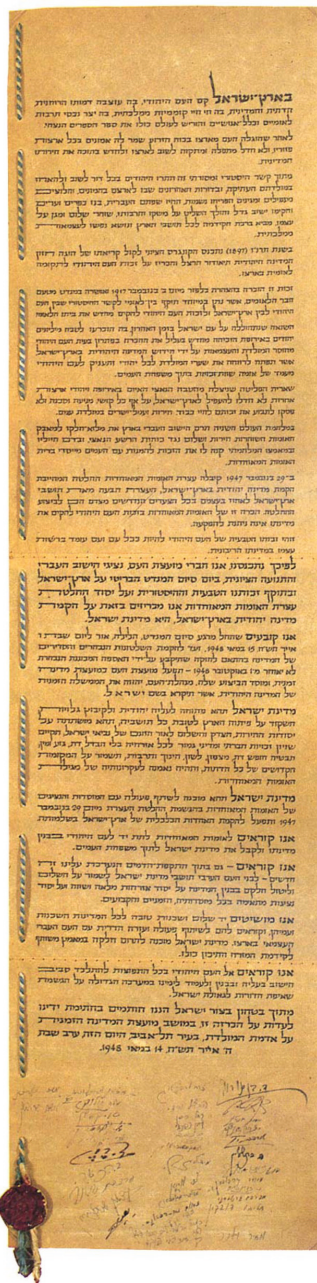
to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East.

We appeal to the Jewish people throughout the Diaspora to rally round the Jews of Eretz-Israel in the tasks of immigration and upbuilding and to stand by them in the great struggle for the realization of the age-old dream – the redemption of Israel.

Placing our trust in the Almighty, we affix our signatures to this proclamation at this session of the provisional Council of State, on the soil of the Homeland, in the city of Tel-Aviv, on this Sabbath eve, the 5th day of Iyar, 5708 (14th May, 1948).

*David Ben-Gurion*

*Daniel Auster; Mordekhai Bentov; Yitzchak Ben Zvi; Eliyahu Berligne; Fritz Bernstein; Rabbi Wolf Gold; Meir Grabovsky; Yitzchak Gruenbaum; Dr. Abraham Granovsky; Eliyahu Dobkin; Meir Wilner-Kovner; Zerach Wahrhaftig; Herzl Vardi; Rachel Cohen; Rabbi Kalman Kahana; Saadia Kobashi; Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Levin; Meir David Loewenstein; Zvi Luria; Golda Myerson; Nachum Nir; Zvi Segal; Rabbi Yehuda Leib Hachohen Fishman; David Zvi Pinkas; Aharon Zisling; Moshe Kolodny; Eliezer Kaplan; Abraham Katznelson; Felix Rosenblueth; David Remez; Berl Repetur; Mordekhai Shattner; Ben Zion Sternberg; Bekhor Shitreet' Moshe Shapira; Moshe Shertok.*



The Declaration

# Hannah Arendt et alii

## Letter to the Editors of the New York Times (1948)

In occasion of the visit to the USA of Menachem Begin, leader of the *Freedom Party*, a group of Jews wrote a letter to the editors of *The New York Times* warning the public about the risk of fascistization of the Israeli State.

During the British Mandate in Palestine Menachem Begin had been the leader of the terrorist Zionist group *Irgun*, responsible, besides other criminal actions, for the bombing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem (22 July 1946) that killed 91 people and injured 46.

He would then become Prime Minister (1977-1983) preparing the road to another Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, responsible for crimes against humanity.

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Among the most disturbing political phenomena of our times is the emergence in the newly created state of Israel of the “Freedom Party” (*Tnuat HaHerut*), a political party closely akin in its organization, methods, political philosophy and social appeal to the Nazi and

Fascist parties. It was formed out of the membership and following of the former *Irgun Zvai Leumi*, a terrorist, right-wing, chauvinist organization in Palestine.

The current visit of Menachem Begin, leader of this party, to the United States is obviously calculated to give the impression of American support for his party in the coming Israeli elections, and to cement political ties with conservative Zionist elements in the United States. Several Americans of national repute have lent their names to welcome his visit. It is inconceivable that those who oppose fascism throughout the world, if correctly informed as to Mr. Begin's political record and perspectives, could add their names and support to the movement he represents.

Before irreparable damage is done by way of financial contributions, public manifestations in Begin's behalf, and the creation in Palestine of the impression that a large segment of America supports Fascist elements in Israel, the American public must be informed as to the record and objectives of Mr. Begin and his movement.

The public avowals of Begin's party are no guide whatever to its actual character. Today they speak of freedom, democracy and anti-imperialism, whereas until recently they openly preached the doctrine of the Fascist State. It is in its actions that the terrorist party betrays its real character; from its past actions we can judge what it may be expected to do in the future.

### **Attack on Arab Village**

A shocking example was their behavior in the Arab village of Deir Yassin. This village, off the main roads and surrounded by Jewish lands, had taken no part in the war, and had even fought off Arab bands who wanted to use the village as their base. On April 9, 1948

(*The New York Times*), terrorist bands attacked this peaceful village, which was not a military objective in the fighting, killed most of its inhabitants 240 men, women, and children and kept a few of them alive to parade as captives through the streets of Jerusalem.

Most of the Jewish community was horrified at the deed, and the Jewish Agency sent a telegram of apology to King Abdullah of Trans-Jordan. But the terrorists, far from being ashamed of their act, were proud of this massacre, publicized it widely, and invited all the foreign correspondents present in the country to view the heaped corpses and the general havoc at Deir Yassin.

The Deir Yassin incident exemplifies the character and actions of the Freedom Party.

Within the Jewish community they have preached an admixture of ultranationalism, religious mysticism, and racial superiority. Like other Fascist parties they have been used to break strikes, and have themselves pressed for the destruction of free trade unions. In their stead they have proposed corporate unions on the Italian Fascist model.

During the last years of sporadic anti-British violence, the IZL and Stern groups inaugurated a reign of terror in the Palestine Jewish community. Teachers were beaten up for speaking against them, adults were shot for not letting their children join them. By gangster methods, beatings, window-smashing, and wide-spread robberies, the terrorists intimidated the population and exacted a heavy tribute.

The people of the Freedom Party have had no part in the constructive achievements in Palestine. They have reclaimed no land, built no settlements, and only detracted from the Jewish defense activity. Their much-publicized immigration endeavors were minute, and devoted mainly to bringing in Fascist compatriots.

### **Discrepancies Seen**

The discrepancies between the bold claims now being made by Begin and his party, and their record of past performance in Palestine bear the imprint of no ordinary political party. This is the unmistakable stamp of a Fascist party for whom terrorism (against Jews, Arabs, and British alike), and misrepresentation are means, and a "Leader State" is the goal.

In the light of the foregoing considerations, it is imperative that the truth about Mr. Begin and his movement be made known in this country. It is all the more tragic that the top leadership of American Zionism has refused to campaign against Begin's efforts, or even to expose to its own constituents the dangers to Israel from support to Begin.

The undersigned therefore take this means of publicly presenting a few salient facts concerning Begin and his party; and of urging all concerned not to support this latest manifestation of fascism.

*Isidore Abramowitz, Hannah Arendt, Abraham Brick, Rabbi Jessurun Cardozo, Albert Einstein, Herman Eisen, M.D., Hayim Fineman, M. Gallen, M.D., H.H. Harris, Zelig S. Harris, Sidney Hook, Fred Karush, Bruria Kaufman, Irma L. Lindheim, Nachman Maisel, Seymour Melman, Myer D. Mendelson, M.D., Harry M. Oslinsky, Samuel Pitlick, Fritz Rohrlach, Louis P. Rucker, Ruth Sagis, Itzhak Sankowsky, I.J. Shoenberg, Samuel Shuman, M. Singer, Irma Wolfe, Stefan Wolfe.*

New York, December 2, 1948

# Maxim Ghilan

## Behind the Scenes in Israel

### (1964)

Maxim Ghilan (1931-2005) was in his youth a member of the Lehi group, also known as the Stern Gang. Subsequently, after the establishment of the State of Israel, he was jailed by the Israeli authorities. During his times in prison he witnessed the tortures inflicted to the Arab prisoners and became for the rest of his life a spokesperson and activist for Arab rights.

This extract from his book is a damning indictment of the State of Israel and of its so wrongly celebrated “democracy”.

Source: Maxim Ghilan, *How Israel Lost Its Soul*, 1974.

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Not long before the Bolshevik revolution, the Russian Tsarina expressed a wish to visit a zone of ‘popular development’ which was under the direct control of Count Potiemkin, of sad memory. In fact Potiemkin had not developed the zone at all. Peasants subsisted there, as from time immemorial, in run-down villages where the pigsties were indistinguishable from the villagers’ homes. To satisfy

the curiosity of Her Imperial Majesty, Count Potiemkin gave orders. In febrile haste theatre sets were erected along the road the Tsarina was to travel. Since she never alighted to inspect the development, she went away convinced that all was well. A few years later some of the peasants living behind the camouflage sets were among her executioners.

In Israel, development of the Jewish part of the country (and to a lesser extent, of the Arab part) is genuine enough. Israeli democracy, on the other hand, strongly resembles Potiemkin's villages.

The State of Israel is presented, both at home and abroad, as the embodiment of social democracy, a mixture of all that is good in capitalism and in socialism, the original, the archetypal Welfare State. This suggestion is of course, a lie.

A welfare state is one where a kind of balance has been achieved between the classes. While in a 'pure' capitalist society (which is rare indeed) the means of production and financing are exclusively in the hands of the owners – which affects the degree of advantages and services non-owning workers of all kinds enjoy – a welfare state is one where the workers and producers can put a stranglehold on the means of production and, through periodic use of their force, make the government and the owning classes grant them more rights, advantages, power and income.

The degree of centralization in any welfare state also influences the will of the workers to obtain extra power. A bureaucratic class develops which, not being part of the capitalist establishment, creates an establishment of its own and strives to conquer what the British Labour Left has called 'the commanding height of the economy'. This, however, is as far as the struggle for the means of production goes. And, above all, it must be remembered that in a welfare state the bureaucracy of the trade unions has a particular kind of power and privilege which the capitalist classes have not got. This being so, there is a kind of 'democratic stabilization' through the tug-of-war of

two power groups. As long as the capitalists and the bureaucrats do not identify their separate interests, there is a polarization of interests which ensure the continuation of democracy. When these two classes do merge – often because of an overriding common enemy, belief, patriotism or ideology – then a fascist-type ‘national syndicalist’ society appears. In Israel this has happened. Society, as we have seen, is divided into various national, or racial-ideological, groups. Israeli society is basically a settlers’ society. It does not primarily concern itself with the ‘Indians’ or ‘Niggers’ of the land. Its first priority is the creation of a united economic establishment for the Jewish Israelis. Only then does it concern itself (almost as an afterthought) with the captive Palestinians. Since 1967, when the West Bank of the Jordan, the Golan Heights, the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula came under Israeli rule, the same priority has operated in the Occupied Territories; but here more logically: these territories were taken by open force of war, so it was not ‘unnatural’ that they should be arbitrarily administered by military rule; whereas during the first twenty years of Israeli’s existence, precisely similar military methods had been used on the Palestinians of Israel without any justification whatsoever.

This military rule, then, is what is hidden by the Potiemkin institution of Israel. It is not unduly cruel. It is not irrational or sadistic. It does not advocate the systematic use of cruelty for ‘practical purposes’. On the contrary, it can be beneficial for the neo-feudal society of the Palestinian villagers in Israel and the occupied Territories, and particularly for the people in the *Bedawi*, or Bedouin, nomad camps. For the first time the people are given medical aid, veterinary services, education, agricultural instruction, gynaecological care and even lessons in the use of modern rifles.

The trouble is that all these benefits are incidental. The true purpose of the military rule is the containment of the Palestinian *outside* the power structure of Jewish Israel and, by the use of both force and psychological repression, the creation of conditions by which the

Palestinians will be incapable of challenging Zionist majority rule. Another, but less important, goal of military rule is agricultural expropriation.

Though the pretext for military rule is to keep the Israeli Arabs (and, since 1967, the Arabs of the Occupied Territories) quiescent and let the Jews pursue their 'return to their land' in an orderly fashion, the historical result of this policy has been to impede the development of a bi-national society which, in spite of the creation of the 'Jewish State' in 1948, would certainly have evolved in Israel because of the higher Palestinian birth-rate (three times as high as that of the Hebrew-speaking majority) and the difficulties of attracting more Jewish immigrants from abroad, once the first waves of Hitler's victims were saved from the European mainland between 1945 and 1952.

The desire for a 'purely Jewish' society is freely admitted by the Zionist leadership, which always adds as a rider that Arabs in Israel are given 'equal but separate' opportunities for development and live in good conditions; in peace and in freedom. Unfortunately, the rigours of military rule – to all practical purposes the law of the land, as far as Arabic-speaking Israelis, both Moslem and Christian, are concerned – have repeatedly shown this rider to be untrue.

Military rule covered directly extremely large areas of Israel: the whole of the southern (Negov) area where *Bedawi* tribes roam; almost all northern Israel, or Galilee; and the central area called the 'Big and Small Triangles', which mostly consists of Arab villages. Broadly speaking only Jerusalem, Beer Sheba and the densely populated coastal and central areas of Israel, which include Tel-Aviv, Haifa, and Natanyah, are outside the control of direct military rule.

A Palestinian Israeli living in an area of military rule may be subjected to curfew. For fourteen years, tens of thousands of citizens in the central area who had, according to Zionist propaganda, 'full civil and democratic rights' were forced to enter their homes by nine

o'clock in the evening and not allowed to leave them before five o'clock next morning. At times the rules were changed; the curfew ended at four in the morning but it began at 8 p.m. One can imagine the psychological effect on someone who for the first fourteen years of his life is forced to stay indoors at night, as a persecuted criminal is forced in his cell from the exercise yard. The curfew was not abolished until the spirit of the central area villagers had apparently been totally broken, and they had become what in Israel is euphemistically termed 'non-political'. In the Gaza strip, occupied in 1967, a night curfew was still being imposed as late as March 1972.

In Israel there has been a good deal of discussion about military rule, and a lot of opposition to it. At one point in 1964 the decision to end it was almost taken; but by one vote the renewal of the British Emergency Regulations was approved.

If he wanted to leave a military area, an Arab had to get a permit; in theory this applied to the Jews too, but nobody ever asks a Jew to produce one. However, a Jew entering such an area, might be asked to show his permit, and if he was known to be a non-Zionist opponent of the regime he might be turned back. Thus, these *Bantustans* [a *bantustan* was a territory set aside for black inhabitants of South Africa and South West Africa under the apartheid regime] are visible, or rather transparent. Now you see them (when you are stamping out opposition) and now you don't (and can declare democracy to reign supreme).

The law was enforced in the invisible *Bantustans* through three channels: (a) the 'village elders' or *Muhtars* and the religious leaders, both Moslem *Kadis* and Christian priests; (b) the structures of military rule, assisted by an intricate net of informers and stool-pigeons who enjoy hidden or open benefits (In Lod, for instance, a 'stool-pigeon quarter' was built, exclusively inhabited by Arabs who served the military government and other hush-hush organizations. These were the only Israeli Palestinians known to have granted permits to

carry hand-guns); and (c) economic rewards and sanctions, such as remission of taxes, agricultural loans, minor public posts. It is through this last channel that most of the relatively modest economic development of the 'Arab sector' in Israel has happened. Arab village society being neo-feudal, even in Israel, it is enough to help the bigger landowners, the rich and religious men quaintly called 'Notables', to ensure the obedience of most, if not all, of their villagers.

In the twenty-odd years of Israel's history, the Palestinians have never been allowed to create an independent political movement. Whenever such a movement has appeared the huge weight of military rule has been directed against it. When the group centred on the *El Ard* publication was established in the sixties with a clearly Arab nationalist programme, it was simply proscribed by the courts.

Any Arab who became politically active, either in the ranks of the Communist Rekah Party or as an individual defending his civil rights, was blacklisted by the military government and the Security Service (*Shin Beit*), which secretly control development of the non-Jewish sector – partly through the Department of Arab Affairs of the Prime Minister's Bureau; partly through the so-called Special Branch of the police; and partly through parallel organisms planted in the various civil services such as the Ministry of Posts and Communications, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Culture and Education and the Histadrut [the New General Workers' Federation]. This overall checking is systematic, regulated, and consistent with the Zionist Establishment's policy of allowing the Arabs controlled development in separate, limited and sharply delineated areas.

When elections to the Knesset are approaching, additional pressure is put on the 'doubtful' elements among the 'controlled' Arabs. The authorities let it be known that their jobs are in danger, their property may be in jeopardy, their future as students is uncertain, if they get out of line.

Up to 1969, this policy had the hoped-for effect of breaking the Palestinians' spirit: no independent Arab list of candidates for the Knesset not aligned with one of the Zionist groups was ever formed between the 1948 and 1969 elections.

Controlling Israeli-Palestinians in non-rural areas is a bit more difficult. There are in Israel two bigish Arab towns: Nazareth and Acre. In both, 'parallel Jewish quarters' have been created to neutralize a possible majority of Palestinian voters who might elect municipal representatives of their own, either on a nationalist or personal basis, or through the Rekah party. Nonetheless Nazareth at least twice elected a Rekah majority. Gerrymandering and the buying-off of municipal council members and officials with political advantages solved this problem. The authorities now hoped to prevent such further crises by the redrafting of the Nazareth electoral area through the inclusion of the voters of the *Kiryas Nazareth* (or upper town of Nazareth) constructed on the slopes of the hills above the old town inhabited by Jews.

Incidentally, the building of new housing developments is usually the joint responsibility of the Ministry of Absorption (of Jewish Immigrants) and the Ministry of Public Works, which are assisted with money supplied from other sources. The building of 'Upper Nazareth' was however, pushed through with funds from the Ministry of Defence, whose areas of responsibility are officially war and security.

In despair, aware that they have no political outlet, either democratic or revolutionary, some Israeli Arabs tried to find a way out of their predicament in the old way of the Middle East: by religious conversion. Judaism, however, is not a proselytizing religion like Christianity or Islam. Procedural and administrative difficulties are heaped in the path of would-be converts by religious Jewish authorities, charged with examining the candidates for circumcision or – if women – conversion by ritual cleansing. Politics, racialism and irra-

tional beliefs are now mixed and indistinguishable. This may be the reason why the *Shin Beit* vetted the Arabs who wanted to become first-class Israelis, or Jews. In answer to a Parliamentary Question, Israel's Minister for Religious Affairs declared: (a) It was true that the security services examined the records of the candidates for conversion, as the police did – the first in order to establish that the prospective Jew is not a 'security risk' and the second to see that he has no criminal record; (b) that this procedure had been adopted at the request of 'security sources'; (c) that some candidates had been refused conversion to Judaism because of a negative security check and that there did exist instructions to the Rabbinate to act thus, in case of a negative security check; (d) that it was 'only natural, as when we go about a conversion, that the first question is always if the candidate is a honest man; and if one can take seriously his honest wish to take upon himself the faith of Israel. If he is a criminal or has a criminal record, the question arises if one should not consider this or believe what he says.' As a result of the outcry which followed the Question, and as usually happens in such cases, the official open regulations were changed and the security checks were 'abolished'. In point fact, the Shin Beit's control of who was to be converted and who was not went on.

[...]

As Israel is, in the early seventies, a developing country with a shortage of workers, the existence of an Arabic-speaking, underdeveloped proletariat is desirable; all the more so as the wages of Palestinian Israelis are often lower (if unofficially so) than those of Hebrew-speaking Israelis. The influx of Arab workers from the countryside into the towns is therefore encouraged; but it is also controlled. In the past, permits to move outside their home-zones were granted only to 'good' Arabs, not to the uppity 'political trouble-makers'. Then on the eve of the 1967 war, and following much criticism of military rule by liberal Jewish circles in Israel, the reverse

system was put into practice. Henceforth the 'good' variety of Arab could circulate freely – subject of road-searches, security checks, political bosses and informers – and positive restrictions were imposed only on trouble-makers. Some were not allowed to leave the town or village where they lived; others had to obey a sunset-to-sunrise curfew; the most 'dangerous' were exiled from their native town or village, often at the cost of their livelihood. Obviously, an extensive list of the trouble-makers was kept by the *Shin Beit* and freely consulted by Jewish employers.

This meant that no Arab agricultural worker, no artisan, no shop-keeper, no student, no accountant or lawyer or physician could afford to fall foul of the whim of military rule. Only somebody bent on economic suicide or a truly desperate man would brave the gale of Zionist displeasure in such a climate. The great mass of Arabic-speaking citizens did not want to commit such economic suicide: they were also simply glad to obtain better-paid jobs than their former agricultural occupation. Once again the mixture of the economic carrot and the stick of straightforward repression – which had already broken the spirit of the Israeli Palestinians before this phase – was put to work. Most Arabs were prepared to put up with the situation as long as they were left in peace.

The 'fringe benefits' thrown by the Hebrew-speaking Israelis, from their generally more advanced technological level, to the Arabic-speaking Palestinians really did improve their standard of living. One measure of this improvement was the rise in their numbers. Before 1948 the Arabs were the majority throughout the total area of Palestine (that is, excluding Transjordan but including the Gaza Strip and the West Bank). When in 1948 the Arab countries' attack and the Zionist riposte drove some 600,000 refugees out of Israel only 108,000 Palestinians were left inside Israel. But in March 1968 an official publication of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave their total number as 313,000 – some 11.8 per cent of the population of Israel, excluding the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. This rise was

partly due to their higher birth-rate, even in times of stress, and partly to the relatively high standards of living they enjoyed: four times higher than any Arab community elsewhere.

Israel as a whole developed much faster than the surrounding regimes. Mortality among Israeli Palestinians fell from 20 per thousand in 1948 to 6.1 per thousand in 1965: this, in spite of the fact that the Zionist policy of discrimination still left many Arab villages, particularly in the north, without physicians or pharmacists, whereas the smallest and most isolated Jewish outposts had a well-stocked clinic, a doctor or at least a trained nurse, and an ambulance or other means of medical transport. In some Arab villages not even vaccination against smallpox was enforced. In December 1970 the Minister of Labour promised that seventeen Arab villages would get access-roads – in some three years' time. Many of these villages had no telephone connection to emergency services, although again, not a single Jewish point of colonization was without contact with the rest of the country, having either a telephone service or a wireless transmitter. All of which leads one to think how much worse things must be in the surrounding Arab countries for such a situation to be praised as an improvement.

Schooling in Arabic is provided for the inhabitants of the invisible *Bantustans*, but efforts are made to prevent Arab children from identifying themselves too much with the Arab culture and history of the Middle East.

On the other hand they are taught the history of Zionism and of the Jewish people throughout the world.

In Israel, as in the Arab countries, children are indoctrinated from the kindergarten. Although the Israeli educational authorities never went so far as the Egyptian educators in the Gaza strip, who between 1948 and 1966 taught under-five-year-old children anti-Semitic slogans and inculcated blood-curdling sentiments of hate, the principles of indoctrination and educational falsification do exist. Teaching

posts in the Arab schools cannot be filled without the approval of the *Shin Beit*.

Behind all this is the attitude: 'We have no choice, having been saddled with these unwanted Arabs'. But since the Israeli, and the Jewish culture he has inherited, are basically generous and committed to liberalism and humanism, a strange mixture of oppression and unwilling help is extended to the almost 12 per cent strong minority of non-Jews. Yet the prevailing feeling is, as a humorist once put it: 'Why don't the Palestinians go back to the place from which they didn't come?'

Fewer than one per cent of all Arabs in Israel pursue higher education. Even these – numbered by the Foreign Ministry in 1968 as 350 – are obliged to go to such 'Jewish' towns as Tel-Aviv and Rehovot, or 'mixed' towns such as Haifa and Jerusalem, to complete their studies. Only in these towns do colleges exist. By the spring of 1971 nothing had come out of a proposal to establish, in the occupied territories, an Arab university under Israeli auspices. In the Jewish ones, it is very easy to prevent non-Jewish students from taking part in political organizations, or forming an efficient students' union.

Arab workers are just as effectively controlled. For many years the main trade-union organization, the Histadrut, was officially 'The General Organization of the Hebrew Workers of the Land of Israel'. But this was changed later, when the Histadrut found it expedient to extend its influence. In fact, Histadrut has become one of the main instruments of control over Arabic-speaking minorities, as it already was over the Hebrew-speaking majority. Histadrut activities, such as organizing leisure, distributing work, educational programmes and so on, as well as directing industry, have become a further channel for the ubiquitous agents of the *Shin Beit*.

Histadrut also exerts influence in another way. In Israel there was no socialized medicine till 1970. Instead there were a number of 'sickness funds', medical insurance organizations affiliated to the different

political parties and economic Zionist bodies. That of the Histadrut, simply called *Kupat Holim*, or 'Sickness Fund' is the biggest by far, covering some sixty per cent of the inhabitants of the country. Every worker or employee, Jewish or Arab, who pays dues to the Histadrut, automatically pays part of them for Medical Sick Fund services. Many villages in the Arab sector, however, have no *Kupat Holim* clinic. In January 1971 a law introducing compulsory sickness insurance through the existing sickness funds was introduced. It gave an absolute majority to the Histadrut on the board of the Health Insurance services and thus created further pressure on Arab and Jewish workers to join the majority *Kupat Holim*. There was, of course, no independent Arab sickness fund.

# Bertrand Russell

## On expansionist Israel

(1970)

Bertrand Arthur William Russell (1872–1970) was a Nobel Literature laureate, philosopher, logician, mathematician, historian, writer, social critic, and human rights activist.

This statement on the Middle East was dated 31st January 1970, and was read on 3rd February, the day after Bertrand Russell's death, to an International Conference of Parliamentarians meeting in Cairo.

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The latest phase of the undeclared war in the Middle East is based upon a profound miscalculation. The bombing raids deep into Egyptian territory will not persuade the civilian population to surrender but will stiffen their resolve to resist. This is the lesson of all aerial bombardment.

The Vietnamese who have endured years of American heavy bombing have responded not by capitulation but by shooting down more enemy aircraft. In 1940 my own fellow countrymen resisted

Hitler's bombing raids with unprecedented unity and determination. For this reason, the present Israeli attacks will fail in their essential purpose, but at the same time they must be condemned vigorously throughout the world.

The development of the crisis in the Middle East is both dangerous and instructive. For over 20 years Israel has expanded by force of arms. After every stage in this expansion Israel has appealed to "reason" and has suggested "negotiations".

This is the traditional role of the imperial power because it wishes to consolidate with the least difficulty what it has already taken by violence. Every new conquest becomes the new basis of the proposed negotiation from strength, which ignores the injustice of the previous aggression.

The aggression committed by Israel must be condemned, not only because no state has the right to annexe foreign territory, but because every expansion is an experiment to discover how much more aggression the world will tolerate.

The refugees who surround Palestine in their hundreds of thousands were described recently by the Washington journalist I.F. Stone as "the moral millstone around the neck of world Jewry." Many of the refugees are now well into the third decade of their precarious existence in temporary settlements.

The tragedy of the people of Palestine is that their country was "given" by a foreign Power to another people for the creation of a new State. The result was that many hundreds of thousands of innocent people were made permanently homeless.

With every new conflict their number have increased. How much longer is the world willing to endure this spectacle of wanton cruelty? It is abundantly clear that the refugees have every right to the homeland from which they were driven, and the denial of this right is at the heart of the continuing conflict.

No people anywhere in the world would accept being expelled in masse from their own country; how can anyone require the people of Palestine to accept a punishment which nobody else would tolerate? A permanent just settlement of the refugees in their homeland is an essential ingredient of any genuine settlement in the Middle East.

We are frequently told that we must sympathize with Israel because of the suffering of the Jews in Europe at the hands of the Nazis. I see in this suggestion no reason to perpetuate any suffering. What Israel is doing today cannot be condoned, and to invoke the horrors of the past to justify those of the present is gross hypocrisy. Not only does Israel condemn a vast number of refugees to misery, not only are many Arabs under occupation condemned to military rule; but also Israel condemns the Arab nations only recently emerging from colonial status, to continued impoverishment as military demands take precedence over national development.

All who want to see an end to bloodshed in the Middle East must ensure that any settlement does not contain the seeds of future conflict. Justice requires that the first step towards a settlement must be an Israeli withdrawal from all the territories occupied in June 1967. A new world campaign is needed to help bring justice to the long-suffering people of the Middle East.

# Anonymous

## I Am Israel

(2008)

This is a text written by an anonymous author that depicts in a tragic cynical-humorous way the behaviour of the rulers of the State of Israel and of many of its Zionist inhabitants from the time of its foundation until now.

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***I am Israel.*** I came to a land without a people for a people without a land. Those people who happened to be here, had no right to be here, and my people showed them they had to leave or die, razing 480 Palestinian villages to the ground, erasing their history.

***I am Israel.*** Some of my people committed massacres and later became Prime Ministers to represent me. In 1948, Menachem Begin was in charge of the unit that slaughtered the inhabitants of Deir Yassin, including 100 men, women, and children. In 1953, Ariel Sharon led the slaughter of the inhabitants of Qibya, and in 1982

arranged for our allies to butcher around 2,000 in the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila.

***I am Israel.*** Carved in 1948 out of 78% of the land of Palestine, dispossessing its inhabitants and replacing them with Jews from Europe and other parts of the world. While the natives whose families lived on this land for thousands of years are not allowed to return, Jews from all over the world are welcome to instant citizenship.

***I am Israel.*** In 1967, I swallowed the remaining lands of Palestine – the West Bank and Gaza – and placed their inhabitants under an oppressive military rule, controlling and humiliating every aspect of their daily lives. Eventually, they should get the message that they are not welcome to stay, and join the millions of Palestinian refugees in the shanty camps of Lebanon and Jordan.

***I am Israel.*** I have the power to control American policy. My American Israel Public Affairs Committee can make or break any politician of its choosing, and as you see, they all compete to please me. All the forces of the world are powerless against me, including the UN as I have the American veto to block any condemnation of my war crimes. As Ariel Sharon so eloquently phrased it, “*We control America*”.

***I am Israel.*** I influence American mainstream media too, and you will always find the news tailored to my favor. I have invested millions of dollars into PR representation, and CNN, New York Times, and others have been doing an excellent job of promoting my

propaganda. Look at other international news sources and you will see the difference.

***I am Israel.*** You Palestinians want to negotiate “peace!?” But you are not as smart as me; I will negotiate, but will only let you have your municipalities while I control your borders, your water, your airspace and anything else of importance. While we “negotiate,” I will swallow your hilltops and fill them with settlements, populated by the most extremist of my extremists, armed to the teeth. These settlements will be connected with roads you cannot use, and you will be imprisoned in your little Bantustans between them, surrounded by checkpoints in every direction.

***I am Israel.*** I have the fourth strongest army in the world, possessing nuclear weapons. How dare your children confront my oppression with stones, don’t you know my soldiers won’t hesitate to blow their heads off? In 17 months, I have killed 900 of you and injured 17,000, mostly civilians, and have the mandate to continue since the international community remains silent. Ignore, as I do, the hundreds of Israeli reserve officers who are now refusing to carry out my control over your lands and people; their voices of conscience will not protect you.

***I am Israel.*** You want freedom? I have bullets, tanks, missiles, Apaches and F-16s to obliterate you. I have placed your towns under siege, confiscated your lands, uprooted your trees, demolished your homes, and you still demand freedom? Don’t you get the message? You will never have peace or freedom, because ***I am Israel.***

# Uri Avnery

## Eyeless in Gaza

### (2018)

Uri Avnery (1923-2018) was in his youth a Irgun member. Later on he founded the *Gush Shalom* peace activist movement. The movement objects to Israeli occupation of the West Bank, and argues that the State of Israel is committing war crimes on a daily basis.

This text is further reminder that the Israeli Army is a criminal organization within which people commit mass murders and then justify their insane actions by declaring that they are just “following orders”.

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WRITE DOWN: I, Uri Avnery, soldier number 44410 of the Israel army, hereby dissociate myself from the army sharpshooters who murder unarmed demonstrators along the Gaza Strip, and from their commanders, who give them the orders, up to the commander in chief.

We don't belong to the same army, or to the same state. We hardly belong to the same human race.

IS MY government committing "war crimes" along the border of the Gaza Strip?

I don't know. I am not a jurist.

It seems that officials of the International Criminal Court believe that the acts of our soldiers do constitute war crimes. They demand an international investigation.

To prevent that, our army command proposes an Israeli military investigation. That is manifestly ridiculous – an army investigating itself about acts committed on direct orders of the Chief of Staff.

As was published in advance, sharpshooters were posted along the border fence and ordered to kill "ringleaders" of the unarmed protesters on the other side of the fence.

The Gaza leadership had announced that these unarmed protests were to take place every week, after Friday prayers, until Naqba Day [the 15th of May, to commemorate the catastrophe of the displacement of the Palestinians following the establishment of the State of Israeli].

During the first two Fridays, 29 unarmed people were shot dead and more than a thousand wounded by sharpshooters.

For me this is not a judicial question. It is a crime, not only against the unarmed protesters. It is also a crime against the State of Israel, against the people of Israel and against the Israeli army.

Since I was a member of that army on the day of its foundation, I think that it is also a crime against my comrades and me.

THIS WEEK a short video, recorded by a soldier at the time of such an action, was widely seen in Israel.

It shows the action from the angle of a soldier who was obviously standing next to a sharpshooter. The sharpshooter sees the demon-

strators from a distance of hundreds of yards. The hairs of his sights move at random, than settle on an individual. He shoots. The person drops on the spot.

A joyous cry “Yesh” is heard all around from unseen soldiers who have been watching. “Yesh” means “got him”, a jubilant yell, such as would accompany a hunter’s success in killing a rabbit.

Many hundreds of thousands of Israelis have seen this film by now, since it was shown for the first time on TV. Except for a few articles and letters to the editor (in Haaretz), there has been no protest.

This did not happen overseas, in some remote colony. It happened right next to us, 45 minute’s drive from my home.

The killer was not a hardened mercenary. He – and the joyous soldiers around him – were just ordinary youngsters, drafted at the age of 18 like most Jewish Israelis.

All of them were just “following orders”. (Remember?) We have not heard of one single case of a soldier refusing orders.

UNTIL TWO weeks ago, I had the highest respect for our highest officer, the Chief of Staff, Gadi Eizenkot. Surrounded by officers who are mere military technicians, he seemed an officer who, in spite of his unmilitary appearance, was well capable of upholding the dignity of the army against the punk who serves as Minister of Defense.

No more. Eizenkot has given the murderous orders. Why, for heavens sake?

Like the British in India and the white racists in the US, the Israeli government does not know how to deal with unarmed protest. It has never encountered it. It does not exist in Arab tradition.

By chance this week I saw the classic movie about Mahatma Gandhi. The British tried everything – they beat him and myriads of others

into pulp, they shot thousands of others. When Gandhi and his followers suffered this torment and did not hit back, the British eventually admitted defeat and went away.

So did the white racist opponents of Martin Luther King in Alabama. A Palestinian follower of his came to this country at the beginning of the occupation and tried to convince his countrymen to try this method. The Israel army opened fire, and the Palestinians reverted to the armed struggle.

Not this time. The (violent) Islamic Hamas in the Gaza Strip calls on the population to try unarmed protest, tens of thousands follow. This can lead to unforeseen results. One of them is the sharpshooters' order to kill more or less at random.

WHEN I stated publicly that I am ashamed, a reader accused me of hypocrisy. He cited from my two books about our (1948) War of Independence, in which I had described atrocities to which I was a witness.

Sure, there were atrocities (as in every war). The perpetrators were soldiers of all ethnic and social groups. But they were denounced by some of their comrades (also of all ethnic and social groups). Most soldiers were in the middle, following the most persuasive.

Now the picture is different. Not only is the shooting of the unarmed protesters, far from the fence, done by order, but there seem to be no other voices. The military and political leadership is united. Even in civilian society, voices against the mass murder are very few.

HOW DO the Israeli media react? Well, they don't. This momentous event in Israel's history is almost ignored.

Fortunately for the perpetrators, there are plenty of events to take our minds off them and their actions. President Bashar al-Assad has apparently used chemical weapons against his rebels. The Israeli media are having a feast. How awful! How barbarous! How Arab!

Then there is the problem of the 36,000 “illegal” (meaning non-Jewish) African workers who have entered Israel. The government wants to throw them out. Decent Israelis very properly want to prevent this. That is a full-time job. No time for the Gaza Strip.

And there is, of course, Holocaust Memorial Day, which happens conveniently this week. One can write endlessly about this awful chapter in our history. What is Gaza compared to this horrible event?

WHAT ABOUT our media?

The sorrowful fact is that the Israeli media have reverted to what they were in the early days of the state: an instrument of the government. It took my news magazine dozens of years to break that habit. For many years we had a decent press, with some wonderful journalists and broadcasters.

No more. A few are left, but the great majority of the press is now coordinated with the regime (“gleichgeschaltet” in German). Two minutes on Gaza. 20 minutes on what’s happening in Syria. 10 minutes for the latest (imaginary) outbreak of anti-Semitism in the British Labor Party.

Most of the journalists and broadcasters, honest and well-meaning people all, are not even conscious of what they are doing (or not doing). They are innocent of any other thoughts.

WHERE IS the “Left”? Where is the so-called “Center”?

They have not disappeared, as some lament. Far from it. A shift of some percent or a move of one of the small parties would suffice to topple Binyamin Netanyahu.

But they all seem to be paralyzed. Nobody dares to speak out against the killing, apart from some faint whispers. Even the many admirable groups of youngsters who fight against the occupation, each on some special sector, are silent about the Gaza killings.

No mass demonstrations. No huge protests. Nothing.

So we, too, are to blame. And perhaps more than others.

Please write down: I am guilty!

## 6. Arabs - Palestinians

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The first aspect to be highlighted is the fact that the Arabs, like the Jews, are not an homogeneous mass and the problems facing the Palestinians are not identical to the ones facing Arab people living in other regions.

Moreover, the differences in political status (rulers versus common people) should be taken into strong consideration when talking about the Arab world.

Finally, even assuming the existence of an Arab World, within it there are, as in every social and cultural large community, enlightened persons and sectarian individuals.

Therefore, the solution to many social problems depends on which of these categories succeeds in promoting ideas and aspirations that can lead either to universal liberation or to group oppression.



# Camillo Berneri

## Bloodstained Palestine

### (1929)

Two decades before the founding of the State of Israel, Camillo Berneri warned against the danger of bloodshed in Palestine because the Zionists wanted to become the new rulers of that land. For Berneri, Zionism is not only as a smokescreen for British imperialist policy but also a nationalist-hegemonic threat to peaceful coexistence between the new colonisers and the long-standing inhabitants of Palestine. What is instead needed is a situation of full tolerance towards the Jews in Europe, because only in this way the Zionist Jews will have no reason to migrate in big numbers to Palestine.

Source: *Vogliamo!* Monthly magazine of social, historical and literary culture, Biasca-Annemasse-Lugano, year I, no. 4, November 1929

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Let us leave the 'Wailing Wall' out of the way. It is merely the backdrop to the picture. Symbolically, it can be considered the centre of the tragedy, but historically it is not. Every Friday for ten years, Jews have been free to go to Solomon's Wall, which juridically

belongs to the Arabs, to mourn the despair and misfortunes of their race. Arab fury has never raged against the Orthodox Jewish element. Arabs are tolerant, good Muslims in religion. Their “fanaticism” can be explained by demographic data rather than historical reminiscences and psychological amateurism. The Arab revolt was, by circumstance, anti-Jewish; by nature, simply xenophobic.

I have before me two interviews: one with Dr. Weizmann, president of the World Zionist Organisation, and the other with Ameen Hussein, religious leader of the Arabs of Palestine. The former declares it necessary that the Arabs understand that England has no intention of changing its policy of protecting Zionism, and that it is necessary to facilitate Jewish immigration as much as possible. The second reaffirms that the current government of Palestine [under British mandate] is opposed to the Arabs in its constitution and policies; he calls for the adoption of a democratic form of government in which all the inhabitants of Palestine are represented proportionally, and for the abandonment of British policy in favour of the development of a “Jewish national centre”, especially with regard to immigration.

Two clearly opposing positions. A contrast that is difficult to resolve. Which side is right? It is the Arabs. Sentimentality is out of place. If the world press has reported on Jewish victims, it has also depicted the horrific scenes of the massacres of defenceless Zionist settlers; if there is a just tradition of pity for the Jews who were victims of absurd and unjust laws and massacred in pogroms; if the Zionist effort is admirable, all this is counterbalanced by the weight of Arab victims, by the fact that Zionism serves as a smokescreen for British imperialist policy and the regime of inequality that prevails in Palestine.

The Jews declared themselves certain that they would be the future rulers of Palestine. The Arabs saw hundreds of Jews disembarking from every steamship arriving in Jaffa and Haifa, they saw the Jews

occupying the most favourable areas of their territory, they saw lands made fertile by Arab farmers becoming the property of Jews, they saw most of the expenditure on public works going to benefit the Zionist community, they witnessed the huge profits made from the resale of land bought for very little money, and they were denied the convening of the Palestinian parliament.

Before the European war [the First World War], there were 43 Zionist agricultural colonies, with approximately 13,000 inhabitants. With the British occupation of Palestine (December 1917), Lord Balfour became the protector of Zionism. This protection led to large-scale Jewish immigration. In 1919, there were 57,000 Jews in Palestine; from that year to 1927, their number increased by 90,200. Between 1922 and 1927, a total of 77,792 immigrants arrived. Immigration peaked in 1925 with 35,801 individuals. After 1925, immigration declined rapidly, so much so that in 1927 the contingent was 2,788 individuals.

At the same time, there was an exodus that rose to over 7,500 individuals after 1925. What do these figures mean? They mean this: after the initial rush towards the promised land, a crisis ensued due to the environment's inability to absorb immigration quickly enough. If we take into account the prevailing nature of the soil and the population density (38 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>), as well as the ratio of the Arab population (80%) to the Jewish population (19%), the economic contrast mentioned above becomes very clear.

But demographics are not the main issue. What worries people is the nature of Jewish immigration, which is economically selective and technically capital-intensive. The Immigration Ordinance of 1925 stipulates that Jewish immigrants must have an annual income of at least £60 or a capital of at least £250. Jewish immigration is therefore almost entirely composed of wealthy individuals. In addition, many of the Jewish settlers are technically educated (engineers, agricultural experts, science professors, etc.). The Arabs are therefore

unable to compete because of administrative inequality in favour of the Jews, Jewish hoarding of the best land, and the combination of capital and technical expertise that characterises Zionist colonisation.

The solution cannot be that advocated by the leader of Zionism, but rather that advocated by the leader of the Muslims of Palestine. However, England has in Palestine a base for expansion into Asia Minor and will not renounce its policy of protecting Zionism. On the other hand, millions of Muslims live in British-controlled territories in Asia and Africa, and this will have to be taken into account in the not too distant future; all the more so in Iraq, Transjordan and Syria, where Muslim discontent is far from being appeased.

The problem of Zionism must also be resolved in Europe, as a problem of tolerance towards Jews. The fact that in 1925, 50.5 per cent of Jewish immigrants to Palestine came from Poland is enough to show that the idea of reconstituting the Jewish nation grew and developed on the basis of suffering, fear and inferiority, which made and still makes Jews a rejected race in some countries.

Solomon's wall was the altar of a scattered and oppressed people. The Zionists wanted to turn it into a throne. But above that worn wall stands the mosque of Amar in all its beautiful grandeur. Behind Rome, the destroyer and persecutor, the Arab Muslim has advanced.

Have the Jews found in England an ally that can disperse the people of Mohammed? The problem of Palestine is this: either the Arabs or the Jews. The land is too small to be populated by both, living together in peace and freedom. The Zionists who want to open Palestine to unlimited Jewish immigration can only want the Arab diaspora. But the people of Judah were a complex of tribes of believers. It was religion that constituted the nation. The Arab people of Palestine are a fraction of the Islamic world. And Islam is not dispersed, because it has many vital centres and a sphere of life that encompasses much of the world.

If the Zionists fail to see the problem clearly, they will find themselves driven out of Palestine. The exodus of settlers from the blood-stained Jewish oases should serve as a warning. Unfortunately, London is calling for exemplary punishment, and new blood will soak the soil and sands of Palestine. With this sowing of hatred, the fruits of Zionist colonisation can only be bitter.

# Edmond Rabbath

## The Arabs

(1937)

Edmond Rabbath (Alep, 1902 - Beyrouth, 1991) was a Syrian historian and jurist, naturalised Lebanese.

The interesting aspect, among others, of this text is that it points out the fact that “It is commonly agreed to classify the Arabs with the Semitic group. In it are generally included those peoples who were called Syrians or Aramaeans in the north; Babylonians and Assyrian in the east; Arabs in the south; Phoenicians, Edomites, Hebrews, Moabites, and so forth, in the west.”

So, to use the term “antisemitism” as an obnoxious and immoral attitude towards the Jews, and only towards the Jews, is something totally incorrect if not preposterous.

Source: Extract from: Edmond Rabbath, *Unité Syrienne et Devenir Arabe*, Paris, 1937

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A common origin, whatever may be said of it, inspires the unity [of the Arabs].

This is not to say that one could speak of an Arab race. Here, but to a smaller extent than elsewhere, the inevitable mixture of blood has produced what, in the case of France, has been called the “ethnic synthesis” which seems to have been the fate of most European countries. Marcellin Boule, in a now-classic definition, means by “a race,”

“The continuity of a physical type which manifests affinities of blood, and which represents an essentially natural grouping, neither having nor being able to have anything in common with a people, a nationality, a language, or habits, these being concepts which correspond to purely artificial groupings which are in no way anthropological, and which depend only on history, of which they are the product.” (*Les Hommes Fossiles*, p. 320).

Racial unity, as may be seen, is not essential to national existence. In a famous lecture, *What is a Nation*, Renan defined it in these brilliant words:

“A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Two things which, truth to say, are really one, constitute this soul, this spiritual principle. One lies in the past, the other in the present. One is the common possession of a rich legacy of memories, the other is the actual willingness, the desire to live together, the will to improve the inheritance which has been received intact. Man . . . does not improvise. The nation, as much as the individual, is the outcome of a lengthy past made up of efforts, of sacrifices, and of devotion.... To share the common glories of the past, to have a common will in the present, to have done great things together, to want to go on doing them, such are the essential conditions of being a people. . . . The Spartan song: We

are what you were, we will be what you are, is in its very simplicity the short and compendious anthem of every fatherland. . . .”

However, when a community of blood exists, it undoubtedly strengthens national unity. The peoples who have it do not have to wait for the work of time, for historical circumstances, for the tenacious will of a dynasty such as that which “in a thousand years made France,” to realize their national unity. They carry this unity in themselves, in their ethnic consciousness, in the voice of the blood. It will be invincibly realized when those factors which have been favourable to other peoples in the past will, in turn, make it possible.

But can one dare today, considering the new horizons which are constantly revealing themselves to ethnology, to assert the existence of pure races, of organic species constituting those “essentially natural groupings” of which Marcellin Boule speaks? The violent or peaceful contact among peoples has powerfully modified human anthropology. And which people did not, during the course of its past, undergo the mixing processes of history?

Among the Arabs, however, these inevitable changes are much less pronounced than elsewhere.

It is commonly agreed to classify the Arabs with the Semitic group. In it are generally included those peoples who were called Syrians or Aramaeans in the north; Babylonians and Assyrian in the east; Arabs in the south; Phoenicians, Edomites, Hebrews, Moabites, and so forth, in the west.

“The areas which they inhabited or which they still inhabit are bounded by the Taurus, the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, the Red Sea, Egypt, and the Mediterranean. The whole of this is called the Fertile Crescent, because it constitutes a semicircle open to the south, with the desert in front and the mountains behind.” (Dr. Rappoport, *Histoire de la Palestine*, Paris, 1933)

Whence come the Semites? Not from Central Asia, as it used to be asserted, but actually from the Arabian Peninsula. Winkler, an authority on the subject, is categorical. "The home of the Semites," he affirms, "is Arabia." Sprenger before him also maintained that "all the Semites are Arabs." In successive eras, starting with the earliest antiquity, under the pressure of overpopulation (Winkler), or more simply, of climatic variations which caused persistent famine, their migrations waves overflowed periodically in the neighbouring countries, overwhelming the native populations, or evicting them from their country of origin.

Four times in history the Semitic wave broke its dam and spread outside. The first migration, called Babylonian, is lost in the night of time. It went in the direction of the Tigris and Euphrates valley and reached northern Babylonia, where the Sumerians and Akkadians had to surrender.

The second time, it invaded the countries of the west, especially Canaan. This is the migration of the Amurru, or western Semites. The known history of Palestine goes back to that period. Toward the fourteenth century B.C. the Aramaean invasion took place in Syria. In northern and central Syria small, semi-independent kingdoms were founded. The history of Damascus began then.

Finally, in the seventh century of our era, the conquest of Arab Islam was started from Medina. This is the last invasion, the most violent, the most widespread, and the most durable. (Rappoport, *Histoire de la Palestine*, Paris, 1933, pp.35-36)

In the intervals between these brutal population movement, a slow and peaceful penetration went on, through the groupings which inhabited the Arab periphery. Whenever their Semitic origins became diluted or began to fade, the peninsula, both a laboratory and a reserve, would again inject young blood to remind them of their Arab origins. Semite and Arab are therefore synonymous appella-

tions. They express the same biological reality, the unity of a race which has not stayed put in its original home.

“Contemporary Arabia does not contain within its natural limits . . . the whole of the Arab race.” (Eugène Pittard, *Les Races et l'histoire*, p. 432)

The latter has, long since gone beyond its prehistoric boundaries and occupied new territories where, thanks to it, majestic civilizations were founded. They have been called Babylonian, Assyrian, or Phoenician. In truth, they were Arab, Arab in the spirit which conceived them, Arab in the hands which set them up.

It is certainly true that these peoples, in the course of their peregrinations, came up against other races and fell under their moral and physical influence. Mixing with these races, they lost the purity of their early characteristics. But if their history is closely considered, it cannot be denied that these adulterations are small and without great influence over the whole, at least in those countries which are strung out round the peninsula. From the first Babylonian migrations, the Semites who come from Arabia have always met on their path other Semites who had come before them. By means of struggle or mutual help which takes place between the newcomers and the old occupiers, they have necessarily come into contact with one another. Their inevitable fusion, invariably consummated in history, does not blot out their ethnic characteristics. It rejuvenates them and enables them to adapt themselves to their new situation, a process all the more easy and rapid in that it is effected between groups having the same origin.

But the invasions which originated from outside the Arab countries, from the west or the south, from the north or the east — and in this part of the world they succeeded one another ceaselessly through the centuries — obviously did bring new blood. They encroached on the homogeneity of the Semitic race, which was subjugated for a time. In

Iraq, they “encapsulated” it with Persian or Indian elements, in Syria and Palestine with a sediment of extremely varied lineages separated from the peoples who had trampled over their soil. But the Arab-Semitic race, because it is prolific, rooted in the soil, and constantly renewed by infiltration from the desert, has remained the dominant one. The foreign elements have changed it only at the surface. Indeed, their cultural and social manifestations endured only for a short time. Slowly, the Arab wave would cover them once more. Without opposing any resistance, they let themselves be absorbed by it, to be lost and forgotten.

All the same, the landslides constituted by the foreign armies, however small their weight, have impressed on the Arab countries ethnic modifications which diminish a little the purity of their race. Today they are no longer the direct descendants of a common ancestor, but “the congregation of similar individuals descended from parents of the same blood.” (Eugène Pittard, *Les Races et l'Histoire*, p. 4)

Popular tradition indicates this when it divides the Arabs into two categories, the *ba'ida* (extinct) Arabs, a pure race of whom the traces subsist only in the Yemen and Hadramaut, and the *musta'riba* (Arabized) Arabs who constitute the majority of the Arabs in history.

It would therefore seem rash to bring forward the unity of the Arab race, at a moment when scholars agree in accepting the disappearance of pure races. In spite of the fact that the argument from the unity of the race favours the Arab nation, we would prefer instead of the term “race” the more generic term “origin,” that is, Arab origin, or, if it is preferred, Semitic origin, which is the same thing.

Racial unity, or unity of origin, cannot, by itself, constitute the nation. Race is a corporeal element “which constantly falls apart ... which is exposed to attack by that which produced it, namely environment and heredity.” (Henri Berr, foreword to Pittard, *op. cit.*, p. viii)

Further, it is the characteristic of human progress to liberate gradually the individual from the influence of the soil and of blood, in raising him toward an ideal which men of different races could share. Spiritual effort lessens the intensity of physical reactions. It liberates men from the instincts of his race. "Within the skull which does change, the brain is modified." (Henri Berr, foreword to Pittard, *op. cit.*, p. vii).

Under the *facies* of the ancestor a new soul will live.

Hybrid races may form a united nation. And it is the glory France to supply so magnificent an example of a people eminently homogeneous in spite of the diversity of the old races which compose it.

# T. R. Feiwel

## The Arab does not exist (1938)

T. R. Feiwel (1907-1985) was born in a Belarusian Jewish family. In the years 1936-1937 he was involved in the Zionist movement in Palestine, that was at that time under British mandate. His report is quite relevant, coming from a Jew witnessing directly a reality that he then portrayed in his book.

Source: T. R. Feiwel, *No Ease in Zion*, Chapter XVIII, 1938.

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Are the Jews aware of this hostile world surrounding them on every side? They are aware, and yet not aware, both at the same time: a contradictory psychological state and deliberate ability not to see, very possible under the influence of the exalted Zionist state of mind.

At the 1936 Levant Fair in Tel Aviv one Zionist pavilion contained a huge photograph showing a group of young Jews and Jewesses in workers' clothes striding in unbroken line towards the observer, conveying, as intended, an impression of irresistible penetration – the new army of Jewish conquest.

A distinguished English visitor, a pro-Zionist but startled by this picture, commented about it: "And then they wonder why the Arab reaches for his rifle!"

No Arab saw the picture, because no Arab visited the 1936 Levant Fair. In the Zionist Press this boycott was taken as another sign of Arab extremism, racial chauvinism, and lack of joint effort for the common good of Palestine.

The curious point is that such views are held by men who in all other respects are intelligent, educated and broad-minded, whose minds are not closed at all. One might therefore assume that they are simply not aware of the Arab issue and of Arab dangers.

Objectively this might be questioned because the feverish Zionist drive for a majority in Palestine proves their awareness of the danger. But subjectively the Zionist assumption that such a Zionist majority could be obtained without major resistance by the Arabs, implies that the Palestine Arabs do not exist, at least not as a separate nation with its own aims for national survival which would have to be reckoned with.

The history of Zionist policy towards the Arabs is that of this illusion, but an illusion fanatically upheld! The illusion started, of course, with the birth of the Zionist movement itself. To the early Zionists, who only knew Palestine as a Turkish province without special mention in geography books, the presence of a small Arab population meant nothing.

Nordau's phrase [\*] "*Das Land ohne Volk, dem Volk ohne Land*" [The land without a people, a people without a land] exactly sums up the early Zionist claim. Nor was this ignorance surprising. The early pre-War Zionists, typical Central European intellectuals, were anything but Orientalists. Under the Turks Palestine looked an empty country, poor and desolate. The small Levantine merchant communities and the few hundred thousand poor fellaheen seemed

little more than a temporary squatter population. If Palestine were built up as a Jewish country, surely these fellaheen must also profit from its new prosperity; they would either become absorbed in the new state, or else transferred.

Compared to the growing problem of millions of Jews in Europe, compared with the forces Zionism aimed to arouse, the problem of transferring an Oriental population – something the Turks had frequently done – seemed of a very minor order.

As we have said, that the early Zionists dreaming in Cracow and Basle and Chicago should think this is not surprising. But that this messianic belief in Palestine as a purely Jewish country, so vital to Zionism, should be able to survive shock after shock of reality and endure even to the present day, after the Arabs have made their presence so clearly and unmistakably felt – that is remarkable proof of the Jewish urge for clinging fanatically to any hope promising even a partial way out from the Jewish problem.

[...]

Examining the Jewish attitude to the Arabs during the years 1933-6, it would be difficult to find it other than a frantic belief that the Arab did not exist. Already the official Zionist name for Palestine – *Eretz Israel*, Land of Israel – emphasized this attitude. True, this was the ancient Biblical name of the country. But its modern revival signified the political demand of Zionism, and it did so in Arab eyes. The education of Jewish children in Palestine was nationalist, in a strangely calm and matter-of-fact way. Aggressiveness was not preached, only peaceful penetration. The Jewish children were simply taught that the plight of the Jews was intolerable and that Palestine was, by historic right and international recognition, theirs to colonize.

Colonization should even extend beyond the borders of the country. Arab opposition could not exist; if it did, it was due to obscurantism or wickedness. That the inevitable answer to this calm assumption was similar Arab education towards Arab national rights and conquest by force, was disregarded.

In fact, nothing was done to placate Arab suspicions, and almost nothing omitted which could rouse them. No contact was established with even a single Arab group. To the Arabs Zionism could not but appear uncanny and peculiarly malevolent. Individual Jews they encountered were often friendly and kindly and extraordinarily helpful. But, as a whole, Zionism excluded them like an intangible wall.

Statistics showing Jewish growth and progress were continually held before their eyes. The terminology of Zionism was militant. Expansion of colonization was described as the conquest of new areas – the conquest of Galilee, the conquest of the ports, the conquest of the hill country. When Jewish labourers were substituted for Arabs in some branch of work, this was called the conquest of such work. To buy a new Jewish product, previously supplied only by Arabs, was openly proclaimed as an advance.

Incessant flag-waving and the most extravagant Zionist patriotic programmes were carried on as though the Arab had no susceptibilities, and as though the Zionists tried to make the Arabs believe that these programmes could really be carried out. In the crowded streets and cafés of Tel Aviv, particularly isolated from the rest of Palestine during the hectic years 1934-6, no doubts were permitted that the Zionist programme was feasible, because the need of solving the Jewish problem was so great that it had to be feasible.

Even when it was seen that a more and more closely knit national movement was arising out of the million Arabs in Palestine, that even so primitive and disunited a people could be stirred to common action, this was disregarded. Or else the class issue was dragged in.

Young socialist Jews, even though Zionism had done nothing to benefit the Arab peasantry *directly*, said with perfect conviction that if they were Arab peasants they would, for the sake of indirect benefits, be ardent Zionists.

To the last this spirit of blindness was maintained, so that when the crash came and the Arabs rose in 1936 the Jewish reaction was the hysterical one of a psychologically unprepared people. True, the Jews defended themselves with rare courage and discipline, but, faced with Arab violence, instead of asking themselves in what way they could have aroused such widespread burning hatred among a primitive people, they proclaimed to the world that there Arabs were not only primitive savages, but branded by their own acts as without moral sense, an evil force with which one could not bargain.

Or alternatively, the Arabs were an innocent people ready to love the Jews who were showering such benefits upon them, had they not been misled by unscrupulous leaders.

But, in any case, the Arab attack was aimed at historical Jewish rights – the right to colonize freely in all Palestine, a right arising out of the catastrophic Jewish situation, and one internationally acknowledged. So how could the Arab attack be anything but wickedness, and how could Jewish resistance not be uncompromising? In their inability to see the Arab point of view, in their frantic belief that surely public opinion must recognize the justice of the Jewish cause, that surely the British must realize that British and Zionist interests went together, the Jews were politically paralysed.

Their own self-deception prevented them from recognizing the million Arabs of Palestine as a political factor, with whom accommodation must be sought. And so beyond tenacious self-defence, the Jews had no policy whatsoever in Palestine, least of all towards moderate Arabs, and in these bitter years of struggle without compromise the prosperity of Palestine, the impetus of Zionism, all were

lost. The Jews had relatively tremendous power in Palestine, but it was hardly used.

And even in 1938, when the Partition Plan seemed to save something from the wreckage of Zionist hopes, it was only a minority of the Zionists who could break through the hysterical make-belief, and realize that Palestine was a mixed country, that even any Jewish state must inevitably be mixed Jewish and Arab, and that the difficulties of establishing tolerable Jewish and Arab relations, vital to any continuance of Zionism, were only just beginning.

But the chief factor in maintaining this unreal wall between the Jews and Arab had been the powerful *General Federation of Jewish Labour in Palestine*, usually known by its Hebrew abbreviation of Histadrut.

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### **Note**

[\*] The phrase attributed here to Max Nordau had already been pronounced by many other people, amongst them Israel Zangwill. As for Max Nordau, it seems that when he heard for the first time that there were Arabs inhabiting Palestine, he rushed excitedly to Herzl proclaiming: "I did not know that! If that is the case, then we are perpetrating an injustice."

Even Israel Zangwill changed his mind when he realised his mistake of believing that Palestine was an uninhabited land.

# King Abdullah of Jordan

## The Truth about Palestine

### (1947)

In this text the king of Jordan (reign 1946-1951) unmasks the hypocrisy of the western rulers who want to dispose of the Jews by sending them in mass to Palestine.

The text is in the form of a letter addressed to the government of the United States, warning of the disaster that might follow because of that policy concerning Palestine. He writes: "Your government, almost alone in the world, is insisting on the immediate admission of 100,000 more Jews into Palestine, to be followed by countless additional ones. This will have the most frightful consequences in bloody chaos beyond anything ever hinted at in Palestine before."

The last 75 years have more than confirmed the correctness of that warning.

Source: *As the Arabs see the Jews*, by His Majesty King Abdullah, The American Magazine, November, 1947.

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I am especially delighted to address an American audience, for the tragic problem of Palestine will never be solved without American understanding, American sympathy, American support.

So many billions of words have been written about Palestine – perhaps more than on any other subject in history – that I hesitate to add to them. Yet I am compelled to do so, for I am reluctantly convinced that the world in general, and America in particular, knows almost nothing of the true case for the Arabs.

We Arabs follow, perhaps far more than you think, the press of America. We are frankly disturbed to find that for every word printed on the Arab side, a thousand are printed on the Zionist side.

There are many reasons for this. You have many millions of Jewish citizens interested in this question. They are highly vocal and wise in the ways of publicity.

There are few Arab citizens in America, and we are as yet unskilled in the technique of modern propaganda. The results have been alarming for us. In your press we see a horrible caricature and are told it is our true portrait. In all justice, we cannot let this pass by default.

Our case is quite simple: For nearly 2,000 years Palestine has been almost 100 per cent Arab. It is still preponderantly Arab today, in spite of enormous Jewish immigration. But if this immigration continues we shall soon be outnumbered – a minority in our home.

Palestine is a small and very poor country, about the size of your state of Vermont. Its Arab population is only about 1,200,000.

Already we have had forced on us, against our will, some 600,000 Zionist Jews. We are threatened with many hundreds of thousands more.

Our position is so simple and natural that we are amazed it should even be questioned. It is exactly the same position you in America

take in regard to the unhappy European Jews. You are sorry for them, but you do not want them in your country.

We do not want them in ours, either. Not because they are Jews, but because they are foreigners. We would not want hundreds of thousands of foreigners in our country, be they Englishmen or Norwegians or Brazilians or whatever.

Think for a moment: In the last 25 years we have had one third of our entire population forced upon us. In America that would be the equivalent of 45,000,000 complete strangers admitted to your country, over your violent protest, since 1921. How would you have reacted to that?

Because of our perfectly natural dislike of being overwhelmed in our own homeland, we are called blind nationalists and heartless anti-Semites. This charge would be ludicrous were it not so dangerous. No people on earth have been less “anti-Semitic” than the Arabs. The persecution of the Jews has been confined almost entirely to the Christian nations of the West. Jews, themselves, will admit that never since the Great Dispersion did Jews develop so freely and reach such importance as in Spain when it was an Arab possession. With very minor exceptions, Jews have lived for many centuries in the Middle East, in complete peace and friendliness with their Arab neighbours.

Damascus, Baghdad, Beirut and other Arab centres have always contained large and prosperous Jewish colonies. Until the Zionist invasion of Palestine began, these Jews received the most generous treatment – far, far better than in Christian Europe.

Now, unhappily, for the first time in history, these Jews are beginning to feel the effects of Arab resistance to the Zionist assault. Most of them are as anxious as Arabs to stop it. Most of these Jews who have found happy homes among us resent, as we do, the coming of these strangers.

I was puzzled for a long time about the odd belief which apparently persists in America that Palestine has somehow “always been a Jewish land.”

Recently an American I talked to cleared up this mystery. He pointed out that the only things most Americans know about Palestine are what they read in the Bible. It was a Jewish land in those days, they reason, and they assume it has always remained so.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. It is absurd to reach so far back into the mists of history to argue about who should have Palestine today, and I apologise for it. Yet the Jews do this, and I must reply to their “historic claim.” I wonder if the world has ever seen a stranger sight than a group of people seriously pretending to claim a land because their ancestors lived there some 2,000 years ago!

If you suggest that I am biased, I invite you to read any sound history of the period and verify the facts.

Such fragmentary records as we have, indicate that the Jews were wandering nomads from Iraq who moved to southern Turkey, came south to Palestine, stayed there a short time, and then passed to Egypt, where they remained about 400 years. About 1300 BC (according to your calendar) they left Egypt and gradually conquered most – but not all – of the inhabitants of Palestine.

It is significant that the Philistines – not the Jews – gave their name to the country: “Palestine” is merely the Greek form of “Philistia.”

Only once, during the empire of David and Solomon, did the Jews ever control nearly – but not all – the land which is today Palestine. This empire lasted only 70 years, ending in 926 BC. Only 250 years later the Kingdom of Judah had shrunk to a small province around Jerusalem, barely a quarter of modern Palestine.

In 63 BC the Jews were conquered by Roman Pompey, and never again had even the vestige of independence. The Roman Emperor

Hadrian finally wiped them out about 135 AD. He utterly destroyed Jerusalem, rebuilt under another name, and for hundreds of years no Jew was permitted to enter it. A handful of Jews remained in Palestine but the vast majority were killed or scattered to other countries, in the Diaspora, or the Great Dispersion. From that time Palestine ceased to be a Jewish country, in any conceivable sense.

This was 1,815 years ago, and yet the Jews solemnly pretend they still own Palestine!

If such fantasy were allowed, how the map of the world would dance about!

Italians might claim England, which the Romans held so long. England might claim France, “homeland” of the conquering Normans. And the French Normans might claim Norway, where their ancestors originated. And incidentally, we Arabs might claim Spain, which we held for 700 years.

Many Mexicans might claim Spain, “homeland” of their forefathers. They might even claim Texas, which was Mexican until 100 years ago. And suppose the American Indians claimed the “homeland” of which they were the sole, native, and ancient occupants until only some 450 years ago!

I am not being facetious. All these claims are just as valid – or just as fantastic – as the Jewish “historic connection” with Palestine. Most are more valid.

In any event, the great Moslem expansion about 650 AD finally settled things. It dominated Palestine completely. From that day on, Palestine was solidly Arabic in population, language, and religion. When British armies entered the country during the last war, they found 500,000 Arabs and only 65,000 Jews.

If solid, uninterrupted Arab occupation for nearly 1,300 years does not make a country “Arab”, what does?

The Jews say, and rightly, that Palestine is the home of their religion. It is likewise the birthplace of Christianity, but would any Christian nation claim it on that account? In passing, let me say that the Christian Arabs – and there are many hundreds of thousands of them in the Arab World – are in absolute agreement with all other Arabs in opposing the Zionist invasion of Palestine.

May I also point out that Jerusalem is, after Mecca and Medina, the holiest place in Islam. In fact, in the early days of our religion, Moslems prayed toward Jerusalem instead of Mecca.

The Jewish “religious claim” to Palestine is as absurd as the “historic claim.” The Holy Places, sacred to three great religions, must be open to all, the monopoly of none. Let us not confuse religion and politics.

We are told that we are inhumane and heartless because do not accept with open arms the perhaps 200,000 Jews in Europe who suffered so frightfully under Nazi cruelty, and who even now – almost three years after war’s end – still languish in cold, depressing camps.

Let me underline several facts. The unimaginable persecution of the Jews was not done by the Arabs: it was done by a Christian nation in the West. The war which ruined Europe and made it almost impossible for these Jews to rehabilitate themselves was fought by the Christian nations of the West. The rich and empty portions of the earth belong, not to the Arabs, but to the Christian nations of the West.

And yet, to ease their consciences, these Christian nations of the West are asking Palestine – a poor and tiny Moslem country of the East – to accept the entire burden.

“We have hurt these people terribly,” cries the West to the East. “Why don’t you please take care of them for us?”

We find neither logic nor justice in this. Are we therefore “cruel and heartless nationalists?”

We are a generous people: we are proud that “Arab hospitality” is a phrase famous throughout the world. We are a humane people: no one was shocked more than we by the Hitlerite terror. No one pities the present plight of the desperate European Jews more than we.

But we say that Palestine has already sheltered 600,000 refugees. We believe that is enough to expect of us – even too much. We believe it is now the turn of the rest of the world to accept some of them.

I will be entirely frank with you. There is one thing the Arab world simply cannot understand. Of all the nations of the earth, America is most insistent that something be done for these suffering Jews of Europe. This feeling does credit to the humanity for which America is famous, and to that glorious inscription on your Statue of Liberty.

And yet this same America – the richest, greatest, most powerful nation the world has ever known – refuses to accept more than a token handful of these same Jews herself!

I hope you will not think I am being bitter about this. I have tried hard to understand that mysterious paradox, and I confess I cannot. Nor can any other Arab.

Perhaps you have been informed that “the Jews in Europe want to go to no other place except Palestine.”

This myth is one of the greatest propaganda triumphs of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, the organisation which promotes with fanatic zeal the emigration to Palestine. It is a subtle half-truth, thus doubly dangerous.

The astounding truth is that nobody on earth really knows where these unfortunate Jews really want to go!

You would think that in so grave a problem, the American, British, and other authorities responsible for the European Jews would have made a very careful survey, probably by vote, to find out where each Jew actually wants to go. Amazingly enough this has never been done! The Jewish Agency has prevented it.

Some time ago the American Military Governor in Germany was asked at a press conference how he was so certain that all Jews there wanted to go to Palestine. His answer was simple: "My Jewish advisors tell me so." He admitted no poll had ever been made. Preparations were indeed begun for one, but the Jewish Agency stepped in to stop it.

The truth is that the Jews in German camps are now subjected to a Zionist pressure campaign which learned much from the Nazi terror. It is dangerous for a Jew to say that he would rather go to some other country, not Palestine. Such dissenters have been severely beaten, and worse.

Not long ago, in Palestine, nearly 1,000 Austrian Jews informed the international refugee organisation that they would like to go back to Austria, and plans were made to repatriate them.

The Jewish Agency heard of this, and exerted enough political pressure to stop it. It would be bad propaganda for Zionism if Jews began leaving Palestine. The nearly 1,000 Austrian are still there, against their will.

The fact is that most of the European Jews are Western in culture and outlook, entirely urban in experience and habits. They cannot really have their hearts set on becoming pioneers in the barren, arid, cramped land which is Palestine.

One thing, however, is undoubtedly true. As matters stand now, most refugee Jews in Europe would, indeed, vote for Palestine, simply because they know no other country will have them.

If you or I were given a choice between a near-prison camp for the rest of our lives – or Palestine – we would both choose Palestine, too.

But open up any other alternative to them, give them any other choice, and see what happens!

No poll, however, will be worth anything unless the nations of the earth are willing to open their doors – just a little – to the Jews. In other words, if in such a poll a Jew says he wants to go to Sweden, Sweden must be willing to accept him. If he votes for America, you must let him come in.

Any other kind of poll would be a farce. For the desperate Jew, this is no idle testing of opinion: this is a grave matter of life or death. Unless he is absolutely sure that his vote means something, he will always vote for Palestine, so as not to risk his bird in the hand for one in the bush.

In any event, Palestine can accept no more. The 65,000 Jews in Palestine in 1918 have jumped to 600,000 today. We Arabs have increased, too, but not by immigration. The Jews were then a mere 11 per cent of our population. Today they are one third of it.

The rate of increase has been terrifying. In a few more years, unless stopped now, it will overwhelm us, and we shall be an important minority in our own home.

Surely the rest of the wide world is rich enough and generous enough to find a place for 200,000 Jews, about one third the number that tiny, poor Palestine has already sheltered. For the rest of the world, it is hardly a drop in the bucket. For us it means national suicide.

We are sometimes told that since the Jews came to Palestine, the Arab standard of living has improved. This is a most complicated question. But let us even assume, for the argument, that it is true. We

would rather be a bit poorer, and masters of our own home. Is this unnatural?

The sorry story of the so-called “Balfour Declaration,” which started Zionist immigration into Palestine, is too complicated to repeat here in detail. It is grounded in broken promises to the Arabs, promises made in cold print which admit no denying.

We utterly deny its validity. We utterly deny the right of Great Britain to give away Arab land for a “national home” for an entirely foreign people.

Even the League of Nations sanction does not alter this. At the time, not a single Arab state was a member of the League. We were not allowed to say a word in our own defense.

I must point out, again in friendly frankness, that America was nearly as responsible as Britain for this Balfour Declaration. President Wilson approved it before it was issued, and the American Congress adopted it word for word in a joint resolution on 30th June 1922.

In the 1920s, Arabs were annoyed and insulted by Zionist immigration, but not alarmed by it. It was steady, but fairly small, as even the Zionist founders thought it would remain. Indeed for some years, more Jews left Palestine than entered it, in 1927 almost twice as many.

But two new factors, entirely unforeseen by Britain or the League or America or the most fervent Zionist, arose in the early thirties to raise the immigration to undreamed heights. One was the World Depression; the second the rise of Hitler.

In 1932, the year before Hitler came to power, only 9,500 Jews came to Palestine. We did not welcome them, but we were not afraid that, at that rate, our solid Arab majority would ever be in danger.

But the next year – the year of Hitler – it jumped to 30,000!

In 1934 it was 42,000! In 1935 it reached 61,000!

It was no longer the orderly arrival of idealist Zionists. Rather, all Europe was pouring its frightened Jews upon us. Then, at last, we, too, became frightened. We knew that unless this enormous influx stopped, we were, as Arabs, doomed in our Palestine homeland. And we have not changed our minds.

I have the impression that many Americans believe the trouble in Palestine is very remote from them, that America had little to do with it, and that your only interest now is that of a humane bystander.

I believe that you do not realise how directly you are, as a nation, responsible in general for the whole Zionist move and specifically for the present terrorism. I call this to your attention because I am certain that if you realise your responsibility you will act fairly to admit it and assume it.

Quite aside from official American support for the "National Home" of the Balfour Declaration, the Zionist settlements in Palestine would have been almost impossible, on anything like the current scale, without American money. This was contributed by American Jewry in an idealistic effort to help their fellows.

The motive was worthy: the result were disastrous. The contributions were by private individuals, but they were almost entirely Americans, and, as a nation, only America can answer for it.

The present catastrophe may be laid almost entirely at your door. Your government, almost alone in the world, is insisting on the immediate admission of 100,000 more Jews into Palestine, to be followed by countless additional ones. This will have the most frightful consequences in bloody chaos beyond anything ever hinted at in Palestine before.

It is your press and political leadership, almost alone in the world, who press this demand. It is almost entirely American money which hires or buys the “refugee ships” that steam illegally toward Palestine: American money which pays their crews. The illegal immigration from Europe is arranged by the Jewish Agency, supported almost entirely by American funds. It is American dollars which support the terrorists, which buy the bullets and pistols that kill British soldiers – your allies – and Arab citizens – your friends.

We in the Arab world were stunned to hear that you permit open advertisements in newspapers asking for money to finance these terrorists, to arm them openly and deliberately for murder. We could not believe this could really happen in the modern world. Now we must believe it: we have seen the advertisements with our own eyes.

I point out these things because nothing less than complete frankness will be of use. The crisis is too stark for mere polite vagueness which means nothing.

I have the most complete confidence in the fair-mindedness and generosity of the American public. We Arabs ask no favours. We ask only that you know the full truth, not half of it. We ask only that when you judge the Palestine question, you put yourselves in our place.

What would your answer be if some outside agency told you that you must accept in America many millions of utter strangers in your midst – enough to dominate your country – merely because they insisted on going to America, and because their forefathers had once lived there some 2,000 years ago?

Our answer is the same.

And what would be your action if, in spite of your refusal, this outside agency began forcing them on you?

Ours will be the same.

# Ghassan Kanafani

## Letter from Gaza

(1956)

Ghassan Fayiz Kanafani (1936-1972) was a one of the world's leading Palestinian writers and a prominent militant for the Palestinian cause. He was assassinated in 1972 in Beirut by agents sent by the Israeli Terrorist State.

The narrative of this text is so real that we can forget that it is a short fiction story written by one of the most promising literary authors that the Palestinian people has ever produced.

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Dear Mustafa,

I have now received your letter, in which you tell me that you've done everything necessary to enable me to stay with you in Sacramento. I've also received news that I have been accepted in the department of Civil Engineering in the University of California. I must thank you for everything, my friend. But it'll strike you as rather odd when I proclaim this news to you – and make no doubt about it, I

feel no hesitation at all, in fact I am pretty well positive that I have never seen things so clearly as I do now. No, my friend, I have changed my mind. I won't follow you to "the land where there is greenery, water and lovely faces" as you wrote. No, I'll stay here, and I won't ever leave.

I am really upset that our lives won't continue to follow the same course, Mustafa. For I can almost hear you reminding me of our vow to go on together, and of the way we used to shout: "We'll get rich!" But there's nothing I can do, my friend. Yes, I still remember the day when I stood in the hall of Cairo airport, pressing your hand and staring at the frenzied motor. At that moment everything was rotating in time with the ear-splitting motor, and you stood in front of me, your round face silent.

Your face hadn't changed from the way it used to be when you were growing up in the Shajiya quarter of Gaza, apart from those slight wrinkles. We grew up together, understanding each other completely and we promised to go on together till the end. But...

"There's a quarter of an hour left before the plane takes off. Don't look into space like that. Listen! You'll go to Kuwait next year, and you'll save enough from your salary to uproot you from Gaza and transplant you to California. We started off together and we must carry on. . ."

At that moment I was watching your rapidly moving lips. That was always your manner of speaking, without commas or full stops. But in an obscure way I felt that you were not completely happy with your flight. You couldn't give three good reasons for it. I too suffered from this wrench, but the clearest thought was: why don't we abandon this Gaza and flee? Why don't we? Your situation had begun to improve, however. The ministry of Education in Kuwait had given you a contract though it hadn't given me one. In the trough of misery where I existed you sent me small sums of money. You

wanted me to consider them as loans because you feared that I would feel slighted. You knew my family circumstances in and out; you knew that my meagre salary in the UNRWA schools was inadequate to support my mother, my brother's widow and her four children.

"Listen carefully. Write to me every day... every hour... every minute! The plane's just leaving. Farewell! Or rather, till we meet again!"

Your cold lips brushed my cheek, you turned your face away from me towards the plane, and when you looked at me again I could see your tears.

Later the Ministry of Education in Kuwait gave me a contract. There's no need to repeat to you how my life there went in detail. I always wrote to you about everything. My life there had a gluey, vacuous quality as though I were a small oyster, lost in oppressive loneliness, slowly struggling with a future as dark as the beginning of the night, caught in a rotten routine, a spewed-out combat with time. Everything was hot and sticky. There was a slipperiness to my whole life, it was all a hankering for the end of the month.

In the middle of the year, that year, the Jews bombarded the central district of Sabha and attacked Gaza, our Gaza, with bombs and flame-throwers. That event might have made some change in my routine, but there was nothing for me to take much notice of. I was going to leave this Gaza behind me and go to California where I would live for myself, my own self which had suffered so long. I hated Gaza and its inhabitants. Everything in the amputated town reminded me of failed pictures painted in grey by a sick man. Yes, I would send my mother and my brother's widow and her children a meagre sum to help them to live, but I would liberate myself from this last tie too, there in green California, far from the reek of defeat which for seven years had filled my nostrils. The sympathy which bound me to my brother's children, their mother and mine would

never be enough to justify my tragedy in taking this perpendicular dive. It mustn't drag me any further down than it already had. I must flee!

You know these feelings, Mustafa, because you've really experienced them. What is this ill-defined tie we had with Gaza which blunted our enthusiasm for flight? Why didn't we analyse the matter in such away as to give it a clear meaning? Why didn't we leave this defeat with its wounds behind us and move on to a brighter future which would give us deeper consolation? Why? We didn't exactly know.

When I went on holiday in June and assembled all my possessions, longing for the sweet departure, the start towards those little things which give life a nice, bright meaning, I found Gaza just as I had known it, closed like the introverted lining of a rusted snail-shell thrown up by the waves on the sticky, sandy shore by the slaughter-house. This Gaza was more cramped than the mind of a sleeper in the throes of a fearful nightmare, with its narrow streets which had their bulging balconies...this Gaza! But what are the obscure causes that draw a man to his family, his house, his memories, as a spring draws a small flock of mountain goats? I don't know. All I know is that I went to my mother in our house that morning. When I arrived my late brother's wife met me there and asked me, weeping, if I would do as her wounded daughter, Nadia, in Gaza hospital wished and visit her that evening. Do you know Nadia, my brother's beautiful thirteen-year-old daughter?

That evening I bought a pound of apples and set out for the hospital to visit Nadia. I knew that there was something about it that my mother and my sister-in-law were hiding from me, something which their tongues could not utter, something strange which I could not put my finger on. I loved Nadia from habit, the same habit that made me love all that generation which had been so brought up on defeat and displacement that it had come to think that a happy life was a kind of social deviation.

What happened at that moment? I don't know. I entered the white room very calm. Ill children have something of saintliness, and how much more so if the child is ill as result of cruel, painful wounds. Nadia was lying on her bed, her back propped up on a big pillow over which her hair was spread like a thick pelt. There was profound silence in her wide eyes and a tear always shining in the depths of her black pupils. Her face was calm and still but eloquent as the face of a tortured prophet might be. Nadia was still a child, but she seemed more than a child, much more, and older than a child, much older.

"Nadia!"

I've no idea whether I was the one who said it, or whether it was someone else behind me. But she raised her eyes to me and I felt them dissolve me like a piece of sugar that had fallen into a hot cup of tea.

Together with her slight smile I heard her voice. "Uncle! Have you just come from Kuwait?"

Her voice broke in her throat, and she raised herself with the help of her hands and stretched out her neck towards me. I patted her back and sat down near her.

"Nadia! I've brought you presents from Kuwait, lots of presents. I'll wait till you can leave your bed, completely well and healed, and you'll come to my house and I'll give them to you. I've bought you the red trousers you wrote and asked me for. Yes, I've bought them."

It was a lie, born of the tense situation, but as I uttered it I felt that I was speaking the truth for the first time. Nadia trembled as though she had an electric shock and lowered her head in a terrible silence. I felt her tears wetting the back of my hand.

"Say something, Nadia! Don't you want the red trousers?" She lifted

her gaze to me and made as if to speak, but then she stopped, gritted her teeth and I heard her voice again, coming from faraway.

“Uncle!”

She stretched out her hand, lifted the white coverlet with her fingers and pointed to her leg, amputated from the top of the thigh.

My friend ... Never shall I forget Nadia's leg, amputated from the top of the thigh. No! Nor shall I forget the grief which had moulded her face and merged into its traits for ever. I went out of the hospital in Gaza that day, my hand clutched in silent derision on the pound of apples I had brought with me to give Nadia. The blazing sun filled the streets with the colour of blood. And Gaza was brand new, Mustafa! You and I never saw it like this. The stone piled up at the beginning of the Shajiya quarter where we lived had a meaning, and they seemed to have been put there for no other reason but to explain it. This Gaza in which we had lived and with whose good people we had spent seven years of defeat was something new. It seemed to me just a beginning. I don't know why I thought it was just a beginning. I imagined that the main street that I walked along on the way back home was only the beginning of a long, long road leading to Safad. Everything in this Gaza throbbed with sadness which was not confined to weeping. It was a challenge: more than that it was something like reclamation of the amputated leg!

I went out into the streets of Gaza, streets filled with blinding sunlight. They told me that Nadia had lost her leg when she threw herself on top of her little brothers and sisters to protect them from the bombs and flames that had fastened their claws into the house. Nadia could have saved herself, she could have run away, rescued her leg. But she didn't.

Why?

No, my friend, I won't come to Sacramento, and I've no regrets. No, and nor will I finish what we began together in childhood. This

obscure feeling that you had as you left Gaza, this small feeling must grow into a giant deep within you. It must expand, you must seek it in order to find yourself, here among the ugly debris of defeat.

I won't come to you. But you, return to us! Come back, to learn from Nadia's leg, amputated from the top of the thigh, what life is and what existence is worth.

Come back, my friend! We are all waiting for you.

# Cecil Hourani

## Towards a Middle East Dialogue

(1967)

Cecil Hourani (1917-2020), from Marjayoun, South Lebanon, has been during many years political advisor to the Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba. He might be defined as a humanist intellectual.

The text here presented is a very lucid analysis of the situation in Palestine and the Arab countries. Unfortunately not much of what the author suggests has been accepted and adopted by the leaders of the Arab world. That is why the situation of the Palestinian people is currently even more tragic, almost fifty years since that article was published.

However, it is never too late to acknowledge past mistakes and to start relying in the determination of the people themselves and not in the emotional disastrous proclaims of populist leaders that have never solved any single problem.

Source: Magazine *Encounter*, November 1967.

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**Note by the author**

This essay is addressed to the educated classes in the Arab countries: to those who still participate actively in the political, social, and intellectual life of their countries, and to those who have been excluded forcibly or by their own free will. To all I trust it will have a message of hope. Destructive as much of my argument is, my aim is positive and constructive. On the understanding of our errors in the past may be built the new society of the future.

I have no recrimination against states or individuals. Time and history will provide their own judgment. The moment is one for solidarity and mutual tolerance, and above all for a free discussion among ourselves. In a climate of honest self-criticism and free expression those truths may emerge which can lead us from our present disarray to a new vision of ourselves and the world we would like to build.

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At this moment when the destiny of the Arab nation is being decided, it is the duty of every Arab thinker to witness to the truth as he sees it, without fear and without dissimulation. For too long has the field of publicity and expression been left in the hands of professional demagogues, blackmailers, and semi-educated fanatics. Our silence on the one hand, their vociferation on the other, have led the Arab nation not merely to disaster, but to the brink of disintegration.

The primary condition of a redressment of this situation is to see things as they are, in all their brutal clarity: then to take action to change them in the light of the ideals and objectives we set ourselves. A victory over ourselves is more important than a physical defeat on the battlefield. Governments, states, *régimes*, frontiers, are all transient things, subject to fluctuations and fortune. What is important is that a people should survive, not as a mere agglomeration of individ-

uals, but as a living, creative force in history. We can only survive by acting positively ourselves, not by reacting negatively to what others may do, or seek to do, to us. History has given to the Arab nation in the 20th century a unique chance to return to the community of living creative forces in the world: a conjunction of international affairs which made possible the independence of all our territories; and the discovery of enormous wealth which, with almost no effort on our part, gives us the means to accomplish all we need to refashion our society and to raise it to prosperity and progress.

This unique chance we are now in danger of losing. Our sovereign and political liberty gives us the means to bring about our own destruction more easily than we can construct our future. Our very freedom implies dangers greater than existed when we were dependent. No one will now save us from the consequences of our own mistakes and follies, except ourselves. The fact that we inhabit certain territories in this world of strategic importance or material wealth is not a sufficient guarantee of our safety or survival. We can be driven from these territories, or lose control of these riches. We can commit suicide as a nation. And history will then judge us as a people who did not know how to use the chances which had been offered them, and condemn us to the fate we shall have deserved.

The most dramatic, but not the only, example of our weakness, and of our failure to recognise both our weakness and our strength, lies in our relationship with the Zionist movement and with the State of Israel.

We have been able neither to come to terms with them: nor to destroy them: nor even to contain them.

As a result of our failure to decide what position to adopt, or to take the necessary measures of self-defence, we have allowed Israel to usurp the whole of Palestine, and to occupy the most important strategic positions in the Near East. While it is true that the Zionist movement did not develop wholly in relationship to the Arab world,

but also in an international climate outside our control, nevertheless since the establishment of Israel in 1948, against our will, our struggle against that state has taken place within the framework of the international community, and largely within the United Nations Organization. The frontiers established in 1948 as a result of the cease-fire were not wholly advantageous to Israel,

Because they set a territorial limit to Zionism. The Arab objective, therefore, if we had thought clearly and calmly, should have been *the containment of Israel* within its boundaries as limited by *de facto* arrangements arrived at after two wars we had lost, rather than its conquest and destruction.

That we were unable to distinguish clearly between containment and conquest was due primarily to a psychological weakness in us: *that which we do not like we pretend does not exist*. Because we refused to recognize a situation which was distasteful to us, we were unable to define our own relationship to that situation, or to distinguish between what we would have liked ideally, and what we were capable of achieving in practice.

As a policy of containment, the moves of the U.A.R. [United Arab Republic] until 5 June 1967 could have been successful. But it had implicit dangers, the greatest of which was that in the minds of those who were practising it, it could be at any moment transformed successfully into a policy of conquest. By this confusion in their own minds about their aims, and by their misjudgement of their own strength, the Arab Governments brought about the disaster of June 5. They also lost the battle of public opinion. By foolish and irresponsible statements they allowed themselves to appear as the aggressor instead of the victims. While they talked of war and conquest, Israel prepared it.

For years Israel had cultivated the image of herself as a small defenceless State surrounded by heavily-armed neighbours bent on destroying her. While in fact we were trying to contain her, some of

our spokesmen, for home consumption, were exaggerating our military capacities and promising our people conquests. This gave Israel a pretext for arming to the teeth. The balance of power which Israel was trying to maintain was not one between Israel and Egypt, but between Israel and all her neighbours combined. The higher technical skills of the Israelis, and the integration of her armed forces into her civilian population, combined with supplies of arms qualitatively at least equal to those of the Arabs, in fact gave her an advantage which we should have foreseen.

The greatest defeat, however, was not that on the battlefield or in propaganda and public opinion, but that which our Governments inflicted on their own people: countless lives lost uselessly; a great new exodus of refugees from their homes; economic losses and misery not yet calculable; a new despair and a new humiliation.

What greater proof of our capacities for self-deception and moral cowardice than that Ahmed Shouqairi [\*] still sits with our responsible leaders, or the claims of one Arab Head of State that we were not defeated because we did not use our full strength? Does not all this make one suspect that the “final victory” of which some talk would be nothing less than a *coup de grâce* delivered to the Arabs?

This is indeed our moment of truth: but some of our leaders cannot make up their minds whether they want to be Torero or Bull!

Another consequence of our unwillingness to accept as real what we do not like is that when reality catches up with us, it is always too late. At every *débâcle* we regret that we did not accept a situation which no longer exists. In 1948 we regretted that we had not accepted the 1947 U.N. plea for partition. In May 1967 we were trying to go back to pre-Suez. Today we would be happy — and are actually demanding the U.N. — to go back to things as they were before 5 June. From every defeat we reap a new regret and a new nostalgia, but never seem to learn a new lesson.

Yet every human situation — except annihilation — contains within it the seeds of its final reversal. Take for example the creation of Israel in 1948. It is true that in relation to our right to the total possession of Palestine this represented an Arab loss: but there were also gains to us in what happened in 1948. We won independence for part of Palestine in place of total dependence on the Mandatory Power before. Under the *Mandatory Régime*, Jewish immigration and the expansion of Zionism could have continued in the whole of Palestine: after 1948 Zionism was confined to a tiny territory which was strategically weak and scarcely viable economically. Had we consolidated the independence we had gained, we could have contained Israel, and with it World Zionism, for fifty years, after which Israel itself would have ceased to be a threat to us, and become just another Levantine state, part Jewish, part Arab, but overwhelmingly Oriental.

Instead of which, twenty years later, we have not only lost what remained of Arab Palestine: we have also helped Zionism to leap forward yet another stage in its dynamic progress towards full Jewish nationalism. The enormous material and moral support which the State of Israel received from Jewish citizens of other countries in the recent crisis shows that what extreme Zionists have always hoped, and moderate Jews always feared, is happening: namely the polarisation of Jewish nationalism around the State of Israel, and the progressive alienation of Jews from the societies in which they have been assimilated or at least accepted. The potential population of Israel is thus not the unborn generations in that country alone, but Jews from everywhere in the world.

Shall we in one, or ten, or twenty years, seek another “victory” like the one we have just gained, and lose the other side of the Jordan, the fertile plains of Jaulan and Hauran in Syria, and the Litani and Hasbani rivers in Lebanon? And shall we still have Ahmed Shouqairi with us to consecrate the final victory of stupidity over

intelligence, of fanaticism over common sense, of dishonesty over truth?

The answer lies with us. What we do in reaction to the events of the last few weeks will determine the future of our people not for ten or twenty years, but for centuries. This time there can be no second chance. Either we continue on the same road that has led us to our present state, defeats, retreats, *débâcles*, and the rapid transformation of our settled urban and peasant populations in the Near East into a new nomadism: or we take positive measures to stop the process of disintegration, to limit the collapse, and to transform our military defeat into a political and a psychological victory.

What are these positive measures, and what are the psychological victories we may hope to gain?

We must first of all ask ourselves the question, what does victory mean in terms of our actual situation and our real strength? Does it mean victory over others — Israel, or the Anglo-Americans, or Western imperialism or international indifference, or all together? Does it mean we can impose our terms on others, draw frontiers as we want, dictate the conditions on which we agree to live with the rest of the world, and make others see us as we would like to see ourselves?

Our first effort must surely be to win a victory over ourselves: over defeatism on the one hand, extremism on the other. These two dangers are in fact intimately linked together. The real defeatists are not those who look facts in the face, accept them, and try to remedy the situation which brought them about, but those who refuse to do this, who deny facts, and who are thus preparing for new defeats.

The extremists are those who argue that our concepts were correct, but that we did not implement them seriously: and that therefore we should continue along the same path, but use more violent methods.

If however, our concepts were wrong, the use of the same methods even in a more violent form can only lead us to another defeat. It is therefore essential to re-think our basic ideas in terms of reality, rather than of wishes. What could we realistically hope to achieve?

## **Ourselves and Israel**

I have pointed out the disastrous effects of not having formulated clearly in our minds the distinction between the containment and the conquest of Israel. The principal reason why we did not make this distinction, and imagined that we could at any moment switch from one to the other, was our failure to appreciate our own strength and weakness relatively to Israel and the rest of the world. We must therefore examine this question honestly and fearlessly.

1. The first basic truth we must face is that the Arabs as a whole do not yet have the scientific and technological skills, nor the general level of education among the masses, which make possible the waging of large-scale modern warfare. This is not merely a deduction from recent events: it is a statistically demonstrable fact. We do not have the educational facilities or standards at home, nor enough students abroad, to provide the General Staff, the officers, and the men capable of using modern weapons and modern methods. Nor do we have civilian populations sufficiently disciplined and educated to collaborate with the armed forces and the civil authorities to the degree which modern warfare demands.

By not recognising this fact, our military leaders tried to fight the wrong kind of war. It is a classical accusation made against General Staffs that they use methods appropriate to the previous war. Our military thinkers and planners were trying to fight the next one. As a result our soldiers were not only unable to use the modern weapons that were placed in their hands: they were actually handicapped by them. Trapped in the tanks they could not manoeuvre, relying on the

air support that never came, they fell easy victims to their enemies. And the material they had to abandon will be incorporated into the army of Israel, so that in fact we have helped to arm our opponents.

2. The second truth is that the rate of technological and scientific advance is so rapid in the modern world that even if in twenty years we can catch up with the military standards of today, we shall still be outdistanced by the Israelis, whose technological and scientific skills are the product not only of their own schools and research institutes, but of Jewish — and non-Jewish — talent throughout the world.

3. The third truth is that even if we had been able to defeat Israel militarily, we would have been deprived of the fruit of that victory by some of the Great Powers, who would have intervened to save Israel's political existence.

4. The fourth truth is that in twenty years, or even less, even if we succeed in bringing our scientific and technological skills to a point where we could wage a modern war, warfare itself will have taken on quite another aspect. The possession of nuclear weapons by smaller powers — including the Arab States and Israel — will offer a choice either of mutual annihilation or of international control: and in neither case shall we be able to get our own way on our own terms.

It is evident, therefore, that if we think primarily in terms of military power we shall be making a fundamental error. This does not mean that we should disarm. It does mean that we must re-appraise our own strength, and find a new relationship between military power on the one hand, and our political, economic, and geopolitical assets on the other.

What are the conclusions we should draw from these facts about our relationship to Israel? We must first of all realise that the immediate consequence of the present war has been to modify the strategic situation in favour of Israel, which has now reached more natural frontiers than she had before, both for defence and attack. If therefore we

try to rectify this situation by military force, we shall be in an even weaker position than we were in 1948, in 1956, or before 5 June 1967. And not only are we in a weaker position to attack: we are also less able to defend ourselves.

The conclusions to be drawn are two: in the first place, the resort to military force as a basic element in Arab policy towards Israel is an error. In the second place, our best chance of containing Israel lies in international pressures either within or outside the United Nations. These international pressures, of whatever nature, have, however, a price. What is the price we are prepared to pay, is a question I leave to later on.

If the balance of military power has now been seriously upset in favour of Israel, there are other aspects of the balance of power which remain in our favour. Some of these have always existed, though we have not used them properly: others spring from the defeat of 5 June itself, for in all situations lie the seeds of their reversal. In the first place, Israel's military victory was a limited one — limited by those territorial, geopolitical factors which make the physical conquest of the Arab world impossible. Military occupation is one thing, permanent conquest and domination quite another. In the second place, Israel's military victory was not a political one: it has not led her any nearer to that peace on her terms which she would like, or any nearer to the negotiating table with the Arabs. It has on the contrary brought against her a coalition of international pressures which never existed before, and liquidated the fruit of twenty years' work to win friends in Africa and Asia.

*If military force is not the Arabs' best card, neither is it Israel's.* By a military action far out of proportion to the immediate situation it had to face, Israel has brought into play other factors which in the long run may modify the situation within Israel in ways which their present leaders had never envisaged.

Firstly, let us suppose that international pressures do not succeed in forcing Israel to withdraw to her pre-5 June frontiers. By incorporating the Gaza Strip and the West Bank into her territory, the proportion of Arabs to Jews in Israel will be radically changed. The higher birth-rate of the Arabs will give them equality in numbers, then a majority, in a few years. And as the proportion of "Arab" Jews to European Jews is also changing, the total population of Palestine will eventually, and before long, take on an oriental character. As we acquire some of their virtues, and they acquire some of our defects, the gap between Arabs and Jews will narrow, and in fifty years could almost disappear.

Secondly, it is clear that the Zionist movement as a whole, and the Israeli leaders in particular, must now face a dramatic dilemma as a result of their *blitzkrieg* of 5 June. This dilemma is the following: If the Israeli Government accepts the Arabs within the territories she controls as full Israeli citizens, with equal civil and political rights, the concept of Israel which has hitherto been incorporated into her laws will have to be changed. Israel will no longer be a Jewish State, in which, as it does now, full citizenship requires not only membership of the Jewish religion, but Jewish ancestry. It will become a Jewish-Arab State in which nationality will be a function of residence or citizenship. Israel, in other words, as she has been since 1948, will no longer exist, and Palestine, with Arabs and Jews living together, will have been restored.

If, on the other hand, the Israeli authorities refuse to accept the Arabs as full citizens with equal civil and political rights, she will have on her hands a large population which she will be unable to liquidate or to govern.

It is the perception of this dilemma which is now leading some of the Israeli leaders to force the hands of the others and to try to have it both ways: to keep the territories they have conquered, and try to reduce the Arab population in numbers by encouraging their exodus

across the Jordan. It is not difficult to foresee that the next step will be to encourage a new wave of Jewish immigration into Israel, to replace as many Arabs as possible in as short a period as possible.

If the extremists within Israel succeed in forcing the hand of the more reasonable, and getting the world Zionist movement to follow, then they will in fact make forever impossible their dream of an Arab-Jewish *rapprochement*. For the way in which the Arabs are ultimately going to judge the advantages of peace or war in their relations with Israel will depend on the way Israel treats the Arabs within its borders. If there is a genuine attempt to live together with the Arabs on terms of complete equality and within the same juro-political framework, the way to an eventual conciliation between Israel, or Palestine, and the rest of the Arab world will have been opened. But if the Arabs are excluded from full citizenship, and reduced to the *status* of a colonised, dependent population, no peace will ever be possible, either inside or outside Palestine.

It is not difficult to draw logical conclusions about what Arab policy should be in the light of this situation, and of this dilemma which faces Israel. If the goals of Arab policy should be, as I have suggested,

- (1) the containment of Israel within whatever boundaries we can get international pressure to agree to and to stabilise,
- (2) the gradual transformation of Israel from a European-dominated "exclusive" Jewish State into a predominantly oriental Arab-Jewish State,

then the problem of whether or not to make a formal "peace" becomes a secondary one. It will no longer be a question of principle on which no Arab leader can compromise: it becomes a question of expediency and efficacy. But there is no reason why we should accept the Israeli argument that peace can only be obtained by direct negotiations with them. Since the United Nations, or some other international group, will have to be a party to any attempt to stabilise

frontiers, all our efforts to obtain a settlement can be canalised through that organisation. What we cannot afford is to have no policy at all: to be unable to support the conditions of war, and incapable of profiting from the advantages of peace.

The formulation of a consistent Arab policy towards Israel within the framework of the international community is thus perfectly possible and not difficult if we define both our aims and our methods. I have stated what these aims could be.

As for the methods, a few are obvious, although others may also be found, and the way these methods are used will be up to the Arab negotiators to determine.

1. We should do all we can to secure the return to the frontiers as they were before 5 June 1967, not indeed as a final settlement but as a first step towards an arrangement in which the questions of frontiers, the rights of the refugees to return, and compensation will find a solution. The means we adopt to bring pressure on other powers to accept our point of view should be realistic, however: that is to say they should be capable of success, and they should not do us more harm than they can bring us benefits.

It is unlikely that we shall be able to achieve our objective without making some concessions. What these concessions might be, it is up to those governments who would have to make them to decide. But we should hope and insist that these governments would not act unilaterally, and thereby prejudice the outcome of any compromise they may accept.

2. In the event of our being unable to accept the terms on which a withdrawal from occupied territories is offered us, our second line of policy should be based on the principle that the forcible occupation of a territory involves a responsibility towards the inhabitants of that territory. We should not only bring the maximum international pressure to prevent Israel from expelling Arabs and expropriating their

possessions in favour of new Jewish immigrants: we should bring the same international pressure on Israel to accord full political and civil rights to her Arab population, as well as the right of the Arab refugees to return. If all Palestine is re-united, there is no reason why any Palestinian should be prevented from returning to his country: not only the refugee masses now living in camps (old and new) should return: in addition all those Palestinians who have been able to find work and prosperity in the Arab countries should go back and help to rebuild the Palestine Arab community, and play their proper role in re-establishing the rights of the Arabs in their own country. The returning Arabs will not be a fifth column: one cannot be a fifth column in one's own country. The relations which the Palestinian Arabs within Palestine are then able or willing to establish with the Jews will be their own responsibility. The other Arab countries must help them by all means in their struggle to restore their rights and their human dignity: but the primary responsibility for their future will lie with the Palestinians themselves.

There remains one more question perhaps more important than any I have yet discussed, because in the long run it will determine our relations with the Jews and their relations with us. *The fate and the peace of the Near East should not be left to the initiative of Israel alone.* Even if Israel opts for the closed, exclusive type of society, and rejects the Arabs as fellow-citizens, *we should not do the same.* If there is no room in Israeli society for the Arabs, we should show that there is room in Arab society for the Jews. This has always been the pattern of our society, and the greatest victory of militant Zionism would be to get us to abandon it and to adopt their concept of the State. For in their hearts they know that a closed, exclusive, fanatic Israel can never co-exist with an open, liberal, and tolerant Arab society. There are Jews, however, in Israel and throughout the world who also reject the narrow vision and fanatical aims of some of their leaders, and who can be our allies in combating the introduction of racial nationalism into the Near East. Our greatest victory will be the day

when the Jews in Palestine will prefer to live in an Arab society rather than in an Israeli one. It is up to us to make that possible.

### **Ourselves and the World**

I have suggested that we formulate and try to implement a consistent Arab policy towards Israel within the framework of the international community, which means in effect the United Nations. But it is not only in the problem of Israel that the international community can be of service to us. In many of our foreign relations our numbers and our potential strength make the U.N. a suitable instrument of action. This implies, however, a correct appraisal of our strength and our weakness in the world.

Our greatest mistake in the past has been to overestimate our actual and to underestimate our potential strength. From this combination of misjudgments spring almost all the errors of our international behaviour. We have formulated and pursued policies we could not implement: we have neglected to practise policies which might have succeeded.

Nothing illustrates this truth better than the international policies we have adopted towards Israel. All our attempts to find military solutions have ended in failure, and led to subsequent political and diplomatic failures. On the other hand, our diplomatic, political and economic efforts have often met with success until we lost our advantages by pushing them too far, or not realising what these advantages were.

For example, the St. James's Conference in London in 1939 between the British Government and some of the Arab Governments led to the White Paper, which was in our favour, but which we rejected. In 1948 we secured the evacuation of British civil and military authorities from Palestine, but we did not take the necessary steps to take their place. In 1948 again, after our first unsuccessful war, we could

have turned our military defeat into a limited political victory and confined Israel to an insignificant territory. Instead, we preferred our theoretical rights and principles to our real advantages. By 1967 — and this was the basic cause of Israel's aggression on 5 June — we had succeeded in building up an economic situation in Jordan and most of the other Arab countries to a point where foreign investors were beginning to have serious doubts about putting money in Israel if that meant exclusion from Arab markets. We had also isolated Israel diplomatically in wide areas of international life. We lost all these advantages by failing to analyse the situation correctly. We did not perceive that the disparity between Israel's growing economic and diplomatic difficulties and her military strength would inevitably tempt her to restore the balance by a generalised rather than a localised military action. Instead of removing all possible pretexts for such an action we provided the pretexts they had difficulty in inventing themselves.

### **The Arab Régimes**

The greatest sources of weakness in the last twenty years has been the introduction into Arab political life of methods of government and of ideological slogans which are unsuitable and irrelevant to the actual conditions of the Arab countries. These methods and slogans have not only poisoned the relations between different Arab countries, they have also blinded some of their *régimes* to their real problems and their real interests.

The military *régimes*, for example, which have installed themselves in certain Arab countries since 1949 had their only justification in terms of the necessity of meeting external dangers. They have now given a public demonstration of their incompetence in war. What reason do we have to suppose that they are likely to be more successful in economic planning, and development, in education, foreign affairs, finance, or culture?

Among the most harmful consequences of military *régimes* to the political, economic and social structure of the countries they have tried to govern is the exclusion from public life which they have deliberately or indirectly effected of vast numbers of educated and skilled citizens, who now languish idle either in their own countries, or in exile in others. This fact represents an enormous loss in terms of an investment in human resources going back at least forty years. The resulting poverty of technicians is felt not only in civilian affairs, but even in the armies themselves, so that it can reasonably be argued that the military *régimes* instead of strengthening their armed forces have in reality weakened them.

The introduction of ideological slogans and political and economic doctrines which derive from contexts radically different from those of the Arab countries has done even more harm to these countries both in their relations with each other and in their internal affairs. They have divided the Arab world into camps on issues which are not really relevant or along lines which do not make sense.

First of all, that between the so-called “progressive” or “revolutionary” and the “reactionary” or “conservative” *régimes*. It is interesting and significant that all those *régimes* which call themselves “progressive” are, in fact, military. What has led some of our leaders to adopt the language and imitate the style of movements and *régimes* with which they really have nothing in common? There are two basic reasons: the desire to find foreign allies and friends, and the need to seek popular support. Since most of the Arab countries have only recently emerged from Western domination or colonisation, it was natural for leaders seeking an easy popularity among the masses to align themselves with the enemies of the West in foreign policy, and to promise them economic and social welfare through “land reforms,” “nationalisation,” and other elements of the programme of certain socialist countries.

Except in Egypt, however, the “progressive” military *régimes* have not only failed to implement socialist programmes: they have actually lowered gross national products and seriously damaged the economic welfare of some sections of the population without improving that of others. Nor have they been able, or willing, to take those social and juridical measures which would have given a progressive character to their *régimes*, at least on paper. Not one of the “progressive” *régimes*, for example, has abolished polygamy. On the contrary, some of them have been trying to reintroduce a conservative interpretation of Islam into public life. And certain of the *régimes* which have been classified as “conservative” or “reactionary” have done much for their populations in terms of economic progress and social legislation.

Secondly, the attempt to identify Arab nationalism with the “progressive” as opposed to the “reactionary” *régimes* has led to a senseless and dangerous conflict between some of the Arab Governments, just as it has inflamed and divided public opinion all over the Arab world. We must reject and resist the claim that any one *régime* or party or leader has a monopoly on Arab nationalism, and refuse to accept that differences of opinion or of interests provide an adequate basis for classifying *régimes* or individuals as genuine nationalists or traitors. The poisonous campaigns waged by the radio stations and the press in certain countries should be condemned, ignored, or ridiculed, and every pressure should be brought on those governments which utilise or permit them to put an end to this scandal of the Arab world.

### **The Real Problem**

The introduction into Arab life of political and social doctrines which are not relevant to it at its present stage not only weakens the Arab countries by dividing them on irrelevant issues; it also diverts their attention from their real problems.

The only valid distinction at this time between the Arab countries lies in the degree of their economic and social development, and in the resources they possess to promote their progress. The real difference is between the less – and the more – underdeveloped, and between the rich and the poor. There is no reason why we should anticipate the problems of more highly developed societies before we have reached the stage where these problems become real and demand solutions. There is no reason why we should adopt the language and the political forms of social and economic conflicts which are not relevant to our societies.

The most immediate and urgent problems which face nearly all the Arab countries are those involved in establishing the minimum conditions on which a modern society may eventually be built. While the nature of that society, and the social and economic content of the measures to be taken to bring it into existence must certainly be studied and discussed, and will certainly provide eventually the grounds for divergent opinions and political movements, we have not yet reached that stage. There is a wide area for action where interests are common and basic enough for us to ignore or at least to postpone questions which may divide us at a moment when we need to be united.

For some of the under-developed countries of the world the necessity of finding an outside source for the capital investments and the technical skills they lack forces them to an involvement in the ideological conflict and divisions of the more-developed world.

No such necessity exists for the Arab world, which has all the material, and many of the human resources, which it needs. There is sufficient capital and liquidity to make us independent of outside financial help, and to promote our own economic and social progress provided we use our resources intelligently, and take a broad view of both the existing and the future needs of the Arab world as a whole. We have vast territories, enormous natural resources, and vital

strategic positions. What we need is to exploit them in terms of today's and tomorrow's needs. Countries which are rich today may not be always: others which are poor today possess potentialities which may one day make them rich. The total human and natural resources of the Arab world must be studied and then exploited in the light of a general plan, a moving idea.

It is this great responsibility which now faces the educated classes in the Arab countries. They have a unique chance which is not given to many of the educated classes of more developed countries and societies, weighed down as they often are by traditions and already established patterns of life which do not give much scope to originality or to individual initiative. It is our good fortune to be born at a time when not only great tasks await us, but when the possibility of action is also present.

Instead of the sterile and irrelevant discussions, the bitter divisions and mutual suspicions which dominate our political and intellectual life, we should try to establish among ourselves an understanding, an agreement on principles, a mutual confidence which will make possible the action which must now be undertaken if the Arab world is to be saved from a rapid decline.

## **Note**

[\*] Ahmad al-Shukeiri (1 January 1908 – 26 February 1980) was a Palestinian political leader and the first chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, serving from 1964 to 1967.

He made inflammatory statements ["Throw the Jews into the sea"] that were successfully used by the Israeli government to justify, before the world public opinion, all sorts of military measures resulting in occupation of territories and subjection of populations.

# Palestine Liberation Organization

## Palestinian National Charter

### (1968)

The first Palestinian National Charter was adopted by Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in 1964. In 1968 it was replaced by a comprehensively revised version that is here presented. In April 1996, many articles, which were inconsistent with the Oslo Accords, were wholly or partially nullified.

What is necessary to stress is the fact that in all the Charters the enemy to fight has been always identified in the Zionist oppressors and not in the Jews who want to live peacefully in Palestine.

The 1964 and 1968 Charters were documents focusing on national Arab liberation of the entire Palestine, and so that aspect was particularly stressed. After that, realising that the armed struggle against a very powerful opponent, supported and armed by the United States, was leading nowhere, the solution of two states was put forward and deemed necessary to be introduced in an updated Charter.

However, even this solution has proved to be illusory and deceptive. Nowadays, a cosmopolitan view based on the existence on the same land of autonomous voluntary communities would be more appro-

priate and desirable. In other words, what is needed is a new Charter prospecting and upholding the No-State Solution. This, in due course, will be considered the most realistic and sensible one for all the people concerned.

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### **Resolutions of the Palestine National Council July 1-17, 1968**

**Article 1:** Palestine is the homeland of the Arab Palestinian people; it is an indivisible part of the Arab homeland, and the Palestinian people are an integral part of the Arab nation.

**Article 2:** Palestine, with the boundaries it had during the British Mandate, is an indivisible territorial unit.

**Article 3:** The Palestinian Arab people possess the legal right to their homeland and have the right to determine their destiny after achieving the liberation of their country in accordance with their wishes and entirely of their own accord and will.

**Article 4:** The Palestinian identity is a genuine, essential, and inherent characteristic; it is transmitted from parents to children. The Zionist occupation and the dispersal of the Palestinian Arab people, through the disasters which befell them, do not make them lose their Palestinian identity and their membership in the Palestinian community, nor do they negate them.

**Article 5:** The Palestinians are those Arab nationals who, until 1947, normally resided in Palestine regardless of whether they were evicted from it or have stayed there. Anyone born, after that date, of a Palestinian father – whether inside Palestine or outside it – is also a Palestinian.

**Article 6:** The Jews who had normally resided in Palestine until the beginning of the Zionist invasion will be considered Palestinians.

**Article 7:** That there is a Palestinian community and that it has material, spiritual, and historical connection with Palestine are indisputable facts. It is a national duty to bring up individual Palestinians in an Arab revolutionary manner. All means of information and education must be adopted in order to acquaint the Palestinian with his country in the most profound manner, both spiritual and material, that is possible. He must be prepared for the armed struggle and ready to sacrifice his wealth and his life in order to win back his homeland and bring about its liberation.

**Article 8:** The phase in their history, through which the Palestinian people are now living, is that of national (*watani*) struggle for the liberation of Palestine. Thus the conflicts among the Palestinian national forces are secondary, and should be ended for the sake of the basic conflict that exists between the forces of Zionism and of imperialism on the one hand, and the Palestinian Arab people on the other. On this basis the Palestinian masses, regardless of whether they are residing in the national homeland or in diaspora (*mahajir*) constitute – both their organizations and the individuals – one national front working for the retrieval of Palestine and its liberation through armed struggle.

**Article 9:** Armed struggle is the only way to liberate Palestine. Thus it is the overall strategy, not merely a tactical phase. The Palestinian Arab people assert their absolute determination and firm resolution to continue their armed struggle and to work for an armed popular revolution for the liberation of their country and their return to it. They also assert their right to normal life in Palestine and to exercise their right to self-determination and sovereignty over it.

**Article 10:** Commando action constitutes the nucleus of the Palestinian popular liberation war. This requires its escalation, comprehensiveness, and the mobilization of all the Palestinian popular and

educational efforts and their organization and involvement in the armed Palestinian revolution. It also requires the achieving of unity for the national (*watani*) struggle among the different groupings of the Palestinian people, and between the Palestinian people and the Arab masses, so as to secure the continuation of the revolution, its escalation, and victory.

**Article 11:** The Palestinians will have three mottoes: national (*wataniyya*) unity, national (*qawmiyya*) mobilization, and liberation.

**Article 12:** The Palestinian people believe in Arab unity. In order to contribute their share toward the attainment of that objective, however, they must, at the present stage of their struggle, safeguard their Palestinian identity and develop their consciousness of that identity, and oppose any plan that may dissolve or impair it.

**Article 13:** Arab unity and the liberation of Palestine are two complementary objectives, the attainment of either of which facilitates the attainment of the other. Thus, Arab unity leads to the liberation of Palestine, the liberation of Palestine leads to Arab unity; and work toward the realization of one objective proceeds side by side with work toward the realization of the other.

**Article 14:** The destiny of the Arab nation, and indeed Arab existence itself, depend upon the destiny of the Palestine cause. From this interdependence springs the Arab nation's pursuit of, and striving for, the liberation of Palestine. The people of Palestine play the role of the vanguard in the realization of this sacred (*qawmi*) goal.

**Article 15:** The liberation of Palestine, from an Arab viewpoint, is a national (*qawmi*) duty and it attempts to repel the Zionist and imperialist aggression against the Arab homeland, and aims at the elimination of Zionism in Palestine. Absolute responsibility for this falls upon the Arab nation – peoples and governments – with the Arab people of Palestine in the vanguard. Accordingly, the Arab nation must mobilize all its military, human, moral, and spiritual

capabilities to participate actively with the Palestinian people in the liberation of Palestine. It must, particularly in the phase of the armed Palestinian revolution, offer and furnish the Palestinian people with all possible help, and material and human support, and make available to them the means and opportunities that will enable them to continue to carry out their leading role in the armed revolution, until they liberate their homeland.

**Article 16:** The liberation of Palestine, from a spiritual point of view, will provide the Holy Land with an atmosphere of safety and tranquility, which in turn will safeguard the country's religious sanctuaries and guarantee freedom of worship and of visit to all, without discrimination of race, color, language, or religion. Accordingly, the people of Palestine look to all spiritual forces in the world for support.

**Article 17:** The liberation of Palestine, from a human point of view, will restore to the Palestinian individual his dignity, pride, and freedom. Accordingly the Palestinian Arab people look forward to the support of all those who believe in the dignity of the human being and his freedom in the world.

**Article 18:** The liberation of Palestine, from an international point of view, is a defensive action necessitated by the demands of self-defense. Accordingly the Palestinian people, desirous as they are of the friendship of all people, look to freedom-loving, and peace-loving states for support in order to restore their legitimate rights in Palestine, to re-establish peace and security in the country, and to enable its people to exercise national sovereignty and freedom.

**Article 19:** The partition of Palestine in 1947 and the establishment of the state of Israel are entirely illegal, regardless of the passage of time, because they were contrary to the will of the Palestinian people and to their natural right in their homeland, and inconsistent with the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly the right to self-determination.

**Article 20:** The Balfour Declaration, the Mandate for Palestine, and everything that has been based upon them, are deemed null and void. Claims of historical or religious ties of Jews with Palestine are incompatible with the facts of history and the true conception of what constitutes statehood. Judaism, being a religion, is not an independent nationality. Nor do Jews constitute a single nation with an identity of its own; they are citizens of the states to which they belong.

**Article 21:** The Arab Palestinian people, expressing themselves by the armed Palestinian revolution, reject all solutions which are substitutes for the total liberation of Palestine and reject all proposals aiming at the liquidation of the Palestinian problem, or its internationalization.

**Article 22:** Zionism is a political movement organically associated with international imperialism and antagonistic to all action for liberation and to progressive movements in the world. It is racist and fanatic in its nature, aggressive, expansionist, and colonial in its aims, and fascist in its methods. Israel is the instrument of the Zionist movement, and geographical base for world imperialism placed strategically in the midst of the Arab homeland to combat the hopes of the Arab nation for liberation, unity, and progress. Israel is a constant source of threat vis-a-vis peace in the Middle East and the whole world. Since the liberation of Palestine will destroy the Zionist and imperialist presence and will contribute to the establishment of peace in the Middle East, the Palestinian people look for the support of all the progressive and peaceful forces and urge them all, irrespective of their affiliations and beliefs, to offer the Palestinian people all aid and support in their just struggle for the liberation of their homeland.

**Article 23:** The demand of security and peace, as well as the demand of right and justice, require all states to consider Zionism an illegitimate movement, to outlaw its existence, and to ban its opera-

tions, in order that friendly relations among peoples may be preserved, and the loyalty of citizens to their respective homelands safeguarded.

**Article 24:** The Palestinian people believe in the principles of justice, freedom, sovereignty, self-determination, human dignity, and in the right of all peoples to exercise them.

**Article 25:** For the realization of the goals of this Charter and its principles, the Palestine Liberation Organization will perform its role in the liberation of Palestine in accordance with the Constitution of this Organization.

**Article 26:** The Palestine Liberation Organization, representative of the Palestinian revolutionary forces, is responsible for the Palestinian Arab people's movement in its struggle – to retrieve its homeland, liberate and return to it and exercise the right to self-determination in it – in all military, political, and financial fields and also for whatever may be required by the Palestine case on the inter-Arab and international levels.

**Article 27:** The Palestine Liberation Organization shall cooperate with all Arab states, each according to its potentialities; and will adopt a neutral policy among them in the light of the requirements of the war of liberation; and on this basis it shall not interfere in the internal affairs of any Arab state.

**Article 28:** The Palestinian Arab people assert the genuineness and independence of their national (*wataniyya*) revolution and reject all forms of intervention, trusteeship, and subordination.

**Article 29:** The Palestinian people possess the fundamental and genuine legal right to liberate and retrieve their homeland. The Palestinian people determine their attitude toward all states and forces on the basis of the stands they adopt vis-a-vis to the Palestinian revolution to fulfill the aims of the Palestinian people.

**Article 30:** Fighters and carriers of arms in the war of liberation are the nucleus of the popular army which will be the protective force for the gains of the Palestinian Arab people.

**Article 31:** The Organization shall have a flag, an oath of allegiance, and an anthem. All this shall be decided upon in accordance with a special regulation.

**Article 32:** Regulations, which shall be known as the Constitution of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, shall be annexed to this Charter. It will lay down the manner in which the Organization, and its organs and institutions, shall be constituted; the respective competence of each; and the requirements of its obligation under the Charter.

**Article 33:** This Charter shall not be amended save by [vote of] a majority of two-thirds of the total membership of the National Congress of the Palestine Liberation Organization [taken] at a special session convened for that purpose.

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### **1996 Amendments to the PLO Charter**

*The Palestinian National Council, at its 21st session held in the city of Gaza,*

Emanating from the Declaration of Independence and the political statement adopted at its 19th session held in Algiers on Nov. 15, 1988, which affirmed the resolution of conflicts by peaceful means and accepted the two states solution,

And based on the introduction of the Declaration of Principles signed in Washington D.C. on 13 September 1993, which included the agreement of both sides to put an end to decades of confrontation and conflict and to live in peaceful coexistence, mutual dignity and

security, while recognizing their mutual legitimate and political right,

And reaffirming their desire to achieve a just, lasting and comprehensive peace settlement and historic reconciliation through the agreed political process,

And based on international legitimacy represented by the United Nations Resolutions relevant to the Palestinian question, including those relating to Jerusalem, Refugees and Settlements, and the other issues of the permanent status and the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338,

And affirming the adherence of the Palestine Liberation Organization to its commitments deriving from the D.O.P. (Oslo I), the provisional Cairo Agreement, the letter of mutual recognition signed on 9 and 10 September 1993, the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (Oslo II) signed in Washington D.C. on 28 September 1995, and reconfirm the resolution of the central Council of the P.L.O. adopted in October 1993, which approved the Oslo Agreement and all its annexes,

And based on the principles which constituted the foundation of the Madrid Peace Conference and the Washington negotiations, decides:

The Palestinian National Charter is hereby amended by canceling the articles that are contrary to the letters exchanged between the P.L.O. and the Government of Israel 9-10 September 1993.

Assigns its legal committee with the task of redrafting the Palestinian National Charter in order to present it to the first session of the Palestinian central council.

# Hamas

## General principles and objectives on Palestine

### (2017)

The narrative about Hamas by the rulers of the Western States is that it is a terrorist group whose aim is the annihilation of all the Jews. The image that emerges from this document that presents the general principles and objectives of this organization as declared by the protagonists themselves is totally different.

Hamas is a patriotic organization whose aim is to free Palestine from an occupying power (the State of Israel) and to erase a nefarious ideology (Zionism) that has nothing to do with Judaism (see point 16 of the document). Many Jews uphold the same idea and aim.

The inclusion of this document in the anthology intends to fight the distortions and lies of the propaganda of the western rules who are interested in keeping a situation of permanent insecurity in that region, and then presenting themselves as the indispensable guarantors of order.

A possible solution for the Palestinian problem has been put forward by many people and consists in going beyond the territorial monopolistic state. A no-territorial state in Palestine could then become an

example and a model of inspiration for other intractable situations (Yemen, Donbass, Kosovo, etc.) and then for the entire world, because the territorial states and their ideology, statism, are at a dead end.

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### **Preamble**

Palestine is the land of the Arab Palestinian people, from it they originate, to it they adhere and belong, and about it they reach out and communicate.

Palestine is a land whose status has been elevated by Islam, a faith that holds it in high esteem, that breathes through it its spirit and just values and that lays the foundation for the doctrine of defending and protecting it.

Palestine is the cause of a people who have been let down by a world that fails to secure their rights and restore to them what has been usurped from them, a people whose land continues to suffer one of the worst types of occupation in this world.

Palestine is a land that was seized by a racist, anti-human and colonial Zionist project that was founded on a false promise (the *Balfour Declaration*), on recognition of a usurping entity and on imposing a *fait accompli* by force.

Palestine symbolises the resistance that shall continue until liberation is accomplished, until the return is fulfilled and until a fully sovereign state is established with Jerusalem as its capital.

Palestine is the true partnership among Palestinians of all affiliations for the sublime objective of liberation.

Palestine is the spirit of the *Ummah* [Community in Arabic] and its central cause; it is the soul of humanity and its living conscience.

This document is the product of deep deliberations that led us to a strong consensus. As a movement, we agree about both the theory and the practice of the vision that is outlined in the pages that follow. It is a vision that stands on solid grounds and on well-established principles. This document unveils the goals, the milestones and the way in which national unity can be enforced. It also establishes our common understanding of the Palestinian cause, the working principles which we use to further it, and the limits of flexibility used to interpret it.

### **The movement**

**1.** The Islamic Resistance Movement “Hamas” is a Palestinian Islamic national liberation and resistance movement. Its goal is to liberate Palestine and confront the Zionist project. Its frame of reference is Islam, which determines its principles, objectives and means.

### **The Land of Palestine**

**2.** Palestine, which extends from the River Jordan in the east to the Mediterranean in the west and from Ras al-Naqurah in the north to Umm al-Rashrash in the south, is an integral territorial unit. It is the land and the home of the Palestinian people. The expulsion and banishment of the Palestinian people from their land and the establishment of the Zionist entity therein do not annul the right of the Palestinian people to their entire land and do not entrench any rights therein for the usurping Zionist entity.

**3.** Palestine is an Arab Islamic land. It is a blessed sacred land that has a special place in the heart of every Arab and every Muslim.

### **The Palestinian people**

**4.** The Palestinians are the Arabs who lived in Palestine until 1947, irrespective of whether they were expelled from it, or stayed in it; and every person that was born to an Arab Palestinian father after that date, whether inside or outside Palestine, is a Palestinian.

5. The Palestinian identity is authentic and timeless; it is passed from generation to generation. The catastrophes that have befallen the Palestinian people, as a consequence of the Zionist occupation and its policy of displacement, cannot erase the identity of the Palestinian people nor can they negate it. A Palestinian shall not lose his or her national identity or rights by acquiring a second nationality.

6. The Palestinian people are one people, made up of all Palestinians, inside and outside of Palestine, irrespective of their religion, culture or political affiliation.

### **Islam and Palestine**

7. Palestine is at the heart of the Arab and Islamic Ummah and enjoys a special status. Within Palestine there exists Jerusalem, whose precincts are blessed by Allah. Palestine is the Holy Land, which Allah has blessed for humanity. It is the Muslims' first Qiblah and the destination of the journey performed at night by Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. It is the location from where he ascended to the upper heavens. It is the birthplace of Jesus Christ, peace be upon him. Its soil contains the remains of thousands of prophets, companions and mujahidin. It is the land of people who are determined to defend the truth – within Jerusalem and its surroundings – who are not deterred or intimidated by those who oppose them and by those who betray them, and they will continue their mission until the Promise of Allah is fulfilled.

8. By virtue of its justly balanced middle way and moderate spirit, Islam – for Hamas - provides a comprehensive way of life and an order that is fit for purpose at all times and in all places. Islam is a religion of peace and tolerance. It provides an umbrella for the followers of other creeds and religions who can practice their beliefs in security and safety. Hamas also believes that Palestine has always been and will always be a model of coexistence, tolerance and civilizational innovation.

**9.** Hamas believes that the message of Islam upholds the values of truth, justice, freedom and dignity and prohibits all forms of injustice and incriminates oppressors irrespective of their religion, race, gender or nationality. Islam is against all forms of religious, ethnic or sectarian extremism and bigotry. It is the religion that inculcates in its followers the value of standing up to aggression and of supporting the oppressed; it motivates them to give generously and make sacrifices in defence of their dignity, their land, their peoples and their holy places.

### **Jerusalem**

**10.** Jerusalem is the capital of Palestine. Its religious, historic and civilisational status is fundamental to the Arabs, Muslims and the world at large. Its Islamic and Christian holy places belong exclusively to the Palestinian people and to the Arab and Islamic Ummah. Not one stone of Jerusalem can be surrendered or relinquished. The measures undertaken by the occupiers in Jerusalem, such as Judaisation, settlement building, and establishing facts on the ground are fundamentally null and void.

**11.** The blessed al-Aqsa Mosque belongs exclusively to our people and our Ummah, and the occupation has no right to it whatsoever. The occupation's plots, measures and attempts to judaize al-Aqsa and divide it are null, void and illegitimate.

### **Refugees and right of return**

**12.** The Palestinian cause in its essence is a cause of an occupied land and a displaced people. The right of the Palestinian refugees and the displaced to return to their homes from which they were banished or were banned from returning to – whether in the lands occupied in 1948 or in 1967 (that is the whole of Palestine), is a natural right, both individual and collective. This right is confirmed by all divine laws as well as by the basic principles of human rights and international law. It is an inalienable right and cannot be

dispensed with by any party, whether Palestinian, Arab or international.

**13.** Hamas rejects all attempts to erase the rights of the refugees, including the attempts to settle them outside Palestine and through the projects of the alternative homeland. Compensation to the Palestinian refugees for the harm they have suffered as a consequence of banishing them and occupying their land is an absolute right that goes hand in hand with their right to return. They are to receive compensation upon their return and this does not negate or diminish their right to return.

### **The Zionist project**

**14.** The Zionist project is a racist, aggressive, colonial and expansionist project based on seizing the properties of others; it is hostile to the Palestinian people and to their aspiration for freedom, liberation, return and self-determination. The Israeli entity is the plaything of the Zionist project and its base of aggression.

**15.** The Zionist project does not target the Palestinian people alone; it is the enemy of the Arab and Islamic Ummah posing a grave threat to its security and interests. It is also hostile to the Ummah's aspirations for unity, renaissance and liberation and has been the major source of its troubles. The Zionist project also poses a danger to international security and peace and to mankind and its interests and stability.

**16. Hamas affirms that its conflict is with the Zionist project not with the Jews because of their religion. Hamas does not wage a struggle against the Jews because they are Jewish but wages a struggle against the Zionists who occupy Palestine. Yet, it is the Zionists who constantly identify Judaism and the Jews with their own colonial project and illegal entity.**

**17.** Hamas rejects the persecution of any human being or the undermining of his or her rights on nationalist, religious or sectarian grounds. Hamas is of the view that the Jewish problem, anti-Semitism and the persecution of the Jews are phenomena fundamentally linked to European history and not to the history of the Arabs and the Muslims or to their heritage. The Zionist movement, which was able with the help of Western powers to occupy Palestine, is the most dangerous form of settlement occupation which has already disappeared from much of the world and must disappear from Palestine.

### **The position toward Occupation and political solutions**

**18.** The following are considered null and void: the Balfour Declaration, the British Mandate Document, the UN Palestine Partition Resolution, and whatever resolutions and measures that derive from them or are similar to them. The establishment of "Israel" is entirely illegal and contravenes the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and goes against their will and the will of the Ummah; it is also in violation of human rights that are guaranteed by international conventions, foremost among them is the right to self-determination.

**19.** There shall be no recognition of the legitimacy of the Zionist entity. Whatever has befallen the land of Palestine in terms of occupation, settlement building, judaisation or changes to its features or falsification of facts is illegitimate. Rights never lapse.

**20.** Hamas believes that no part of the land of Palestine shall be compromised or conceded, irrespective of the causes, the circumstances and the pressures and no matter how long the occupation lasts. Hamas rejects any alternative to the full and complete liberation of Palestine, from the river to the sea. However, without compromising its rejection of the Zionist entity and without relinquishing any Palestinian rights, Hamas considers the establishment of a fully sovereign and independent Palestinian state, with Jerusalem as its capital along the lines of the 4th of June 1967, with the return of the

refugees and the displaced to their homes from which they were expelled, to be a formula of national consensus.

**21.** Hamas affirms that the Oslo Accords and their addenda contravene the governing rules of international law in that they generate commitments that violate the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Therefore, the Movement rejects these agreements and all that flows from them, such as the obligations that are detrimental to the interests of our people, especially security coordination (collaboration).

**22.** Hamas rejects all the agreements, initiatives and settlement projects that are aimed at undermining the Palestinian cause and the rights of our Palestinian people. In this regard, any stance, initiative or political programme must not in any way violate these rights and should not contravene them or contradict them.

**23.** Hamas stresses that transgression against the Palestinian people, usurping their land and banishing them from their homeland cannot be called peace. Any settlements reached on this basis will not lead to peace. Resistance and jihad for the liberation of Palestine will remain a legitimate right, a duty and an honour for all the sons and daughters of our people and our Ummah.

### **Resistance and Liberation**

**24.** The liberation of Palestine is the duty of the Palestinian people in particular and the duty of the Arab and Islamic Ummah in general. It is also a humanitarian obligation as necessitated by the dictates of truth and justice. The agencies working for Palestine, whether national, Arab, Islamic or humanitarian, complement each other and are harmonious and not in conflict with each other.

**25.** Resisting the occupation with all means and methods is a legitimate right guaranteed by divine laws and by international norms and laws. At the heart of these lies armed resistance, which is regarded as

the strategic choice for protecting the principles and the rights of the Palestinian people.

**26.** Hamas rejects any attempt to undermine the resistance and its arms. It also affirms the right of our people to develop the means and mechanisms of resistance. Managing resistance, in terms of escalation or de-escalation, or in terms of diversifying the means and methods, is an integral part of the process of managing the conflict and should not be at the expense of the principle of resistance.

### **The Palestinian political system**

**27.** A real state of Palestine is a state that has been liberated. There is no alternative to a fully sovereign Palestinian State on the entire national Palestinian soil, with Jerusalem as its capital.

**28.** Hamas believes in, and adheres to, managing its Palestinian relations on the basis of pluralism, democracy, national partnership, acceptance of the other and the adoption of dialogue. The aim is to bolster the unity of ranks and joint action for the purpose of accomplishing national goals and fulfilling the aspirations of the Palestinian people.

**29.** The PLO is a national framework for the Palestinian people inside and outside of Palestine. It should therefore be preserved, developed and rebuilt on democratic foundations so as to secure the participation of all the constituents and forces of the Palestinian people, in a manner that safeguards Palestinian rights.

**30.** Hamas stresses the necessity of building Palestinian national institutions on sound democratic principles, foremost among them are free and fair elections. Such process should be on the basis of national partnership and in accordance with a clear programme and a clear strategy that adhere to the rights, including the right of resistance, and which fulfil the aspirations of the Palestinian people.

**31.** Hamas affirms that the role of the Palestinian Authority should be to serve the Palestinian people and safeguard their security, their rights and their national project.

**32.** Hamas stresses the necessity of maintaining the independence of Palestinian national decision-making. Outside forces should not be allowed to intervene. At the same time, Hamas affirms the responsibility of the Arabs and the Muslims and their duty and role in the liberation of Palestine from Zionist occupation.

**33.** Palestinian society is enriched by its prominent personalities, figures, dignitaries, civil society institutions, and youth, students, trade unionist and women's groups who together work for the achievement of national goals and societal building, pursue resistance, and achieve liberation.

**34.** The role of Palestinian women is fundamental in the process of building the present and the future, just as it has always been in the process of making Palestinian history. It is a pivotal role in the project of resistance, liberation and building the political system.

### **The Arab and Islamic Ummah**

**35.** Hamas believes that the Palestinian issue is the central cause for the Arab and Islamic Ummah.

**36.** Hamas believes in the unity of the Ummah with all its diverse constituents and is aware of the need to avoid anything that could fragment the Ummah and undermine its unity.

**37.** Hamas believes in cooperating with all states that support the rights of the Palestinian people. It opposes intervention in the internal affairs of any country. It also refuses to be drawn into disputes and conflicts that take place among different countries. Hamas adopts the policy of opening up to different states in the world, especially the Arab and Islamic states. It endeavours to establish balanced relations on the basis of combining the requirements of

the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian people's interests on the one hand with the interests of the Ummah, its renaissance and its security on the other.

### **The Humanitarian and international aspect**

**38.** The Palestinian issue is one that has major humanitarian and international dimensions. Supporting and backing this cause is a humanitarian and civilisational task that is required by the prerequisites of truth, justice and common humanitarian values.

**39.** From a legal and humanitarian perspective, the liberation of Palestine is a legitimate activity, it is an act of self-defence, and it is the expression of the natural right of all peoples to self-determination.

**40.** In its relations with world nations and peoples, Hamas believes in the values of cooperation, justice, freedom and respect of the will of the people.

**41.** Hamas welcomes the stances of states, organisations and institutions that support the rights of the Palestinian people. It salutes the free peoples of the world who support the Palestinian cause. At the same time, it denounces the support granted by any party to the Zionist entity or the attempts to cover up its crimes and aggression against the Palestinians and calls for the prosecution of Zionist war criminals.

**42.** Hamas rejects the attempts to impose hegemony on the Arab and Islamic Ummah just as it rejects the attempts to impose hegemony on the rest of the world's nations and peoples. Hamas also condemns all forms of colonialism, occupation, discrimination, oppression and aggression in the world.



## 7. United Nations Resolutions

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Since the establishment of the State of Israel, only two Resolutions by the United Nations have been accepted and implemented by the Israeli State:

- 29 November 1947: Resolution 181: Recommending partition of the British Mandate for Palestine into Arab and Jewish states, and international status for the City of Jerusalem. This international status was later suppressed with the annexation of Jerusalem, declared in 1980 the capital of Israel.

- 11 May 1949: Resolution 273: Admission of Israel to membership in the UN.

On the other hand, the State of Israel has violated:

- (1949-2017) 102 Resolutions of the General Assembly of the UN

- (1961-2016) 26 Resolutions of the Security Council of the UN

Source: <https://thegazafund.com/violations-by-israel/>



# United Nations Resolution 194

## (1948)

The Resolution 194 was adopted near the end of the 1947–1949 Palestine war. The Resolution defines principles for reaching a final settlement and returning Palestine refugees to their homes.

The resolution also calls for the establishment of the United Nations Conciliation Commission to facilitate peace between Israel and Arab states, continuing the efforts of UN Mediator Count Folke Bernadotte, following his assassination.

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December 11, 1948

*The General Assembly,*

Having considered further the situation in Palestine,

*Expresses* its deep appreciation of the progress achieved through the good offices of the late United Nations Mediator [Count Bernadotte] in promoting a peaceful adjustment of the future situation of

Palestine, for which cause he sacrificed his life; and *Extends* its thanks to the Acting Mediator and his staff for their continued efforts and devotion to duty in Palestine;

*Establishes* a Conciliation Commission consisting of three States Members of the United Nations which shall have the following functions:

To assume, insofar as it considers necessary in existing circumstances, the functions given to the United Nations Mediator on Palestine by resolution 186 (S-2) of the General Assembly of 14 May 1948;

To carry out the specific functions and directives given to it by the present resolution and such additional functions and directives as may be given to it by the General Assembly or by the Security Council;

To undertake, upon the request of the Security Council, any of the functions now assigned to the United Nations Mediator on Palestine or to the United Nations Truce Commission by resolutions of the Security Council; upon such request to the Conciliation Commission by the Security Council with respect to all the remaining functions of the United Nations Mediator on Palestine under Security Council resolutions, the office of the Mediator shall be terminated;

*Decides* that a Committee of the Assembly, consisting of China, France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, shall present, before the end of the first part of the present session of the General Assembly, for the approval of the Assembly, a proposal concerning the names of the three States which will constitute the Conciliation Commission;

*Requests* the Commission to begin its functions at once, with a view to the establishment of contact between the parties themselves and the Commission at the earliest possible date;

*Calls upon* the Governments and authorities concerned to extend the scope of the negotiations provided for in the Security Council's resolution of 16 November 1948 and to seek agreement by negotiations conducted either with the Conciliation Commission or directly with a view to the final settlement of all questions outstanding between them;

*Instructs* the Conciliation Commission to take steps to assist the Government and authorities concerned to achieve a final settlement of all questions outstanding between them;

*Resolves* that the Holy Places — including Nazareth — religious buildings and sites in Palestine should be protected and free access to them assured, in accordance with existing rights and historical practice that arrangements to this end should be under effective United Nations supervision; that the United Nations Conciliation Commission, in presenting to the fourth regular session of the General Assembly its detailed proposal for a permanent international regime for the territory of Jerusalem, should include recommendations concerning the Holy Places in that territory; that with regard to the Holy Places in the rest of Palestine the Commission should call upon the political authorities of the areas concerned to give appropriate formal guarantees as to the protection of the Holy Places and access to them; and that these undertakings should be presented to the General Assembly for approval;

*Resolves* that, in view of its association with three world religions, the Jerusalem area, including the present municipality of Jerusalem plus the surrounding villages and towns, the most Eastern of which shall be Abu Dis; the most Southern, Bethlehem; the most Western, Ein Karim (including also the built-up area of Motsa); and the most Northern, Shu'fat, should be accorded special and separate treatment from the rest of Palestine and should be placed under effective United Nations control;

*Requests* the Security Council to take further steps to ensure the demilitarization of Jerusalem at the earliest possible date;

*Instructs* the Conciliation Commission to present to the fourth regular session of the General Assembly detailed proposals for a permanent international regime for the Jerusalem area which will provide for the maximum local autonomy for distinctive groups consistent with the special international status of the Jerusalem area;

The Conciliation Commission is authorized to appoint a United Nations representative who shall cooperate with the local authorities with respect to the interim administration of the Jerusalem area;

Resolves that, pending agreement on more detailed arrangements among the Governments and authorities concerned, the freest possible access to Jerusalem by road, rail or air should be accorded to all inhabitants of Palestine; *Instructs* the Conciliation Commission to report immediately to the Security Council, for appropriate action by that organ, any attempt by any party to impede such access;

*Instructs* the Conciliation Commission to seek arrangements among the Governments and authorities concerned which will facilitate the economic development of the area, including arrangements for access to ports and airfields and the use of transportation and communication facilities;

*Resolves* that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible;

*Instructs* the Conciliation Commission to facilitate the repatriation, resettlement and economic and social rehabilitation of the refugees and the payment of compensation, and to maintain close relations with the Director of the United Nations Relief for Palestine

Refugees and, through him, with the appropriate organs and agencies of the United Nations;

*Authorizes* the Conciliation Commission to appoint such subsidiary bodies and to employ such technical experts, acting under its authority, as it may find necessary for the effective discharge of its functions and responsibilities under the present resolution. The Conciliation Commission will have its official headquarters at Jerusalem. The authorities responsible for maintaining order in Jerusalem will be responsible for taking all measures necessary to ensure the security of the Commission. The Secretary-General will provide a limited number of guards for the protection of the staff and premises of the Commission;

*Instructs* the Conciliation Commission to render progress reports periodically to the Secretary-General for transmission to the Security Council and to the Members of the United Nations;

*Calls upon* all Governments and authorities concerned to cooperate with the Conciliation Commission and to take all possible steps to assist in the implementation of the present resolution;

*Requests* the Secretary-General to provide the necessary staff and facilities and to make appropriate arrangements to provide the necessary funds required in carrying out the terms of the present resolution.

# United Nations Resolution 2443

## (1968)

The Resolution 2443, adopted after the Six-Day War (5-10 June 1967) established the institution of a “Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories.”

Since its mandate, renewed year to year, the Government of Israel has always denied to the Special Committee any cooperation or access to the occupied territories.

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December 19, 1968

*The General Assembly*

*Guided* by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

*Bearing in mind* the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to

the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949,

*Mindful* of the principle embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights regarding the right of everyone to return to his own country, and recalling Security Council resolution 237 (1967) of 14 June 1967, General Assembly resolutions 2252 (ES-V) of 4 July 1967 and 2341 B (XXII) of 19 December 1967, Commission on Human Rights resolution 6 (XXIV) of 27 February 1968 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1336 (XLIV) of 31 May 1968, in which those United Nations organs called upon the Government of Israel, *inter alia*, to facilitate the return of those inhabitants who have fled the area of military operations since the outbreak of hostilities,

*Recalling* the telegram dispatched by the Commission on Human Rights on 8 March 1968, calling upon the Government of Israel to desist forthwith from acts of destroying homes of the Arab civilian population in areas occupied by Israel,

*Recalling* also Security Council resolution 259 (1968) of 27 September 1968, in which the Council expressed its concern for the safety, welfare and security of the inhabitants of the Arab territories under military occupation by Israel, and deplored the delay in the implementation of Council resolution 237 (1967),

*Noting* resolution I on respect for and implementation of human rights in occupied territories, adopted by the International Conference on Human Rights on 7 May 1968, in which the Conference, *inter alia*:

- (a) Expressed its grave concern at the violation of human rights in Arab territories occupied by Israel,
- (b) Drew the attention of the Government of Israel to the grave consequences resulting from the disregard of fundamental freedoms and human rights in occupied territories,

(c) Called upon the Government of Israel to desist forthwith from acts of destroying homes of the Arab civilian population inhabiting areas occupied by Israel and to respect and implement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 in occupied territories,

(d) Affirmed the inalienable rights of all inhabitants who have left their homes as a result of the outbreak of hostilities in the Middle East to return home, resume their normal life, recover their property and homes, and rejoin their families according to the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

1. *Decides* to establish a Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, composed of three Member States;
2. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly to appoint the members of the Special Committee,
3. *Requests* the Government of Israel to receive the Special Committee, co-operate with it and facilitate its work;
4. *Requests* the Special Committee to report to the Secretary-General as soon as possible and whenever the need arises thereafter;
5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide the Special Committee with all the necessary facilities for the performance of its task.

# United Nations Resolution 2546

## (1969)

The Resolution 2546 reiterated the obligation of the Government of Israel to abstain from committing any sort of violence against the Palestinian population (namely, “collective and area punishment, the destruction of homes and the deportation of the inhabitants of the territories occupied by Israel”).

The State of Israel has never abided by these injunctions and has continued to commit acts of ever increasing violence, without the International Community intervening other than producing useless declarations like the present one.

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December 11, 1969

*The General Assembly*

*Guided* by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

*Bearing in mind* the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949 and the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

*Recalling* the humanitarian resolutions regarding the violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the territories occupied by Israel, especially Security Council resolutions 237 (1967) of 14 June 1967 and 259 (1968) of 27 September 1968, Commission on Human Rights resolutions 6 (XXIV) of 27 February 1968 and 6 (XXV) of 4 March 1969, and the relevant resolutions of the International Conference on Human Rights held at Teheran in 1968, the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization,

*Further recalling* its resolutions 2252 (ES-V) of 4 July 1967 and 2443 (XXIII) and 2452 (XXIII) of 19 December 1968,

*Concerned* that the provisions of these resolutions have not been implemented by the Israeli authorities,

*Gravely alarmed* by fresh reports of collective punishments, mass imprisonment, indiscriminate destruction of homes and other acts of oppression against the civilian population in the Arab territories occupied by Israel,

1. *Reaffirms* its resolutions relating to the violations of human rights in the territories occupied by Israel;
2. *Expresses its grave concern* at the continuing report of violation of human rights in those territories,
3. *Condemns* such policies and practices as collective and area punishment, the destruction of homes and the deportation of the inhabitants of the territories occupied by Israel;

4. *Urgently calls* upon the Government of Israel to desist forthwith from its reported repressive practices and policies towards the civilian population in the occupied territories and to comply with its obligations under the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the relevant resolutions adopted by the various international organizations;

5. *Requests* the Special Committee to investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories, established under General Assembly resolution 2443 (XXIII) to take cognizance of the provisions of the present resolution.

# United Nations Resolution 3236

## (1974)

The Resolution 3236 recognizes the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, officializes United Nations contact with the Palestine Liberation Organization, and adds the "Question of Palestine" to the U.N. Agenda.

After more than fifty years from that Resolution, nothing has been achieved in terms of its implementation.

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November 22, 1974

The General Assembly,

*Having considered* the question of Palestine,

*Having heard* the statement of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

*Having also heard* other statements made during the debate,

*Deeply concerned* that no just solution to the problem of Palestine has yet been achieved and recognizing that the problem of Palestine continues to endanger international peace and security,

*Recognizing* that the Palestinian people is entitled to self-determination in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations,

*Expressing its grave concern* that the Palestinian people has been prevented from enjoying its inalienable rights, in particular its right to self-determination,

*Guided* by the purposes and principles of the Charter,

*Recalling* its relevant resolutions which affirm the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination,

*1 Reaffirms* the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people in Palestine, including:

(a) The right to self-determination without external interference;

(b) The right to national independence and sovereignty;

*2 Reaffirms* also the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted, and calls for their return;

*3 Emphasizes* that full respect for and the realization of these inalienable rights of the Palestinian people are indispensable for the solution of the question of Palestine;

*4 Recognizes* that the Palestinian people is a principal party in the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East;

*5 Further recognizes* the right of the Palestinian people to regain its rights by all means in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations;

*6 Appeals* to all States and international organizations to extend their

support to the Palestinian people in its struggle to restore its rights, in accordance with the Charter;

7 *Requests* the Secretary-General to establish contacts with the Palestine Liberation Organization on all matters concerning the question of Palestine;

8 *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

9 *Decides* to include the item entitled “Question of Palestine” in the provisional agenda of its thirtieth session.

# United Nations Resolution 3379

## (1975)

The Resolution 3379, after having assessed the situation in Palestine, also in relation to the conditions of the population under other State Regimes “*Determines* that Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination”. The Resolution condemns racism also in those places where it was practiced at that time (Zimbabwe, South Africa).

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November 10, 1975

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 1904 (XVIII) of 20 November 1963, proclaiming the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and in particular its affirmation that “any doctrine of racial differentiation or superiority is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous” and its expression of alarm at “the manifestations of racial discrimination still in evidence in some areas in the world, some of which are

imposed by certain Governments by means of legislative, administrative or other measures”,

*Recalling also* that, in its resolution 3151 G (XXVIII) of 14 December 1973, the General Assembly condemned, *inter alia*, the unholy alliance between South African racism and zionism,

*Taking note* of the Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and Their Contribution to Development and Peace 1975, proclaimed by the World Conference of the International Women's Year, held at Mexico City from 19 June to 2 July 1975, which promulgated the principle that “international co-operation and peace require the achievement of national liberation and independence, the elimination of colonialism and neo-colonialism, foreign occupation, zionism, *apartheid* and racial discrimination in all its forms, as well as the recognition of the dignity of peoples and their right to self-determination”,

*Taking note also* of resolution 77 (XII) adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its twelfth ordinary session, held at Kampala from 28 July to 1 August 1975, which considered “that the racist regime in occupied Palestine and the racist regime in Zimbabwe and South Africa have a common imperialist origin, forming a whole and having the same racist structure and being organically linked in their policy aimed at repression of the dignity and integrity of the human being”,

*Taking note also* of the Political Declaration and Strategy to Strengthen International Peace and Security and to Intensify Solidarity and Mutual Assistance among Non-Aligned Countries, adopted at the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries held at Lima from 25 to 30 August 1975, which most severely condemned zionism as a threat to world peace and security and called upon all countries to oppose this racist and imperialist ideology,

*Determines* that Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination.

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This Resolution has been revoked on the 16th of December 1991 (Resolution 46/86) under explicit request by the State of Israel as a condition for its participation in the Madrid Conference, a Peace Conference meant to start solving the Palestinian problem.

However no peace and no solution of the Palestinian problem has resulted from that Conference and from all the subsequent international meetings on Palestine.

# United Nations Resolution 3415

## (1975)

The Resolution 3415 stresses the fact that acquisition of territories by force is inadmissible and requests the State of Israel to withdraw from those territories occupied since the Six-Day War (1967). Moreover, the General Assembly “*requests* all States to desist from supplying Israel with any military or economic aid as long as it continues to occupy Arab territories.”

Nothing of this has happened and most States have continued supporting militarily and economically Israel, becoming then accomplices of a Regime based on apartheid and on the disrespect of international norms.

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December 5, 1975

*The General Assembly*

*Having considered* the item entitled “The situation in the Middle East,”

*Guided* by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and resolutions of the United Nations as well as those principles of international law which prohibit the occupation or acquisition of territory by the use of force and which consider any military occupation, however temporary, or any forcible annexation of such territory, or part thereof, as an act of aggression,

*Gravely concerned* at the continuation of the Israeli occupation of Arab territories and Israel's persistent denial of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people,

*Recalling* relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, particularly those concerning the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people and its right to participate in any efforts for peace,

*Convinced* that the early reconvening of the Peace Conference on the Middle East with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, is essential for the realization of a just and lasting settlement in the region,

*Convinced* that the present situation prevailing in the Middle East continues to constitute a serious threat to international peace and security, and that urgent measures should be taken in order to ensure Israel's full compliance with relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council on the questions of Palestine and the Middle East,

*Recognizing* that peace is indivisible and that a just and lasting settlement of the question of the Middle East must be based on a comprehensive solution under the auspices of the United Nations, which takes into consideration all aspects of the Middle East conflict, including, in particular, the enjoyment by the Palestinian people of its inalienable national rights, as well as the total withdrawal from all the Arab territories occupied since June 1967,

1. *Reaffirms* that the acquisition of territory by force is inadmissible and therefore all territories thus occupied must be returned;
2. *Condemns* Israel's continued occupation of Arab territories in violation of the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of international law and repeated United Nations resolutions;
3. *Requests* all States to desist from supplying Israel with any military or economic aid as long as it continues to occupy Arab territories and deny the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people;
4. *Requests* the Security Council, in the exercise of its responsibilities under the Charter, to take all necessary measures for the speedy implementation, according to an appropriate time-table, of all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council aiming at the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region through a comprehensive settlement, worked out with the participation of all parties concerned, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, and within the framework of the United Nations, which ensures complete Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories as well as full recognition of the inalienable national rights of the Palestinian people and the attainment of those rights;
5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to inform all concerned, including the Co-Chairmen of the Peace Conference on the Middle East, and to follow up the implementation of the present resolution and report thereon to the Security Council and to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

# United Nations Resolution 32/5

## (1977)

The Resolution 32/5 deplores the fact that the Israeli State is intent on changing “the legal status, geographical nature and demographic composition” of the occupied territories especially by way of new settlements by Zionist colons.

The Resolution strongly invites the Israeli Government to desist from similar actions and urges all States who have subscribed to the *Geneva Convention* relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (12 August 1949) to collaborate in order to implement the content of that Resolution.

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October 28, 1977

*The General Assembly*

*Stressing* the urgent need to achieve a just and lasting peace in the Middle East,

*Expressing grave anxiety and concern* over the present serious situation in the occupied Arab territories as a result of the continued Israeli occupation and the measures and actions taken by the Government of Israel, as the occupying Power, and designed to change the legal status, geographical nature and demographic composition of those territories,

*Considering* that the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, is applicable to all the Arab territories occupied since 5 June 1967,

1. *Determines* that all such measures and actions taken by Israel in the Palestinian and other Arab territories occupied since 1967 have no legal validity and constitute a serious obstruction of efforts aimed at achieving a just and lasting peace in the Middle East;
2. *Strongly deplores* the persistence of Israel in carrying out such measures, in particular the establishment of settlements in the occupied Arab territories;
3. *Calls upon* Israel to comply strictly with its international obligations in accordance with the principles of international law and the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949;
4. *Calls once more upon* the Government of Israel, as the occupying Power, to desist forthwith from taking any action which would result in changing the legal status, geographical nature or demographic composition of the Arab territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem;
5. *Urges* all States parties to the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War to ensure respect for and compliance with its provisions in all the Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem;
6. *Requests* the Secretary-General:

(a) To undertake urgent contacts with the Government of Israel to ensure the prompt implementation of the present resolution;

(b) To submit a report to the General Assembly and the Security Council, not later than 31 December 1977, on the results of his contacts;

7. *Requests* the Security Council to review the situation in the light of the present resolution and of the report of the Secretary-General.

# United Nations Resolution 34/89

## (1979)

The Resolution 34/89 deals with the development of nuclear weapons by the Israeli State, seeing this as a factor that “would further aggravate the already dangerous situation in the region and further threaten international peace and security.”

For this reason the General Assembly demands that Israel “submit all its nuclear facilities to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency” and at the same time “strongly condemns any attempt by Israel to manufacture, acquire, store or test nuclear weapons or introduce them into the Middle East.”

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December 11, 1979

The General Assembly,

Alarmed by the increasing information and evidence regarding Israel's activities aiming at the acquisition and development of nuclear weapons,

Recalling its resolution 33/71 A of 14 December 1978 concerning military and nuclear collaboration with Israel,

Recalling its repeated condemnation of the military and nuclear collaboration between Israel and South Africa,

Reaffirming its resolutions 3263 (XXIX) of 9 December 1974, 3474 (XXX) of 11 December 1975, 31/71 of 10 December 1976, 32/82 of 12 December 1977 and 33/64 of 14 December 1978 on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East,

Convinced that the development of nuclear capability by Israel would further aggravate the already dangerous situation in the region and further threaten international peace and security,

1. Appeals to all States to put an end to any co-operation with Israel which may assist it in acquiring and developing nuclear weapons and also to dissuade corporations, institutions and individuals within their jurisdiction from any co-operation that may result in providing Israel with nuclear weapons;
2. Calls upon all States to take all necessary measures to prevent the transfer to Israel of fissionable material and nuclear technology which could be used for nuclear arms;
3. Calls upon Israel to submit all its nuclear facilities to inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency;
4. Strongly condemns any attempt by Israel to manufacture, acquire, store or test nuclear weapons or introduce them into the Middle East,
5. Requests the Security Council to adopt appropriate measures to ensure the implementation of the relevant resolutions concerning Israeli nuclear armament;

6. Requests the Secretary-General, with the assistance of qualified experts, to prepare a study on Israeli nuclear armament and to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session;
7. Further requests the Secretary-General to submit a progress report on the work of the group of experts to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session;
8. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-fifth session the item entitled "Israeli nuclear armament."

## 8. Peace Proposals

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All the peace initiatives carried out by individuals or groups have as their common points the redressing of torts and the restitution of dignity to the Palestinian people that should be considered, in every respect, on a par with the Israeli population.

However, all this is incompatible with the Zionist ideology that postulates an overall superiority of the people of Israel with respect to all the others.

For this reason, no substantial and serious peace proposal has come and could ever come from the Zionist camp. And those Zionists or Jews who were and are willing to deal with the Palestinians on an equal footing, have been, and continue to be, marginalized and boycotted in all their initiatives.



# Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld

## Message of Peace and Truth

(1929)

Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld (1848-1932) was the founder of the Haredi Jewish community of Jerusalem during the years of the British Mandate of Palestine. He was vehemently opposed to Zionism. He often referred to the Zionists as “evil men and ruffians,” claiming that “Hell had entered the Land of Israel with Herzl.”

In this message, written after the disorders who took place in Palestine in 1929, he advocates a peaceful and fruitful cohabitation of individuals and communities having different culture and religion.

This is not what happened once the Zionist took control of the situation and succeeded in establishing their Zionist State through deception, exploitation, expropriation, terror and appalling violence against the local population.

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It is now close on sixty years since the Almighty allowed me to come to the Holy Land “to take pleasure in its stones and to favour the dust thereof.” Providence has permitted me to be a witness to the recon-

struction of the ruins of Jerusalem, to the extension of its settlement beyond the city's walls. Houses were built, colonies were founded. Torah, religious and charitable institutions were established, as well as houses for old people. People living on the labour of their hands or on business came to the Holy Land.

During my stay in the Holy Land, especially inspired people were awakened to perform the precepts of Yishuv Eretz-Israel (Revival of Palestine) by agricultural work, also "to eat of its fruit and enjoy its produce," thus creating the opportunity to exercise those precepts connected with the earth. Thus, with the help of the Almighty, colonies were established in Judea and Galilee, wherein I afterwards had the pleasure to walk and give praises and thanks to Him Who set up the "border of the widow."

The Wailing Wall, the place whence the Divine Presence has never moved even in its ruined state, has been a place of refuge for prayer for all the inhabitants of the Holy Land.

Whenever the Jewish soul craved to be near the Divine Presence, whenever a Jewish heart felt a need for prayer or supplication, it was in this holy place that it found relief and from here the prayer ascended to heaven.

This holy place serves also as a beacon-light for the whole world. The scattered of Israel at the farthest ends of the world direct their hearts, whilst at prayer, towards this divine place; and when they are in trouble they apply to their brethren in Jerusalem to offer up a prayer for them at this Wall.

There was no fixed time for such prayer. Whether by day or by night, this holy corner has not been deserted by the Jewish people. I, as one of the frequenters of this place, have never known any fixed hour for it, and many times I found myself at this holy place at a late hour of night, alone, quite alone with Him Who "caused His name to dwell in this House."

During all those tens of years, also after the country had come under the mandate of His Britannic Majesty's government, peace and tranquillity prevailed in the land. Its non-Jewish inhabitants looked with favour upon the flourishing of the settlement. Religious hatred, prevailing in some places abroad, had no footing in this holiest of countries. "He Who establishes peace in His Heights" spread His tabernacle of peace over His chosen land and city, and quietness and tranquillity reigned in our streets.

Our esteemed neighbours honored the Jews and the Jews felt sympathy and esteem for the rest of the inhabitants. On no few occasions they mutually helped one another as quiet and peaceful neighbours, mutually wishing the progress of their homeland. Also the Arabs themselves knew and still know that the Jews mean well towards them and bring blessing to the land at large. All together they hoped for the Great Almighty's Day when "He would bring again His divine presence unto Zion" and the Holy Land would be given back its holiness and glory which it had in the days of old, to be again a light unto nations and kingdoms.

Behold now, woe unto us that such things have arisen in our days! A spirit of confusion has caused a storm to hover upon the Jewish people in the Holy Land. Hatred is destroying order, false allegations are taking root and cause the shedding of innocent blood and the ruining of holy settlements. The soil of the Holy Land is saturated with blood of pure and innocent souls, the voice of brothers' blood is crying to us from the ground.

To our great sorrow there are being circulated false rumours and allegations, invented by lovers of strife, attributing bad meanings to the Jewish inhabitants in order to arouse anger and vengeance, and turn our tranquil holy land into a field of murder and a place of punishment. The bitter results of these quarrels cause great injury to the whole population, and should the situation last still longer it is likely

to spell havoc and ruination to the whole country and its many inhabitants.

I have now attained the age of eighty and the Almighty has bound me to witness at my old age the shaking of the foundations of what has taken scores of years to build by the hard toil and sweat of the brow of people who sacrificed themselves, with holy love and strong will, on the altar of establishing a sound and healthy settlement in the Holy Land.

I here appeal to all classes of the population in our Holy Land, particularly to our non-Jewish neighbours; and out of the depth of my broken and aching heart I beg them to have pity on the Holy Land and stay the evil and destroying hand. Remove hatred from your heart and do not allow yourselves to be misled by people who, whether intentionally or unintentionally, by mistaken apprehensions, endeavour to sow seeds of separation among the various parts of the population.

Lend no ear to reports and libels which have no foundation.

### **Jews Mean No Harm**

The Jewish inhabitants of the Holy Land mean no harm to any of the rest of the population. They, like all the inhabitants of the region, strive for the progress of the land to the benefit of all its inhabitants. There is in the Holy Land sufficient room for all to live therein peacefully without one interfering with his neighbour to the slightest degree.

The Jewish People do not, in any way, desire to lay hands on that which is not theirs and much less to touch any of the rights of the rest of the inhabitants to the places they have been holding and toward which they have been cherishing respect and holiness. There is, particularly no foundation whatsoever to the rumour that the Jews wish to acquire the *Har Habayit* (Mosque of Omar site). On the

contrary, since, by reason of our sins, we were exiled from our land, our Temple was destroyed and we are without the means of purification set out by our Torah, it is forbidden to any Jewish person to put his foot on the site of the *Har Habayit*, until the arrival of the righteous Messiah who, by the spirit of the Lord, will righteously reign for the welfare of entire humanity and who will give us back the means of purification prescribed for in our Torah.

We only plead that we should be allowed the holiest place left to us, the place of the Wailing Wall, so that we may still be able to pour forth our hearts before our Father in Heaven, in time of trouble and at any time when the Jewish soul craves for this holy place, without hindrance and tranquil mind, as heretofore.

I declare my words for all to hear and I hope that all just people of the nation will recognise the justice of what I say and will use every possible effort to re-establish peace in the Holy Land, removing suspicion and jealousy from the hearts of all the inhabitants. Then the Almighty will favour our work and direct our activities, so that we may be privileged to see the upbuilding and flourishing of the Holy Land for the happiness of the whole world, and will cause the Divine Presence to rest among us, as in ancient times.

Hoping for speedy salvation,

Y. Ch. Sonnenfeld

# Judah L. Magnes

## Toward Peace in Palestine

### (1943)

The interest of this writing lies in the renown of its author, an illustrious pacifist who became rector of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1925-1935), and in the unconventional nature of his proposal: 1. Union between Jews and Arabs within a binational Palestine. 2. Union of Palestine, Transjordan, Syria and Lebanon in an economic and political federation.

Unfortunately, the role assigned by the author to the Anglo-American rulers, namely to promote and assist in the implementation of this proposal, was completely illusory, since those leaders had other political views and economic interests that were not at all conducive to a just and lasting solution to the Palestinian question.

Source: *Foreign Affairs*, January 1943.

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Many of the basic problems of life defy complete solution. The Jewish problem is one of these. It is made up of so many complex elements — religious, moral, political, economic, social, racial, histor-

ical — that it is a difficult task to even formulate it, let alone speak of “solving” it. Most of the solutions which are put forward are oversimplifications. But Jews and non-Jews can attempt to understand the problem and labor together for a free and just society. And in the measure society is just and free, in that measure Jews and Judaism will find their appropriate places and functions.

Palestine must occupy an important place in any consideration of the Jewish problem. It is unique among the lands of the earth — the Holy Land of the three great monotheistic faiths. It is also the Land of Israel, with which the People Israel have been associated from Bible time to this day. Would that it were large and empty enough to absorb millions of persecuted, wandering Jews and to be constituted into a Jewish state! Some object to this conception on the ground that politics and religion have nothing to do with one another. But politics is one of the most profound of mankind's spiritual concerns. How men are to live together and be governed is a spiritual question with far-reaching implications.

The fact remains that Palestine is small and is not empty. Another people have been in possession for centuries, and the concept of Palestine as a Jewish state is regarded by many Arabs as equivalent to a declaration of war against them. To those who contend that Palestine is the Promised Land of the Jews, I would say that it is necessary to distinguish between Messianic expectations and hard reality. When the late Chief Rabbi of Palestine, Rabbi Kuk, was asked by the Shaw Commission in 1930 what his attitude was toward restoration to the Jews of the site of Solomon's Temple, where the Mosque of Omar now stands, he replied that he believed with a perfect faith that this would come about in God's own time, but that meanwhile violence in achieving Messianic ends could not be countenanced by Judaism.

Some important Zionist leaders (see Chaim Weizmann, *Palestine's Role in the Solution of the Jewish Problem*, Foreign Affairs, January

1942) contend now — they did not always do so — that room can be created in Palestine “for something like 400,000 families, or nearly two million souls” in addition to those already there, and that “this is likely to be approximately the number of people whom Palestine will in fact have to take care of very rapidly after the war.” The only way this can be achieved, they maintain, is “by establishing a state of their own,” that is, by constituting Palestine into a Jewish state or commonwealth.

But to make sure that there will be room in this small country for these additional two millions, some influential Zionists have adopted the idea put forward by the Palestine Royal Commission in its report of 1937 that the Arabs of Palestine, now numbering about a million, should be exchanged or transferred in the event of a partition of the country. The Royal Commission spoke (p. 392) of an arrangement “for the transfer, voluntary or otherwise, of land and population”; and in a book of essays published in Palestine last year, B. Kaznelson, one of the foremost leaders of the Labor Party in Palestine, which constitutes the dominant group in the Jewish Agency, welcomed this initiative of the Commission.

Mr. Kaznelson, addressing the Arabs, says:

“We shall be ready not to be your foes and even to support your aspirations for independence and unification, provided you cease disturbing us and provided you recognize Palestine as a Jewish state. Upon this presupposition there can be mutual understanding.”

As to the transfer of Arabs, he adds:

“The question of the exchange of populations is likely to become pressing in our days. I believe this question to be *essential* (italics by the author) for us and also for them.” (B. Katznelson, *In the Furnace*, p. 168-9).

On the other hand, the late George Antonius says:

“There seems to be no valid reason why Palestine should not be constituted into an independent Arab state . . . No other solution seems practicable, except possibly at the cost of an unpredictable holocaust of Arab, Jewish and British lives . . . No code of morals can justify the persecution of one people in an attempt to relieve the persecution of another. The cure for the eviction of Jews from Germany is not to be sought in the eviction of the Arabs from their homeland; and the relief of Jewish distress may not be accomplished at the cost of inflicting a corresponding distress upon an innocent and peaceful population.” (George Antonius, *The Arab Awakening*, Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1939, p. 410).

The antithesis is complete. These extreme aspirations are clearly incompatible.

This is not to say that there is a lack of reassurances from one side to the other. In his article in *Foreign Affairs*, Dr. Weizmann says that in the Jewish state of Palestine there will be

“complete civil and political equality of rights for all citizens without distinction of race or religion, and, in addition, the Arabs will enjoy full autonomy in their own internal affairs.”

Mr. Antonius says that in an independent Arab state Jews

“would live in peace, security and dignity, and enjoy full rights of citizenship . . . and the widest freedom in the pursuit of their spiritual and cultural ideals . . . Jewish values could flourish and the Jewish genius have the freest play to seek inspiration in the land of its ancient connection.”

These assurances of tolerance are sincerely meant. Yet the basic contrast persists, in that the one assumes the Jews are to rule and the other is predicated upon Arab hegemony.

The purpose of this article is to warn of the danger of war between Jews and Arabs, and to offer an alternative based upon a reasonable compromise. The uncompromising who believe that this collision is inevitable are supposedly making their preparations. Those who believe in the necessity and the possibility of compromise should also be preparing. Nothing is more dangerous and enervating than the advice to postpone all thinking and planning until the end of the war. The war will not end and the peace will not come unless in every field the utmost exertions are made to think things through and to work things out now.

The indispensable prerequisite for a reasonable compromise is, I am convinced, that America's moral and political authority be thrown into the balance. In view of the intransigence of many responsible leaders on both sides the adjustment may have to be imposed over their opposition. Only organized world democracy, convinced of the truth and the necessity of the Atlantic Charter, can have enough authority to do this; and it is America, I submit, which must be chiefly responsible for the practical fulfillment of the principles of this great pronouncement.

Great Britain's authority, unhappily, has been impaired for the time being in Palestine and in the Middle East. The association of the United States with Britain in the Holy Land can help reestablish the authority necessary to keep Palestine from becoming a menace to the world's peace. America is greatly trusted. She has no territorial or imperialist ambitions here. She has served the Middle East generously and unselfishly on numerous occasions, and she should continue to do so. She must not leave it to perfidious Japan sanctimoniously to hold up ideals of freedom and union before the peoples of

the East. She should join Britain in helping find out and, if necessary, impose a reasonable compromise.

But if the American people are to be drawn into this task in Palestine they must know beforehand that it is not simple or one to be undertaken lightly. They may become involved in the controversies and even in the hatreds which, unfortunately, seem to be almost inseparable from the Palestine problem.

Palestine as a Jewish state: Palestine as an Arab state. The two conceptions leave little room for compromise. But a search for one should be begun. The first step — and the sooner it is taken the better — should be an announcement that the adjustment will not include either of these alternatives. Such an announcement might help dissipate the increasingly bellicose atmosphere and might, perhaps, turn both Jewish and Arab propaganda in the direction of peace and understanding. The ordinary Jew and the ordinary Arab have no hatred for one another. They will rejoice over the prospect of a reasonable settlement which might enable them to live together and to develop their common country in peace. The search for a compromise might well be furthered, too, by the selection of a few Englishmen and Americans to cooperate with Jews and Arabs in canvassing the possibilities. There is much material that could be studied usefully.

I shall try now to give the general outlines of the kind of compromise which I think might be imposed upon the Jews and the Arabs by a sufficiently high moral and political authority without giving reasonable cause for rebellion. It is the outcome of many years of study, for the past 20 years in Palestine itself. It is not, I must admit, the official program of any political party (I may be permitted to say, however, that there are Jews and Arabs of some consequence who are in accord with its general purport). I am putting it forward now in the hope that it may serve as material for anyone who is convinced that

the search for a compromise is essential. The suggestion of other ideas would be advantageous.

The proposals which I bring forward are based on the great idea of union. Union must be the guiding political ideal of the United Nations if they are to achieve victory. The unbridled greed of those who have ruled hitherto, and the narrow chauvinism of so many nations, can be overcome only if a really free and really united world is created. The Palestine situation must be raised to the high plane where the gigantic struggle to build a mighty union of free nations is going on. Union for Palestine may be said to have three aspects:

1. Union between the Jews and the Arabs within a bi-national Palestine.
2. Union of Palestine, Transjordan, Syria and the Lebanon in an economic and political federation. These lands form a geographic unit and constituted a political and economic union at several times between ancient Semitic days and the First World War.
3. Union of this federation with an Anglo-American union which is assumed to be part of that greater union of the free nations now laboring to be born out of the ruins of the decaying world.

I should like to consider each of these aspects in some detail. Experience in the new states set up by the Treaty of Versailles has shown that a successful bi-national arrangement is hardly possible unless the majority and the minority nations or peoples constituting the state have equal political rights. The conception of minority rights has broken down in practice. It has to give way to equal rights for nations and peoples within the state as well as for individual citizens. Palestine as a Jewish state would mean Jewish rule over the Arabs; Palestine as an Arab state would mean Arab rule over the Jews.

Palestine as a bi-national state must provide constitutionally for equal political rights and duties for both the Jewish and the Arab

nations, regardless of which is the majority and which the minority. In this way neither people will dominate the other. But a constitutional provision alone is not sufficient. There must be effective guarantees that this political equality will be carried out in practice. The nature of these guarantees will be determined by the nature of the federation of which Palestine is to be a member, and also by the nature of the union of the free nations of which this federation is to be a part. I shall return to this point later.

If the political equality of the two peoples in Palestine is accepted as a part of the compromise we are seeking, there seems to be no good reason why a beginning should not be made now with a bi-national administration, so that officials may be trained as soon as possible for the great tasks which confront them. On more than one occasion Britain has held out hopes that the people of Palestine would receive an increasing share in the government of the country. These hopes have not been realized. If it be objected that the Palestinians are politically immature, the democratic way to attain maturity would be to place political responsibility upon them. The time has come to put Palestinians, both Jews and Arabs, in charge of non-controversial government departments and to make them members of the Executive Council of the Government. That would be a step forward of the highest educational and political value.

A modest way of associating the population of Palestine with the war effort has also been suggested. It has been proposed that a consultative body of representative citizens be appointed under the chairmanship of the High Commissioner. He would call the group together at intervals to make statements on the war and to consult on such matters as supplies and rationing, recruiting, the cost of living, agricultural and industrial production, profiteering and social welfare. But nothing has come of this suggestion.

It is a mistake to think that new arrangements will come into being automatically after the war. The time to begin to prepare the Jews

and the Arabs for responsible duties in the bi-national Palestinian body politic is now. Immigration is in many ways the crux of the problem and it is on this issue that agreement will be most difficult. There are 17 million Jews in the world. Understandably, the Jews want to admit hundreds of thousands of the homeless and persecuted to Palestine. But a long time would be required to settle even the two million whom some think the country could absorb.

The astounding advances which the scientific knowledge and the devotion of the Jews have brought about in the agriculture and industry of Palestine might conceivably shorten this period. But today the country does not grow enough food to support its present population; and in order to import food, particularly from neighboring countries, peace between Jews and Arabs is necessary. If the capacity to absorb immigrants is to be increased by making Palestine largely industrial rather than agricultural, this will increase its dependence upon the Middle East for markets; and in this case also there must be peace between the two peoples.

The problem is dual. Taking into account both the country's economic absorptive capacity and the political situation, how can as large a Jewish population as possible be settled in Palestine? How is this to be accomplished within the framework of the suggested compromise? We begin again with a negative aspect of the proposed adjustment in order to reach a positive conclusion. No Jew can agree to a fiat which would arbitrarily stop immigration into Palestine, the Land of Israel. This is the main reason why Jews have been unanimous in opposing the British Government's White Paper of 1939. Of the many arbitrary decrees included in that unhappy document, the one to permit no further Jewish immigration after five years from 1939 unless the Arabs are prepared to acquiesce in it was the most unfortunate. The Arabs will not agree to unrestricted Jewish immigration. It would build up a Jewish majority and might mean Jewish dominance in Palestine. We must recognize that this is a genuine impasse and that a way out must be found.

The establishment of a federation would help resolve the problem. If and when the federation came into being, the whole question of numbers in Palestine would lose its present primary significance for the Arabs. For a federation of the four states in question, whatever its form, would include an Arab population of several million. The Arabs would be relieved of their present fear of being swamped and dominated by a majority of Jews. A Jewish majority in the federation is hardly conceivable.

It should also be borne in mind that since the outbreak of war Jewish immigration into Palestine has been practically at a standstill. This means that the proportion of Jews to Arabs in Palestine is growing progressively smaller, for the annual rate of natural increase of the Arabs is much higher (2.7 percent) than that of the Jews (1.3 percent). The present Arab population is estimated at about a million; in five years' time it might number rather more than 1,200,000. The Jewish population is estimated to be about 500,000; if there is no important Jewish immigration in the next five years the rate of natural increase will bring this to only about 540,000. In other words, the Arab population in 1947 would be larger than the Jewish population by more than 600,000.

If, therefore, the political controversy between the Jews and the Arabs were composed, as it might be, through the establishment of a federation, several hundred thousand Jewish refugees could be admitted to Palestine with advantage to the country and without disturbing the political balance. The establishment of a federation might also be advantageous to the Jews, as well as to the federation itself, by making possible agreements under which the Governments of Transjordan, Syria and the Lebanon would permit a given number of refugee Jews to settle in those countries without extending the Jewish National Home beyond the borders of Palestine.

Thus it seems clear that a federation would make it possible for many thousands of Jewish refugees to find room in Palestine and other

parts of the federation, and this with Arab agreement instead of Arab animosity. As to the economic absorptive capacity of Palestine, it should be pointed out that the Jews have given definite proof that it is greater than had been supposed. The Jews have shown that there is more water in the country, more arable land, better land, the possibility of raising more diversified crops, more raw materials for industry, more chances of establishing industries both for home consumption and for export, than had been imagined. Whereas formerly the maximum population of present-day Palestine had been estimated at about three million, with agriculture as its chief economic activity, today responsible authorities admit that this maximum can be raised to four million.

The economic absorptive capacity both of Palestine and of the federation ought to be determined from time to time. This would be useful not only in selecting immigrants and determining their numbers, but also in drawing up any large-scale plan for the country's development. One of the first constructive tasks of the federation, under the aegis of the free nations and with their financial and scientific help, should be to work out such a plan of development for all the constituent parts of the federation, and to put it into execution. An Anglo-American undertaking of this sort in the name of the union of the free nations would go a long way toward bringing the compromise to fruitful success.

If for some unfortunate reason the federation should not come into being, the immigration question in Palestine alone would be made — as I think I have shown — that much more baffling. Even so, we should have to try to face that difficult eventuality as well as possible. For example, a proposal might be offered somewhat similar to that made in 1936, after the Arab rebellion had begun. At that time it was suggested that the number of Jewish immigrants be so calculated that at the end of a ten-year period the Jews would constitute no more than 40 percent of the total population. The Jewish population then

numbered 400,000. It was estimated that under the plan, which was sponsored by a number of responsible Jews and Arabs, this figure would be doubled by 1946.

A similar procedure could be used now. It would have two basic provisions. First, whatever percentages and periods might be fixed, the Jewish population would never be permitted to become more than one half of the total population; and second, instead of dividing Jewish immigration into equal yearly quotas, as large a number as economically possible should be admitted in the years immediately following the close of the war to mitigate the fate of thousands of homeless Jews. This is a method which should be adopted, however, only after all hope of finding a better way has been abandoned. It has the fault that it again raises the majority-minority complex to primary political importance, as at present; whereas federation would reduce it to a secondary place.

In the preceding paragraphs I have attempted to show that a reasonable compromise is possible on the two chief points at issue — a bi-national government and Jewish immigration. Obviously, other matters of great importance remain to be settled also, such as land, employment and agricultural settlement.

The Jews are able to help as no other people can or will to build up the proposed federation as an integral part of a union of the free peoples. Their help can be scientific, financial, social, industrial and agricultural. But even before the start of the delicate and complicated process of establishing a political federation there can be an economic union of Palestine, Transjordan, Syria and Lebanon, and these countries can join with their neighbors in economic agreements.

These developments are possible because of the war. The four small states in question will be less and less able to stand the rigors of the war unless they form themselves into an economic bloc for the

production of food and the manufacture of other goods and to arrange to receive supplies in common. One way of forming this very desirable economic union might be to develop the Middle East Supply Center to its full capacity for usefulness.

This wartime organ is based on two ideas: its make-up is Anglo-American, which means that it pools Anglo-American resources for conducting the joint war effort in the Middle East; and it is giving blood and bone to the conception that the Middle East is a unit formed of contiguous countries with economic needs so vital in time of war that differences over their political borders and other matters become of secondary importance. This conception ought to be carried over into the peace, and I believe it is possible if the basic ideas of the Middle East Supply Center are worked out with efficiency and vision.

Another factor in the suggested compromise is Jerusalem, Holy City of three religions, which might become the federal headquarters or capital. Geography and history alike fit it for this great destiny. Should it once again become a center of spiritual and intellectual exchange, it will restore contact between Judaism, Christianity and Islam. So far these three faiths have failed in their efforts to create a society based upon ideals of righteousness and mercy. Yet despite the afflictions visited upon Israel in the Christian West, we may not despair of the West. And Israel, which once achieved great things for mankind in the Middle East, can acquire renewed youth and deeper wisdom if it is re-invigorated and rooted once more in the ancestral soil.

The new Jerusalem, then, would symbolize a new relationship between Judaism, Christianity and Islam in the cradle of their origin; and in the New Jerusalem they would work out together part of their common problems with the old-new East which contains among its other elements the vast, vibrating, spiritual powers of Russia, India and China.

A compromise settlement of the Palestine problem such as I have outlined above would be doubly guaranteed: by the federation and by the union of the free nations. But will this latter union be created? And how can we be sure that it will be any more effective or that its members will do their duty toward peace through it any more truly than they did through the League of Nations? Millions of men and women are asking these questions.

When Vice-President Wallace and Mr. Sumner Welles speak eloquently and sincerely of the free world that is to be made, millions take courage. But afterwards they begin to ask themselves if, after all, it is only words. No answer can be found for this historic question except in the heart and the determination of each one of us individually. By now we should have learned that peace is indivisible and that there is no chance of political understanding in the world unless organized world democracy assumes responsibility for it by assuming responsibility for the security and the economic well-being of every nation, regardless of race, creed or color.

In making our Palestine compromise work we can learn much from the mistakes of the mandatory system. The principle of trusteeship which was implicit in that system is sound. But let the mandatories ask themselves if they have always acted like true trustees. Whatever the nature of the guarantee or trusteeship which is adopted after this war, experience has taught us that it should not assume the form of mandates granted to single countries or to groups of countries which have imperialistic, military or other selfish interests in the region involved.

Israel is an imperfect instrument through which universal religious and moral principles have been communicated to mankind. These principles call for the creation of a visible, tangible society founded upon justice and mercy. The utterances of the Prophets of Israel contain as powerful revolutionary ferment as mankind has ever known. Until Israel and the nations of mankind succeed in estab-

lishing a universal society based upon those ideals there will continue to be a Jewish problem.

That is Israel's destiny.

# Count Folke Bernadotte

## Suggestions on Palestine

### (1948)

This is the Plan of Suggestions presented in June 1948 by Count Bernadotte as mediator for the resolution of the conflict in Palestine.

He proposed the formation of a Union of the two independent entities, Jews and Palestinians, administering the land for their common well-being, remaining at the same time autonomous in the ruling of their internal affairs.

On Friday 17 September 1948, four members of a Zionist paramilitary organization, sometimes referred to in the West as the Stern Gang, attacked Count Bernadotte's UN convoy as it drove through West Jerusalem, killing him as well as the French officer riding next to him.

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**Suggestions Presented by The United Nations  
Mediator On Palestine to the Two Parties On 28  
June 1948**

I have the honour to present for the information of the Security Council the following three papers presented to the Arab and Jewish authorities on 28 June 1948, for their consideration in pursuance of my effort to find a common basis for discussion with the two parties looking towards a peaceful adjustment of the future situation of Palestine.

#### PART I. INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

1. The resolution of the General Assembly of 14 May 1948, provides *inter alia* that the United Nations Mediator is to use his good offices to “promote a peaceful adjustment of the future situation of Palestine”.
2. It follows that my prime objective as Mediator is to determine on the basis of the fullest exploration, whether there is any possibility of reconciling, by peaceful means, the divergent and conflicting views and positions of the two sides.
3. The co-operative attitude manifested thus far by both sides has made possible the truce which began on 11 June. This truce has brought a calmer atmosphere, more favourable to the task of mediation entrusted to me by the General Assembly. In this improved atmosphere I have talked with the representatives of both sides and have obtained a very clear impression of their positions on the question of the future of Palestine. I have also profited from the information afforded by the technical consultants whom each side has designated in response to my request.
4. The basic issues arising from the opposing parties relate to partition, the establishment of a Jewish State, and Jewish immigration.
5. I have thoroughly studied, weighed and appraised the positions taken by the two parties. I interpret my role as Mediator not as one involving the handing down of decisions on the future of Palestine, but as one of offering suggestions on the basis of which further

discussions might take place and possibly counter suggestions be put forth looking toward a peaceful settlement of this difficult problem. Suggestions at this stage, then, must clearly be of such nature as to provide a reasonable framework of reference within which the two parties may find it possible to continue their consultations with me towards the end of a peaceful adjustment.

6. My analysis has taken into account the equities involved, and the aspirations, fears, motivations of the parties. It has also taken account of the realities of the existing situation. It has convinced me that on grounds of equity as well as on practical grounds it is impossible for me as Mediator to call upon either party to surrender completely its position. In the light of this analysis I see a possibility of an adjustment which would give adequate reassurance to both parties as regards the vital factors in their respective positions. But the realization of this possibility depends upon the willingness of the parties to explore all avenues for a peaceful adjustment and their readiness not to resume armed conflict as a means of settling their differences.

7. Despite the present conflict, there is a common denominator in Palestine which, happily, is acceptable to and affirmed by both sides. This is the recognition of the necessity for peaceful relations between Arabs and Jews in Palestine and of the principle of economic unity.

8. It is with this common denominator especially in mind that I put forth the accompanying suggestions in outline as a basis for discussion. These suggestions, I must emphasize, are submitted with no intimation of preciseness or finality. They are designed solely to explore the possible bases for further discussions and mediation, and to elicit from the parties their reactions and further views. Moreover, any plans which might result from these suggestions could be workable only if voluntarily accepted and applied. There can be no question of their imposition.

9. I should make perfectly clear my intentions as regards future procedure. If it develops that the suggestions herewith presented, or suggestions subsequently presented, which may arise from the reactions to those now put forth, provide a basis for discussion, I will carry on with the discussions as long as may prove necessary and fruitful. If, however, these or subsequent suggestions, if any should emerge, are rejected as a basis for discussion, which I earnestly hope will not occur, I shall promptly report the circumstances fully to the Security Council and shall feel free to submit such conclusions to the Security Council as I may consider appropriate.

## PART II. SUGGESTIONS PRESENTED BY THE MEDIATOR ON PALESTINE

The Mediator advanced the following suggestions as a possible basis for discussion:

1. That, subject to the willingness of the directly interested parties to consider such an arrangement, Palestine, as defined in the original Mandate entrusted to the United Kingdom in 1922, that is including Transjordan, might form a Union comprising two members, one Arab and one Jewish.
2. That the boundaries of the two members be determined in the first instance by negotiation with the assistance of the Mediator and on the basis of suggestions to be made by him. When agreement is reached on the main outlines of the boundaries they will be definitively fixed by a Boundaries Commission.
3. That the purposes and function of the Union should be to promote common economic interests, to operate and maintain common services, including customs and excise, to undertake devel-

opment projects and to co-ordinate foreign policy and measures for common defence.

4. That the functions and authority of the Union might be exercised through a central council and such other organs as the members of the Union may determine.

5. That, subject to the provision of the Instrument of Union, each member of the Union may exercise full control over its own affairs including its foreign relations.

6. Immigration within its own borders should be within the competence of each member, provided that following a period of two years from the establishment of the Union, either member would be entitled to request the Council of the Union to review the immigration policy of the other member and to render a ruling thereon in terms of the common interests of the Union. In the event of the inability of the Council to reach a decision on the matter, the issue could be referred by either member to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations whose decision, taking into account the principle of economic absorptive capacity, would be binding on the member whose policy is at issue.

7. That religious and minority rights be fully protected by each member of the Union and guaranteed by the United Nations.

8. That Holy Places, religious buildings and sites be preserved and that existing rights in respect of the same be fully guaranteed by each member of the Union.

9. That recognition be accorded to the right of residents of Palestine who, because of conditions created by the conflict there have left their normal places of abode, to return to their homes without restriction and to regain possession of their property.

## PART III. ANNEX TO THE SUGGESTIONS: TERRITORIAL MATTERS

With regard to paragraph 2 of the suggestions it is considered that certain territorial arrangements might be worthy of consideration. These might be along the following lines:

1. Inclusion of the whole or part of the Negev in Arab territory.
2. Inclusion of the whole or part of Western Galilee in Jewish territory.
3. Inclusion of the City of Jerusalem in Arab territory, with municipal autonomy for the Jewish community and special arrangements for the protection of the Holy Places.
4. Consideration of the status of Jaffa.
5. Establishment of a free port at Haifa, the area of the free port to include the refineries and terminals.
6. Establishment of a free airport at Lydda.

(signed) Count Folke Bernadotte  
United Nations Mediator on Palestine,  
Rhodes, Greece, 27 June 1948



**Count Bernadotte street sign in Gaza City, Gaza Strip**

# Hal Draper

## To Break the Vicious Spiral in Palestine (1956)

In this is extract, Hal Draper presents a series of points that would break the vicious spiral of violence. This can be done, first and foremost, by treating the Palestinians inside Israel (the much smaller territory that formed at that time the State of Israel) with decency and respect. In other words, the Jews should play a role “not over the Arab peoples but as a partner with them, as one Middle Eastern people among others”.

Since the formulation of these proposals, the situation has deteriorated tremendously and no way out seems possible other than the disappearance of the Zionist State of Israel and the formation of voluntary self-administered federated communities.

Source: Hal Draper, *Zionism, Israel & the Arabs*, Chapter XV, 1956.

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In discussing the crisis in the Middle East, we are dealing with one of the most difficult problems in a torn world. There are no very easy or ready-made solutions. As someone has said, it is “a conflict of rights”

— it is not a simple matter of right on one side and wrong on the other. By the same token, it is a conflict of wrongs too.

[...]

The question is how to break out of a vicious circle.

One of the poles of the situation is the threat by the surrounding governments to wipe out Israel as a state. As I tried to stress at a recent symposium on the subject, on which this article is based, this discussion is within the framework of the question of how to defend Israel — against this threat.

“How to Defend Israel” in this sense is also the question we addressed ourselves to in the Palestine war of 1948. At that time we supported Israel in the war against the invasion of the Arab states; but we predicted that if the war were carried through as a war against the Arab people, rather than as a revolutionary war of defense appealing to the Arab people against their own rulers, only grief would come of it. And we were indubitably right, as events have shown.

[...]

But we have always stressed that we expect more from the Israeli working-class movement, precisely because of its relatively more advanced social and political character. This is why we have addressed ourselves in the first place to a program for Israel — how to break out of the vicious circle.

What is at stake is the survival of Israeli Jewry, and also all of its considerable accomplishments in many fields, all of the many sacrifices that were made by or exacted from so large a part of its population since the exodus from Nazism.

*We fear that what is happening may be a new act in the tragedy of the Jewish people.* Yesterday it was played out in Europe; now it has been shifted to the Palestine arena, which according to the Zionist ideology was supposed to be the scene of the final solution of the Jewish question.

[...]

In 1953 when Foreign Minister Sharett reported to his Knesset on world reaction against the Qibya massacre [1], he said:

“It is ... false to assume that Israel cannot survive without peace. We exist and can continue to exist indefinitely without it.”

Exist? Perhaps. But how?

As a state ghetto in the Middle East?

As a fear-palled fortress?

As a militarized garrison? As a satellite of Washington?

Even before this present alarm of war, two years ago, two leaders of the Ichud of Israel regretfully put a spotlight on the following fact, which speaks volumes:

“The State of Israel ... is today almost the only country in the world where the life of Jews is in danger —now, and even more so in the future.”

Think of it!

If the outcome of the “Zionist fulfillment” is not to be simply another act of Jewish tragedy, then some way of breaking out of the vicious circle must be found.

In fact, it is not a vicious circle but a vicious spiral, a spiral down. The present situation is not some entirely unforeseen result of unpredictable factors. From the beginning of Zionism, the opponents of Jewish chauvinism insistently pointed to the fatal results that would flow from trying to displace a people from their land by colonization under the aegis of an imperialist power. The Zionists always underestimated the "Arab question," though usually giving it lip service. Reactionary Arab leaders utilized the justified resentment of their people, against the interlopers who came under the protection of the imperialist's flag, and turned it into fuel for their own dynastic and feudal power-politics. So reaction on both sides has jacked up mutual antagonism first on one side and then on the other.

This jacking-up process has been especially virulent in the last few years. It has even been systematized with the adoption by the Israeli authorities, under Ben-Gurion's inspiration, of the policy of "massive retaliation" (as against Qibya, Gaza, and Syria) in response to Arab attacks; which in turn were exacerbated by Israeli injustices to its refugees; which in turn took place on the background of the Arab states' aggressive assault on the sovereignty of the new State of Israel in 1948; which in turn of Zionist transgressions in the Jewish-Arab relations in this land which they were infiltrating with the hope of taking it away from its inhabitants ...

This vicious spiral is still moving down. The program proposed below aims to break it from the Israeli side.

There are four guiding principles on which any such program has to be based, in our opinion. These are four things to realize about the position of Israel. Or four ways of looking at it.

(1) First and foremost, Israel must be looked on as a Middle East state. Not as the "fulfillment" of the Bible or Theodor Herzl. Not as a ghetto (a very large ghetto with national boundaries) in the midst of an Arab world. Not as a regional beachhead for NATO or American imperialism. Israel will either accept its being as a Middle East state,

as against any of the other concepts, or it will remain an alien splinter-state festering in the body of this region where three continents meet.

(2) Israel must be a state of two peoples, Jews and Arabs — a bi-national state in this sense, even though the Jewish majority will inevitably be the dominant element. [The author makes reference to the territories under the jurisdiction of the State of Israel in the year 1956, before the vast expansion as result of the wars of 1967 and 1973]. The policy and orientation signified by the Zionist concept of “Jewish State” is a danger to the Jews and a provocation to the Arabs at home and around it.

[...]

(3) The problem of breaking out of the vicious spiral is not how to appease the Arab rulers, not how to tickle them under the chin with concessions.

Even when and where the Israeli leaders have thought to make concessions, it has been with this false perspective.

The aim is how to appeal to the mass of Arab people against these rulers, how to mobilize them against their own government cliques.

In this sense, it is a revolutionary approach, and the very opposite of appeasement.

The question of concessions to the Arab population, or a new approach in Arab-Jewish relations, takes on an entirely different coloration from the standpoint of this objective.

In contrast, Israeli policy has lurched between appeasement on the one hand and provocation on the other, always with the eye fixed on the Arab tops. The way out of the vicious spiral is: from below.

(4) The Arab countries, it must be recognized, are not simply backward and zombie-like societies, with passive but bloodthirsty Arab hordes firmly in the grip of feudal devils. This is a chauvinist caricature. The Arab countries today are rent through and through with revolutionary ferment. They are filled with anti-government and anti-status-quo dissent — more so than Israel. Their masses are stirring.

There is no paradox in the following statement: The same hatred of the Arab regimes by its people which today even takes the form of anti-Israel extremism could, given a revolutionized Israeli policy, be channelized in a progressive direction — to blow up from within the dictators and feudal powers who are today the joint enemies of both their own people and the Israeli Jews.

There's the direction to look! Certainly not to the Big Brothers in the imperialist camps; not to cynical manipulators like Dulles [2] and his colleagues in Washington, who are ready to sell out the so-called "bastion of democracy" at the drop of an oil barrel. Not to the totalitarians in Moscow.

A "security pact" with the U.S., which the Israelis and Zionists are demanding, would afford Israel no security in making this little country the local branch office of the Atlantic Pact in a hostile environment.

An Israel which is "guaranteed" by U.S. armed "police action," as is demanded, is more likely to make Israel a Korea than to integrate it into the Middle East where it exists.

When the Israeli regime faces in this direction, it is of course in response to immediate dangers from its threatening neighbors; but to face this way is to ensure disaster. There is no safety in becoming the satellite, satrapy or stooge of the imperialists.

So Israel must about-face. It has to go in the other direction, to inte-

grate with the peoples of the Middle East as a force for political freedom in friendship and peace.

What these “four principles” add up to, we admit, is a revolutionary transformation in the Zionist policy-basis of the state — no slight change.

The question is whether the realities of life in the Middle East will batter this into the Zionist-stuffed heads of the political people of the country before the last act of tragedy is played out.

But in any case it is a change in direction that is vital, not an overnight transmutation. The direction would have to be toward winning the support and friendship of the Arab masses, away from and against the reactionary rulers of the Arab states — instead of the present policy which pushes them together. This program begins at home for Israel.

In Israel the Arab question is first of all internal, not external. Israel can show the world how to make peace with the Arab people without waiting on the power-politics or whims of neighboring kings or colonels.

Israel will never achieve real peace with the surrounding Arab world, even after a settlement with the Nassers [3], as long as it is at war with its own Arab minority. This is the first place to start, to reach the Arab people. This is precisely the opposite of the prevailing Israeli line — prevailing since 1949 at least. It early became the government practice and the Zionist norm to treat all Israeli Arabs as if they were enemies as long as the neighboring states breathed war clouds.

Spoliation of Israeli Arabs has been excused on the ground that they are fifth-columnists, potential or otherwise. Discrimination against Arabs at home has been condoned and officially fostered in vital economic fields — even Arabs who were never hostile to the state; even Arabs who fought with the Israeli Jews against the Arab armies.

For seven years, with zigs and zags, Israeli policy has pushed itself into the pattern of making bitter enemies out of even friendly Arabs, in spite of sectors (like health and education) where real benefits were bestowed.

Arabs were juridically turned into second-class citizens by a Law of Nationality which discriminated racially and put obstacles to citizenship in the path of Arab families whose ancestors had lived in the land for a thousand years.

It was this Law of Nationality which caused Norman Thomas [4] to write that "An Arab, without too much exaggeration, could complain that the Jews were practicing Hitlerism in reverse ..." If the comparison seems shockingly extreme, it is an index to Thomas's sense of shock.

The overwhelming majority of Israel's Arabs are confined to areas under military rule as if they were a conquered people under occupation by an enemy. To all intents and purposes the military commanders over them are dictators with wide powers over their lives. They cannot even travel out of their areas without military permits, whether to look for a job or to sell their produce on the market or to visit a doctor outside.

The barbarous system of collective punishments (of a village, for example, for an individual's offense) stems from the colonialist code of the British, but has become an anti-Arab weapon of the Israeli government. It has been applied even to a village that fought on the side of the Jews in 1948.

The system is justified as a security measure. Is it wise security which seeks to turn every Arab into an enemy even if he was not an enemy to begin with?

Is it a security measure that Arabs from the border zones are not allowed to move away from the border, so that presumably their ethnic sympathies will not be so dangerous?

Is it entirely for security reasons that Jewish citizens (by state definition, “racially” loyal) are not allowed into Arab zones?

Is it entirely for security reasons that an Arab cannot leave one of these military areas and come to Tel-Aviv without a military permit?

Nor is it in the interests of security that the Arab population (including some who never moved from their villages during the war) have been systematically robbed of land, by a series of laws.

The large majority of the Arabs who remained in Israel territory during the war were peasants — people who, uprooted from their land, were uprooted in life.

From 1948 to a culmination in 1953 a systematic land-grab went on — “legally.” By an Absentee Properties Law of 1950, Arabs who fled from their village to a neighboring village, to get out of the way of the bullets, or some even because they were ousted by Israeli troops, were declared technical “absentees” even though they were in the country, not to speak of those who were caught on the other side of borders as refugees. The government took away their land.

By another set of laws, the government stripped Arabs of land by declaring an area a “security zone,” then making it Araberein, ousting all Arabs, taking over the land and handling it over to Jewish settlement.

By the Land Acquisition Law of 1953, even land-grabs that had been perfectly illegal up to then were sanctioned ex-post-facto, and Israeli Arabs were despoil of land which was added to Jewish settlements.

Aside from the inadequacy and trickiness of the government’s compensation provisions, no money compensation could keep these Arabs’ lives together.

It is little justification for these gross acts when pro-Zionist apologists, in extenuation, point to the U.S. crime against Japanese-Ameri-

cans who were stripped of their property and herded behind barbed wire for the duration of the war.

These are the two main grievances which work to turn Israel's Arabs into "security risks" against their own will: military rule and the land-grab.

To this, add the problem of the Arab refugees from Palestine who were caught on the other side of the truce lines at the end of the war, after a mass flight from the war-torn land which was caused by three pressure working in close harmony: the threats of the Arab military forces; fear of the Israeli forces especially after the atrocious Deir Yassin massacre, and ejection from villages even by the regular Israeli troops; and evacuation by the British forces when they left Palestine.

The refugees too have been turned, unnecessarily, into a festering pool of hatred and hostility — incidentally, not only against the Israelis but also against the Arab leaders, and almost anyone else.

Insistently, the Israeli government and Zionist parties have taken the position that they can do nothing to change the lot of these Arab masses until the Arab war lords become willing to make a peace settlement.

They keep their eyes fixed on the tops.

They were willing to think in terms of a deal with Abdullah of Jordan, till he was assassinated. They are willing to think in terms of a peace deal with Nasser, if he will change his tune. But they have shown no capacity to think in terms of a "deal" with the discontented masses, that is, of a revolutionary approach to them — from below.

They too look on the Arab people as pawns of their leaders, doomed to be somebody's victims — victims of oppression by an Israeli overlord or an Arab overlord.

If this is true, then Israel is probably doomed as a free and independent state and a decent home for its people.

The conditions that have been sketched point to another way. This road leads from unity with the Arab population at home to the implementation of a bi-national approach to drive a class wedge inside the encircling Arab states.

It is a road that can turn the socialist and democratic currents of Arab life from enemies of Israel's existence to friends of a revolutionary Israel which fights for two peoples. It is a program which starts with proposals that are demanded by elementary feelings of justice, to remedy political sins which today lie heavy on the conscience of every decent man in Israel.

(1) An end to the land-grab from the Arabs of Israel. Repeal of the discriminatory laws. Rent from occupied land and possessions to go to the Arab owners immediately. Return of a maximum of such land and real property to Arab owners. Compensation at full current value in all other cases.

(2) Full and equal citizenship rights for Arabs.

(3) Abolition of the segregation system, restrictions, permits, etc., in Arab zones, and turning over of a maximum of functions to civilian self-government.

(4) Abolition of military rule over Arab areas.

(5) Extension of the right to all members of an Arab family to rejoin parents in Israel.

(6) Encouragement — not just toleration, but encouragement — to Arabs to enter into every field of life and work on a plane of complete equality. Extension to Arab workers of the right to vote in the Histadrut [5] elections.

The above six proposals give examples of the type of change that involve the present Arab minority in the country.

(7) The Israel government should return to the proposal it made once before, albeit grudgingly under U.S. pressure: admission of 100,000 of the refugees.

(8) Acceptance of the principle of repatriation or compensation for other legitimate refugees — not conditioned on a prior peace agreement with the kings and colonels but as part of an Israeli political offensive. Few observers expect an overwhelming number to insist on repatriation.

(9) The Jewish fund-raising network in the United States and elsewhere has raised millions of dollars a year for Israel. Let the American Jewish fund-raisers announce a campaign to raise such millions to resettle the Arab refugees, and the whole world would be electrified!

(10) The abandonment of the theory and practice of Israel as a “Jewish State,” as explained above.

(11) Border changes to straighten out the frontier so as to reunite Arab villages with their own land where the truce lines ran through them: one of the biggest single contributions possible to stopping “infiltration” and border incidents.

(12) And lastly, on the basis of such a deep revolutionary transformation of Israeli policy, which ranges the Jewish people of Israel with the Arab people: launching of a massive initiative and political offensive inside the whole Arab world to rally support for the new Israel and against any and all of the provocateurs and fanatics and dynasts who want war.

It is in such a context that an enormous initiative could be taken to do, within such a transformed framework, what Nahum Goldmann [6] of the Jewish Agency proposed the other week: a program of Israeli-Jewish economic development and investment for the whole Middle East.

This idea, with all of its huge potential, was suggested in a speech by Goldmann, who was speaking as a top leader in the World Zionist movement, but he did it in the traditional Zionist way: as a dangled piece of bait to reward some “good” Arab leader who would accede to Israel’s demands.

But the idea itself, in the framework of our own program, is dynamite. Not as a reward for capitulation, but as the spearhead of a political offensive. Propose it now. Of course, the Arab states are busy pretending that Israel does not even exist, or at least refusing to recognize its existence — except to implement their economic boycott against this non-existent state. Let them reject such an economic offensive, on the basis of a transformed Israel policy ...

Instead of hedging in Arab students at Hebrew University with restrictions and red tape and suspicion, let Israel make efforts to bring Arab students there, and press for cultural exchanges of all sorts.

Above all, and this applies to the program as a whole, it is meaningless to act along these lines in a half-hearted fashion; or (as the Israeli government has typically done) suggest that one is willing to make a couple of concessions along these lines only provided the other side (meaning the kings and colonels and feudals) reciprocate.

The whole point of such a program is its sweep. A policy of half-hearted appeasement, alternating with sporadic retaliation and provocation, is a combination of sure poisons, bringing together everything that is self-defeating.

What unites and inspire such a revolutionary program is its aim: the eventual integration of Israel into a Federation of the Middle East to unite the region for development and independence from outside pressures and imperialism. This may be a more or less distant aim: that is not the point. Every step in the direction of Arab-Jewish unity is a step in its direction.

This is not only the road of survival for Israel's Jewry; it is more. It means the end of the state's ghetto existence. It means the liberation of its none-too-plentiful resources from the crushing burden of armaments. It means the normalization of its economy, which can make sense not by indefinite dependence on international charity but by correlation with the complementary economies of its Arab neighbors. It means the end of its process of satellization by the American dollar — both the dollar of charity and the dollar of imperialism.

And still more: it means that for the first time, Israel can really play the role it deserves where the superior cultural and technical resources of much of its population can legitimately give it the position of a beneficent leader and guide in Middle Eastern development, as a part of a whole.

Today its boast of being the “bastion of democracy” and progress in its part of the world is only a boast. Tomorrow it could really play that role — not over the Arab peoples but as a partner with them, as one Middle Eastern people among others.

Labor Action, March 5, 1956

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## Notes

[1] The Qibya massacre occurred in October 1953, when, for a so-called reprisal operation, IDF's Unit 101 led by future Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon attacked the village of Qibya in the West Bank, which was then under Jordanian control, and killed more than sixty-nine Palestinian civilians, two-thirds of whom were women and children.

[2] John Foster Dulles (1888 – 1959) was an American politician, lawyer, and diplomat who served as United States secretary of state

under President Dwight D. Eisenhower from 1953 until his resignation in 1959 for health reasons.

[3] Gamal Abdel Nasser Hussein (1918 – 1970) was an Egyptian military officer and revolutionary who served as the second president of Egypt from 1954 until his death in 1970.

[4] Norman Mattoon Thomas (1884 – 1968) was an American Presbyterian minister and political activist. He achieved fame as a socialist and pacifist, and was the Socialist Party of America's candidate for president in six consecutive elections between 1928 and 1948.

[5] Histadrut is Israel's national trade union center and represents the majority of Israel's trade unionists. Established in December 1920 in Mandatory Palestine, it soon became one of the most powerful institutions in Israel.

[6] Nahum Goldmann (1895-1982) was a founder of the World Jewish Congress and its president from 1951 to 1978. He was also president of the World Zionist Organization from 1956 to 1968. During his life he was very critical of the positions taken by various Israeli governments. In 1977, Goldmann expressed his frustration with Israel's approach to the peace process: "In 30 years, Israel has never presented the Arabs with a single peace plan. She has rejected every settlement plan devised by her friends and by her enemies. She has seemingly no other object than to preserve the status quo while adding territory piece by piece."

# Nahum Goldmann

## A plan for peace in Palestine (1978)

The author of this extract, Nahum Goldmann, was the founder and long-standing President of the World Jewish Congress. He explains very clearly why the policy of imposed colonization of Palestine promoted by the Israeli rulers is totally wrong. He puts forward a plan of peaceful egalitarian coexistence that, if implemented, would have transformed the region in a highly developed one (from the spiritual, cultural, social and economic point of view) and would have avoided the violence that we have witnessed in the past and that is currently reaching genocidal levels.

Source: Nahum Goldmann, *The Jewish Paradox*, Chapter 9, 1978.

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I am absolutely against the Israeli attempt to colonize a territory stretching between the Gaza Strip and Sinai, and the plans to construct the town of Yamit. The idea will have to be discarded once peace has been made. The Arabs will not accept it, and many Israelis themselves are hostile to it. This kind of enterprise is the result of a

miscalculation on the part of the Israeli government which is under the impression that if Israel presents the world with a *fait accompli*, the world will swallow it. This may hold true for many countries which ten years after the end of the troubles in the Near East will be facing other problems – coexistence, race riots, nuclear armament, pollution, etc. The Arabs, though, have the same historical memory as the Jews. The Semitic race is a stubborn one; it forgets nothing.

At a big meeting in Sydney, Australia, I once said that Israel's bad luck was to have the Arabs for enemies instead of the British. In fact the British have a genius for forgetting; in the space a generation they have lost the world's greatest empire, and despite that they are very happy: for some time their main popular concern was over who was to marry the princess ... Can you imagine the Jews in the same situation? The Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed two thousand years ago, and we observe an annual day's fasting in remembrance. If we had lost an empire equivalent to the British we would have had to fast twice a week for those twenty centuries!

And the Arabs are like ourselves. It is utterly simple-minded to believe that in the end they will forget our presence in Palestine and come to terms with our occupation of the Golan or Sinai. They have proved that they will prolong the war until they regain their lands. So this whole policy of the *fait accompli* represents an enormous waste. How many hundred million dollars did Israel spend on the Bar Lev Line along the Suez Canal which was smashed in a matter of hours? How many villages are being built right now which some day will have to be wiped off the map?

On the other hand, if a genuine peace is concluded it is possible to look forward to some improvement in relations in a year or two, and to some sort of arrangement for free movement. Jews would move into the Gaza Strip, Arabs into Israel, there would be open frontiers and perhaps an economic confederation. On the West Bank, the Jews would be foreigners authorized by a treaty to exercise their

rights to make homes there and circulate freely, as happens inside the Common Market. There would be no question of building towns, which the Arabs would not permit, but the possibility of agricultural villages would be considered. At the same time tens of thousands of Arabs would have the opportunity to come and work in Israel, where they would earn more money than they do in their own countries. But that kind of approach would only bear fruit in a climate of peace, not in the context of a *fait accompli* policy imposed by military occupation.

As for the Gaza Strip itself, it must be given up, either to Jordan or to a Palestinian state in the West Bank, in the event of its creation, but in either case with a corridor to Gaza, which would become a free port under the terms of the peace treaty. The Gaza Arabs could work in Israel if they so wished, and their daily comings and goings would reduce the hostility between the parties.

To those who dismiss me as a daydreamer when I air this plan, I can only reply that if they do not believe that Arab hostility can some day be alleviated then we might just as well liquidate Israel at once, so as to save the millions of Jews who live there. On this point I am categorical: there is no hope for a Jewish state which has to face another fifty years of struggle against Arab enemies. How many will there be, fifty years from now?

But I feel sure that we can live as friends within the framework of a genuine alliance. Certainly it has become a lot harder after thirty years of hidebound, ingrown Israeli policy which is largely the fault of Ben Gurion. Yet there is still time to convince the Arabs that the Jews would bring them an immense contribution with their knowledge and technology, their two thousand years' experience throughout Europe. There are no great policies without great designs.

A major section of Israeli public opinion and some influential leaders adhere to a theory according to which the Arab character will never

allow them to suffer the presence of the State of Israel willingly. They back up this hypothesis by stressing the intolerance of the Arabs and their negative attitude to all minorities. I reject this theory utterly.

I do so, first, because if it were true there would be no hope of a future for the State of Israel: an Arab world of over a hundred million inhabitants would necessarily end up by annihilating the little Jewish state if the Arabs were not prepared to accept it.

Secondly, I repudiate this idea, which is based on a racist concept. The character of a race or people undoubtedly plays an important, but never a decisive role in its history. In the conflict between racism and the environment (see Taine and Gobineau), nature and nurture, I make no final judgement, but I do think that the two elements carry different weights in different eras. During the 'golden age' of their Spanish domination, for example, the Arabs were more tolerant towards the Jews than the Christian world ever was, and the same spirit characterized them too at other times – even as regards the Christians. And if proof is needed to show how absurd it is to ascribe an immutable character to any people, one has only to cite the example of Israel: in the course of two or three generations the Israelis have become the opposite of what the Jews were supposed to be during the two thousand years of Diaspora. The stereotype Jew was a brilliant businessman but a poor and rather cowardly soldier. In Israel today it is precisely the contrary: the Israelis are excellent fighters but fairly average businessmen.

It is the different living conditions in the Diaspora and in an independent state which have produced so striking a change in so short a lapse of time. The same could happen with the Arabs, once liberated from the complexes of colonial domination and restored to a sense of security and human respect.

The first condition of success is, of course, that the Jews should adapt to the Arab world. Take the oil question for example. In my opinion

the oil producers were quite right; they behaved brutally, but we must not forget that the capitalist world was exploiting them cynically. Western governments were making far more out of the re-sale of oil than the Arabs were making from the price of crude. It is thanks to the exploitation of the Third World that the Western countries went through an era of unprecedented prosperity. Well, on this point in particular Israel should have taken the side of the Arabs and not lined up with America and the exploiters. Its position on this problem has had a disastrous consequence, because the Arabs said to themselves: 'Israel is decidedly a foreign element. It is an agent of imperialism and we've got to eliminate it.'

The clinching proof for the Arabs that the State of Israel was interfering with their international policy and so was not to be tolerated was provided by the Sinai war. They could not accept either the Israeli attack which sparked off the conflict or, still less, the collusion with the French and British, who in retaliation against Nasser for nationalizing the Suez Canal used Israel as a spearhead. I consider that war as one of Ben Gurion's major mistakes.

I have often defended the notion of a confederation uniting all the states in the Near East, Israel included. Each state would be sovereign in its domestic policy, but when it comes to foreign policy the Jews would have to adapt to the main lines laid down by the Arab majority. I have had hours of discussions on this subject, and have drawn the following conclusions: what disturbs the really responsible Arab leaders is not that Israel possesses half of Palestine; actually this is of little interest to them, especially if the Palestinians are granted a state of their own. No, what troubles them is the Jews setting themselves up as an independent minority inside the Arab world.

I had a close friendship with the late Dag Hammarskjöld, the secretary general of the United Nations: I was one of ten people, I discovered, who were on first-name terms with him. 'Go and see Nasser for me,' I once suggested to him, 'and propose this solution to him:

let him recognize Israel and make peace, and Israel will become a member of a confederation of Near Eastern states including not only the Arab countries but Turkey as well. In that way the Jews will form a minority, which means that they will not be able to conduct an individual policy determined by the Americans, the British or the French, but will have to bow to the collective decision. Israel will have to adapt, just as the members of the EEC do, like it or not.'

Hammar skjöld passed on the message and Nasser replied: 'This actually may be a solution. The Arabs will steel themselves to accept the partition of Palestine, because we have vast amounts of land available which will take centuries to develop. But we will never accept Israel as a wedge inside the Arab world. Our plan is to form a bloc stretching from Morocco to Iraq. Unfortunately, at the centre of that bloc there is an Israeli state which does not care a rap for our plans. We want to create a policy of no alignment and Israel practises a pro-capitalist policy. We cannot tolerate that.'

It was a very good answer, and a year later, when I submitted my suggestion to Nehru, he was so impressed by it that he altered his schedule of visits and stopped in Cairo to talk it over with Nasser.

'I have already discussed it with Hammar skjöld, Nasser told him, 'and I instructed him to let Nahum Goldmann know that it really was a valid idea. Only, this Mr. Goldmann cannot deliver the goods. It is Ben Gurion who makes the decisions, not Goldmann, and we will never sign an accord with Ben Gurion, who is a brutal man, an aggressor and an imperialist!'

A good friend of mine is Roger Garaudy, whose courage and free-ranging opinions I very much admire. Asked to deliver a series of lectures at the university of El Azhar in Cairo on the relations between modern socialism and religion, which is his favourite subject, he was invited to dinner by Nasser and spent four hours in conversation with him. Garaudy noticed that the Egyptian head of

state was more familiar with Jewish and Zionist questions than some of Israel's own leaders.

'I desire peace,' Nasser told him, 'because I know that in my own lifetime at least we will be unable to destroy Israel. My great aim is to build a modern, socialist Egypt and to unite the Arab world. To achieve that, the Israeli problem must be resolved, not by eradicating but by accepting Israel.'

'If you do sign a peace,' asked Garaudy, 'will it be a true peace allowing for freedom of movement and communication, trade treaties and some degree of cooperation?'

And Nasser, who lacked neither charm nor humour, told him: 'Of course; only I shall have one big worry: every Sunday the Israelis will flock into Port Said in their thousands and empty our shops, and we shall have to replenish our stocks every Monday!'

But the reality of the present moment is taking us daily farther from this solution. I have often been publicly critical of the Zionist economic policy. The Jerusalem government should have brought the Israeli Arabs into the economy right from the start. Banks were created: why not grant thirty per cent of the shares to the Arabs? Big industries were created: why not get them involved? Like everybody else, Jews do not like to give something for nothing, and that is a very human reflex. The slogan 'Jewish labour to create a Jewish state' brought about a revaluation of manual and agricultural labour in Israel, and that was a fine thing, but it also excluded the Arabs from the development of Palestine.

The big mistake of the Zionists was their insistence on monopolizing all the positions of power. Yet just imagine the combination of the Jewish financial and commercial acumen with the Arab billions! The Near East could become one of the wealthiest regions in the world. We unquestionably took the wrong direction from the start, and did not pay enough attention to the warnings of a far-sighted Zionist

minority (people like Buber, Kalvariski [1], Arlosorof [2] and others) who sensed what a false step it was. I often point out that had we put twenty per cent of the energy we expended on influencing the British, American, German and French governments into influencing the Arabs instead, there would never have been a war. But we said to ourselves: 'What do these Bedouins matter? Better to convince Balfour, Wilson and Roosevelt.' An expensive mistake.

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### **Notes**

[1] Hayim Margolis-Kalvariski (1874 – 1953) was an agronomist and Zionist thinker of the wave of Jewish immigration between 1881 and 1903. He was well known for his contributions to reconciliation efforts between Jewish and Arab communities in Ottoman Palestine and then Mandatory Palestine.

[2] Haim Arlosoroff (1899 – 1933) was a Socialist Zionist leader during the British Mandate for Palestine before the establishment of the State of Israel. He was the head of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency. In 1933, Arlosoroff was assassinated while walking with his wife on the beach of Tel Aviv.

# Yossi Wolfson

## Palestine and the so-called "peace process"

(1995)

In late 1994 a young Israeli anarchist named Yossi Wolfson wrote an opinion column in a local punk fanzine, describing why he opposes the so-called peace process, the "Oslo Agreements". In that article the author stated that "The thought that we could end the bloodshed without doing justice to the (Palestinians) is not only malicious, but a dangerous illusion. The 'peace process' is trying to do precisely that... That is why I'm against it."

The ensuing reality will prove how prescient that position was.

Source: *War of Words*, issue 2, 1995.

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No justice, no peace! I'm against the peace process.

It's been more than a year since the Washington Agreement, and I think we need to reevaluate our position. And I'm against it. It's not that I don't see positive developments. Surely I don't miss Shamir as prime minister, when new settlements kept being erected and the

IDF was patrolling in Jabalia refugee camp. There's no more night curfew in Gaza, that's already a good thing, and not the only one. And still, I'm against it.

Thousands of Palestinians are still being held in Israeli prisons. The closure is preventing the people from Gaza and the West Bank from getting work and providing for their families. Anyone trying to enter for work can get arrested and fined. Recently there were a few cases where the IDF killed some of these "infiltrators". Mass arrests in the West Bank continue. The Shin Bet continues with its torture tactics, and now it is also being joined by a Palestinian Shin Bet. Home demolitions have restarted, and land expropriation never stopped – not to mention that no piece of land has been returned to its rightful owners.

And also the violence hasn't stopped, every week there are more people injured and killed. They say it's a process and that we need to give it a chance, and that things can only get better. A year ago they said: we're on our way to victory. Now I think it's time to sober up. Things are going the opposite way. Even before the elections Rabin was clear about his platform: let's build a fence around Gaza and let them rot. So he said and so he did. The Palestinian Authority has relieved Israel of its responsibilities towards the people of Gaza. Finally we don't have to worry about (or pay for) their health and education (not that we did a lot for them before).

The Palestinian Authority takes care of keeping the peace. We didn't give up a single Israeli interest – either real or imagined. We control the population registry, entry to and exit from Gaza, we keep the settlements, set building regulations and I could go on. And regarding those little concessions we committed to, we are mostly trying to deflect them: for example, the promise to remove military forces from population centers before the election. Rabin wants to maintain all military advantages but do away with the burden of keeping the peace.

And what does Peres want? Peres has a grand vision of a New Middle East. His vision gives a central role to huge multinational corporations. Let's turn the Middle East into a free market, with capital moving freely. Of course, the workers will remain caged in their places. Nobody wants Arabs in the middle of Tel Aviv, right? The big companies will get cheap labor and make their profits. And what about the Middle East?

Arafat's aspirations also don't give me great hopes. He founded a new military rule in the (1967-occupied Palestinian) territories, with him as the top ruler, surrounded by a multitude of all-powerful generals. Human rights are not being upheld. There are limits on free press. And his arm is being twisted behind his back by Israel.

A year ago, I had the illusion that political processes can undo evil. Now it seems they mostly replace one evil by another. Instead of the occupation they are now creating a banana republic that is dependent on Israel. This new state of affairs has advantages and disadvantages. In the bottom line, though, the Palestinians will continue being screwed, sometimes even more screwed than before. And the Israeli "left" and global public opinion will no longer help them. As far as they're concerned the problem's been solved.

There's a "peace process", the Nobel prizes have already been awarded, so what if children are hungry, prisoners are left to rot, and people need a double permit if they want to visit Cairo – not only from the Israeli authorities (and Shin Bet) as before, but now also from the "independent" Palestinian Authority.

The Israeli-Palestinian problem is not, in its essence, a problem of war and peace. This is not a cycle of revenge killings, started in ancient history, which perpetuates itself into the present. Not at all. The Israeli-Palestinian problem is a problem of justice, or more precisely of injustice. An injustice that is still ongoing in the prisons, the refugee camps in Palestine and beyond, and in the everyday lives of millions.

The thought that we could end the bloodshed without doing justice to the workers, to the refugees of all the wars, to the farmers who are left without land or water, to the political prisoners – this thought is not only malicious. It is a dangerous illusion. Making peace is about allowing two sides to forgive each other for past injustices and to start a new path. But as long as the injustice is not a thing of the past, there's no chance (and also no justification) for the demand that Palestinians should lay down their weapons.

The peace process is trying to do precisely that: to achieve a peace that is inseparable from continuing the injustice. That is why I'm against it.

I'm aware of the limitations of a process that is directed from the top by political leaders, which is why it's hard for me to offer alternatives in the form of a general resolution. I still dream, in moments of weakness, of a two-state solution, but after Oslo I no longer believe that there's any kind of diplomatic solution that could help the common folk. I'm not saying we should call it quits. On the contrary, we must snap out of our euphoria and go back to protest.

I don't expect Rabin, Peres, Arafat or Clinton to provide me with a solution. But I can demand the end of specific injustices: demand the release of prisoners, protest the closure, demand elections now, persuade the Israeli public that Palestinian East Jerusalem is, in fact, Palestinian.

I can, in short, continue to serve as a leftist opposition to the regime. Because the biggest disaster resulting from this fake peace process is that the leftist opposition in Israel has pretty much decided to take a break and stop fighting.

# The Haifa Declaration

## (2007)

The Haifa declaration, redacted by a group of Palestinian intellectuals and activists, puts forward three pre-conditions for the solution of the Palestinian problem, based on the reconciliation between the Jewish Israeli people and the Arab Palestinian population:

- (1) recognize the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to an independent and sovereign state;
- (2) recognize the rights of Palestinian citizens in Israel, which derive from being a homeland minority;
- (3) recognize the right of the Israeli Jewish people to self-determination and to life in peace, dignity, and security with the Palestinian and the other peoples of the region.

Unfortunately, the State ideology based on monopolistic territorial sovereignty, especially on the part of the Israeli rulers, has made all this impossible to realise.

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We, sons and daughters of the Palestinian Arab people who remained in our homeland despite the *Nakba* [\*], who were forcibly made a minority in the State of Israel after its establishment in 1948 on the greater part of the Palestinian homeland; do hereby affirm in this Declaration the foundations of our identity and belonging, and put forth a vision of our collective future, one which gives voice to our concerns and aspirations and lays the foundations for a frank dialogue among ourselves and between ourselves and other peoples. In this Declaration, we also set forth our own reading of our history, as well as our conception of our citizenship and our relationship with the other parts of the Palestinian people, with the Arab nation, and with the State of Israel. We further present our vision for achieving a dignified life in our homeland and building a democratic society founded upon justice, freedom, equality, and mutual respect between the Palestinian Arabs and Jews in Israel. We also put forward our conception of the preconditions for an historic reconciliation between the Palestinian people and the Israeli Jewish people, and of the future to which we aspire as regards the relationship between the two peoples.

Our national identity is grounded in human values and civilization, in the Arabic language and culture, and in a collective memory derived from our Palestinian and Arab history and Arab and Islamic civilization. It is an identity that grows ever more firm through active and continuous interaction with these values. It is continuously nourished by our uninterrupted relationship to our land and homeland, by the experience of our constant and mounting struggle to affirm our right to remain in our land and homeland and to safeguard them, and by our continued connection to the other sons and daughters of the Palestinian people and the Arab nation.

Despite the setback to our national project and our relative isolation from the rest of our Palestinian people and our Arab nation since the *Nakba*; despite all the attempts made to keep us in ignorance of our Palestinian and Arab history; despite attempts to splinter us into

sectarian groups and to truncate our identity into a misshapen “Israeli Arab” one, we have spared no effort to preserve our Palestinian identity and national dignity and to fortify it. In this regard, we reaffirm our attachment to our Palestinian homeland and people, to our Arab nation, with its language, history, and culture, as we reaffirm also our right to remain in our homeland and to safeguard it.

Our close affinities with the rest of the Palestinian people and with the Arab nation are in fact a form of connection to ourselves. They are our natural space, of which we were deprived following the *Nakba*, and this connection is the embodiment of the complete Self. It is a human need and a natural and universal right of individuals and groups, which cannot be circumscribed by the existence of political agreements among states. It is also enshrined in international conventions pertaining to human rights.

We strive to give substance to our Palestinian and Arab affinities at all levels, including contacts between family members, relatives, and friends, as well as free and continuous contacts with cultural and intellectual centers in the Arab world. We aspire to deepen and expand these contacts on the political, economic, and institutional levels.

We view with pride the many luminous milestones traversed in our collective journey, which served to strengthen our identity. We value the role of continual political, civic, and cultural activism, aimed at holding on to our land and homeland and protecting and consolidating all the elements of our national identity. We also look with pride on the resistance to the military regime put up by our people and its national leadership, and the creativity our people has displayed in the realms of thought and culture, which have contributed to the preservation and enrichment of our identity. We greatly admire what they have produced in terms of our illustrious national days, the most prominent of which are Land Day in March 1976 and the Jerusalem and al-Aqsa Day in October 2000, as well as

the historical landmarks along our path of self-organization, most significantly the founding of the High Follow-up Committee for the Arab Citizens of Israel, the Land Defense Committee, and the Arab Students' Union and Committees.

We bear our responsibility, as a society, as individuals, and as active organizations, for our social problems. Our society has been, and to a large extent remains, subject to social, family, sectarian, and local structures that curtail individual freedoms. We respect family ties, as well as individual rights to free worship, faith, and creed, provided no creed or loyalty is exploited to impair individual freedoms, dignity, or rights. We reject sectarian zeal and all forms of prejudice, which at times reach the extreme of physical violence and which obstruct the opportunities of wider social solidarity and the construction of a national identity.

Adherence to these social structures together with the prejudices thus engendered has made it easier for Israeli governments to exploit the divisions and tensions within our society in order to subjugate our people through numerous means. Thus these governments have attempted to strip groups away from our community through a policy of "divide and rule", which reinforced a discourse of sectarian, tribal, familial, and regional bigotry among us.

Furthermore, Israel imposed compulsory military service upon the Druze youth of our people, and sought to enlist other Arab youths by exploiting occasional tensions between sectors of our society, and pursuing enticement policies through the offer of individual benefits. Israel has also appointed and supported Arab leaders loyal to these policies and has striven to create a subordinate Arab society indifferent to its own public good and to impede its political, cultural, and economic progress.

Our society must strengthen its rejection of all these phenomena, and must develop ways to resist them. It must also put forth a political and social agenda that highlights human and national identity,

restores respect for the value of political, nationalist action, sets as its goal the building of a credible political authority, and strives to develop the institutions and economy of our society. Rallying around and supporting this political and social agenda will guarantee the rise of an alternative consciousness and a different culture, with the ability to change the prevailing social structures and to establish moral standards to guide collective action, and govern the dealings between the national parties and the civil and community institutions in our society.

Despite the progress achieved in the status of women and the rise in awareness of and popular and feminist support for women's equality, most women in our society – especially the economically disadvantaged women – are still subject to multifaceted oppression: class, national, social, and gendered. It is our duty to endeavor to bring an end to the marginalization of women and discrimination against them in the private and public spheres in various fields, the most important of which are labor and education, and to resist attempts to deny them their right to total mastery over their fate. We must also resist all forms of violence, abuse, and exploitation exercised upon many of them, occasionally reaching the point of murder, in the name of what is known as “family honor”. It is our duty to strive to put an end to all forms of discrimination against women and to protect their rights on the basis of the principles of equality, justice, and affirmative action.

Discrimination and oppression in our society are not confined, however, to women, but also affect the elderly, children, and those with special needs. These groups suffer from social marginalization and from the infringement of their status, rights, and dignity, which necessitate the defense of their rights and the rights of all social groups that suffer from discrimination. Therefore, we call for the formulation of a national, progressive, and democratic plan to build a society based on social solidarity among all its members, which respects the freedom of the individual and his or her right to dissent

and to differ, and which is based on the principles of justice, equality, and pluralism.

Our presence in our homeland is an extension of a perpetual historical renewal which has accompanied the eras and events that the Arab East has known during its rise and decline, its awakening and its liberation, and its resistance to invasion, occupation, and colonialism. Towards the end of the 19th century, the Zionist movement initiated its colonial-settler project in Palestine. Subsequently, in concert with world imperialism and with the collusion of the Arab reactionary powers, it succeeded in carrying out its project, which aimed at occupying our homeland and transforming it into a State for the Jews. In 1948, the year of the *Nakba* of the Palestinian people, the Zionist movement committed massacres against our people, turned most of us into refugees, totally erased hundreds of our villages, and drove out most inhabitants out of our cities. Later, the State of Israel prevented the return of the Palestinian refugees to their homeland in defiance of United Nations General Assembly Resolution 194, and the UN's successive resolutions in this same regard.

Although we were made citizens of the State of Israel, the State nevertheless continued to pursue its uprooting and evacuation operations after its establishment, with the result that many of us were displaced from our towns and villages, becoming refugees in our homeland. Against us, Israel has pursued policies of repression, which at times reached the level of killing, as in the case of the massacre of Kufr Qassem in October 1956. Upon us, it imposed a military regime, which remained in place until 1966. It has prevented the return of the internal refugees (internally displaced persons) to their towns and villages, and to this very day it refuses to recognize dozens of Arab villages in the Naqab, where it follows policies of land dispossession.

The State of Israel enacted racist land, immigration, and citizenship laws, and other laws that have allowed for the confiscation of our land and the property of the refugees and internally displaced persons. Israel further sought to distort the identity of our sons and daughters through educational curricula that aim at educating them in accordance with the Zionist narrative and leaving them ignorant of their own national narrative. It has spread an atmosphere of fear through the Arab educational system, which is supervised by the security services. The State has exercised against us institutional discrimination in various fields of life such as housing, employment, education, development, and allocation of resources.

In 1967, Israel occupied the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, in addition to Egyptian and Syrian territories. Throughout the occupation of the Palestinian territories, which has lasted to the present day making it one of the longest periods of occupation since World War II, Israel carried out policies of subjugation and oppression in excess of those of the apartheid regime in South Africa. In the Occupied Territories, Israel has perpetrated war crimes against Palestinians, killed and expelled thousands, assassinated leaders, jailed tens of thousands – many through military and administrative order – inflicted physical and psychological torture, and bulldozed thousands of houses.

Israel has also, in violation of International Humanitarian Law, employed a policy of collective punishment, such as military sieges and curfews imposed on cities and towns. It has splintered the Occupied Territories by constructing hundreds of barriers and imposing restrictions on freedom of movement between Palestinian towns, villages, and refugee camps. It has further confiscated land, uprooted trees, destroyed orchards, separated families, enacted racist military laws preventing family unification, and denied residents in Occupied Arab Jerusalem the right to live in their own city. Israel has also exploited private and public Palestinian resources, such as land and water, in order to construct settlements and build roads for Jewish

settlers' use. It has erected the racist Separation Wall, which has divided villages and split up families in the West Bank and Arab Jerusalem.

These Israeli policies and practices in the Occupied Territories affect the lives and dignity of every single Palestinian, and gravely violate his or her freedoms and fundamental rights.

Our citizenship and our relationship to the State of Israel are defined, to a great extent, by a formative event, the *Nakba*, which befell the Arab Palestinian people in 1948 as a result of the creation of the State of Israel. This was the event through which we – who remained from among the original inhabitants of our homeland – were made citizens without the genuine constituents of citizenship, especially equality. As we are a homeland minority whose people was driven out of their homeland, and who has suffered historical injustice, the principle of equality – the bedrock of democratic citizenship – must be based on justice and the righting of wrongs, and on the recognition of our narrative and our history in this homeland. This democratic citizenship that we seek is the only arrangement that guarantees individual and collective equality for the Palestinians in Israel.

We believe that the policies that require us to perform “civil service” and the steps that could lead to our involvement in Israeli militarism and the distribution of the spoils of wars are incompatible in our case with the principle of equality, because they disfigure our identity and disregard historical injustices.

We look towards a future in which we can reach historic reconciliation between the Jewish Israeli people and the Arab Palestinian people. This reconciliation requires the State of Israel to recognize the historical injustice that it committed against the Palestinian people through its establishment, to accept responsibility for the *Nakba*, which befell all parts of the Palestinian people, and also for the war crimes and crimes of occupation that it has committed in the

Occupied Territories. Reconciliation also requires recognizing the Right of Return and acting to implement it in accordance with United Nations Resolution 194, ending the Occupation and removing the settlements from all Arab territory occupied since 1967, recognizing the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to an independent and sovereign state, and recognizing the rights of Palestinian citizens in Israel, which derive from being a homeland minority. Furthermore, such an historical reconciliation between the two peoples must be part of a comprehensive change in Israeli policy, whereby Israel abandons its destructive role towards the peoples of the region, especially in the context of a hegemonic U.S. policy which supports certain Arab regimes in oppressing their citizens, stripping them of their resources, obstructing their development, and impeding the democratic process in the Arab world.

This historic reconciliation also requires us, Palestinians and Arabs, to recognize the right of the Israeli Jewish people to self-determination and to life in peace, dignity, and security with the Palestinian and the other peoples of the region.

We are aware of the tragic history of the Jews in Europe, which reached its peak in one of the most horrific human crimes in the Holocaust perpetrated by the Nazis against the Jews, and we are fully cognizant of the tragedies that the survivors have lived through. We sympathize with the victims of the Holocaust, those who perished and those who survived.

We believe that exploiting this tragedy and its consequences in order to legitimize the right of the Jews to establish a State at the expense of the Palestinian people serves to belittle universal, human, and moral lessons to be learned from this catastrophic event, which concerns the whole of humanity.

Our vision for the future relations between Palestinian Arabs and Israeli Jews in this country is to create a democratic state founded on equality between the two national groups. This solution would guar-

antee the rights of the two groups in a just and equitable manner. This would require a change in the constitutional structure and a change in the definition of the State of Israel from a Jewish State to a democratic state established on national and civil equality between the two national groups, and enshrining the principles of banning discrimination and of equality between all of its citizens and residents.

In practice, this means annulling all laws that discriminate directly or indirectly on the basis of nationality, ethnicity, or religion – first and foremost the laws of immigration and citizenship – and enacting laws rooted in the principles of justice and equality. It also means the application of equality between the Arabic and Hebrew languages as two official languages of equal status in the country; ensuring the principle of multiculturalism for all groups; securing the effective participation of the Palestinian minority in government and in decision making; guaranteeing the Palestinian citizens in Israel the right of veto in all matters that concern their status and rights; guaranteeing their right to cultural autonomy, which includes the rights to develop policies for and to administer their own cultural and educational affairs; and distributing resources in accordance with the principles of distributive and corrective justice. It is these principles that can guarantee our right to self-determination as a homeland minority.

We are confident that in such a democratic state, responsibilities of all citizens and residents – Jews, Arabs, and others – would grow as they strive to build a democratic and multicultural society, one which abolishes all forms of discrimination, safeguards the freedoms and rights of individuals, and guarantees social and economic rights – especially the rights to education, health care, and social welfare, and labor rights – for all.

We firmly believe that the fulfillment of all the conditions for a reconciliation between the two peoples, the Jewish Israeli and Arab

Palestinian, which requires the recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, and the realization of the rights of the Palestinians in Israel as a homeland minority, will create political circumstances that will enable the creation of confidence, cooperation, and mutual respect between two independent and democratic states: the State of Palestine and the State of Israel. We further hope that this will open up new horizons in which agreements and treaties will be concluded between them in the economic, scientific, and cultural fields that guarantee free and reciprocal movement, mobility, residence, and employment for the citizens and residents of the two states.

*May 15, 2007*

*Haifa*

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### **Note**

[\*] The Nakba, meaning "catastrophe" in Arabic, refers to the mass displacement and dispossession of Palestinians during the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, when approximately 750,000 Palestinians were expelled from their homes. This event is central to Palestinian identity and is commemorated annually on May 15 as Nakba Day.

## 9. One-State Solution

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Even before the establishment of the Zionist State of Israel, many voices emerged putting forward the proposal of creating one single State where people belonging to the various communities (religious, social, cultural) could live and prosper in peace.

This proposal was sabotaged in the past by the ultra-nationalists of both sides (Jews and Arabs), probably because the spirit of the time was not at all prepared to accept it. The monocratic State, with its territory, police, army and fixed border, was the dominant form of political and social organization, and too many Jews as well as Arabs were fully immersed in this way of thinking.

The result is a most unfortunate outcome of permanent fighting, incessant insecurity, apartheid, militarization and incarceration, leading all the way up to physical destruction and democide.

Palestine, therefore, displays very clearly to the entire world the reality of a State based on an ultra-nationalist ideology and on the monopolistic control of a territory, and why this form of organization should disappear from the face of the earth.



# Simon Dubnow

## The Doctrine of Jewish Nationalism (1897-1906)

Simon Dubnow (1860-1941) was a Jewish-Russian historian, writer and activist.

In this *First Letter on Old and New Judaism* he presents his conception of nationalism as made of spiritual and cultural features of individuals who are then pushed to associate themselves with other individuals sharing the same traits.

It follows that the most relevant trait of nationalism “is not its external power but its spiritual force, the quality of its culture and the inner cohesion of its members.”

For this reason, it is important to distinguish between *national individualism* and *national egotism*. National individualism is based on the principles of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity amongst all individuals and national groups. National egotism, on the other hand, means “the desire of the national majority of a state or region to force its culture upon the national minority. It constitutes the negation of freedom and equality in relations between nationalities.”

For this reason this text could be taken as promoting a bi-national or multi-national Palestine, contrary to what the Zionists have been advocating and implementing, especially since the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948.

Source: Simon Dubnow, *Letters on Old and New Judaism*, First Letter: The Doctrine of Jewish Nationalism, 1897-1906.

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In investigating the evolution of national types, we discover that development proceeds from the material to the spiritual and from external simplicity to inner complexity. On lower cultural levels the differences between peoples are largely natural in character; on higher levels the differences are historical-cultural in character. On the basis of the predominant characteristics of each period we can distinguish the following stages in the evolution of national types: (1) the tribal type, (2) the territorial-political or autonomous type, (3) the cultural-historical or spiritual type.

Each type is combined with the succeeding one in either mechanical or organic fashion, that is, the earlier may be preserved in the later type in its original form, or it may disappear and take on a new form. Let us examine each of these types separately.

In the earliest stage of civilization, the racial or tribal group is merely a product of nature. Common origin, territory and climate leave their stamp on the physical and mental characteristics of the members of the family group, who may be concentrated in one territory or in many (in fixed settlements or nomadic). Thus the "nation," in original and biological sense (*natio*, from *nasci*, to be born), comes into being. General tribal characteristics become crystallized, as the law of heredity operates over many generations, and in this way a fundamental pattern is established, the natural or tribal stage of nationality.

Even in this stage of development, however, the influence of material culture begins to compete with the influence of nature. Gradually the influence of nature over man decreases, as man gains mastery over it. Cultural factors weaken the more obvious effects of territory and climate and they obscure somewhat the more dominant characteristics of the tribal type (later on the same effects are produced by migrations, intermarriage, etc.). As the reciprocal influences between man and nature grow more complex, the cultural pattern creates a more complex individuality. The more the tribe adjusts itself to its natural environment and, in turn, adapts the environment to its essential needs, the more will its economic needs find expression in various forms of co-operation, thus planting the seeds of the social organization of the future. As the struggle for survival takes on definite forms, common tendencies, habits, attitudes and beliefs become fixed among the members of the whole tribal group. Common language is one of the strongest forces cementing the members of the group and setting it apart from other tribal groups. Thus, the transition from material to spiritual culture becomes marked and the second stage of nationality, the cultural, emerges from the natural or tribal foundations.

The growing social cohesion, which results from economic cooperation and other forms of human association, leads necessarily to a unified and stable organization in the form of a civic union or state.

The territory, hitherto only part of the natural environment, becomes a political factor which unites the various tribes into a nation. An organized political authority subjects the whole state to fixed laws and protects its frontiers against the attacks of foreign nations. Political life educates the nation along certain definite lines. Social discipline, well-defined duties and rights of citizens (equal at least within each class and party) and the setting off of the state from other states, all these create for the members of the political community numerous new needs, preferences and aspirations. The unifying force is the concept of native land, with the will to defend or

strengthen it. The heroic deeds of patriots and the legends of the great men who won eternal fame in the annals of the nation become a powerful factor in the development of the historical consciousness during this early period.

The territorial-political type of nationality emerges in various stages and forms which are conditioned by the level of civilization of the group and by the degree of its self-government. The annals of human history contain frequent examples of small states being swallowed up by big states. As a result, the conquered nations, whose national cultural character was not too well developed, lose all or some of their characteristics and become fused with nations of a clear-cut and distinct type. Spiritually and culturally strong nations, however, preserve their identity, even under conditions of political subordination, thanks to their social autonomy, that is, their ability to order their communal self-government in keeping with their historical traditions and inner needs. The conquering nations on their side are themselves often endangered by political hypertrophy. Through conquests and forceful annexations of territory they create polyglot empires of alien and often hostile national groups. Thus arise those inner tensions which lead to the breakup of absolutist monarchies and to the destruction of the conquering nation as well (Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, ancient Rome). The ruling nation, powerful in a political sense, disappears often precisely because the element of political power outweighs its spiritual resources. After a period of social and ethical decline it comes to be absorbed in the family of younger nations, who bear within them the seeds of sound cultural development. From this we see that **the decisive factor for the destiny of a nation is not its external power but its spiritual force, the quality of its culture and the inner cohesion of its members.**

The culture of the political or social stage is higher and more differentiated than that of the earlier tribal stage. The growth of material culture is intimately related to the advance of its spiritual creativity.

Social life gives rise to altruistic ideas and emotions. Religion is elevated to a comprehensive world view. The moral sense becomes deepened and takes on well-defined forms of ethical ideals as expressed by priests and sages. Language, up to then only a means of communication among the members of the tribal group, now becomes a tool for spiritual intercourse and for the creation of literary and scientific values. . . . History and legend no longer glorify exploits solely of conquest or defense, but also spiritual strength, dedication to lofty cultural values, to freedom of thought, religion and conviction. These historical traditions inspire succeeding generations and unite the nation in a powerful bond of common feelings of love and hatred. The earlier tribal foundation and the chain of historical traditions, when joined with the spiritual progress of the people, create a broad basis for national consciousness. From this moment the future of the nation depends mainly on the depth of this consciousness, on the strength of the national spirit, on the power of the cultural foundations created over generations and on the ability of the nation to further develop its creative powers. The natural instinct of national self-preservation creates for itself forms of autonomous development, and if they prove inadequate in the political sphere they are directed to the social or cultural spheres, to all areas of life and thought.

[...]

What force, then, was it that kept alive this dispersed nation [the Jews], without state and without territory, all these centuries? Was it the written law of the Bible, the ordinances of the Talmud and the decisions of the rabbis, the isolation of the ghetto, inner autonomy, faith in the coming of the Messiah? All of them indeed contributed, but they were only external manifestations of forms of national survival. These were not fixed forms, but forms that changed and were altered in the course of history. Quite apart from these, the source of vitality of the Jewish people consists in this: that this

people, after it had passed through the stages of tribal nationalism, ancient culture and political territory, was able to establish itself and fortify itself in the highest stage, the spiritual and historical-cultural, and succeeded in crystallizing itself as a spiritual people that draws the sap of its existence from a natural or intellectual “will to live”. **All this came only because in the play of forces that sustained Jewish nationalism those elements not dependent on territory counted more than those dependent on territory.** In the measure that the positive political factors declined, the spiritual factors increased in importance, in the same way, for example, that the sense of touch or hearing of a blind man is sharpened at the expense of his defective sense of sight. Over a period of many generations, unique characteristics, emotions, and historical tendencies, the effects of the sufferings and pains of the past, were brought out by the law of heredity. The collective personality grew deeper and the power to resist the leveling influences of an alien environment waxed stronger. The weapons used by the nation in its struggle for survival were adapted to more difficult conditions. In this struggle there were critical and dangerous moments, periods of separation of the chaff from the grain, when the weaker parts of the nation were cut off and assimilated with other peoples (assimilation in varying degrees is a constant factor throughout Jewish history). In the end, however, the healthy kernel of the nation survived and drew its strength from a determined national will.

[...]

What is the distinguishing mark of nationality? This question has up to most recent times aroused sharp controversy both in theory and in practice. I shall not dwell on the details of the controversy. I wish to underscore but one fact: the scientific definitions of the concept “nation” exhibit the same transition from the material to spiritual factors as the concrete historical development of nations. Philoso-

phers of the old school looked upon nationality as the product of biological elements, climate and territory. Contemporary legal philosophers and political scientists frequently confuse the terms "nation" and "state." For them the typical nation is the uni-national state and, where they find a multi-national state, they condemn the national minority to assimilation and fusion with the ruling majority (this opinion originated during the French Revolution and was for a long time widely accepted in jurisprudence). More liberal political theorists benevolently accord the right of cultural autonomy to national groups which do not have a state of their own but have not yet lost their territory and their language. Lately, however, the view has gained ground that a nation may be defined as a historical-cultural group which is conscious of itself as a nation even though it may have lost all or some of the external characteristics of nationality (state, territory or language), provided it possesses the determination to continue developing its own personality in the future. Objective criteria of nationality are giving way in the scientific definitions of the concept to subjective factors.

Theoretical sociologists and political scientists have arrived at the conclusion that subjective or spiritual factors are supreme in the development of the national type, while all the material factors are but stages leading to the highest point of this development, namely, the crystallization of a well-defined and conscious national individuality. In the same way in which spiritual affinity is a more important factor than blood relationship in families of higher cultural circles (there are numerous instances of families being broken up because of profound differences in ethical and spiritual aspirations among their members), so also in higher types of national families the common spiritual aspirations are the unifying and cohesive forces.

[...]

The charges usually leveled against nationalism in general are also directed against Jewish nationalism. The chief point made is that it runs counter to the fundamental principle of the progress of humanity. . . . The basic error in these arguments arises from a confusion of terms, from the failure to distinguish between the two forms of nationalism, **national individualism** and **national egotism**.

National individualism ... involves the striving by every people to retain its originality and to preserve the necessary internal or external cultural or political autonomy in order to insure its own free development. It is the fruitful and creative will of a national group to remain true to itself, to improve and to adorn its historical forms, and to defend the freedom of its collective personality. This definitely is in keeping with the principles of ethics and social progress symbolized in the slogan of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. The freedom of the national individual flows from the freedom of the individual as a human being. Just as the individual enjoys freedom in the community, the nation also needs to be free in the international community. The principle of freedom implies the principle of equality, which sets limits to liberty. All national cultural groups, irrespective of their size or political conditions, are equal with respect to the sanctity of their national rights; and **if several national groups are joined together into one state, no single dominant nationality has the right to suppress the individuality of the national minority**. Only then is national "fraternity," that is, the quiet and peaceful coexistence of various nationalities, possible, if no group tries to suppress or devour the others and if none must fear attack on its existence. **This is the meaning of national individualism.**

National egotism, on the other hand, means the complete rejection of all these progressive principles. It represents the ambition of the ruling nationality to dominate over the dependent national groups, the desire of the national majority of a state or region to force its culture upon the national minority (the majority forcing the minority

to accept its language, its educational system, its social organization and its economic institutions). It constitutes the negation of freedom and equality in relations between nationalities. National egotism is characterized by strife, hostility and aggression; national individualism fights only in self-defense. The former assumes the form of “national imperialism” and “national rivalry” and stands condemned by the moral principles of humanity. The latter was always looked upon with favor by enlightened circles and manifested itself either in the form of a political liberation movement ... or in the defense of the inner autonomy of national minorities living under strong nations. . .

On the whole, people always knew in practice how to differentiate between true and false nationalism, between nationalism as a liberating force and aggressive and oppressive nationalism. It is only in theory that confusion of terms in this area still prevails and that clarification and elucidation is needed.

[...]

There is absolutely no doubt that Jewish nationalism in essence has nothing in common with any tendency toward violence. As a spiritual or historical-cultural nation, deprived of any possibility of aspiring to political triumphs, of seizing territory by force or of subjecting other nations to cultural domination (language, religion and education), it is concerned with only one thing: protecting its national individuality and safeguarding its autonomous development in all states everywhere in the Diaspora. It has no aggressive national aspirations even of the kind found among other peoples that lack political independence but live on their own soil and show the tendency to wipe out the national minorities living in their midst (for example the behavior of the Poles toward the Jews in Russian Poland, and toward the Ruthenians and Jews in Austria). The Jewish nationality is an outstanding example of a collective individuality which protects itself against attacks from the outside but never

attacks and is not able to do so. A nationality of this kind manifests the highest sense of social justice, which demands that the equality of all nations be recognized as an equal right of all to defend themselves and their internal autonomous life.

Does this, however, imply isolation and separation from the world at large, a withdrawal into a national shell? To be a true and useful member of a community one does not have to hide his face and his personality and to lower his character and his ambitions to fit a general pattern. Mass character types of this kind are not a creative element in the community, but rather a passive and slow-moving mixed multitude. A nation whose features have become indistinct has no cultural values within the family of nations. A nation that is uprooted from its spiritual soil withers and degenerates into sterility and is unable to create new cultural values for the enrichment of mankind. . . .

. . . The national principle stands between the individual and the social principle. It is not the abstract human being, but the human being as a member of a definite nationality, that is the actual member of the social organism. The individual finds expression in the state and in society with all his individual characteristics, and to these belong also his national characteristics. Every human group appears to the rest of the world in its own national physiognomy, which is connected with the inner structure of its life, and only as an individual collectivity does it become a cultural and social force. The instinct of national self-preservation grows stronger as the dangers which threaten it increase. ... In a nation without land or state and in danger of being absorbed by other peoples, the national instinct takes on the form of eternal vigilance and impresses its stamp upon all manifestations in the life of both individual and community. As the pressure from without increases, each member of a cultural nationality, not protected by state frontiers or armed might, must reaffirm the moral imperative: "Act in such a way as to preserve the autonomy of your people and its perfection!" This imperative must become the

supreme criterion in the life of Jewry, exposed as it is to dangers from every side. This imperative must rouse and strengthen the national will. The absence of such strength in any part of the persecuted nation would indicate a diseased will in one part of the national organism. To diagnose precisely this disease and to prescribe the necessary therapy is one of the important tasks for our writers in this period of transition in which we live.

# Hashomer Hatzair Workers' Party

## The Case for a Bi-National Palestine (1946)

The *Hashomer Hatzair Workers Party of Palestine* was a Marxist-Zionist political party, founded in 1946 in Palestine, at the time of the British Mandate.

It was the only Zionist political organization fully recognizing the autonomous aspirations of the Palestinian Arabs, advocating the establishment of a bi-national State in which Jews and Palestinian Arabs had equal rights, whatever their position as majority or minority of the population.

The text here presented, drafted by the Executive Committee of the Party, illustrates the main points of their position.

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### **Summary of Principles**

We think it useful briefly to enumerate once again the premises we believe would be essential in drawing up any form of constitution for Palestine.

a. The essential national aspirations of both peoples are not irreconcilable. They include the right of the Arabs not to be dispossessed of their soil; the right of the Jews not to be artificially or arbitrarily prevented from coming to and settling in Palestine; the right of both to preserve their respective languages, cultures and customs, to enjoy freedom, equality and protection before the law, well-being and happiness; the right of each to manage the internal affairs of its community; and the right of both jointly and equally to administer the affairs of the country. All these aspirations and rights should enjoy guarantees in the constitution.

b. The relations between both peoples must be based on the principle of mutual non-domination. This principle is independent of the numerical proportion one community bears to the other. Consequently, the constitution would have to be so constructed as to render it immaterial which community are in the majority at any given time or whether or not the proportion is a shifting one. In this way, all ideas of preserving or achieving a majority would, from the point of view of the constitution, become entirely irrelevant.

c. The constitution would have to be expressive of the bi-national character of Palestine. This should be so explicitly stated as to be incompatible with any presumptions to regard Palestine as either an Arab or Jewish State. The sovereignty over the country would be held jointly and equally by two constituent units constitutionally recognised as of equal weight and status, one representing the Jewish, the other the Arab interests.

d. The legislative and administrative framework of the constitution would be based on parity. The parity clause, however, would be an instrument for safeguarding, to be used only on occasions when the interests of an entire community would be judged to be in danger; it would not be considered part of the normal machinery of government, but would operate as a conclusive veto.

e. While the constitution would furnish each community with the most effective means of self-protection against possible designs of domination by the other, it would at the same time be so constructed as to encourage the free play as well as the solidarity of economic and social forces represented in the federal legislature, with a view to eliminating communal discord. Thus the representatives of both communities would necessarily be free to vote according to their convictions except in cases affected by invocation of the parity clause.

f. The constitution and legislature would expressly prohibit racial, communal or religious discrimination as well as the use of any means of propaganda, written or oral, calculated to foment racial, communal or religious strife, prejudice, or antagonism.

g. Fair and general distribution of the members of both communities in all trades, professions, occupations and branches of business would be aimed at as a means of eliminating racial issues in social and economic controversies.

h. Gradual redressing of the inequalities in the standard of living between Jews and Arabs would be one of the important objects of constitutional development.

i. The strengthening of the interdependence between both communities with a view to making the achievement of their respective aims contingent upon the securing of mutual goodwill would be encouraged.

j. It seems needless for us to explain at length that in addition to the above premises, we take it for granted that the solution for Palestine must be based on a democratic form of government and popular suffrage.

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## COMMUNAL FEDERALISM

1. The possibility for constitutionally implementing the principle of joint sovereignty and parity seems to us to lie in a form which we choose to term "Communal Federalism". By this is meant the setting up of a system of government to be constituted as a federation not of territories but of two organised national communities. The territory would remain undivided and as such would be administered by the Central Government. But this Central Government would, again, be set up by two component units jointly administering the country's sovereignty and between them maintaining a state of parity; the demarcation between them, be it noted, would run along national and not along geographical lines.

2. A solution based on Territorial Federalism has many well-established precedents in numerous systems of government. But we realise that in dealing with a system of Communal Federalism, we are treading a good deal less thoroughly explored ground. This plan is, therefore, more apt to encounter scepticism in quarters accustomed to test new proposals in the light of precedent and tradition. Yet it would be unduly precipitate to conclude that Communal Federalism is an idea without parallel in constitutional practice. Upon closer examination one may discover that in its essentials the idea of delineating communities on the basis of race, nationality or language for purposes of participation in government or the discharging of certain communal functions, has been successfully applied, though in undeveloped forms, in various countries. Thus, in India we have "communal voting", "communal electorates", and "reserved seats" system, which all aim to secure adequate representation, though not necessarily parity, for the various communities in the legislative bodies of the provinces. On the other hand, there are the Protestant and Catholic "School Panels" in the French-Canadian Province of Quebec, Dominion of Canada, which autonomously administer the educational systems. Similarly, we had the organs of the so-called "National Minorities Autonomy" in the Baltic States;

and in Palestine itself we may point to the Religious Communities Ordinance under which “Keneset Israel”, the organised Jewish Community of the country, functions.

All of the systems enumerated entail a recognition of the rights of a national, lingual or religious section of the population to organise for the purpose of administering autonomously certain of its internal affairs.

3. These systems all have one thing in common. Without providing for either territorial demarcation or any inequality of political status between citizens affiliated with the various communities, they nevertheless extend constitutional recognition to the principle of defining national or language groups for purposes affecting the affairs of state. At the same time, however, each of these systems has presented only one limited aspect of the communities problem. The Indian system recognises delineation of communities only for purposes of conducting elections to secure adequate community representation in the Provincial Legislatures. It does not, as a rule, present any scope for the autonomous administration of internal community affairs. On the other hand, the Canadian system was set up mainly for the purpose of autonomous cultural and educational administration and takes no cognizance of separate communities in the election of parliamentary representatives. Similarly, the systems of national autonomy the Jews enjoyed in the Baltic States or enjoy now in Palestine are only instruments of internal self-government for the community; they have no bearing on the composition of the central legislative bodies of the states as a whole. So both the Indian and the Canadian systems, insofar as they recognise organised communities, do not differentiate between majorities and minorities (except to determine numerical proportions) in respect of their legal status; while the national autonomy system is based on the definite distinction between the minority group enjoying its limited autonomy and the majority group not organised as a separate community (since it is

the acknowledge ruling group) but having all its affairs settled directly by the central government.

4. The Communal Federalism scheme we propose would serve to combine and further develop elements contained in all the systems already alluded to. In the first place, it would be based on a division of the entire citizenry into two communities.

Each citizen (with the exception of small communities such as the Armenians and the Greek) would be under obligation to adhere either to the Arab or the Jewish Community. Secondly, it would secure the numerical representation of both communities on a par in at least one of the Federal Legislative Chambers. Thirdly, it would entrust to each Community, within constitutionally stipulated limits, certain functions in the administration of its internal affairs, such as education or social welfare work. In this way, we believe, a scheme of government could be developed which would conform to all our principles without involving any territorial partition of the country.

5. Although we have indicated the principles upon which, we believe, any bi-national system based on parity must rest, we do not consider the moment opportune for drawing up in detail any constitution for a future bi-national state. We do not doubt that when the time is ripe, it will be possible to erect on the foundation of these principles the complete edifice of legislation called for.

# Martin Buber

## The Bi-National Approach to Zionism

(1947)

This interesting point elaborated by the author in this writing is the fact that he sees the Palestinian problem as something that the inhabitants of the region (Arabs and Jews) must sort out by themselves to their reciprocal benefit. On the contrary, if it becomes an international question with the meddling of other States and their political interests, no acceptable solution might ever be found out. And this is what has happened so far.

The proposal put forward by Buber is the establishment of a bi-national commonwealth where everyone is treated equally and all the different styles of life are respected and preserved. Unfortunately, the original cosmopolitan Jews, by creating their own territorial State, have become the Ultranationalist Zionists and, in their turn, have perpetuated, against the Palestinians, the criminal atrocities that other Jews had suffered in the past at the hands of the Nazis and their allies.

So, it is quite appropriate to remind the George Santayana statement that “those who don’t learn from history are doomed to repeat it.”

And, in this case, with the most appalling and atrocious consequences.

Source: Martin Buber et alii, *Towards Union in Palestine: Essays on Zionism and Jewish-Arab Cooperation*, 1947.

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When some years ago, a group of Jews from Jerusalem and elsewhere in Palestine combined their efforts in founding the IHUD (Union) Association, and later created the monthly BA'AYOTH as its organ, the main problem occupying their minds was the one usually referred to as the Arab question. This problem consists in the relationship between Jewish settlement in Palestine and Arab life, or, as it may be termed, the intra-national basis of Jewish settlement.

The intra-national approach is one which starts out from the concrete relationship between neighbouring and inter-dependent nations, when considering the given economic and political facts and when considering decisions within their domain; the international view, on the other hand, gives predominance to the necessarily more abstract relations between civilised nations as entities.

It is one of the most important characteristics of our revolutionary age that intra-national considerations are gaining in significance, when compared with international ones. As long as the traditional colonial policy, the "legitimate" rule over the destinies of remote peoples, was undisputedly maintained, the intra-national point of view was denied its natural precedence. With the growth of self-confidence in the nations and with their increasing desire for self-determination, concrete geographical conditions became absolutely and relatively more important factors. Especially was this the case where historical connections existed and where new possibilities were opened up for the joint erection of a new cultural and social structure. This accounts for the fact that

international politics soon became the scene of a dispute between the colonial point of view and considerations of neighbourliness. It may be assumed that this state of affairs will only suffer a radical change in the course of a future stage of global development, when the actual and all-embracing co-operation between the nations, brought about by an enormous calamity, will give concrete substance to international activity.

Jewish settlement in Palestine, which was embarked upon in order to enable the Jewish people to survive as a national entity, and which, in its social, economic and cultural aspects, constitutes an enterprise of universal significance, suffered from one basic error, which handicapped the development of its positive features. This basic error consisted in the tribute paid by political leadership to the traditional colonial policy, which was less suitable for Palestine than for any other region of the globe and certainly less fitting the Jewish people than any other nation. Hence, political leadership was guided by international and not intra-national considerations.

Instead of relating the aims of the Jewish people to the geographical reality, wherein these aims had to be realised, the political leaders saw these aims only against the background of international events and in their relation to international problems. Thus, Palestine was embedded into international entanglements and attempts towards their solution, isolating it from the organic context of the Middle East, into the awakening of which it should have been integrated in accordance with a broader spiritual and social perspective.

Whoever pointed to this state of affairs as constituting a decisive factor in the shaping of the future, had to realise that the Zionist public and their leaders were, in this respect, blind to reality. This blindness was bound to prove fatal. To a large extent, this attitude and its practical consequences are responsible for the fact that the self-confidence and desire for self-determination prevailing among the Arab population of Palestine have found a militant form of expression.

At a time when colonial powers are forced into the defensive and have to give up position after position, even a nation with big-power backing could dare to settle in a country the population of which is maturing politically, only if it were sincerely bent on creating a real community of interest with that population; if it were prepared, at the price of inevitable sacrifices, to make the development of the country a joint concern; if it would enable the partner to co-operate actively in the enterprise and make him share the advantages gained.

This applies in a still greater measure to a nation which cannot count on big-power support and which has to be careful not to mistake what is only the ephemeral interest of this or that big power, for genuine backing. What was needed at the outset of the settlement enterprise — in any case at the initiation of the modern one, undertaken with an international perspective — was a clearly defined programme of “*do ut des*” (give and take). Such a programme should have provided for the collective integration of the backward Arab population, as a whole, into Jewish economic activities and should have secured, in exchange, the indispensable demands necessary for the survival of the Jewish people as a national entity: free immigration, free acquisition of land, and the right of self-determination.

What was actually put into practice, even when it seemed to answer real necessity, as was the case with the principle of ‘Jewish Labour’ [i.e. the principle that all hired labourers, both in industry and agriculture, should be exclusively Jews] was bound to have results almost contrary to the above programme. In these circumstances, those in the Arab camp, who wanted to shape the awakening Arab national movement in a negative, defensive manner, instead of allowing it to develop positive and social features, which would have threatened their interests, had an easy task.

In this faulty development of the Arab movement, as well as in our own, another characteristic feature of our age becomes dreadfully apparent: the hypertrophy of political factors as compared to

economic and cultural ones. This world of ours should, by dint of gigantic problems, be forced to bury phraseology and give way to matter-of-fact reality. Such a state of affairs should make politics only the facade of the economic and cultural structure. This facade has only to represent the economic and cultural structure, and not to exercise an influence impairing it. But instead of contenting itself with this role, the political principle claims to be the only decisive and active one. Hence, whenever real, that is, essentially economic clashes of interests between two nations occur, it is not the actual extent of the divergences, which determines the struggle, but the exaggerated and over-emphasised political aspect of these divergences.

Nurtured by fictitious political ideas, this surplus factor has become more powerful in the public arena than economic realities themselves, since in any emergency, these economic factors cannot act but through their political agents, and, therefore, have to put up with and pay for the latter's encroachments. Whilst the real conflicts might be easily solved, political fictions precipitate the crisis, by adding the emotional surplus; the crisis, in turn, increases the power of professional politicians. Such is the vicious circle.

It is frequently claimed that power lies with captains of industry, but this would only be true in unaffected conditions. More often than not are conditions affected by the mass intoxication with fictions, without which, it seems, most people can no longer go on in this dreadfully complicated world. In between come the catastrophes, that is, the time when the fictions become reality, because they were allowed to reign supreme. The power of professional politicians over the intoxicated masses is almost unlimited, although in the hour of catastrophe they have to share this power with military or gang leaders, unless they manage to unite both these functions — as, for instance, by holding one post officially and fulfilling the other function *de facto*, only. The “Jewish-Arab Question” has indeed become a classical example for all this.

What are we to call the Cassandra of our time? Whether we choose the proud name of “spiritual elite” or the somewhat contemptuous reference to “certain intellectuals”, it comes to the same. I am referring to those, who, equally free from the megalomania of the leaders and from the giddiness of the masses, discern the approaching catastrophe. They do not merely utter their warnings, but they try to point to the path which has to be followed if catastrophe is to be averted. This path is not unalterably defined. With history slipping further down the dangerous slope, they have to change the plan and adapt it to the remaining possibilities. They do not prattle about the goal, they want to attain it. Thus, they have to analyse reality in its changes, brought about by the suggestive interplay of political fictions, in order to arrive at a correct appreciation of facts, in order to reach their target eventually. Since they are out to realise these aims in fact and since they refuse to accept hopeless, heroic gestures as a substitute for the triumph of the national rescue work over immense obstacles, they are called defeatists. Because they remain faithful to the ideal and do not allow its replacement by the Asmodaeus [1] of a political chimera, they are looked upon as quislings. Because, day and night, they summon up all inner forces so as not to submit to despair, and because they invoke the helpful power of reason, they are described as men whose hearts are left cold by the misery of their people.

Such are the convictions and such the fate of the group of men in whose midst IHUD and BA'AYOTH came into being.

Does this Cassandra act? She, too, only speaks. She does not act because she is not authorised to do so and because at this juncture action without authorisation would be madness. But her speeches are as many deeds — because they point to the path. The history of the present and the coming generations will prove that her speech was action and the road indicated, the only one leading to Jewish revival in Palestine.

We describe our programme as that of a bi-national state — that is, we aim at a social structure based on the reality of two peoples living together. The foundations of this structure cannot be the traditional ones of majority and minority, but must be different. We do not mean just any bi-national state, but this particular one, with its particular conditions, i.e., a bi-national state which embodies in its basic principles a *Magna Charta Reservationum*, the indispensable postulate of the rescue of the Jewish people. This is what we need and not a “Jewish State”; for any national state in vast hostile surroundings would mean premeditated national suicide, and an unstable international basis can never make up for the missing intra-national one. But this programme is only a temporary adaptation of our path to the concrete, historical situation — it is not necessarily the path itself. The road to be pursued is that of an agreement between the two nations — naturally also taking into account the productive participation of smaller national groups — an agreement which, in our opinion, would lead to Jewish-Arab cooperation in the revival of the Middle East, with the Jewish partner concentrated in a strong settlement in Palestine. This co-operation though necessarily starting out from economic premises, will allow development in accordance with an all-embracing cultural perspective and on the basis of a feeling of at-oneness, tending to result in a new form of society.

Essential pre-requisites for such an agreement are the two principles, which I have described as decisive for the immediate future of mankind: the precedence of economics over politics; and that of the intra-national principle over the international one.

The cleansing of the Jewish-Arab atmosphere is much more difficult today than it was only a few years ago. Above all, this is the result of an entirely fictitious programme, which does not comprise any possibility of realisation, and which relinquishes the realistic Zionism of toil and reconstruction — the Biltmore Programme [2].

This programme, interpreted as admitting the aim of a minority to “conquer” the country by means of international manoeuvres, has not only aroused Arab anger against official Zionism, but also made all attempts at bringing about Jewish-Arab understanding suspicious in the eyes of Arabs, who imagined that these attempts were concealing the officially admitted real intentions. Yet, even today, such a cleansing of the atmosphere — an indispensable preliminary condition for the establishment of agreement — is not impossible. This can only be done, however, on the basis of the primacy of reality. It is necessary to create conditions which will prove that the common interests now overshadowed by political considerations, are more real, more vital than the differences hitherto so successfully emphasised by the professional politicians on either side.

This is what J.L. Magnes [3], when giving evidence before the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry, defined as reaching agreement “through life and not through discussion”. The realities of life should be given a chance to force the walls of political fictions. Magnes was right in going as far as to hope for an “agreement among the political leaders” themselves. Life, when given a chance, will prove strong enough to force a new line of action upon the politicians. The evil does not lie with politics as such, but with its hypertrophy.

Equally important for the intended agreement is the precedence of the intra-national principle over the international one. Prevailing Zionist policy hitherto adhered to the axiomatic view that international agreement had to precede, nay, determine the intra-national agreement with the Arabs. It is imperative to reverse this order: it is essential to arrive at an intra-national agreement, which is later to receive international sanction. This order will recommend itself also to the Arabs, even if today their political leaders refuse to admit it, because the Palestinian State they aim at will, in the present international situation, only come about if demanded jointly by Jews

and Arabs — that is, only after Jewish-Arab agreement will have been established.

In the present state of world politics, the intra-national principle tends more and more to assume a constructive role, whilst it remains for the international principle only to sanction the results of the former. In other words: as a consequence of agreements between nations, super-national structures will of necessity come into being, based, from without, upon common economic interests and joint economic action, and cemented inwardly by the singleness of purpose in the cultural and social domains. Within this common concern of two or more nations, economically unified and culturally diverse, the political activities will partly be the joint action of all and partly the result of the separate action of each group; but all this diversity of effort will be moulded into a whole, by a great vision, shared by all and creative. Finally, these new social structures will be fitted into a super-territorial pattern, corresponding with our present “international” principle, but more vital and more active.

In the Middle East, no such larger integration will come about without a genuine agreement between Jews and Arabs and its international sanctioning. In the same manner, the essential Jewish demands can only be realised by way of such an agreement. Only if the Jews are able to offer the world the peace of the Middle East — as far as this depends upon them — will the world concede those demands to Jewry. For, one thing is certain: not only this or that Great Power needs a peaceful Middle East, but the nations of the world at large.

Since we embarked upon our struggle against fictitious political thinking, the power of these fictions over the Yishuv [4] has, it seems, been increasing continuously. First, a programme was drawn up that could not be realised by political means; when this became apparent a desperate and foolhardy section of Jewish youth resorted to violence — which is more vain still. The whole history

of national movements, in which revolutionary and violent measures play no small part, was invoked to serve as a lesson that was no lesson — for it is evident that lessons drawn from history can only be applied if the particular character of the situation has been recognised: the weight of the interested powers, assessed, and the inter-play of forces between and within these states, as they affect the particular problem, analyzed. But this very investigation — an essential preliminary — was not undertaken; had it been, it would have laid bare the absurdity of a policy of violence in our situation.

It should of course, be borne in mind that genuine despair was prevailing, brought on by an action of extermination never before experienced by any other nation, as well as by the indifference of the world in the face of this action. Yet, despair does not usually render judgment more keen; rather does it lead to an intoxication by political fictions. Professional politicians here, as elsewhere, have made all the despair, all the misery of the nation, the demand for rescue, so many factors in their calculation. It is not the calculation that matters, however, it is reality; and the politicians of the world power most interested, instead of watching reality, had their eyes pinned on to these calculations. By so doing, they heightened the feeling of despair, especially since after an action of extermination of this kind, the poor human soul is inclined to see extermination lurking everywhere.

Nevertheless, the feeling continues to spread over the Yishuv that something is wrong with official Zionist policy; that irretrievable opportunities have been lost. The number of those, who re-examine their position, is growing. Our pains-taking efforts have not remained without result. It is now of the utmost importance to prevent this disillusionment from developing into destructive pessimism and to shape it into constructive resolution. More emphatically than ever has it to be shown that a solution is still possible. To bring this solution about will be more difficult and less satisfactory now, than at any

earlier stage, but its realisation is still within our reach: it will bring us back to our path of constructive work.

To point to the way and to aim at the solution in the present and more difficult conditions is a task which can only be fulfilled by dint of a supreme effort. To this end, we seek allies everywhere and appeal for their support.

## Notes

[1] Asmodaeus is a king of demons in the legends of Solomon.

[2] The Biltmore Programme, established during the Biltmore Conference (New York City) in May 1942, called for the creation of a Jewish Commonwealth (i.e. a Jewish Nation State) in Palestine and demanded unrestricted Jewish immigration to the region.

[3] J.L. Magnes (1877-1948) was a Reformed Rabbi and a leader in the pacifist movement during World War I. He served as the first Chancellor of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1925) and later as its President (1935-1948). He was a strong advocate of a binational Jewish-Arab State in Palestine.

[4] Yishuv is a Hebrew term meaning “settlement,” referring to the Jewish community living in Palestine before the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948. It is often divided into the Old Yishuv, which consisted of religious Jews, and the New Yishuv, which included those influenced by the Zionist ideology.

# Mohammad Rasheed

## Towards a Democratic State in Palestine (1969-1970)

This is the last part of a document titled *Towards a Democratic State in Palestine* drafted by Mohammad Rasheed for the Palestine Liberation Organization Research Center, Beirut.

The document clarifies once for all the difference between Zionists and Jews and completely dispels the idea that the Palestinian Liberation Organization wants the destruction of the Jewish element and not just the end of supremacism and racism practised by Zionists against all non Zionists individuals (Christian, Muslims and Jews).

The aim envisaged here is for all the Jews, Moslems and Christians living in Palestine to have the same rights and no pretence of superiority. This clearly means the end of “the political, economic and militarist foundations of the chauvinist-racist settler-State.”

Source: <https://archive.org/details/towards-a-democratic-state-in-palestine/page/n3/mode/2up>

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## PROFILE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PALESTINE

### 1. THE COUNTRY

Pre-1948 Palestine — as defined during the British mandate is the territory to be liberated and where the democratic, progressive State is to be created. The liberated Palestine will be part of the Arab Homeland and will not be another alien State within it. The eventual unity of Palestine with other Arab States will make boundary problems less relevant and will end the artificiality of the present status of Israel, and possibly that of Jordan as well. The new country will be anti-imperialist and will join the ranks of progressive revolutionary countries. Therefore, it will have to cut the present lifeline links with and total dependence on the United States. Therefore, integration within the area will be a foremost prerequisite.

It should be quite obvious at this stage that the New Palestine discussed here is not the occupied West Bank or the Gaza Strip or both. These are areas occupied by the Israelis since June 1967. The homeland of the Palestinians usurped and colonized in 1948 is no less dear or important than the part occupied in 1967. Besides, the very existence of the racist oppressor State of Israel based on the vacation and forced exile of part of its citizens is unacceptable by the revolution even on one tiny Palestinian village. Any arrangement accommodating the aggressor settler-State is unacceptable and temporary. Only the people of Palestine: its Jews, Christians and Moslems in a country that combines them all is permanent.

### 2. THE CONSTITUENTS

All the Jews, Moslems and Christians living in Palestine or forcibly exiled from it will have the right to Palestinian citizenship. This guarantees the right of all exiled Palestinians to return to their land

whether they have been born in Palestine or in exile and regardless of their present nationality.

Equally, this means that all Jewish Palestinians — at the present time Israelis — have the same right provided of course that they reject Zionist racist chauvinism and fully accept to live as Palestinians in the New Palestine. The revolution therefore rejects the supposition that only Jews who lived in Palestine prior to 1948 or prior to 1914 and their descendants are acceptable. After all Dayan and Allon were born in Palestine before 1948 and they — with many of their colleagues — are die-hard racist Zionists who obviously do not qualify for a Palestinian status. Whereas newcomers may be anti-Zionists and work ardently for the creation of the new Palestine.

In the interview referred to earlier, Abu Iyad, one of the officials of Fateh, reasserted that not only progressive anti-Zionist Jews but even present Zionists who will be willing to abandon their racist ideology will be welcome as Palestinian citizens. It is the belief of the revolution that the majority of the present Israeli Jews will change their attitudes and will subscribe to the New Palestine, especially after the oligarchic State machinery, economy and military establishment is destroyed.

### **3. THE IDEOLOGY**

The Palestinians in the process of, and at the time of liberation will decide on the system of government and on the political-economic-social organization of their liberated country

(One repeats at this juncture that the term Palestinians includes those in exile, under occupation and Jewish settlers).

A democratic and progressive Palestine, however, rejects by elimination a theocratic, a feudalistic, an aristocratic, an authoritarian or a racist-chauvinistic form of government. It will be a country that does

not allow oppression or exploitation of any group of people by any other group or individuals; a State that provides equal opportunities for its people in work, worship, education, political decision-making, cultural and artistic expression.

This is no Utopian dream. For the very process of achieving the New Palestine inherently produces the requisite climate for its future system of government, i.e. a people's war of liberation brings out new values and attitudes that serve as guarantees for democracy after liberation. Witness changing attitudes towards collective work in refugee and guerrilla camps in Jordan and Lebanon. Palestinians and other brothers joining them in volunteer work and livelihoods. They are not exploited or enslaved labor. The values of human life changes. Unlike Israeli Napalm raids and indiscriminate killing, Palestinian guerrillas kill sparingly and selectively. New forms of human relations emerge. No master-slave relation can be attained among fighters for freedom. Increasing awareness of the international dimensions of their problem and discovery of who backs the oppressor and who supports the oppressed create new responsibilities to the international community especially to the supporters of liberation and democracy.

Therefore, Palestinians after liberation will not accept subjugation from anybody and will not reintroduce oppression against any group for this will be a negation of their *raison d'être* and abdication of their revolutionary existence. This is quite obvious in Palestine refugee camps in Lebanon and Jordan. After twenty-two years of oppression, humiliation and manipulation by secret police and local exploiters, the camps have awakened to the revolution. In the process, the exiles have broken their bonds, have thrown out the secret police and its spies and allied exploiters and have instituted democratic self-management.

Medical, educational and social services are being provided locally through the revolutionary organizations in a self-help fashion that

have brought back dignity and self-respect. Crime rates in these camps have drastically gone down to ten percent of their pre-revolutionary magnitude. Self-discipline has replaced the police. The new militia is providing the link between the revolutionary *avant-garde* and the base of the masses. Democratic checks are built in. These Palestinians will not accept oppression and subjugation from anyone and will not enforce it on anyone.

Newsmen and other foreign visitors have discovered that nowhere in the Arab World can they find equally mature and tolerant people *vis à vis* the Jews, than in the camps in Jordan and Lebanon and especially among the Ashbal: the fighting lion cubs. These young Palestinians (8-16 years) are almost totally free of any anti-Jewish biases. They have a clearer vision of the New democratic Palestine than that held by bourgeois city-dwellers. These young people are the liberators of tomorrow. They will complete the destruction of Israeli oppression and the rebuilding of the new Palestine.

If the democratic and progressive new Palestine is utopia, then the Palestinian guerrillas and camp dwellers are starting to practice it.

## TWO MISCONCEPTIONS

Several interpretations of the Democratic Palestine have sprung up in different quarters that require clarification and some corrections. An attempt will be made presently to discuss two of them that seem to be quite vital:

1. The call for a non-sectarian Palestine should not be confused with a multi-religious, a poly-religious or a bi-national State. The new Palestine is not to be built around three state religions or two nationalities. Rather it will simply provide freedom from religious oppression of any group by another and freedom to practice religion without discrimination. No rigidification of religious lines is desired by the revolution. No hard and fast religious distribution of political

offices and other important jobs is envisioned. The Lebanese model (where the reactionary, quasi feudalist or commercial-capitalist hierarchy divides jobs and offices on the basis of sectarian lines to perpetuate its domination of the masses) is completely alien to the revolution.

Abu Ammar reiterated several times that the president of the liberated Palestine could be a Jew, a Moslem or a Christian not because of his religion or sect but on the basis of his merit as an outstanding Palestinian. Furthermore, religious and ethnic lines clearly cross in Palestine so as to make the term bi-national and the Arab-Jewish dichotomy meaningless, or at best quite dubious.

The majority of Jews in Palestine today are Arab Jews — euphemistically called Oriental Jews by the Zionists. Therefore, Palestine combines Jewish, Christian and Moslem Arabs as well as non-Arab Jews (Western Jews).

2. The New Democratic Palestine is NOT a substitute for liberation. Rather, it is the ultimate objective of liberation. A client state in the West Bank and Gaza, an Avneri-style de-Zionized or Pasteurised Israel or a Semitic Confederation are all categorically rejected by the revolution. They are all racist blueprints to delude the Palestinians and other Arabs and continue Israeli hegemony and Palestinian subjugation. They all assume the maintenance of the basic aggression that led to the forced exile of Palestinians and the oppression of the masses. The *sine qua non* of the New Palestine is the destruction of the political, economic and militarist foundations of the chauvinist-racist settler-State. The maintenance of a technologically-advanced military machine through a continuous Western capital flow and exchange of population have led the expansionist Zionist machinery to perpetuate one aggression after the other.

Therefore, liquidation of such a machinery is an irreplaceable condition for the creation of the New Palestine.

When the machinery of the Nazi State was liquidated, the German people were liberated together with other nations that were oppressed by Nazi-Germany such as Poland, Hungary, and France. The Germans were not liquidated.

## **THE TRANSITION, AND AFTER**

It is quite logical to expect specific transitional collective accommodations immediately after liberation, and even few remaining in the normalized permanent State i.e. some collective or group privileges besides the pure individual privileges. Jews or non-Jews for that matter would have the right to practice their religion and develop culturally and linguistically as a group, beside their individual political and cultural participation. It is quite logical, for example, to have both Arabic and Hebrew as official languages taught in governmental schools to all Palestinians, Jews or non-Jews.

The right of free movement within the country and outside it would be guaranteed. Palestinians desirous of voluntarily leaving the country would be allowed to do so. Immigration would be restricted in a transitional period to the return of all exiled Palestinians desirous of return. In a normal permanent State, however, subject to the agreed upon regulation and the absorptive capacity of the country, immigration would be open without discrimination. Freedom of access, visits and extended pilgrimage and tourism would be guaranteed — subject of course to the normal regulation — to all Jews, Moslems or Christians of the world who consider Palestine a holy place worthy of pilgrimage and meditation.

## **IS THE NEW PALESTINE VIABLE?**

Several well-intentioned critics maintain that even if the creation of the democratic Palestine is possible, it will not survive for long. Their

basic contention is that the population and cultural balance will be heavily favoring the Jews in the new Palestine. This — in their argument — will lead either to an explosive situation, or to the domination of the New Palestine by the Jews and a possible reversion to a neo-Zionist State in disguise.

The argument is serious and looks quite plausible given the present set up, and the European Dichotomy of the “Arabs” as a backward group and the “Jews” as a modern one. As for population, the Jews in Palestine today number 2.5 million which is compared to 2.6 million Palestinian Arabs (Christians and Moslems) in the occupied territories before 1967 and after it, and in exile.

Birth rates and net natural growth rates are higher among Arab Palestinians compared to those for the Jews in Palestine. Immigration, however, has been the major cause of growth in the Jewish ranks. Nevertheless, one must consider the fact that 250,000 Jews have permanently left Palestine (emigrated) since 1949 in a period where relative security prevailed. Most of the emigrants were European Jews. Whereas most of the new immigrants were Arab Jews who found it very difficult to stay in their countries after the creation and survival of the aggressor settler-State of Israel.

The process of the revolution will inevitably increase the tempo of emigration especially of those beneficiaries of a racist State who will find it very difficult to adapt to an open plural society. Parallel to that development will be the increasing modernization of the Arab countries and toleration of all minorities including the Jewish citizens. Fateh is already engaged in serious negotiations with several Arab countries to allow Jewish emigrants back, to return their property, and to guarantee them full and equal rights.

These factors are expected on the whole to maintain relative population balance in Palestine.

The pace of social and educational development is rising rapidly among the Arab Palestinians as well. It is estimated that the number of University Graduates among the Palestinians in exile exceed 50,000.

Palestinians have successfully played the role of educators, professionals and technicians in several Arab countries especially those in the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa. Arab Palestinians faced this cultural challenge in pre-1948 Palestine and managed in the relatively short period of thirty years to compete effectively with the Jews in agriculture, industry, education and even in the field of finance and banking.

Armed with the spirit of a victorious revolution, hopefully in comradeship of a significant number of Jews, the Arabs of Palestine will become effective and equal partners, in the building of the New Country.

Integration of Palestine within the Arab region will add to its economic and political viability. Present Arab-boycott will obviously be replaced by economic aid and trade, a goal which the settler-State of Israel completely failed to achieve, remaining thus an American Ward and *protégé* during its entire existence.

## CONCLUSION

The Democratic, non-sectarian Palestine still lacks full clarity and elaboration, but this is the best that can be done at this stage of the arduous liberation struggle. The Palestinians have outgrown their bitterness and prejudice in a relatively short-time through armed struggle. A few years ago, discussing this proposal would have been considered as a complete sell-out or high treason. Even today, some Arabs still find it very difficult to accept the proposed goal and secretly — or publicly — hope that it is nothing more than a tactical propaganda move. *Well, it is definitely not so.* The Palestinian revolu-

tion is determined to fight for the creation of the New democratic and Non-sectarian Palestine as the long-term ultimate goal of liberation. Annihilation of the Jews or of the Palestinian exiles and the creation of an exclusive racist or theocratic state in Palestine, be it Jewish, Christian or Moslem, is totally unacceptable, unworkable and cannot last. The oppressed Palestinian masses will fight and make all needed sacrifices to demolish the oppressor exclusive State.

The Israeli racists are greatly irritated by the idea of a democratic Palestine. It reveals the contradictions of Zionism and bares the Moral Schizophrenia that besets world Jewry since the creation of Israel. The adoption of several significant progressive Jews of the new goal scares world Zionism. Israeli Jewish Professor Loebel and French Jewish writer Ania Francos were threatened and molested by Zionists for their sponsorship of the Democratic Palestine as the ultimate goal of liberation. The Zionists are stepping up their campaign to discredit the idea especially among the Jews. Their effort has been in vain. The force of logic and the effect of years of persecution in exclusive societies on the hands of racists are opening the eyes of Jews and others in the world to the only permanent solution that will bring lasting peace and justice to our Palestine: building a progressive, open, tolerant country for all of us.

# Saif al-Islam Gaddafi

## Isratine (The Israelis- Palestinians Federation)

(2000)

The *Isratine* proposal, that intended to permanently resolve the conflict in Palestine with the formation of a Federalist State, was first presented by Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, the son of Muammar Gaddafi of Libya at the Chatham House in London.

Saif al-Islam Gaddafi's proposal was eventually incorporated in the Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi's book *Isratine — The White Book* released in the year 2000, that served as an official guide to address the conflict in Palestine.

Some facts and analyses exposed in this proposal might be highly controversial to both Jews and Palestinians, but we think necessary to present the text in its entirety. This in order to show that, a quarter of a century ago, some highly placed personalities in the Arab world were not at all for the destruction of the State of Israel (as reiterated by incessant Zionist propaganda) but, on the contrary, quite in favour of its existence and concerned for its security.

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This *White Book* aims at the achievement of a just and equitable solution to the chronic so-called Middle East Question, and to rid the region of the disastrous effects of violence, war and destruction. In doing so, it presents the problem in a serious, objective and neutral manner. The Book compiles views and concepts previously put forward by Arabs and Jews alike, in addition to international plans and projects for its solution. They all support and vindicate the solution propounded in this work. No other concept will be able to resolve the problem.

## **Palestine**

This is the name recorded in the history and scriptures of the country. It derives from the name of its original inhabitants, the Philistines. The Old Testament books of Genesis, Deuteronomy and Joshua acknowledge that name for the land. The Old Testament, *inter alia*, records the names, of the Anaqites, the Rephaites, the Canaanites, the Jebusites, the Hittites and the Phoenicians. The Book of Exodus (13:17-22) explicitly states, "When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines".

The name "Palestine" persisted throughout the British Mandate. It is mentioned in the various projects and settlement plans proposed during that period. This fact is acknowledged even by the zealots of the Zionist Movement; for example, Samuel Katz, founder of the Herut Zionist movement and one of the leaders of the Etzel National Military Organization, who wrote, "All Zionist institutions in the world bore the name of Palestine". His examples include: the Zionist 'Anglo-Palestine' Bank, the Jewish Foundation Fund, which was known as the Palestine Foundation Fund, and the Palestine Workers Fund, which was Jewish. He noted that, in the Diaspora, the songs about Palestine were Zionist anthems. He also noted that, as emigrants in foreign lands, they would celebrate the Feast of Taber-

nacles as the Feast of the Palestinian Tabernacles. He states that the *Palestine Post*, which went under the name *al-Barid al-Filistini*, was a Zionist newspaper, the mouthpiece of the Zionist Federation. "The name of Palestine," he wrote, "was only replaced after the establishment of what was called the State of Israel."

He admits that the Hebrew language only came into use in Tiberius in the tenth century. Even President Roosevelt of the US, in a reply to Prince Abdallah of Jordan in March 1944, wrote "With regard to Palestine, I am pleased to communicate to you the assurances that the United States of America has no plan to take any decision to change the situation in Palestine without full consultation of Arabs and Jews."

Irrespective of the name, the history of Palestine fits the general pattern of other countries in the region. Like those countries, it is a country that was inhabited by different peoples. Dominance and political power changed hands repeatedly between many tribes, nations and ethnic groups, some of whom were immigrants and some of whom were invaders. Like other countries in the region, it has seen many wars and stood witness to waves of human immigration from all directions.

Therefore, from an historical perspective, no one has the right to claim ownership of it as their land. That would amount to no more than an unsubstantiated claim. If no one party can claim the right to one part of Palestine, neither can they lay just claim to any other part.

### **A State for the Jews**

The original idea of Theodor Hertzl was to establish Jewish state as a safe haven for the Jews. The immediate motive behind that idea lay in the persecution to which the Jews were subject, specifically in Europe, before Hitler's time. Cyprus, Argentina, Uganda, Al Jabal

Al Akhdar, Palestine and Sinai were suggested as locations for the establishment of the Jewish state proposed as a way to rid Europe of its Jews. Therefore, as this narrative confirms, Palestine was not necessarily or inevitably the national homeland of the Jews.

#### *Balfour Declaration*

The real intent behind the Declaration was to rid Europe of Jews, rather than express sympathy for them.

#### *The Persecution of the Jews*

The Jews are an unfortunate people. They have suffered greatly at the hands of governments, leaders and other peoples since ancient times. Why? Because this is the will of God, just as the Koran makes clear in the accounts of Egypt's Pharaoh, and as the treatment meted out to them at the hands of the rulers of Babylon, the Roman emperors, from Titus to Hadrian, and the kings of England, such as Edward I, illustrates. The Jews have been banished, held captive, massacred, disadvantaged and persecuted in every possible fashion at the hands of the Egyptians, the Romans, the English, the Russians, the Babylonians, the Canaanites, and, more recently, at the hands of Hitler.

#### *The Arabs and the Jews*

There is no enmity between Arabs and Jews. In fact, the Jews are Adnanite cousins to the Arabs on the father's side, who was a descendant of Abraham, peace be upon him. When the Jews were persecuted, their Arab brothers invited them to live alongside them in the town of al-Medina. They even gave them the land of Wadi al-Qura, thus named in reference to the Jewish villages [Al-Qura]. Following the emergence of Islam under the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings upon him, the Jews found the notion of a prophet from outside their number unpalatable, so they showed hostility towards him. Some attacks against them took place, just as there were attacks against those from the Quraish, who refused to accept Islam and

against Arabs who initially accepted Islam but subsequently rejected it. The Jews, along with the Arabs, were expelled from Andalusia at the end of the 15th century. They all found refuge in the Arab countries. That is why there is a Jewish quarter in every Arab country. There, they lived in peace and friendship with their Arab brothers.

## **Proposed Solutions Based on the establishment of a Single State**

### **British Proposals**

#### **A. Walkhope Plan**

It was proposed by the British High Commissioner in Palestine at the beginning of the 1930s. It provided for the establishment of a Palestinian Legislative Council comprising 11 Muslim, 4 Christian and 7 Jewish members, in proportion to the demographic composition of Palestine at that time.

#### **B. The Newcomb Plan**

- i) Establishment of an independent sovereign Palestinian state.
- ii) Broad sectarian freedom.
- iii) Broad municipal freedom.
- iv) Decentralization.

#### **C. The British White Paper of 1939**

- i) Independent federal Palestinian state.
- ii) Consultative Council comprising Arabs and Jews.
- iii) Executive Council comprising Arabs and Jews.

#### **D. Lord Morrison's Plan**

- i) Central government.
- ii) Four administrative areas: Arab area, Jewish area, Jerusalem and the Negev.
- iii) Local government and Legislative Council for each area.

All these proposals were rejected for non-substantive reasons; for example, dissatisfaction with the size of the areas or towns awarded to one side, differences over the duration of the British mandate, or matters relating to the number of immigrants.

### **Zionist Proposals**

- 1) The first proposal was made by the so-called 'Peace Federation', led by Rabbi Benjamin, who called for a bi-national state. The Jews were warned that the failure to accept a single bi-national state would not bring about peace for them. As they predicted, this is exactly what has happened.
- 2) The confederate or federal solution proposed by Meir Amit (1921-2009), a prominent leader in the Zionist movement and the Haganah organization, who held a number of important and prominent military positions. He was also, among other things, a Knesset member and a cabinet minister.

He believes that a strategic concession on the occupied land, by which he naturally meant territory such as Sinai, the Golan, the West Bank and Gaza, would be tantamount to relinquishing tangible gains for which, according to him, there could be no compensation. Although Egypt had offered something in return, they were subject to sudden change. He discussed the feasibility of establishing a federal state giving the examples of the European Union; the United States of America, which, according to him, experienced 13 years of turmoil up to 1789; and Nigeria, a multi-denominational and multi-national state according to him. He wrote that the economic, mili-

tary, geographical and historical considerations that underpin such a solution exist in Palestine.

He further noted that the establishment of an independent Palestinian state constituted a grave danger. In order to avert those dangers, a single federal state must be established. "The problem of Jerusalem," he wrote, "can be simply resolved by making it the federal capital".

3) Proposal of the German Zionists: The 12th Conference of the German Zionists (the Structuralist School), convened on 11 September 1921, adopted the concept of establishing a single state for both parties, and thereby "establishing a place in alliance with the Palestinian Arab people for our joint security in a developing state. The structure of the state shall guarantee the national development of each individual of our two peoples without interference or prejudice".

### **Arab Proposals**

#### **1. The First Proposal of King Abdallah**

- i) One Kingdom.
- ii) Administration selected by the Jews in areas inhabited by them.
- iii) One Parliament, in which Jews were to be represented in proportion to their demographic share.
- iv) Mixed Cabinet.

#### **2. The Second Proposal of King Abdallah**

Partition of Palestine between Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt, with the remainder left to the Jews.

#### **3. The Proposal of Nuri Al-Said, 1942**

- i) One state.

ii) Jewish autonomy within this state.

All pre-1948 proposals called for a single state and some approached the Jews as the Palestinians are now treated, namely in terms of offering them autonomy and partition of land.

The failure to accept the notion of a single state is thus the historical mistake which lies behind today's tragedy. A declaration establishing one state by one party for its own benefit is also a mistake. The concept of partition has proven its failure and will continue to do so.

Before 1948 the Jews were regarded in just the same manner as the Palestinians are regarded today. They were a minority in Palestine, fed illusions of self-rule at one moment, and autonomous Jewish areas at another. Palestinians were in the majority. That is why they rejected the well-known partition resolution of 1947. Following 1948 this situation was reversed. The Palestinians became the minority as a result of the 1948 and 1967 wars. The Jews became the majority within the area called Israel. Promises of self-rule, Arab areas and partition were made to the Arabs, just as they had previously been made to the Jews.

The definitive, historic solution is the one proposed in this, *The White Book*.

The purpose of this overview of the various proposals was to recall that the notion of a single state in Palestine has always been on the negotiating table. The rejection of that solution is the cause of the tragedy experienced by the region today. The alternative to the one state solution is what we see before us today.

### **The Two-State Solution, Risks and Misconceptions**

An Israeli scholar, a Brigadier who served as a military commander in the West Bank from 1974 to 1976, once said that it was not possible to accept the partition of Palestine or agree to foreign rule over Israel's territory. He justified his refusal with the following facts, which, because of their critical nature, cannot be ignored:

The West Bank is 50 km wide. It is a mountainous area, up to 1000 meters high. It overlooks Israel's vital heartland — a coastal plain that is no more than 14-20 km in width. 67% of Israel's population lives in this area. It is also home to 80% of Israel's industries. The presence of another party in the West Bank poses a direct threat to the Israeli heartland. It cannot therefore be accepted.

Brigadier Mier Bael is a dove, a member of the Zionist left and of the Peace Council. However, he states categorically:

“We have a historical right to the West Bank. Many believe it to be ‘the heart of the Jewish nation’. Our right to retain it is sacredly ordained in the religious and historical duties and traditions, in which the people of Israel believe”.

The same argument for not conceding the West Bank on grounds of vital reasons of security is put forward by Arie Shalev, a scholar and Brigadier,

“Were we to lose the West Bank,” he wrote, “Israel's depth between Tulkarem and Netanya would be just 15 km and between Qalqilyah and the Hertzelia coast just 14 km. Israel would thus be exposed due to a lack of strategic depth in the face of any threat. In the event of war breaking out in the West Bank, Israel would be divided into two or three parts if an Arab army manages to reach the coast”. He goes on to say: “Even without a war, Israel would

remain under constant threat from the West Bank. The Israeli airspace would also be at the mercy of the West Bank”.

He said further:

“To ensure Israel’s security, the West Bank must be divided into three defensive positions, namely the Jordan Valley, the foothills of the mountains of Samaria and the Judean desert, and the high peaks that link Jenin, Tobas, Nablus, the Lafuna heights, Ramallah, Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Tikwa. This is in addition to fixed lines of defense in the south of the Gaza Strip. Any area dividing the Palestinians and the Israelis would not be source of security for Israeli. In fact, it would constitute a constant security irritant”. However, he noted, “Israel’s policies have poisoned the Zionist idea of transforming the country into a bi-national state”.

Professor Shlomo Avineri said,

“The Israeli-Palestinian dispute differs from all the other disputes of the 19th and 20th centuries. Those disputes have been essentially border disputes, despite the fact that some of them lasted for over 100 years. The essence of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute differs from these, however. It is a struggle between two movements, each of which believes that the same territory belongs to it or constitutes part of its national homeland. Thus, the Palestinians believe that what is now called Israel forms part of their nation, even if they got the West Bank and Gaza. In the same way, the Jews believe that the West Bank is Judea and Samaria. They see it as a part of their homeland, even if a Palestinian state were established there.”

He wrote of the West Bank, “For the Jews, it is their historical homeland, home of a glorious heritage and the land of salvation.” For the Arabs, Professor Avineri continues, it is their land. They have ruled it as Arabs and Muslims since the 7th century. The majority of its

inhabitants are Arab Muslims. It forms part of the greater Arab homeland, stretching from the Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean. Thus, it is no different from Yemen or Iraq. He also notes that the Arabs call it Palestine or southern Syria. The Zionist Movement, by contrast, calls it the land of Israel. In such a situation, he writes,

“One of the two movements must destroy the other, or a compromise must be reached. The compromise is the establishment of one state for all allowing each party to feel that they live in all the disputed land and that they are not deprived of any one part of it.”

Recognition of Palestinian self-determination means nothing more than the definition of the area of activity permitted them by Israel. He opposes this solution because, in his opinion, it is not a solution at all.

Professor Avineri also writes,

“I do not support the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, because it is not possible to separate one million Palestinians living east of the Jordan from their Palestinian identity. A Palestinian state in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip cannot resolve the problem of refugees, even those in Lebanon and Syria. Any situation which keeps the majority of Palestinians in refugee camps and does not offer an honorable solution within the historical borders of Israel/Palestine is no solution at all. Even if a Palestinian state was established in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and was prepared to live in peace with Israel, even under a moderate leadership other than that of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), it would not be a real solution. Such solution would not address the problem of refugees and repatriation, even if only to accommodate refugees from Lebanon in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The area is simply too small to absorb such numbers.”

Yahu Shifat Herkabi, a Zionist strategist a scholar, a university lecturer who specializes in the Arab-Israeli dispute, and author of several books, writes,

“Acceptance by the Palestinian Liberation Organization of a Palestinian state in the West Bank is nothing but a tactical step to settle its account with Israel. It will demand more. It will continue its struggle in order to achieve its further objectives. Acceptance of a state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip merely postpones the continuation of the struggle to a later stage.”

“Demilitarized Zones are an experience that has failed abysmally. Control and sovereignty over them is dubious and diluted. As such, they are a cause of conflict not stability.”

“The establishment of an independent Palestinian state would also put an end to the Israeli dream of Greater Israel. It would also force the Palestinians to concede the rest of Palestine. This statelet would be vulnerable to increasing interference in its domestic affairs by both Jordan and Israel. This would inevitably lead to violent conflict.”

Mati Steinberg, lecturer at the Hebrew University, writes,

“Agreement to the transitional objective of the establishment of a Palestinian state in the West Bank/Gaza Strip should not in any circumstance be interpreted as a concession that replaces of final objective That kind of settlement is nothing more than a brief stage in the framework of the conventional wisdom which remains unchanged.”

That Zionist lecturer fears that an agreement to the exercise of self-determination would also have to apply to the so-called Israeli Arabs and to the Palestinians in Jordan.

## THE FUNDAMENTAL HISTORICAL SOLUTION

### **“Isratine”: A Single State for Jews and Palestinians**

#### *Prerequisites*

The return of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons wherever they are located if that is their wish. It is not admissible that Jews, who were not originally inhabitants of Palestine, and whose ancestors were not originally inhabitants of the country, can be brought in from abroad, while Palestinians, who fled Palestine as refugees and displaced persons only a short time ago, following the 1948 war, are not accorded the same right.

The Jews maintain that they did not expel the Palestinians. They say that the Palestinians believed the propaganda claims and fled their homes. It is sufficient to note that one of the most famous zealots, Samuel Katz, a member of the first Knesset, and leader of the Herut movement and the Etzel National Military Organization, cited the words of Glubb Pasha:

“The Arab citizens were seized with terror and fled their villages without being exposed to any threat during the war”.

Katz suggests that this is how the lie arose that the Jews forcibly expelled the Arabs from their villages. He writes,

“Correspondents who covered the 1948 war, most of whom were hostile to the Jews, spoke of the Arabs fleeing. But they did not say that their flight was forced. They did not even insinuate that”.

That writer thus acknowledges that an unusual phenomenon took place namely that the inhabitants fled their homes. He also admits that it took place on a large scale. He further acknowledges that it

was a mass flight of farmers, who are traditionally strongly attached to their land. He also states that

“the men fled without defending their homes. This large-scale, collective mass flight of these Palestinians requires a logical explanation”.

He also cites the words of the *Times* correspondent in Amman, who wrote that Syria, Lebanon, East Jordan and Iraq were ‘filled’ by those fleeing Israel and expressed surprise at how they fled, and why they did not remain or resist. Katz also quotes Emil al-Ghuri, Secretary to the Supreme Arab Authority, who addressed the political committee of the United Nations on 17 November 1960 with the following words:

“It was the Zionist acts of terror, accompanied by mass killings that caused the mass exodus of the Arabs from Palestine.”

The propagation of these lies could have been nipped in the bud.

The purpose of those extensive quotes is to emphasize two things. The first is to acknowledge that a mass exodus did take place. The second is to make clear that the reasons for the exodus lay in the propagation of frightening and false rumors about massacres that never in fact took place, in particular the infamous events reported to have occurred in the village of Deir Yassin.

These quotes, testimonies and the evidence they contain, are but a few of a vast body of knowledge about the subject. They are included in this *White Book*, with the purpose of enabling us to benefit from them in our quest for a definitive solution.

The testimonies of Zionist leaders, academics and neutral observers serve to establish the following:

First, that Palestinians inhabited this land and that they owned farms and homes there until 1948 and 1967.

Secondly, that they left this land in 1948, leaving their farms and homes, for fear of massacres, irrespective of whether these massacres actually happened or not.

Thirdly, that prominent leaders and academics in the Zionist movement, including individuals who participated in the 1948 conflict, testify that the Jews did not expel the Palestinians from Palestine, not from their farms, nor from their homes. In fact, the Palestinians believed the terrible rumors circulating and, terrified, left Palestine.

Fourthly, that those who left formed a large group, that the exodus was on a significant scale.

This is something certain and it will assist us in solving the problem.

The Jews, therefore, do not hate the Palestinians. They do not want to expel the Palestinians from their land, Palestine. They did not decide to massacre them, as the rumors suggest. Even the massacre at Deir Yassin did not take place. In fact, it was the non-Palestinian Arabs who attacked Palestine and declared war on the Jews.

To find a solution to the problem, let us permit ourselves to believe all of the above and go back to square one, the point of origin, namely the return of Palestinians who left Palestine between 1948 and 1967. The Jews stress that they did not expel the Palestinians. They fled for the reasons outlined above. This, logically, means that not even the Jews, who have occupied their land, can object to Palestinians remaining there. This is the key to solving the problem, namely the return of Palestinian refugees to Palestine. This measure would have the effect of putting everything back in its proper place and would implement the United Nations Resolution, issued on 11 December 1948. That resolution calls in paragraph 11 for the return of refugees. There can be no legitimate basis or legal right for any objection to that.

In order to solve the problem, let us keep the lessons of history in mind. As we have seen, the Old Testament and the history of the area record, that Palestine saw successive transfer of numerous tribes and peoples. It was the object of a struggle for the whole of the land, not any one part. The Palestinians were the original inhabitants — the name Palestine derives from the Philistines — and the Jews and the Zionist Movement called the land Palestine up to 1948. And, as we identified earlier in this work, every Zionist movement, bank or Jewish institution bore the name 'Palestine', a practice which, by their own testimony, continued until 1948.

As we have stated before, and as the history of the region makes clear, no one, therefore, has the right to claim for themselves the whole of Palestine or indeed the right to grant part of Palestine to someone else.

### **The Unavoidable Failure of Partition**

#### *Two Neighboring States Living Side by Side*

- 1) First and foremost, these will not two neighboring states living side by side. They are intertwined, interlocking and cut across one another in terms of both demography and geography.
- 2) The width of the so-called state of Israel on establishment of another state in the West Bank would be a mere 14 km. The Israelis would never allow that to happen.
- 3) All the coastal cities would be at the mercy of field and medium range artillery from any point in the West Bank.
- 4) See the remarks made in the section entitled Two States: Risks and Misconceptions.

5) Any buffer zone would become a source of security irritation, not a source of security. It will be the object of a battle for control or advantage. In international history, buffer zones have traditionally been the cause of many wars and conflicts.

6) The Palestinians would not accept a statelet. They want a state, one that is armed to defend itself. It would have the right to arm itself to the same level as neighboring states. This is a natural and legitimate right, to which no one can object.

7) The area in its entirety, from the River Jordan to the Mediterranean, is in no way large enough for two states.

8) The West Bank and the Gaza Strip are not large enough to accommodate refugees, least of all those in Lebanon and Syria, not to mention those spread across other areas of the world.

9) There is the problem of those recently displaced. Where would they go? The West Bank and Gaza Strip are not the land of those displaced from other areas.

10) The so-called state of Israel is not large enough to admit new immigrants.

11) Assimilation exists already and could become a model for the two parties to assimilate in a single state. At present, such assimilation as there is constitutes the foundations on which a single state could be built.

There are one million Palestinians in the so-called state of Israel. They possess Israeli nationality and take part in political life with the Jews. They form their own political parties. Their number will increase from one million to several millions with the passage of time. The same applies to the so-called Israeli settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. If the Jews living therein currently total some hundreds of thousands, they will grow to become a million and more with the passage of time. The creation of the so-called state of

Israel in 1948 is not just a state for the Jews. There are also Christians and Orthodox Jews, Muslims and Druze Muslims, Arabs and Israelis, the Falasha and others.

12) The existence of each party depends on the other. Israeli factories rely on Palestinian labor. Goods and services are exchanged between the parties.

13) The well-known Zionist Mier Bael, whose views were cited earlier, reiterates the point: Each year the two groups [i.e. the Palestinians and the Jews] integrate more and more. On one side, this integration is achieved by means of Jewish settlement in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; on the other, according to Bael, integration is driven further by the massive expansion in Arab labor in all areas of Israel.

In every building that is put up, in every field that is sown, in every factory requiring workers, in every hotel, restaurant and municipal cleaning service, and in every public utility tens of thousand of Palestinians from all areas of the country work on a daily basis. Young Palestinian men from Nablus, Gaza, Tiba, Galilee and Hebron work there.

Given this state of affairs, it would simply be unfeasible and impractical to partition Palestine into two states. Under partition there would not be a state called Israel, nor would there be a state called Palestine. Those who call for the partition of Palestine into two states are thus either ignorant of the nature of the region and of its demography, or they want to rid themselves of the problem and put it in the hands of the Jews and Palestinians. It may appear that we had thus solved the problem but in this case we would be insincere: we would have done little more than laying the foundations for a new conflict.

### **Land of their Forefathers/The Promised Land**

The Palestinians view the coastal towns of Acre, Haifa or Jaffa and others as their towns, as the land of their forefathers, passed from generation to generation. It was only a short time ago that they actually lived there, and the evidence for this is that they are presently living in refugee camps. Where did the inhabitants of the camps of the West Bank and Gaza Strip come from? They are not from the West Bank or Gaza Strip, but fled there following the 1948 war.

These people will never accept anything less than the land of the forefathers, which they left in 1948. And what about the refugees who live in the camps of Lebanon and Syria? Where is their land, the land of their forefathers? What about the Palestinians of the Diaspora? In the case of the Jews, they believe that the West Bank is their sacred territory, if not the heart of the Jewish nation. They do not call it the West Bank, but Judea and Samaria. How can we possibly deprive a people of the land of their forefathers? How can we possibly deprive a people of a land they consider sacred?

Alov Harabin, a Zionist scholar, writes that the problem is that of a conflict between two peoples over their ownership of one piece of land. Chaim Weizmann said in his famous expression of the 1930s: "The problem is that both sides are in the right."

How can we substitute one for the other? It simply is not possible. Nor would it be permissible to attempt to do so. The Jews, especially the religious among them, would not accept any substitute for land that is, in their beliefs, sacred, and the Palestinians, notably the hard-liners among them, will not accept any substitute for the land of their forefathers.

If two statelets are established, each party will continue the struggle against the other. The Palestinians will do so in order to live in the land of their forefathers, while the Jews will fight to live in the Promised Land.

The solution, then, lies in making use of the present set of circumstances and the historical reality of the situation alike. This should lead to the establishment of the state of "Isratine", home to both Palestinians and Israelis. This would allow both to move and live wherever they will. He, who believes that the West Bank is his land, can live there or travel there as he wishes. He could even call it Judea and Samaria, should he so want. Likewise, if a Palestinian should want to live or travel within the coastal cities of Acre, Haifa, Jaffa, Tel Aviv, Jadwal and the others, he could do so. This would put everything back the way it was. Thus, an end shall be put to the injustice and deprivation. There is no history of enmity between Jews and Arabs. The only hostility is the one that occurred between the Jews and Romans in earlier times and between Jews and Europeans more recently.

After a long history of discrimination and persecution at the hands of the Romans, the Kings of Europe, and following their expulsion from Andalusia, it was the Arabs who played host to the Jews, gave them succor and protected them.

Alov Herabin, the Zionist scholar cited above, writes "The Palestinians say: 'Why should it fall to us alone to pay the price for the persecution of the Jews in Europe?'" This goes to prove that the Palestinians never persecuted the Jews. The Jews say, "We did not expel the Palestinians" and "It was the non-Palestinian Arabs who declared war against us in 1948".

This constitutes positive evidence, which can certainly be employed in the interests of the solution by establishment of a state that integrates the two parties.

Alov adds, "The encounter of Israelis and Palestinians is the encounter of two peoples who have lived cruel and painful tragedies whilst others pretended not to notice". He adds further, after laying the blame with the Palestinians for rejecting the Jews after they were despised in Europe, "Undoubtedly the Palestinians have their

reasons for this attitude. When have we ever heard of a people opening their doors to welcome another people, and giving up, of its own volition, some of its land to enable another people to establish their own entity?" Alov is referring to the response of the Palestinian people in the face of Jewish immigration to Palestine, Jews who did not know Palestine, when other territories, such as Uganda and Argentina, were potential candidates.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

- 1) The land area is too narrow to accommodate two states living side by side.
- 2) Two states would come into conflict, because the land of each, they believe, forms part of the land of the other, and each statelet would feel threatened by the other party.
- 3) Neither could absorb Jewish immigrants and Palestinian refugees.
- 4) Each party has settlements on the land of the other. At least one million Palestinians live in the so-called State of Israel and about half a million Israelis, at least, currently live in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Other groups include the Druze, Catholics, Christians and Muslims. The area provides a model for integration and co-existence.
- 5) The workers in Israeli factories are Palestinians.
- 6) Mutual reliance, if not integration, in respect of goods and services.

## **FINAL NOTES**

- 1) Return of Palestinian refugees and displaced persons to their homes.
- 2) A single state. Lebanon serves as a good example.

3) Free elections under UN supervision on the first and second occasions.

4) Removal of Weapons of Mass Destruction from the new state and, if any, from the Middle East.

5) Conflict in the Middle East would then end. The new state would be like Lebanon. It would receive recognition and could even accede to the Arab League.

There may be some objections to the name. Such superficial objections would be unhelpful, and even harmful. Proponents of such objections make them on the basis of irrational and emotional considerations. We have to make a judgment call between Jewish security, with Jews living in peace with Palestinians in a single integrated state; or retention of the name, thereby sacrificing Jewish security and peace in the Middle East and the whole world.

We should not listen to the voices of the old guard or to the World War II mentality. Instead we should listen to the voice of the young, the generation of globalization, the generation of the future.

It is the old mentality that stands behind the present tragedy.

An exclusively state would undoubtedly be exposed to the Arab and Islamic threat. An integrated state comprising Muslims and Jews, Arabs and Israelis would never live under the threat of an Arab or Muslim attack.

Since 1967, the situation has been that of a de facto single Isratinian (Israeli-Palestinian) state. Even the attacks by the guerrillas “Fedayeen” were mounted from outside the borders of that state.

The present attacks by the guerrillas “Fedayeen” are not mounted by the Arabs of 1948, as they are called, but by Palestinians who are not counted among the so-called Israeli Arabs. This is a clear example of the success of a single integrated state — Isratine.

# The Olga Document

## (2004)

This document is the result of a series of meetings between Prof. Anat Biletzki, Andre Draznin, Haim Hanegbi, Yehudith Harel, Michel (Micado) Warschawski and Oren Medicks.

To overcome the dramatic stalemate in Palestine produced by Zionism, the authors advocate a solution based on the recognition that “this country belongs to all its sons and daughters – citizens and residents, both present and absentees (the uprooted Palestinian citizens of Israel in ’48) – with no discrimination on personal or communal grounds, irrespective of citizenship or nationality, religion, culture, ethnicity or gender.”

The document is titled after the location, *Giv'at Olga*, a suburb of the Israeli city of Hadera, where the meetings took place.

Source: <https://www.one-state.org/historical/documents/olga.htm>

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The State of Israel was supposed to grant security to Jews; it has created a death-trap whose inhabitants live in constant danger, the likes of which is not experienced by any other Jewish community.

The State of Israel was supposed to tear down the walls of the ghetto; it is now constructing the biggest ghetto in the entire history of the Jews.

The State of Israel was supposed to be a democracy; it has set up a colonial structure, combining unmistakable elements of apartheid with the arbitrariness of brutal military occupation.

Israel, 2004, is a state on the road to nowhere. Fifty-six years after its establishment – notwithstanding its many achievements in agriculture, science and technology, and albeit a great regional military power, armed with doomsday weapons – many of its citizens are heartsick with existential worry and fear for their future.

Since its foundation Israel has lived by its sword. An incessant succession of “retaliations”, military operations and wars has become the life-support drug of Israel’s Jews. And now, almost four years after the beginning of the second Palestinian Intifada, Israel is up to its neck in the mire of occupation and oppression, while it goes on extending the settlements and multiplying the outposts, repeating to itself ad nauseam that “we have no partner for peace”.

Ten years after the Oslo Accords, we are living in a benighted colonial reality – in the heart of darkness. Thirty-seven years after Israel conquered the last of the Palestinian territories in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, over three and a half million Palestinians under its rule are penned up in their towns and villages. The term “Palestinian State” – which for years embodied the peace option – is being used by many Israeli politicians as a mirage phrase, a spin on the reality of occupation: “In the future,” they whisper with a knowing wink, “the Palestinian entity in the Territories may be called a ‘state’.” And meanwhile Israel is amplifying the devastation of the

West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as if determined to pulverize the Palestinian people to dust.

In the face of the large Israeli camp of supporters of the separation walls – those, both right and left, who are terrified by the demons of demography, constantly counting the populace to find out how many Jews and Arabs are born and die every week, how many Jews and Arabs live in the entire country and in each of its districts every month – it is vital to pose an alternative outlook, based on the following principles: “Coexistence of the peoples of this country, based on mutual recognition, equal partnership and implementation of historical justice.”

We are united in a critique of Zionism, based as it is on refusal to acknowledge the indigenous people of this country and on denial of their rights, on dispossession of their lands, and on adoption of separation as a fundamental principle and way of life. Adding insult to injury, Israel persists in its refusal to bear any responsibility for its deeds, from the expulsion of the majority of Palestinians from their homeland more than half a century ago, to the present erection of ghetto walls around the remaining Palestinians in the towns and villages of the West Bank. Thus, wherever Jew and Arab stand together or face each other, a boundary is drawn between them, to separate and distinguish between the blessed and the cursed.

We are united in the recognition that this country belongs to all its sons and daughters – citizens and residents, both present and absentees (the uprooted Palestinian citizens of Israel in '48) – with no discrimination on personal or communal grounds, irrespective of citizenship or nationality, religion, culture, ethnicity or gender. Thus we demand the immediate annulment of all laws, regulations and practices that discriminate between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel, and the dissolution of all institutions, organizations and authorities based on such laws, regulations and practices.

We are united in the belief that peace and reconciliation are contingent on Israel's recognition of its responsibility for the injustices done to the indigenous people, the Palestinians, and on willingness to redress them. Recognition of the right of return follows from our principles. Redressing the continued injustice inflicted on the Palestinian refugees, generation after generation, is a necessary condition both for reconciliation with the Palestinian people, as for the spiritual healing of ourselves, Israeli Jews. Only thus shall we stop being plagued by the past's demons and damnations and make ourselves at home in our common homeland.

For many years now, Israeli leaders have been exerting themselves to depict the Palestinians as sub-human; and their exertions have been seconded and assisted by members of the cultural elite, media barons, vain functionaries and light-scribblers, right and left. We reject this racist arrogance with disgust, knowing that the Palestinians, as all other people, are neither devils nor angels, but just like us, are humans, created equal.

We are convinced that if we approach peace and reconciliation with the Palestinians with an open mind and a willing spirit, we shall find in them what we bring with us: an open mind and a willing spirit. For we are brothers and sisters, not eternal enemies as the well-poisoners profess.

It is pointless, now, to guess the material future form of the vision of life together: two states or one?! perhaps a confederation?! or maybe a federation?! and what about cantons?! In any case, the primary condition for advancing the vision of living together is self-evident, both as a supreme moral imperative and as a practical matter of the here and now: an immediate end to the state of occupation.

Only in this way will the Palestinians in eastern Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza Strip be rid of the yoke of settlements, the nightmare of apartheid, the burden of humiliation and the demons of destruction employed by Israel unremittingly, day and night, for 37 years.

Only when they are totally free will the Palestinians be able to discuss and decide their future.

We believe that adoption of the principles stated above will lay the foundations on which the people of this country can set up the proper common frameworks for life together. We are not talking of fantasies or of a miracle move that would lead us from our living hell to a heavenly paradise.

We are talking of a road that has not been tried hitherto: being honest with ourselves, with our neighbours and particularly with the Palestinian people – our enemies who are our brothers and sisters. If we muster within ourselves the appropriate honesty and requisite courage, we will be able to take the first step in the long journey that can extricate us from the tangle of denial, repression, distortion of reality, loss of direction and forsaking of conscience, in which the people of Israel have been trapped for generations.

Whoever has eyes to see and ears to hear knows that the choice is between another hundred years of conflict.

# Various Authors

## The One State Declaration

### (2007)

The following statement on a One-State solution was issued by participants in the July 2007 Madrid meeting and the November 2007 London Conference.

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For decades, efforts to bring about a two-state solution in historic Palestine have failed to provide justice and peace for the Palestinian and Israeli Jewish peoples, or to offer a genuine process leading towards them.

The two-state solution ignores the physical and political realities on the ground, and presumes a false parity in power and moral claims between a colonized and occupied people on the one hand and a colonizing state and military occupier on the other. It is predicated on the unjust premise that peace can be achieved by granting limited national rights to Palestinians living in the areas occupied in 1967, while denying the rights of Palestinians inside the 1948 borders and in the Diaspora.

Thus, the two-state solution condemns Palestinian citizens of Israel to permanent second-class status within their homeland, in a racist state that denies their rights by enacting laws that privilege Jews constitutionally, legally, politically, socially and culturally. Moreover, the two-state solution denies Palestinian refugees their internationally recognized right of return.

The two-state solution entrenches and formalizes a policy of unequal separation on a land that has become ever more integrated territorially and economically. All the international efforts to implement a two-state solution cannot conceal the fact that a Palestinian state is not viable, and that Palestinian and Israeli Jewish independence in separate states cannot resolve fundamental injustices, the acknowledgment and redress of which are at the core of any just solution.

In light of these stark realities, we affirm our commitment to a democratic solution that will offer a just, and thus enduring, peace in a single state based on the following principles:

- The historic land of Palestine belongs to all who live in it and to those who were expelled or exiled from it since 1948, regardless of religion, ethnicity, national origin or current citizenship status;
- Any system of government must be founded on the principle of equality in civil, political, social and cultural rights for all citizens. Power must be exercised with rigorous impartiality on behalf of all people in the diversity of their identities;
- There must be just redress for the devastating effects of decades of Zionist colonization in the pre- and post-state period, including the abrogation of all laws, and ending all policies, practices and systems of military and civil control that oppress and discriminate on the basis of ethnicity, religion or national origin;
- The recognition of the diverse character of the society, encompassing distinct religious, linguistic and cultural traditions, and national experiences;

- The creation of a non-sectarian state that does not privilege the rights of one ethnic or religious group over another and that respects the separation of state from all organized religion;
- The implementation of the Right of Return for Palestinian refugees in accordance with UN Resolution 194 is a fundamental requirement for justice, and a benchmark of the respect for equality;
- The creation of a transparent and nondiscriminatory immigration policy;
- The recognition of the historic connections between the diverse communities inside the new, democratic state and their respective fellow communities outside;
- In articulating the specific contours of such a solution, those who have been historically excluded from decision-making — especially the Palestinian Diaspora and its refugees, and Palestinians inside Israel — must play a central role;
- The establishment of legal and institutional frameworks for justice and reconciliation.

The struggle for justice and liberation must be accompanied by a clear, compelling and moral vision of the destination — a solution in which all people who share a belief in equality can see a future for themselves and others. We call for the widest possible discussion, research and action to advance a unitary, democratic solution and bring it to fruition.

Madrid and London, 2007

## 10. No-State Solution

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In the current age, characterised by powerful communication and production technologies that allow each individual, at least potentially, to play a significant role in all spheres of social life, the political and economic forms of organisation that arose in past centuries (centralistic states, large-scale industries) are becoming increasingly dysfunctional.

As regards the subject of this anthology – Palestine – to propose and promote in our age solutions based once again on the State (two States, one State) seems even more unrealistic and outdated.

We must therefore make creative efforts to conceive proposals that are in tune with today's technological, cultural and economic realities and potentialities. This is what the authors of the essays presented in the following pages were and are striving to do.



# Emma Goldman

## Beyond national territorialism in Palestine (1938)

This is a truly beautiful text that puts the entire matter concerning Palestine and its inhabitants (old and new) in the right perspective. According to Emma Goldman, no one has the right to monopolise a territory, neither the Arabs nor the Jews. “The land – in the words of Emma Goldman - should belong to those who till the soil” i.e. to the workers and not to state rulers or state capitalists. If Jews come to Palestine and “till the soil under the most trying pioneer conditions ... to say that the Jews have no business in Palestine seems to me rather a strange kind of socialism.”

Jews have always lived side by side with people having different culture and religion. The problem arises with the emergence of Zionism, which is a strong belief in group supremacy. But this has nothing to do with traditional Jews and true Judaism.

With her letter, Emma Goldman seems to anticipate the no-state proposal, beyond national territorialism, as the solution for the Palestine question. A solution that should be truly examined and concretely developed in the months and years to come.

To the Editor,  
"Spain and the World"

Dear Comrade,

I was interested in the article, *Palestine and Socialist Policy*, by our good friend Reginald Reynolds [1] in *Spain and the World* of July 29th. There is much in it with which I fully agree, but a great deal more which seems to me contradictory for a Socialist and a near-anarchist. Before I point out these inconsistencies, I wish to say that our friend's article lends itself to the impression that he is a rabid anti-Semite. In point of truth, I have been asked by several people how it happens that *Spain and the World* printed such an anti-Semitic article. Their surprise was even greater that Reginald Reynolds should be guilty of such tendency. Knowing the writer I felt quite safe in assuring my Jewish friends that Reginald Reynolds has not a particle of anti-Semitic feeling in him, although it is quite true that his article unfortunately gives such an impression.

I have no quarrel with our good friend about his charges against the Zionists. In point of fact I have for many years opposed Zionism as the dream of capitalist Jewry the world over for a Jewish State with all its trimmings, such as Government, laws, police, militarism and the rest. In other words, a Jewish State machinery to protect the privileges of the few against the many.

Reginald Reynolds is wrong, however, when he makes it appear that the Zionists were the sole backers of Jewish emigration to Palestine. Perhaps he does not know that the Jewish masses in every country and especially in the United States of America have contributed vast amounts of money for the same purpose. They have given unstintingly out of their earnings in the hope that Palestine may prove to be an asylum for their brothers, cruelly persecuted in nearly every

European country. The fact that there are many non-Zionist communes in Palestine goes to prove that the Jewish workers who have helped the persecuted and hounded Jews have done so not because they are Zionists, but for the reason I have already stated, that they might be left in peace in Palestine to take root and live their own lives.

Comrade Reynolds resents the contention of the Jews that Palestine had been their homeland two thousand years ago. He insists that this is of no importance as against the Arabs who have lived in Palestine for generations. I do not think either claim of great moment, unless one believes in the monopoly of land and the right of Governments in every country to keep out the newcomers.

Surely Reginald Reynolds knows that the Arab people have about as much to say who should or should not come into their country as the under-privileged of other lands. In point of fact our friend admits as much when he states that the Arab feudal lords had sold the land to the Jews without the knowledge of the Arab people. This is of course nothing new in our world. The capitalist class everywhere owns, controls and disposes of its wealth to suit itself. The masses, whether Arab, English or any other, have very little to say in the matter.

In claiming the right of the Arabs to keep out Jewish immigration from Palestine, our good friend is guilty of the same breach of Socialism as his comrade, John McGovern [2]. To be sure the latter makes himself the champion of British Imperialism while Reginald Reynolds sponsors Arab capitalist rights. That is bad enough for a revolutionary socialist. Worse still is the inconsistency in pleading on behalf of land monopoly, to which the Arabs alone should have the right.

Perhaps my revolutionary education has been sadly neglected, but I have been taught that the land should belong to those who till the soil. With all of his deep-seated sympathies with the Arabs, our comrade cannot possibly deny that the Jews in Palestine have tilled

the soil. Tens of thousands of them, young and deeply devout idealists, have flocked to Palestine, there to till the soil under the most trying pioneer conditions. They have reclaimed wastelands and have turned them into fertile fields and blooming gardens. Now I do not say that therefore Jews are entitled to more rights than the Arabs, but for an ardent socialist to say that the Jews have no business in Palestine seems to me rather a strange kind of socialism.

Moreover, Reginald Reynolds not only denies the Jews the right to asylum in Palestine, but he also insists that Australia, Madagascar and East Africa would be justified in closing their ports against the Jews. If all these countries are in their right, why not the Nazis in Germany or Austria? In fact, all countries. Unfortunately, our comrade does not suggest a single place where the Jews might find peace and security.

I take it that Reginald Reynolds believes in the right of asylum for political refugees. I am certain he resents the loss of this great principle, once the pride and glory of England, as much as I do. How then, can he reconcile his feelings about political refugees with his denial of asylum to the Jews. I must say I am puzzled.

Our friend waxes very hot about national independence for the Arabs and for all other peoples under British Dominion. I am not opposed to the struggle for it, but I do not see the same blessings in national independence under the capitalist régime. All the advancement claimed for it is like the claims for democracy, a delusion and a snare. One has to point out some of the countries that have achieved national independence. Poland, for instance, the Baltic States or some of the Balkan countries. Far from being progressive in the true sense, they have become Fascist. Political persecution is not less severe than under the Tsar, while anti-Semitism, formerly fostered from on top, has since infested every layer of social life in these countries.

However, since our friend champions national independence, why not be consistent and recognise the right of the Zionists or the Jews at large to national independence? If anything, their precarious condition, the fact that they are nowhere wanted, should entitle them to at least the same consideration that our comrade so earnestly gives to the Arabs.

I know of course that a great many of the Jews can lay no claim to being political refugees. On the contrary, most of them have remained indifferent to the persecution of workers, socialists, communists, trade-unionists and anarchists, so long as their own skins were safe. Like the middle-class in Germany and Austria, they have exploited labour and have been antagonistic to any attempt on the part of the masses to better their condition. Some German Jews had the temerity to say that they would not object to driving out the 'OstJuden' (Jews coming from Poland and other countries). All that is true, but the fact remains that since Hitler's ascendancy to power all Jews without exception have been subjected to the most fiendish persecution and the most horrible indignities, besides being robbed of all of the possessions. It therefore seems strange for a Socialist to deny these unfortunate people a chance of taking root in new countries, there to begin a new life.

The last paragraph in *Palestine and Social Policy* caps the climax. The author writes: "What does it matter who makes a demand or why it is made, or who pays the bill if that demand is just? To reject a just demand is to brand ourselves as friends of tyranny and oppression; to accept it and to work for it is not only our duty but the only policy that will expose the pretensions of our enemies."

The question is, dear Reginald Reynolds, who is to decide what is a 'just demand'? Unless one makes oneself guilty of the charge the writer hurls against the Jews, "the intolerable arrogance of people who regard their own race as superior", one cannot very well decide whether the demand of natives for the monopoly of their country is

any more just than the desperate need of millions of people who are slowly being exterminated.

In conclusion, I wish to say that my attitude to the whole tragic question is not dictated by my Jewish antecedents. It is motivated by my abhorrence of injustice, and man's inhumanity to man. It is because of this that I have fought all my life for anarchism which alone will do away with the horrors of the capitalist régime and place all races and peoples, including the Jews, on a free and equal basis. Until then I consider it highly inconsistent for socialists and anarchists to discriminate in any shape or form against the Jews.

Emma Goldman

26th August 1938

## Notes

[1] Reginald Arthur Reynolds (1905 – 1958) was a British writer, poet, a Quaker and an anti-colonial activist. He was the companion of Ethel Mannin, a close English friend of Emma Goldman.

[2] John McGovern (1887 – 1968) was a Scottish socialist politician who was many times member of the UK Parliament.

# Various Authors

## The Palestine Crisis (1946-1948)

The short passages here presented stress one important point: the necessity to go beyond nationalism in order to move forward towards a solution for the social organization of all the people living in Palestine. As a matter of fact, decades of violent contraposition have shown that “there is no solution through the triumph of one or other of the conflicting Nationalisms” and that the State, the promoter of nationalism, must disappear for the eventual appearance of freedom, security, prosperity and peace for each and everyone.

Source: VV.AA., *British Imperialism & the Palestine Crisis*, Selections from the Anarchist Journal Freedom 1938-1948, London 1989.

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### **What is the 'solution'?**

Any attempt to solve the Palestine question must keep in mind the fundamentally incompatible factors involved. The clash of Imperialisms; the determination of Britain to hold on to assets in Palestine,

and guard Imperial lifelines; the political ambitions of Zionist Jewish Nationalism and the rival ambitions of Arab politicians in Arab Nationalism; the setting-off of these two against each other by the British and their willingness to be used in this way which hinders the mutual solidarity of Jewish and Arab workers.

'Realist' political theorists try and suggest 'compromises' which they advance as 'solutions'. When 'utopians' like the anarchists say that there is no solution within those terms of reference, and therefore it is necessary radically to alter the whole framework of Palestine affairs before any solution can be reached — we are told that we are hopelessly 'unrealistic'. But it is clear that in fact our position is far more realistic than all these 'Palestine Plans' and partitions and compromises which in reality only serve as a cover for the continued predominance of British Imperialism, and the schemes of other Imperialist powers to share in the gains of Palestine.

Men and women in Palestine will never be free and materially secure while Imperial domination lasts. They will not secure freedom by exchanging the British Mandate for rule of Jewish capitalists and landlords or Arab capitalists and landlords. There is no solution through the triumph of one or other of the conflicting Nationalisms. Since the organised resistance in Palestine is clearly under the control of Jewish nationalists, it receives no support from us, though we do not for that reason join the chorus of sanctimonious protest set up by the British fascists. Our sympathies lie with the common people, Jewish or Arab, who suffer under whatever government is imposed upon them, and whose blood is shed either in mistaken adherence to their nationalist pretensions or in blind reprisals against such action.

Peace will come to Palestine only when all existing ruling groups, and all would-be rulers are rendered powerless and impotent by the land and the instruments of production passing under the direct control of the workers — Jewish and Arab — themselves, without any

tutelage from above. The internal problems of Palestine can only be solved by the social revolution; while the elimination of the external factors or rival imperialisms also awaits the social revolution in the countries involved. Until that time comes, the rule of bloodshed and brutality which is Imperialism will continue to shock the conscience of humane people all over the world. Such people should join their efforts to the cause and ideals of the revolution.

10th August 1946

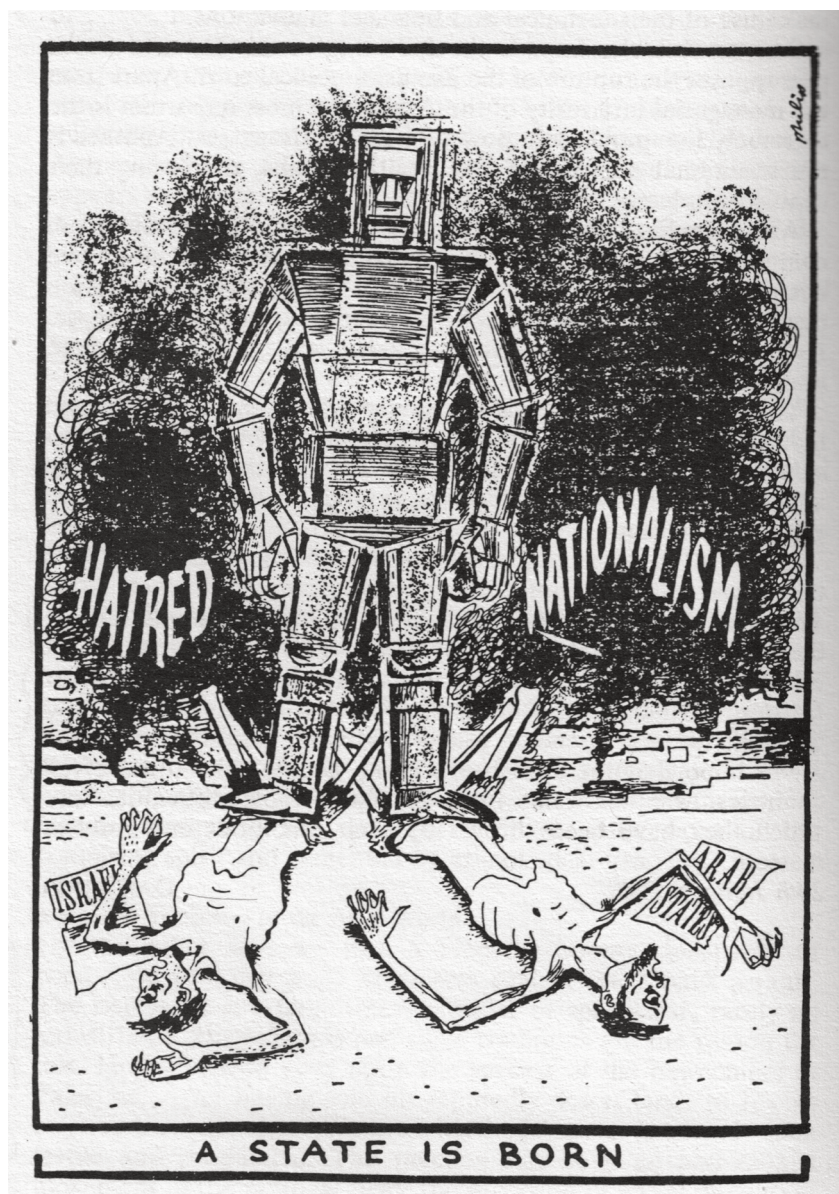
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### **Political Background in Palestine**

(From our Middle East Correspondent)

The reason so many people fail to understand the Palestine situation is because they think exclusively in nationalist terms. Hence they look with optimism or pessimism at this or that latest Conference or Commission that is going to settle the problem once and for all, and never think that the very political existence of nationalist politicians means that some problem or another has to be kept alive. Partition is an old-established way of doing that. Whereas, from an anarchist point of view, what is a preliminary to a rational approach to the problem is the complete abandonment of nationalism. This may be 'utopian' but it is not as hopeless as trying to reconcile 'Arabs' and Jews', particularly when one realises that not only are the 'official' viewpoints classified under those headings quite irreconcilable, but Arabs no more wholly accept the 'Arab case' and Jews the 'Jewish case' than everyone in Britain accept the wishy-washy liberalism expounded over the BBC.

9th August 1947



Alex Comfort

Whither Israel?

(1948)

Already on the eve of the proclamation of the State of Israel, the author warned about the moral risks that the Jews, or better, the Zionists, take in modelling themselves “upon orthodox power institutions.” By doing so they “will be drawn inevitably into the pattern of Great Power intrigue” and, we can add, into a nationalist and supremacist posture, devoid of any ethical underpinning. And this is what has increasingly happened since the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948.

In this short text we find the prefiguration of the No-State Solution for the Jews in Palestine that would be the more realistic and sensible path towards peace and well-being, a path to be undertaken by all the inhabitants of that land.

Source: *New Israel*, Summer 1948

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Twice in the last half-century English ‘progressives’ have seen a similar historical event under similar circumstances. In 1916

[Patrick] Pearse and [James] Connolly captured the imagination of the world in the Easter Rising [Ireland - April 1916], and set in motion by that gesture the foundation of Saorstat Eireann [Irish Free State]. Today the Zionists have declared the State of Israel. Reactions among English progressives are, I think, similar to those which attended Easter Week — keen sympathy with a courageous attempt to secure freedom, contempt for the official attitude of the British government, and a measure of disquiet. The events leading up to each situation have been strikingly alike: terrorism and counter-terrorism are not new, nor are anti-Irish and anti-Jewish feeling. It is not a patronising or an unfriendly approach which makes the disquiet, nor is it a failure to recognise the achievement and sufferings of Jewry.

In historical and social terms, the Jews have many advantages over the Irish Republicans. They have created the most striking examples of social community in the present period. The importance of social societies such as the settlements, existing in a world which is increasingly asocial, is not confined to the people who live in them. It extends into far wider circles of study — sociology, anthropology, the planning of the free society in all countries. It is not too much to say that the future orientation of all anti-totalitarian planning will be determined by the fate of the experiments. The republicanism of the Irish has parallels — the practical achievement in Palestine seems to me unique. It is for precisely this reason that the hazards attending the birth of Israel seem to me greater than those which Ireland faced, and to some extent failed to overcome, after the deaths of Pearse and Connolly.

Non-Jews cannot expect to preach to the Jews — the suffering of Jew in recent years has no parallel in Irish history, or anywhere else, perhaps save in Jewish history. But the chronicity of that suffering is in itself danger. It has left Jewry a legacy which is far more important than Gentile anti-Semitism — in the attitude of mind which has developed between Jews and non-Jews, and the whole crop of

psychological tensions which go with it. There is a radical difference between the ill-feeling which existed between Ireland and Britain in 1916 and the kind of ill-feeling which has existed between Jews and non-Jews. The real curse of anti-semitism is that it infects the attitude both of people who are not anti-Semitic and of Jews themselves. I think that if I were a Jew I would find it easier to know where I was with an anti-Semite than the studiously 'decent' Englishman who is so obsessed with anti-Semitism and with showing that he doesn't share it that he adopts the same insulting attitude towards Jews that some people adopt towards dumb animals. And the Jews themselves have over-reacted – it is hard to see how they could do otherwise: the 'decent' Englishman hasn't had to put up with Jewish history, Hitler, the gas chambers, and Ernest Bevin. You need only compare the emotional effects of a comedian's gag about Irishmen with those of a comedian's gag about Jews to see the difference. Until comedians can make such jokes equally, and nobody feel uneasy, one cannot say that Jewish-Gentile relationships are at a natural level. Non-Jews have a substantial guilt-reaction to live down before them, though the autonomy of Israel is a step on the way.

Why am I uneasy about a Jewish State? Because I am uneasy about any State. I am never ready to support uncritically the birth of a new authority. Israel is still struggling to exist, it is surrounded by every kind of force and chicanery, by foreign intervention and by international intrigues. I can understand why a State was founded, but the very centralising of authority seems to me to be a threat rather than an aid to the victory of Zionism. The Jewish people have shown themselves uniquely capable of living together in a non-coercive, defensible, social society. If that unique pattern is replaced by the orthodox pattern of government, ministries, parliaments, presidents and prisons, the future of free institutions far outside the circle of Jewry will be at risk. An anarchist Israel would possess a far greater power of survival in present world circumstances than any centralised State based on power, and Jewry is uniquely able to

found such a society. A State of Israel modelled upon orthodox power institutions will be drawn inevitably into the pattern of Great Power intrigue.

These are not unfriendly criticisms. It is because I recognise the immense significance of the experimental societies developed in Palestine that I make it at all — if the Jews had done less, one could be content to regard them as yet another people trying to secure equality of status with other national powers. Jewry is more than that — it is a moral force: not in the same sense that the Orthodox Jewish believer might use the word, but because the Jews are the sole civilised group who have learned through a long history of dispossession to retain the basic human pattern of mutual aid. Because they have lived in many States and owed total allegiance to none, the Jews are possibly the only whole human being in the social and biological sense, who still exist as a group in Western Europe. There is a strand of this wholeness in Ireland, and it is the only thing which has enabled Eire [Ireland] to survive. The infection of Israel with orthodox power institutions, under pressure of danger, would be a disaster. I do not think that defence and efficiency depend on the creation of such institutions. If the Palestinians have possessed the self-discipline to do what they have done so far, they are strong enough to defend themselves and to live without a system of political authority.

# Alfredo Bonanno

## No to the Palestinian State (1988)

A clear and precise stance on the rejection of a Palestinian State, implicitly proposing the co-existence on the same land of two non-state communities (the Palestinian and the Jewish communities) as already existed in the past. The only prerequisite for this to be possible is that neither community claims privileges and a specious moral and cultural superiority.

Source: Published in *Provocazione*, no. 18, December 1988, pp. 1-2.

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On the wave of the popular uprising in the occupied territories of Gaza and the West Bank, the PLO [Palestinian Liberation Organization] has established the Palestinian State.

What is certainly seen by many as a positive event can only be considered by us as a step backwards, a deviation from the correct and productive direction that the Palestinian struggles had taken in recent months.

The PLO bureaucracy intervened, and it cannot be said that there was no complicity on the part of those Islamic states that welcome the emergence of a Palestinian State in the Middle East. In this way it has placed the most serious obstacle to the development of anti-state struggles, which would be the only possible development with regard to the Jewish reality established in the same area.

The presence of a Palestinian State, however elusive it may seem today, can only lead to sterile diplomatic agreements, conditioned by international factors, agreements that will make any peaceful coexistence between the two communities – Palestinian and Israeli – impossible. Yet, both of them have the right to live in their own land.

A Palestinian State could not fail to take the same course of action as any other State: military reinforcement, widespread armed intervention, and the transformation of possible diplomatic agreements into instruments of threat and retaliation.

The path now taken by the Jews teaches us how quickly the exploited and oppressed, when regimented by State officials, can become exploiters and oppressors themselves.

The Palestinian liberation struggle, as it has been conducted over the last forty years, may have had its ups and downs, but even at the height of the worst reprisals (such as the attack on Lot airport), it never lost sight of the value of popular uprising. Of course, even in those past conditions, the hand of organisations, and of the PLO in particular, was behind the scenes, but it was essentially an instrumental hand that could be discarded, which did not influence everyone in the name of a precise code, established in the assembly of world nations.

We do not know how much, even in a moment of unanimous consensus, these world nations, led by the US, can really do for the Palestinian people who continue to die and be tortured. They certainly cannot interfere in the internal affairs of the Israeli State, if

only for the same reason of international law that makes the States around the world sovereign and therefore unquestionable. Israel is unquestionable in its “right” to continue oppressing the Palestinian people, and the Palestinian people is unquestionable in its “right” not to be oppressed, occupied, destroyed, killed, tortured, etc. Each would have its “rights”, and these could only be defended through the force of its own (and others’) weapons. We know where this can lead.

The State thus constituted could be a major obstacle on the long and difficult road to liberation for the Palestinian people. And this because those who suffer find it difficult to understand such things, which may seem like nuances. The establishment of an organisation is often seen as a positive development. It makes one stronger. One can negotiate on equal terms with all other nations of the world. But what if this is precisely the way to provide apparent negotiation and a substantial continuation of oppression? What if allowing Arafat to become head of State is nothing more than a diplomatically valid way of washing one’s hands of the matter?

No one can rule out that this is not the case. In the end, the applause that went out in our country [Italy] for the nascent Palestinian State came from contradictory quarters: from the Foreign Ministry and from organisations of comrades who certainly do not move in ministerial circles. What is the reason for this unanimity of purpose? First of all, the fact that both ministers and authoritarian revolutionaries are on the same wavelength: the size of the organisation determines the strength of the struggle, and from this strength comes victory. This reasoning, which has never been ours, cannot therefore lead us to share the joy that so many feel at the birth of the Palestinian State.

There is more. The Palestinian State becomes then an excellent diplomatic interlocutor. Pressure will be exerted through diplomatic channels. Attempts will be carried out to make Israel understand what it does not want to understand, immersed as it is in its State

logic. After all, what all the States of the world care about the fate of five million Palestinians?

The same goes for the late-authoritarian revolutionaries in our own country. What else could they propose? Perhaps direct intervention against the Israeli State? Perhaps direct support for the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories? Of course not! Now that the State is in place, even for these last pioneers of the apparatus at all costs, there will be a way to organise support in the shadow of the model we have already seen.

We believe that the situation has not improved with the decision taken in Algiers [\*]. Whether this was real or unreal. The only reality on which to focus our support, on which to reflect while acting, is that of the hundreds of young people who are resisting with stones against the Israeli tanks that are occupying their land. A reality that has nothing to do with diplomacy or the State.

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## Note

[\*] The *Palestinian Declaration of Independence* formally established the State of Palestine. It was proclaimed by Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), on 15 November 1988 in Algiers (Algeria). In April 1989, the PLO Central Council elected Arafat as the first president of the State of Palestine.

# James Herod

## Palestine: The No-State Solution

### (2009)

The author spells out the real practicable solution for the Palestinian situation, that is a No-State solution. This means the end of state territorialism (monopolistic territorial sovereignty by a state) and the birth of voluntary autonomous communities that live and self-organize side by side. Once implemented in Palestine, this form of social organization could become a model to be tested and implemented in many parts of the world.

Source: <https://jamesherod.info/index.php?sec=paper&id=63>

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Neither the Two-State nor the One-State solution will solve the problem in Palestine. Only the No-State solution will. (1) The No-State solution calls for dismantling the Israeli State and abandoning any attempt to establish a Palestinian State. Rather, the peoples living in the territory of historical Palestine will progress to the advanced decentralized social form of an association of autonomous self-governing communities based on direct democracy. Representa-

tive government will be abolished. This historic leap forward should also immediately encompass both Lebanon and Jordan, two artificial states created by Western imperialists upon the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.

The No-State solution would allow the inhabitants of Palestine to progress beyond territorial units governed by capitalist ruling classes, regardless of whether these classes defined themselves in ethnic, racial, or religious terms, or by the so-called civil rights of secular humanistic liberalism. The real problem is the Nation-State itself, and not whether it is religious or secular, ethnically (or racially) homogenous or not, mono or multi cultural, liberal or conservative.

This beautiful anarchist proposal – an obvious solution – has unfortunately not even been on the agenda throughout the entire one-hundred-year long attack by Zionists upon Palestinians. Why? For one thing, the historical victory of marxism over anarchism in the nineteenth century meant that anarchists have been marginalized and kept out of the political arena for more than a hundred years. For another thing, the capitalist-controlled nation-state system is so strong and entrenched that it is hard to think outside that framework, and hardly anyone has. Now, however, a few innovative voices are being heard in favor of the idea, for example, those of Bill Templer (2) or Uri Gordon. (3)

The trouble with the Two-State solution is that it grants legitimacy to the Zionist State of Israel, and thus recognizes its right to exist. But Israel has no right to exist whatsoever. It was founded on the violent expulsion of the native inhabitants (and rightful owners) of Palestine (approximately 750,000 of them). The Zionists' terrorist campaign of ethnic cleansing, stretching now for nearly a century, has been possible only because Western imperialist powers, especially the United States, have supported it, with massive amounts of military, financial, and political aid. To right this egregious historical injustice it is necessary to dismantle the militarist and racist state of Israel and

establish the right of return for Palestinian refugees, who now number nearly five million persons.

And this has always been the intention of Palestine liberation movements, although not always of their leaders, or of certain Western intellectuals. As for the leaders, both the Palestine Liberation Organization and Hamas eventually came to accept the two-state solution. As for intellectuals, Noam Chomsky has always (and as recently as last month) endorsed the two-state solution. (How is it, by the way, that Chomsky, who purports to be an anarchist, never proposes an anarchist solution to any issue of current import?) So why haven't two states been established? Because Zionist Israel doesn't want a Palestinian State. Its goal from the beginning has always been to steal all the land of Palestine – and even more land from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt – for a Greater Israel, and to cleanse the land of all non-Jewish inhabitants.

Furthermore, the Zionist theft of Palestinian land has proceeded unabated to such an extent that there is by now hardly any land left upon which to base a Palestinian State. Palestinians have been corralled and imprisoned in Gaza and in numerous tiny Bantustan-like isolated enclaves in the West Bank. They control nothing. Israel has effectively taken the Two-State solution off the agenda.

Moreover, after Israel's ghastly and horrific massacres, bombings, and invasions in recent years of Jenin, Lebanon, and now Gaza, and after decades of its brutal assaults on Palestinians with targeted assassinations of their leaders, house demolitions, blockades, the Wall, random murders, destruction of orchards and olive groves, the theft of water, economic strangulation, imprisonment without trial, torture, starvation, theft of moneys, restriction of travel, destruction of civil society, destruction of infrastructure, and so forth *ad nauseam*, who in their right mind could still contemplate Israel's continued existence in the Middle East. These crimes have been so beyond the pale as to totally destroy forever any claim some may

have made for Israel's legitimacy, or any desire to live with the Israeli State in peace.

And so we come to the One-State solution, which is now being mentioned more frequently, and sometimes seriously argued for. (4) Its proponents envision one secular State for historical Palestine in which the civil rights of all citizens would be guaranteed, and in which people from the various religions and ethnicities could live together in equality, freedom, and peace. Such a State would obviously mean the end of the Zionist project and so is vehemently rejected by Zionist Israelis.

In truth, the secular State should not be endorsed by anyone. Its supposed benefits are largely a mirage. There is hardly a Nation-State anywhere that doesn't practice serious discrimination against internal racial or ethnic minorities, not to mention their seemingly ineradicable oppression of the female half of the human race, or their determined and universal exploitation of the working class. With rare exception the Nation-States of the world are controlled by capitalists. Those few which fall into socialist hands end up colluding with capitalists anyway. For decades marxists have written detailed critiques of "bourgeois democracy," as they called it, exposing it as a fraud. So have anarchists. Kropotkin published a blistering attack on representative government 124 years ago in 1885. (5) It's as though he had written it last year just for us. The era of representative government is coming to an end. It is imperative that we make sure that it does end.

This is why it is so important to push for the No-State solution in Palestine. The fact that this seems presently impossible is all the more reason to try hard to get the idea into the air, to get the proposal onto the table. This is the first step. Only in this way will we begin to see how it might be brought about. After all, a decentralized world, without Capitalism or States, seems impossible everywhere. But it might not be. We have to start fighting for what we

want, and for what is just, and not for what we think we can get. The social organization of the world must be changed in fundamental ways if we humans are to have any hope of surviving the unprecedented crises now facing us, and of creating a livable and sustainable society.

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## Notes

(1) William Bowles, “The Final Solution is a No-State Solution” on the web at: <https://williambowles.wordpress.com/2009/01/27/the-destruction-of-the-gaza-strip-leaves-only-the-west-bank-as-the-palestinian-state/> This short article, which appeared on several websites on the Internet on January 28-29, 2009, is not about the anarchist idea of a no-state solution, as discussed in this essay, but about the Zionist ideological connection with Nazism, and to a doctrine, that of Zionism, which seeks the eradication of “impure” persons from a population or territory. “No-state” as used by Bowles with reference to the policy of the Zionist rulers means that Palestinians will get neither the two-state solution nor the one-state solution. They will get nothing, no state. They will be eliminated or expelled, and “Israel” will be ethnically cleansed.

(2) Bill Templer, “Reclaiming the Commons in Palestine/Israel: Ya Basta! / Khalas!” on the web at: <https://mronline.org/2008/07/23/reclaiming-the-commons-in-palestineisrael-ya-bastakhalas/>

(3) Uri Gordon, “Homeland: Anarchy and Joint Struggle in Palestine/Israel,” Ch. 6 in his *Anarchy Alive!* [http://victoriaanarchistreadingcircle.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Uri\\_Gordon\\_Chapt6-Homeland-Anarchy-Alive.pdf](http://victoriaanarchistreadingcircle.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Uri_Gordon_Chapt6-Homeland-Anarchy-Alive.pdf)

(4) Ali Abunimah, *One Country: A Bold Proposal to End the Israeli-Palestinian Impasse*; and Joel Kovel, *Overcoming Zionism: Creating a Single Democratic State in Israel/Palestine*

(5) Peter Kropotkin, "Representative Government," Ch. 13 in his *Words of a Rebel* <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/petr-kropotkin-words-of-a-rebel-1#toc25>

### Useful Books

Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine* <https://www.thetedkarchive.com/library/edward-said-the-question-of-palestine>

Edward Said, *The End of the Peace Process* (revised and updated edition, 2002) <https://archive.org/details/endofpeaceproc00said/mode/2up>

Norman Finkelstein, *Image and Reality of the Israel Palestine Conflict* <https://web.archive.org/web/20051029183123/http://normanfinkelstein.com/content.php?pg=4>

James Petras, *The Power of Israel in the United States* <https://archive.org/details/powerofisraelinu0000petr>

### Useful Web Sites

Angry Arab News Service. The Web Site of As'ad Abukhalil

<http://www.angryarab.blogspot.com/>

Electronic Intifada <http://electronicintifada.net/>

Uruknet.info <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=-6/>

New England Committee to Defend Palestine

<http://www.onepalestine.org/>

# Yuval Ben-Ami

## Introducing the no-state solution (2010)

This is a quite strange unconventional text. It is presented here because of the need to envisage brand new proposals to solve the Palestinian dramatic conundrum, proposals that, at first glance, might appear even quite odd.

The author, native of Jerusalem, is presented as a journalist, musician, radio host, and cultural critic. He serves as expert on the Holy Land for National Geographic Expeditions.

Source: <https://www.972mag.com/introducing-the-no-state-soltion/>

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When I was growing up, my father served as one of Yitzhak Rabin's chief advisers. This being the case, I learned to think of the two-state-solution to the question of this country as unquestionable.

In the early 1980's the discourse common around the house involved "returning the territories" to Jordan and Egypt, of which Israel conquered them in 1967. With time, however, my parents'

consciousness of Palestinian realities grew, as well as their understanding that Jordan and Egypt didn't necessarily want the territories back. The idea of giving the West Bank and Gaza to the Palestinians themselves was accepted and stuck. The 90's began and the rest is (somewhat depressing) history.

The entire Israeli public reached the Oslo years fighting either for or against a separation of the territory into two. It wasn't until I was in my 20's that I understood that for the Palestinians themselves, this would be an enormously painful compromise.

Palestinians were free to live in Jaffa and Safed before 1948. My family didn't have a similar attachment to Nablus and Jenin. If a separation occurred, we would have had to bite the bullet in East Jerusalem and Hebron, but that would have been an acceptable sacrifice. We could accept it as a fair price to be paid for the pain we have caused our neighbors.

The Palestinians, on the other hand, owe us nothing. They had no part in the Holocaust that caused us to escape to their shores, they never kept us occupied under martial law, bereft of human rights, labor rights and all other imaginable rights. Furthermore: they never stole our houses (with very few exceptions: refugees from such villages as Lifta, taken over by the Israelis in 1948, were subsequently accommodated in Jerusalem's abandoned Jewish quarter).

They had no good reason to give up the dream of ever turning the wheels of history back, and still don't. This is probably why, when it came down to it, Arafat could not bring himself to sign the separation plans offered by Barak and Bill Clinton. He promised his people the entire cake and could not come home with a crumbly slice.

**Pragmatic but dumb**

I believe in pragmatism and I believe that a two-state solution is currently the easiest development the world and the Israeli public would accept, which counts for something. We need to encourage any development, because the current situation is intolerable. As I write this I scan the headlines and read of five more Palestinians who were killed during the night.

Still, there are so many flaws with a two-state plan, and the imbalance in the degree of sacrifice is only one of them. Another has to do with the nature such states risk developing: Two ethnocentric states will very likely to become polarized. The Jewish one would easily turn into a proper theocracy, the Palestinian one could easily be taken over by fundamentalists. No side would be fully satisfied and the solution would forever be taken for an *interim* one.

Would two ethnocentric states be better than a single one, occupying a society bereft of sovereign status? Yes, but the flaws are extremely numerous. This is why, in recent years, the one-state movement arose in Israel, demanding the unification of the territory into a single, democratically governed unit in which all will be citizens of equal rights.

What would be more natural than that? Why even have a single ethnocentric state? Ethnocentric states were a dated concept even when Herzl dreamed up his model of Zionism. They are so 1848! Here's the land. Here are the people. Let's give them all rights and do our best to maintain democracy in the new entity created.

This, indeed, is the sensible solution, but is it pragmatic? In the short run, I would say no. We and our brethren abroad (world Jewry, Palestinian expats) have all invested too much energy in the "dream" of sovereignty. Several generation will have to pass before this idea is accepted by more than a handful of activists and a few politicians with hidden agendas.

### **The playing-card parliament**

Another problem is that a “one state” will likely soon turn into the same ethnocentric Palestinian state that was a part of the two-state solution, with one difference: it will now take over the entire territory and the Jewish population will become a minority in it. Currently the Jewish and Arab populations between the Jordan and sea are about balanced. The Palestinians are sure to become a majority soon.

Only a political system that entirely bans ethnic alliances will protect the single state from turning into a reverse model of the one we see now. In the emotional Middle East, such a system would be difficult to maintain. It’s been tried in a way, in Lebanon, to disheartening results.

The accumulating anger of the Palestinians and the ingrained fear and distrust taught to Israelis will likely cause such a parliament built of playing cards to crumble with the first thump on the podium.

What to do then? Since ethnocentric states are an archaic folly, and a non-ethnocentric state seems unmaintainable, perhaps what we should do is just stop thinking “state.” This isn’t my idea. For decades now an entire continent has been moving away from the nationalist dogma towards a new concept.

Currently in Europe, a Belgian is still a Belgian, but that is just one category in a chain. You are first of all human, then a European, then a Belgian, then a Walloon, then a Liegeois. One solution that was raised for the Palestine\Israel question is cantonization. That’s a fine thought, but rather than emulating the Swiss, who reject the EU, I say, let us embrace it.

If we had here two national entities, each with a constitution that allows a limited bias of “national character”, and if both were members of the EU, then perhaps the whole juvenile question of who “rules” the place would become less meaningful, as it does now in Alsace, for example. Movement would be free between the two

parts. One could live wherever one chose to and worship wherever one chose to.

Jews could live in Hebron, for example. They would simply have to live there as good neighbors, subject to the laws of the Palestinian entity, which would be drafted in accordance with EU principles. If Hebron Jews start acting like brutes (as they often do now, while being guarded by the IDF), consequences would follow.

Palestinian refugees could, in turn, return to Haifa and elsewhere. In fact, all Palestinians living in the EU will automatically have the right of return. Would Israelis have to vacate homes for them? I would rather a certain monetary compensation for the suffering of the families helped them purchase those homes or others. It's all open to negotiations, and no concession would seem quite as painful, when both nations are granted both solid sovereignty and the freedom to integrate.

### **An historical debt**

Would the distance from Europe not make this unfeasible or unreasonable? Not at all. Mind you: the next country to the west, Cyprus, is already a member of the EU. Would the Arab world like it? Would Iran? Hard to tell, but I'd like to see Iran threaten the EU following the creation of a Palestinian state. That would really make a lot of sense. The Muslim world has a lot to earn from such an arrangement. It would, for one, allow many Muslim pilgrims to visit Al Aqsa and other holy sites. They would simply need a Schengen visa.

Would the EU itself benefit? Enormously. A stake in the Middle East never hurt. The Americans are investing billions every year in order to maintain one, and yet they don't solve our problems. Turkey has so far not been admitted, true, but it has a population of 80 million and human right issues that often exceed even our own. Would Europe be "opening its gates" to receive unwanted migration

from another part of the world? Not really. Israelis and Palestinians are already immigrating to Europe by the scores. They would probably be less prone to, once the situation here improves.

Christian Europeans could make their home in the land of Christ and the internationalization of Jerusalem would gradually become less and less of an unthinkable idea. I'm not suggesting my plan as a form of bureaucratic crusade (a union of European nations already did preside over this land, with sorry results), but this is a land that should truly welcome all who hold it to be sacred. Currently, converting to Judaism is one of the only ways to immigrate here.

But leave religion aside for a moment. The EU was born of a trade union. It's about economy and is dedicated to maintaining prosperity in its member countries. Prosperity is exactly what we need here, prosperity for all, that would weaken the fundamentalists and instill a sense of future in those who so far sorely lacked it.

One last point: I truly think, as a Jew who lost countless relatives during the Holocaust, that Europe owes this to us. I too am the child of refugees. I have no plans to return to my great grandparents' impressive property in Slovakia. The Slovaks can have it, but the loss of that house and the loss of the demolished village whose ruins are to be found a few steps away from where I write this stem from the same tragedy. The Nakba was a ripple effect of World War Two. The nations that launched that war could easily give us a hand in ending its last battle and recovering.

### **Yes we can**

If they refuse to, we can always just copy their successful model here on a small scale. Israel and Palestine could become a tiny little "Canaanite union". Sound ridiculous? But this would be the compromise between two solutions that are not any more realistic. Think back to the two ethnocentric states solutions. Now think back to the

one state solution bound to eventually become ethnocentric. Now think Benelux.

Think we can't do it? Remember that in the past 100 years, people in the region of the Benelux slaughtered each other in two bouts, with no regard to each others' humanity. This has never happened here. We in the Middle East are at least as civilized and capable of growing together. Yes, we benefit from outside help, but the will to change and the capacity to change will forever remain our own, as will the achievement.

**Chad Ashton Brown**  
**Unlocking Peace in Palestine**  
**(2023)**

The Palestinian/Israeli conflict has remained a persistent and deeply entrenched issue for decades, defying conventional attempts at resolution. This paper explores the potential of Panarchy, a normative political meta-philosophy that advocates for the coexistence of multiple governance systems within a single territory, as a novel and transformative approach to address this protracted conflict. By examining the principles, and key proponents of Panarchy, this paper presents an analysis of its applicability to the Palestinian/Israeli context. It highlights the advantages and benefits of adopting a Panarchist framework, such as fostering peaceful coexistence, accommodating diverse identities, and preserving self-determination. Moreover, it outlines practical steps and strategies for implementing Panarchy in the Palestinian/Israeli region while addressing potential challenges. Ultimately, this paper contends that Panarchy offers a novel, innovative, and viable approach to resolving the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, by offering a fresh perspective on governance itself.

The author — a philosophy student whose research led to the obscure meta-political philosophy of Panarchy — noticed that this non-territorial alternative to nation-states applied perfectly as a solution to the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict. In 2023, months before the attacks of October 7th in the same year, Netanyahu had been doing something of a “press tour” in the months leading up to October 7th, sparking debates on podcasts and in other online forums about possible solutions to the conflict. This inspired the author to write about Panarchy as a model for a “no-state solution” at that time.

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## **Introduction**

The Palestinian/Israeli conflict stands as one of the most enduring and complex conflicts of our time, defying conventional resolution efforts [1]. Decades of diplomatic negotiations, peace agreements, and international interventions have failed to achieve a lasting solution that addresses the root causes and reconciles the deeply entrenched grievances of both parties. [2]

In this context, it becomes imperative to explore alternative approaches that challenge the traditional paradigms of conflict resolution. This paper explores the potential of Panarchy, a political meta-philosophy [3] advocating for the coexistence of multiple governance systems within a single territory [4], as a unique and transformative approach to address the Palestinian/Israeli struggle.

The Palestinian/Israeli conflict has its origins deeply rooted in historical, political, and religious contexts, with competing claims to land, resources, and self-determination driving the antagonism between the two sides. Previous attempts at resolving the conflict have often centered around negotiations for a two-state solution, focusing on the delineation of borders and the establishment of separate entities, and

more recently, a one-state solution, focused on incorporating both communities under one rule. [5]

However, these approaches have been hindered by complex territorial disputes, security concerns, and competing narratives, leading to an impasse that perpetuates the cycle of violence and suffering. [6]

Panarchy, on the other hand, offers a fresh perspective by challenging the prevailing Westphalian Paradigm of territorialism that underpins traditional notions of state-sovereignty and exclusive control over defined territory [7]. It proposes a framework in which multiple governance systems, reflecting the diverse identities and aspirations of different communities, can coexist within a shared space.

By divorcing governance from territorialism, Panarchy transcends the limitations of conventional approaches, acknowledging that diverse communities can have overlapping connection to the same land, without one community necessarily having exclusive control over that land. This approach opens up the possibilities for inclusive coexistence, where both Israelis and Palestinians can maintain their respective cultures, religions, and laws without the need for strict geographical boundaries.

In this framework, each community would have the freedom to maintain its own governance system, with its own laws, judicial systems, education systems, cultural institutions, and public policies, without imposing these onto the other community. This ensures that both groups can exercise genuine self-determination and preserve their unique heritage without fear of forced assimilation or marginalization.

The Palestinian/Israeli conflict serves as a clear-cut example of the limitations of territorialism as a governance model in general. The situation underscores the challenges of a “one-size-fits-all” system, where accurately representing the interests and aspirations of

everyone living within a single geographical area, especially in deeply divided societies, proves to be an impossible task.

This paper will delve into the dynamics of exactly how two communities with different governments can exist and interact peacefully within the same territory. It will examine the theoretical foundations, historical precedents, and practical implications of facilitating such coexistence. Through a comprehensive examination of Panarchy's principles and its potential to address conflicts like the Palestinian/Israeli issue, this paper seeks to contribute to the understanding of alternative paths towards not only peaceful conflict resolution, but also governance in general.

## **Overview of Panarchy**

Panarchy offers a distinct perspective on governance and challenges the conventional understanding of state-sovereignty and exclusive territorial control. The fundamental Principles of Panarchy are as follows:

1. **Non-Territorial:** Laws follow the person, instead of the territory. Governance systems are not tied to specific geographical territories. Thus, the government's authority extends only to those who have chosen it, rather than to defined territories.
2. **Freedom of Association:** Governments exercise jurisdiction based on the voluntary consent of individuals, rather than geographical areas. Individuals have the ability to freely join and leave governance systems of their choice, ensuring that citizens can align with the government that best represents their values and interests.
3. **Individual Autonomy:** No government can impose its laws, services or policies onto another individual, community or government. Each governance system operates independently, respecting the full autonomy and self-determination of other individuals and

communities. Though, voluntary cooperation, coordination and agreement between governance systems is possible without compromising their distinct identities.

4. **Freedom of Innovation:** Individuals and communities are always free to experiment with and create novel governance systems that cater to unique needs and aspirations. This ensures a constantly evolving and diverse landscape of governance options, allowing for innovative solutions to societal challenges and promoting adaptability in response to changing circumstances. Panarchy can be defined as a system in which individuals have the freedom to select and participate in the governance system of their choice, regardless of geographical boundaries. It acknowledges the diversity of human aspirations, values, and political preferences, recognizing that no single system can adequately represent the interests and identities of all individuals within a society.

Instead of your government being decided by where you were physically born or have chosen to live, you decide your government by choosing to sign an explicit contract with the government of your choice. And instead of achieving democracy through voting for representatives, democracy is achieved through allowing individuals to “vote with their feet,” being always free to leave their government and withdraw their support from it, and join another, without being forced to leave their home and migrate to a different geographical area. [8]

All of the services traditionally offered by governments would continue, including security, arbitration, courts, conflict resolution, education, infrastructure, health, unemployment benefits, laws, regulations, etc. The difference would be that the varying packages of benefits offered by different governments (at different prices charged to their citizens), would be voluntarily selected and agreed to, rather than imposed as a monopoly over an entire geographical area, even if that monopoly is subject to majority voting by the citizenry.

The roots of panarchist thought can be traced back to the 19th-century writings of thinkers such as Paul-Émile de Puydt and Gustave de Molinari. Most notably, Paul-Émile de Puydt's short 1860 article, "Panarchie." These early proponents of Panarchy advocated for the voluntary association of individuals and communities with various governance systems, promoting peaceful coexistence and competition among these systems.

In de Puydt's conception of Panarchy, the idea of diverse governments freely chosen and existing side by side within the same territory was simply an extension of the idea of economic competition. The idea was that this would foster a dynamic landscape of competing governments, each striving to deliver the best services at the most competitive costs in order to gain and maintain citizens.

De Puydt [9] writes:

*Under the present conditions a government exists only by the exclusion of all the others, and one party can rule only after smashing its opponents; a majority is always harassed by a minority which is impatient to govern. Under such conditions it is quite inevitable that the parties hate each other and live, if not at war, at least in a state of armed peace. [...]*

*On the civil level we provide against unworkable households by legal separation or divorce. I suggest an analogous solution for politics... [But] my method differs from unjust and tyrannical procedures followed in the past in that I have no intention to do anyone violence... [And] to achieve this, it is absolutely not necessary to subdivide the territory of the State into so many parts as there are known and approved forms of government.*

*It is not a matter of immigration. A man does not carry his native land on the soles of his shoes. I have no intention of resettling the population according to its convictions... I hope we can all go on living together wherever we are, or elsewhere, if one likes, but without*

*discord, like brothers, each freely holding his opinions and submitting only to a power personally chosen and accepted.*

*Thus I demand, for each and every member of human society, freedom of association according to inclination and of activity according to aptitude. In other words, the absolute right to choose the political surroundings in which to live, and to ask for nothing else.*

*Then imagine... that every adult citizen is, and remains, free to select from among the possible offered governments the one which conforms to his will and satisfies his personal needs... here, where you are, without moving.... free not only on the day following some bloody revolution, but always, everywhere, free to select, but not to force his choice on others.*

According to de Puydt, governments in a Panarchist framework would be motivated to optimize their policies and service-delivery to attract and retain citizens voluntarily. Thus, by empowering individuals to opt for the governance system that best aligns with their values, the Panarchist model incentivizes innovation and the pursuit of cost-effective solutions, as well as creates an environment of accountability and responsiveness, putting a brake on the ability of any government to oppress its citizens or demand excessive tax and tribute.

But in addition to incentivizing good governance and promoting responsiveness, de Puydt saw Panarchy as a transformative solution to end political conflicts and usher in an era of progress and harmony. He saw the power to change one's political affiliation peacefully, without having to physically move, as an inherent right, and a profound and revolutionary change that would eliminate the need for struggles over the levers of power, rendering revolutions and conflicts unnecessary.

De Puydt continues:

*What is most admirable about this innovation is that it does away, forever, with revolutions, mutinies, and street fighting, down to the last tensions in the political tissue. Are you dissatisfied with your government? Change over to another! These four words, always associated with horror and bloodshed, words which all courts, high and low, military and special, without exception, unanimously find guilty of inciting to rebellion, these four words become innocent. [...]*

*In each community a new office is opened, a "Bureau of Political Membership". This office would send every responsible citizen a declaration form to fill in, just as for the income tax or dog registration: Question: What form of government would you desire? Quite freely you would answer, monarchy, or democracy, or any other... and once registered, unless you withdrew your declaration, respecting the legal forms and delays, you would thereby become either a royal subject or citizen of the republic. Thereafter you are in no way involved with anyone else's government—no more than a Prussian subject is with Belgian authorities.*

*You take your leave, and the revolution is accomplished without spilling any more than a drop of ink. As it affects you alone, I cannot disagree with it. Your change affects no one else – that is its merit; it does not involve a victorious majority or a defeated minority; but nothing will prevent 4.6 million Belgians from following your example if they wish. [...]*

Panarchy's transformative vision of decentralized governance provides a compelling solution to conflicts by ensuring that political opponents no longer pose a threat to individual autonomy and self-determination.

The principle of voluntary association and individual sovereignty allows every person to freely choose a government that aligns with their values and preferences, without imposing it on others. This eliminates the need for one group to dominate or control the other, as

each community can exercise its own self-governance independently.

When applied to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, Panarchy offers a pathway to resolve the ongoing tensions and strife. With the non-territorial governance model, both Jewish and Palestinian individuals can reside in the same area without compromising their respective customs, traditions, culture, religions, and laws. Each community would have the freedom to maintain its distinct identity and way of life while coexisting peacefully side by side. The fear of one community imposing its will on the other dissipates, and the adversarial dynamic gives way to a harmonious coexistence.

While Panarchy did not gain significant prominence or influence in mainstream political discourse following de Puydt's proposal, its principles and ideas have continued to resonate with proponents of decentralization, and alternative forms of governance, including Anarchists, Communists, Nationalists, and Libertarians, virtually spanning the entire political spectrum. [10]

Voltairine de Cleyre, for instance, was an influential American anarchist, feminist, and social activist who lived from 1866 to 1912. Although she did not use the term "Panarchy" explicitly, her ideas and principles closely aligned with the concept.

De Cleyre's association with Panarchy can be traced to her advocacy for a society based on voluntary cooperation and free association. She summed up the philosophy concisely in one sentence:

"Each choose that method which expresses your selfhood best, and condemn no other man because he expresses his self otherwise."

[11]

**Analysis of the Palestinian/Israeli Conflict**

The concept of territorialism, the idea that a single government system should have exclusive possession or control of a territory, is a relatively recent development in human history. Its origins can be traced back to the emergence of the Westphalian Paradigm in just the 17th century. [12]

At its core, the Westphalian Paradigm established the concept of state sovereignty, the principle that each state is a supreme authority within its territorial boundaries. The paradigm has laid the foundation for the modern international system, shaping the conduct of state-to-state relations, the establishment of national borders, and the framework of international law. [13]

While the concepts of state sovereignty and territorialism have arguably been integral to promoting stability and independence for individual nations, it has also been subject to criticism and evolving interpretations in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent global landscape. [14]

The Palestinian/Israeli conflict is perhaps the clearest example of where the Westphalian Paradigm fails, necessitating the exploration of alternative paradigms.

The roots of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict can be traced back to the late 19th century, with the rise of Zionist aspirations for a Jewish homeland and the subsequent waves of Jewish immigrants to Palestine. [15]

The competing claims to the same territory, intertwined with issues of identity, self-determination, and national narratives, have fueled ongoing tensions and violence between Israelis and Palestinians ever since.

Benjamin Netanyahu, current Prime Minister of Israel who has been serving since December 2022, having previously held the office from

1996 to 1999 and again from 2009 to 2021, has expressed a steadfast position that any resolution to the Israeli/Palestinian conflict should end with Israeli control over certain territories.

In a recent interview [16] Netanyahu stated:

Well, I think the reason you have the persistence of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict, which goes back about a century, is the persistent Palestinian refusal to recognize a Jewish State; a Nation-State for the Jewish people, in any boundary.

Netanyahu's assertion underscores a deeply rooted historical perspective from the Israeli side, which emphasizes the need for recognition and acceptance of Israel's right to exist as a Jewish nation-state. The demand for such recognition is seen as crucial to ensuring Israel's security and legitimacy in the eyes of the international community.

Israel's "right to exist" should be interpreted in terms of the Westphalian Paradigm, meaning that the Jewish people have the right to a geographical territory over which their government has exclusive control and monopoly.

On the other hand, the Palestinian side has also maintained its own historical narrative and claims to the same land, aspiring to establish a state with full sovereignty and self-determination for the Palestinian people. The Palestinian leadership has often insisted on the right to control certain territories, including those currently under Israeli control, as a part of their vision for a Palestinian state. [17]

Mohammed El-Kurd, a prominent Palestinian activist, has stated in a recent interview [18], explaining the Palestinian side:

It's easy to say that this is about Muslims and Jews fighting over the land and so on and so forth. But it's not, it's about the land itself, and it's about people being forced out of their homes.

The plight of Palestinians who have been forcibly displaced from their homes by Israelis has been a profound source of grievance and anguish. [19]

The loss of homes and properties, often spanning generations, has left a lasting impact on the affected communities, engendering feelings of profound injustice, marginalization, and dispossession. The scars of these traumatic events persist through generations, perpetuating a sense of collective loss and a yearning for a redress of the situation.

The Palestinian and Israeli communities both harbor a profound desire to reside in the city of Jerusalem in particular, without being subjected to the governance of the other. Both the Israeli state and the Palestinian state claim the city of Jerusalem as their capital. [20]

However, the conventional Westphalian Paradigm of territorialism presents a formidable obstacle to these aspirations, as it necessitates exclusive control over the territory by one or the other of the parties. In recent developments, it becomes increasingly evident that both the Israeli and Palestinian sides recognize the challenges and limitations of a traditional two-state solution. [21]

The complexities surrounding the allocation of territorial boundaries, access to resources, and shared governance have rendered the pursuit of such a solution arduous and contentious.

As Mohammed El-Kurd says in the same recent interview:

I don't think there exists a geography in which a two-state solution is possible.

Another proposal is simply a one-state solution, in which the government of Israel rules the territory, and Palestinians are simply granted full citizenship, with full rights equal to those of Israeli citizens. However, these approaches both fail because they both fail to

address the underlying issue: the competing claims for self-determination within the same geographical area.

In response, acknowledging the impracticality of exclusive territorial control, both sides appear to be seeking innovative pathways that could potentially lead to a more equitable and harmonious existence, reminiscent of the principles espoused by Panarchy.

El-Kurd states:

The world I envision, not just Palestine, the world I envision is a world that goes beyond states. That goes beyond this framing of power, this hierarchy in which some people rule over other people. This whole idea of nation-states, be it Israel or any other nation-state, it's futile, it's not good, it's exclusive. I think that we can achieve a better world than that.

And at the same time, Netanyahu has proposed something he calls "Imperfect Sovereignty," saying:

My view of how you solve this problem, is a simple principle: The Palestinians should have all the powers to govern themselves, and none of the powers to threaten Israel. Which basically means that the responsibility for overall security remains with Israel.

Netanyahu's proposal of "Imperfect Sovereignty" for Palestine suggests that Palestinians would be granted the authority to govern themselves and implement their own laws and governance structures, allowing for a degree of autonomy and self-determination within the borders of Israel. A non-territorial solution. However, key elements of security and defense would remain under the control and responsibility of the Israeli government exclusively.

This proposal appears to be an attempt to strike a balance between ensuring Palestinian self-governance and safeguarding Israel's secu-

ity interests. By granting the Palestinians substantial powers over internal affairs, Netanyahu aims to address their desire for self-rule while maintaining Israel's desire for full nation-state status within the Westphalian Paradigm. Meanwhile, retaining overall responsibility for security could be seen as an effort to address Israel's legitimate concerns about potential threats and ensuring stability within the territory.

Netanyahu's idea of "Imperfect Sovereignty" represents a departure from the traditional two-state solution with delineated borders, and aligns with certain aspects of Panarchist philosophy, wherein diverse governance systems coexist within the same territory, and demonstrates a willingness to explore innovative approaches to conflict resolution. Under this proposal, Israelis and Palestinians would maintain distinct governance systems and laws, reflecting their distinct identities and interests, within the same territory.

However, this concept of "Imperfect Sovereignty" is likely to generate varied reactions from both Israelis and Palestinians. For Palestinians, the idea of having the security services of another authority imposed upon them might raise concerns about the extent of their self-determination and national identity. The lack of direct control over security forces might also be perceived as a limitation on their ability to protect their interests, as opposed to Israeli interests.

### **Panarchy as a Practical Compromise**

Under the "Imperfect Sovereignty" proposal, while Palestinians may have the ability to govern themselves on internal matters, their security services would remain under Israeli control. This approach could raise concerns about the extent of Palestinian self-determination, as well as the potential for unequal treatment and limited autonomy in security-related matters.

In the current Israeli state, there are already concerns raised by activists and critics, such as Mohammed El-Kurd, about an asymmetry in the courts and policing system that impact Palestinian self-determination and autonomy. [22]

Examples of this asymmetry can be observed in cases where Palestinians and Israelis are subject to different treatment by the Israeli security forces and government based on their respective identities.

Given the historical grievances and claims of asymmetry in treatment, it is likely that Palestinians might hesitate to fully entrust their security solely to the Israeli government, even if granted their own courts and limited internal self-governance. The legacy of past security incidents and the lack of accountability for abuses have contributed to a deep sense of mistrust and apprehension within the Palestinian community.

In contrast, crucial to the concept of Panarchy is the notion that no government can impose its laws (or its services) onto another community or government. This principle ensures that each community maintains full autonomy and self-determination, including the ability to obtain security services according to its own preferences and values. [23]

This means that Palestinians could have their own security services, and Israelis could have their own as well, without either government imposing its services on the other. In this decentralized approach, each community's security needs and preferences can be catered to, fostering a sense of ownership and control over their safety.

Each government would have its own police, military, and judicial systems, serving its respective citizens. The two governments would operate side by side in the same physical space, but without interfering in each other's affairs. There would be no territorial limitations on where each police force can operate, but their focus would

be on ensuring the safety and wellbeing of their respective communities.

Each police force would have authority only over its own citizens. For example, if an Israeli police officer encounters a Palestinian citizen suspected of a crime, they would not have the jurisdiction to make an arrest. Instead, they would have to report the incident to the Palestinian police, who would then handle the matter according to their legal system.

In emergency situations, where swift action is required, police officers might respond to incidents regardless of the citizen's nationality. This would be to ensure public safety and protect lives, regardless of the individual's governance affiliation. After the immediate crisis is addressed, the case would be handed over to the appropriate jurisdiction for further investigation and resolution.

Similarly, when it comes to the military, each government's military would be responsible for national defense and security matters related to its respective citizens. Cooperation and coordination between the two military forces might be necessary for coordinating security efforts and addressing potential threats that affect both communities.

Given that jurisdictions are not based on geographical areas but on individual affiliations with a particular government, a unified approach would be necessary in some instances, such as traffic laws. Governments would need to come to an agreement on standardized traffic regulations that would apply to all roads within the region, though the penalties for traffic violations would be determined by the government under which the offender falls.

In the realm of judiciary, cases involving citizens from different governance systems would be adjudicated according to the guiding principle of "*Actor sequitur forum rei*" — He who acts (the plaintiff) must follow the forum (or court) of the thing involved (the defen-

dant), unless it is a serious crime rising to the level of murder, in which case the defendant may be tried in the plaintiff's court.

Furthermore, in a panarchist framework, the principle of voluntary association would empower citizens of both the Palestinian and Israeli governments to freely change their governance affiliation based on their preferences and values. For instance, some Palestinians might choose to live under the Israeli government, deeming its services a better match for their preferences, or vice versa. Or, there may be a third option available that is even better. Or a fourth and fifth option.

This flexibility in choosing governance systems is particularly significant given recent challenges both the Israeli and Palestinian states have faced in addressing citizen dissatisfaction with policies and actions. [24]

Not only does Panarchy address the long-standing demands of both Israelis and Palestinians for self-determination, but it also offers a potential remedy to the growing frustration among Israelis and Palestinians who find themselves discontented with their current governments but feel powerless to affect meaningful change.

The Panarchist framework fosters an atmosphere of accountability and innovation in governments, resolving a long standing problem of territorialism stemming from the lack of mechanisms to effect meaningful change and voice grievances; a problem which plagues not only the Israeli and Palestinian states, but every state within the Westphalian Paradigm.

By embracing Panarchy, both Israelis and Palestinians would have the opportunity to achieve their aspirations for self-determination and good governance while existing in the geographical area they desire. This transformative framework could potentially pave a way for a new era of cooperation, understanding, and peaceful coexis-

tence, breaking free from the shackles of the past and laying the foundation for a more just and inclusive future for all.

## **Implementing Panarchy**

In “Panarchie,” Paul-Émile de Puydt writes:

*I agree that it is necessary, up to the present, to have the monarchists' consent. For the sake of my argument, I suppose this matter of principle to be settled. Otherwise I am well aware of the difficulty of changing the state of affairs to the way it should be and must become.*

To initiate the practical implementation of Panarchy, a nuanced approach is warranted, requiring willing engagement from both the Israeli and Palestinian states, within the prevailing territorial setup.

A gradual approach to implementation may be prudent, starting with small-scale experiments in specific regions to test feasibility and address challenges, allowing both Israeli and Palestinian governments to operate side by side without imposing their laws on the other.

A pilot project or a demonstration area where Panarchist principles can be tested and showcased can serve as a practical example of how diverse governance systems can coexist within a shared territory, and can foster trust by providing tangible evidence of the viability of Panarchy.

The West Bank or even Jerusalem itself offers an intriguing opportunity to explore the practicality and efficacy in fostering harmonious coexistence between citizens of non-territorial versions of the Israeli and Palestinian governments. This experimental enclave would be structured to ensure that neither exercises exclusive control over the area, and would allow citizens of both governments freedom of movement, adhering to their respective laws and governance systems.

To nurture cooperation and trust between security forces representing both governments, carefully orchestrated joint patrols and other confidence-building measures could be instituted. These collaborative efforts would exemplify the possibility of mutual security arrangements and demonstrate how Panarchy can facilitate the peaceful cohabitation of diverse governance structures within the same geographical area.

As Paul-Émile de Puydt wrote:

*Ultimately, everyone would live in his own individual political community, quite as if there were not another, nay, ten other, political communities nearby...*

*If a disagreement came about between subjects of different governments, or between one government and a subject of another, it would simply be a matter of observing the principles hitherto observed between neighbouring peaceful States; and if a gap were found, it could be filled without difficulties by human rights and all other possible rights. Anything else would be the business of ordinary courts of justice.*

Agreements between the two (or more) governments could outline how the security of each community will be ensured and how cooperation will occur to maintain stability and address common security threats. These agreements would need to reflect mutual respect, recognition, and trust-building between both Israelis and Palestinians. Additionally, safeguards and mediation processes can be established to address potential disputes and ensure the overall stability and functionality of the shared territory.

Panarchy acknowledges the need for coordination and cooperation on issues of common concern, such as security, infrastructure, and environmental management. It emphasizes the importance of dialogue, trust-building, and shared responsibilities among the

diverse governance systems to foster a peaceful and harmonious coexistence.

While navigating the complexities of security arrangements might pose challenges, a Panarchist solution offers a unique opportunity for genuine self-determination, individual freedom of choice, and a mutual respect for the diverse identities and aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians, without barring either community from the territory, nor requiring one community to submit to the other's dominance.

By recognizing the legitimacy of each community's governance and security preferences, a realistic compromise can be crafted that promotes stability, security, and the dignity of all citizens within the shared territory.

Upon the success of a pilot project or demonstration area, the idea can be expanded to include all of Israel and all of the Palestinian territories, effectively turning both governments into the first modern non-territorial governance systems. Furthermore, the idea can be expanded to include more than just the two governance systems, by granting the right to Freedom of Association to all citizens, allowing individuals to opt in and out of their respective governments freely, and allowing new governance service providers to form in the area.

In this way, the city of Jerusalem, and Israel, can truly become the shining beacon on the hill, an example for all the world of how a future of peace and coexistence can subvert and replace the Westphalian Paradigm of war and conflict between people's and nations.

## **Conclusion**

The decentralized arrangement proposed in this paper allows Jews and Palestinians to be neighbors within Jerusalem, governed by their preferred legal systems; Israeli law for the former and Palestinian law

for the latter, promoting individual sovereignty and fostering a cooperative environment.

In this way, Panarchy presents an innovative paradigm that aims to break free from the constraints of territorial governance and offers a pathway towards reconciliation and coexistence in the region.

As we grapple with the challenges of the 21st century, it is crucial to consider bold and innovative alternatives to conventional governance structures. Panarchy, with its emphasis on individual autonomy, freedom of association, and non-territorialism, presents a compelling framework that offers a potential solution to long-standing conflicts and the promotion of peaceful coexistence in shared territories.

In the face of complex geopolitical dilemmas, we must explore and seriously consider unconventional avenues for future governance. The principles of Panarchy, with their potential to reconcile conflicting interests and empower individuals and communities, deserve thoughtful consideration as we strive for a more equitable and harmonious world. In envisioning a future where diverse governance systems coexist side by side, we can move towards a global community that celebrates differences, fosters mutual understanding, and promotes peace and prosperity for all.

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[8] See Albert O. Hirschman's *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Declines in Firms, Organizations, and States*. 1970. Panarchy represents voice by freedom to exit, rather than freedom to vote and/or protest in the streets.

[9] Selections from: Paul-Émile de Puydt, *Panarchy*. 1860.

[10] Notable figures include Max Nettlau, who emphasized the importance of individual sovereignty in choosing governance systems, and John Zube, who advocated for the application of

Panarchy as a means to resolve conflicts and foster harmonious coexistence. As well as Gian Piero de Bellis, Richard CB Johnsson, Michael Rozeff, Benjamin Tucker, Voltairine de Cleyre, Le Grand E. Day, Roderick T. Long, Aviezer Tucker, Gene Callahan, Yves Plasseraud, Dietmar Kneitschel, Roy Halliday, John Gall, and Bruno Frey, among others. Many works by these authors are available at [panarchy.org](http://panarchy.org). These thinkers and proponents have explored different aspects of Panarchy, addressing practical challenges, proposing models for implementation, and engaging in debates about the compatibility of Panarchist principles with existing political and social structures.

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Mohammed A. Bamyeh

The No-State Solution:  
Histories and Realities

(2025)

This text presents the most realistic solution for the Palestinian conundrum. To many, the No-State Solution put forward by the author will appear utopic or, even, absurd. To them we could remind the statement by Arthur Schopenhauer: “All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident.”

The transition from domineering states to voluntary communities is likely to be one of those cases. And Palestine, the crucible of religions and civilizations, might be the laboratory where this transition first takes place.

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“how spacious the revolution; how narrow the journey;  
how grand the idea; how small the state!”

Mahmoud Darwish, *In Praise of the High Shadow*

**Framing Thoughts**

We live in genocidal times. Also, times of other forms of tolerated barbarism. Those are possible only because a powerful state has the capacity to commit them, while other powerful states supply additional means to make them happen.

While based on earlier ideas, this essay has emerged in the middle of this carnage. But it will best be understood if evaluated in terms of the histories it engages, the global contexts it brings into focus, and the future hopes on whose behalf it argues. While the no-state solution will not be implemented tomorrow, nor suddenly and in one step, it is more realistic than any of the phantasms paraded as “realistic” solutions by the powerful players that have themselves produced endless wars, indescribable human suffering, and all kinds of crises they have proved themselves incapable of resolving—precisely because of their “realism.” This piece therefore proposes a different “realism”: one that sees hope to reside not in the forces that have given us our blood-saturated present, but in alternative historical realities, whose continuing resilience holds the vision and promise of a future without states that had power enough to give us the most public genocide in history, but not power enough to stop it.

In addition to its unsuspected realism, a basic virtue of the no-state argument lies in the repeated failure, built-in insincerity, or murderous nature of its alternatives. The war in Gaza, and the eliminationist discourse it has brought to the fore, presents us with the need for a new way of thinking and a radical critique of the very notion that states, the source of all this evil, could be counted upon to resolve it.

While the idea of no-state solution is presented here in the context of Israel and Palestine, it is also informed by global histories that, each in its own way, will present different peoples with their own justification of a no-state solution, everywhere. In that sense, the cause of Palestine appeals globally not only because it conveys the ultimate

nature of a still living, old fashioned colonialism. It also demonstrates the moral bankruptcy of the world state system that generates wars between states repeatedly, and unending struggles over power within them. The intensity of these external and internal conflicts varies of course globally. But like all global phenomena, they display their most intense forms in specific locations, in which the disfiguration they generate becomes visible to all.

In our times, this location is Israel and Palestine. Here we have the struggle in its most basic, pristine form: a state versus a stateless people. But this is the most extreme form of struggles we see everywhere in the world, between states and at least that part of their population they disenfranchise, marginalize, ghettoize, police excessively, expel, or deprive of voice. And in these struggles, oppressed people learn from each other, just as they had done during the anti-colonial struggles. Parallel to that process of rebellious learning, states also learn from each other the arts of control. The global Israelization of the limitless “security” prerogatives of the state and its techniques of controlling populations, and the increasing distance, globally as well, between states and their people, present a truth most revealed in Gaza today: the state will always be the enemy of a category of the people under its jurisdiction. Successful states tend to be those that minimize the size of this category, or the level of its animosity to them. But even here, there is no built-in dynamic to ensure that such an accomplishment will be everlasting. The state always has its own *raison d'état*: its survival depends on it, and it will have to serve its own self-interest, as a state, above any other interest.

We live in an age that has revealed the exact opposite of Thomas Hobbes's defense of strong rule, produced at a time in which he had no empirical materials and little social histories at his disposal. In light of the forever wars in the Middle East and elsewhere, the unlimited “security needs” of the state, and the enormous destruction it has wrought upon the world through colonial histories, world wars, and evident incapacity to learn from any of this, the lesson is

clear. The greatest threats to human life are those states that are armed to the teeth, and are such because they constantly prepare for the next war: one that is guaranteed by virtue of their own existence as powers standing in the world against other states and other populations.

In addition, we live at a time when another illusion has been thoroughly shattered: the capacity of democracy to tame such a monster. And that is because democracy has always been practiced as a partial endowment: some privileged population is allowed to have it, but not most of those who have to live with its consequences. If the majority of US electorate elects a dangerous demagogue with his finger on all buttons of mass destruction—as they have repeatedly and also recently done—someone else in the world will have to suffer the result of their democratic choice. And the same is true within countries: Israel, for example, controls all the population living between the Jordan river and the Mediterranean. Yet, only half of that population has democratic rights; the other half: no rights at all. This apartheid situation is also called “democracy,” even as it produces a government that explicitly wants to expel or exterminate half of its population.

The same dynamic, to a lesser extent, can be observed everywhere where long-time residents, who have become part of the societies in which they live, continue to be regarded as unworthy of citizenship rights, or as second or third-class citizens. Now we know that even democracy can produce a fascist outcome, and further that no “checks and balances” stand in the way of such a takeover if it is sufficiently supported by the privileged part of the population allowed to vote.

Finally, this essay emerges out of a need to address the most certain outcome of the Gaza war: the end of the will to coexist. Few Israelis today support a two-state solution, and the majority of Israeli Jews want all Palestinians expelled, including those with Israeli citizen-

ship. Likewise, it is no secret that Israel is reviled more than ever in the entire region in which it lives, and it is hard today to meet many who are willing to live with such a criminal and unaccountable state in their midst. We are of course here talking about people, not governments that represent nobody. But in the long run, it is the popular spirit that will carry the way. Given this climate, we must either prepare for the next 100 years of war, or cease to think that the instrument that has brought about all this carnage, namely the modern state, can be counted upon as the means to end it.

States do sometimes manage to end wars, which does not mean that we should forget that they themselves had started them, or that the end of one war often entails beginning preparation for the next round of conflicts. The European states that had fought the 30-years war were the entities that agreed to end it. But while they ended one war, they went on to create other wars, global empires and, eventually, world wars. The fact that the monster does not solve the problems that are ingrained in its capacity and disposition, is evident today in how those same states have not been troubled at the most public genocide in history, and some of the most important states in the world—the US, Germany, Britain, and France—actively supported it with weapons, cynical diplomacy, repression of internal dissent, and censorship.

The support for the Zionist project by the great powers, combined with an increasingly evident complicity, cynicism, or short-sighted self-interest of many Arab governments, has provided us with one basic fact in this theater of struggle: the Palestinians are not a priority for any government. This fact is verified by history: the two-state solution, for example, comes into diplomatic currency after each crisis—typically when the conflict becomes violent—only to be dropped once the crisis has passed. And the “crisis” is often a result of something spectacular the Palestinians have done to bring attention to their cause, and in such a way as to compel diplomatic discourse to pay lip service to the just nature of their demands—until

they can be forgotten again. We have seen all this before: suffering people are not going to be a priority for governing orders, unless they force, by their own spectacular action, such orders to pay serious and continuing attention to them. In the case of the Palestinians, the generous attention lasts until they are sufficiently and collectively punished for protesting their fate.

There is no state-based solution to this conflict, and there has never been. The accumulating facts on the ground standing in the way of the two-state solution are well known, but those “facts on the ground” are themselves a product of older realities, the same ones that also stand in the way of the alternative one-state solution: a profoundly lopsided balance of power between Israel and the Palestinians; the fact that the Palestinians are not enough of a priority for any government; and a staunchly exclusionist settler colonial mentality that had accompanied Zionism from its beginnings. Yet none of these factors mean that the Palestinians will somehow disappear, along with the global struggle they epitomize against state violence.

Until its unlikely revision, the Zionist project can only generate three outcomes for the Palestinians:

1. Apartheid, which is the current reality, in which a single state subjects the populations it controls to different sets of laws and separate geographic enclaves;
2. Ethnic cleansing, which was substantially carried out in 1948, and became an explicit Israeli objective during the Gaza war;
3. Genocide, which was foreshadowed by various massacres before and since 1948, until the capacity and willingness to carry it out was displayed in full view of the world in Gaza.

If a call for a “no-state solution” is theoretically valid anywhere, the current situation in Palestine provides us with an empirical verification that humanity benefits more from the absence of the state than

from its existence. This article sets out to argue on behalf of this thesis. The reason why the war in Gaza is so suggestive is because its intensity shows more clearly dynamics that are also operating with less ferocity, but no less consequences elsewhere. For the Gaza war was simply a culmination of eight previous wars, varying in intensity, that that small territory had witnessed within less than two decades. This frequency of wars tells us that something is deeply wrong here, so wrong that it requires us to think beyond “realistic solutions,” all of which have demonstrably and miserably failed. The fact that after each failure the only response was even more violence—each cycle of which interrupted by a simple forgetfulness of that forlorn, poor territory—means that diplomatic “realism” is not only useless: “realism” here is simply a temporary pause of the slaughter. It is time, therefore, for a ruthless criticism of such realism, for thinking beyond its suffocating limits. And it should be clear in what follows that the question concerns not only Israel and Palestine. But that is where the hidden nature of the modern state reveals itself most fully, and especially when the state is justified by a fatal combination of unaccountable power and unquestioned nationalist self-vindication. The story of Gaza, therefore, has been and will be the story of others, far away.

### **Structure of the argument**

This article illustrates the histories and realities of the “no-state solution” in four steps, with specific reference to Palestine and Israel, and including wider implications when appropriate.

First, a brief illustration of the internally generative capacity of society without a state, with a focus on how Palestinian society had reemerged, as society and resistance movement, after its dispossession.

Second, a broader sketch of the no-state as an already familiar experience to large populations in the broader Middle East region, that is,

social life organized outside or parallel to the state as a historical and current reality.

Third, an account of the distorting dynamics surrounding the emergence of competitive modern states in an increasingly dysfunctional region, with a settler colonial system at its core.

Finally, a consideration of the realism of the no-state idea, including the shortcomings of ordinary “realism” as typically understood. This includes how realism ought to be considered in the context of current realities, revolutionary histories, and common approaches in social science.

## **1. The revival of Palestinian society**

It is well-known that Palestinians scarcely counted in Zionist thought. They counted even less in a larger European colonial thought that saw Zionism to be its natural corollary—as exemplified in Lord Balfour’s letter to Lord Curzon in 1919 soon after British imperialism came to control Palestine after WW1. Zionism, Balfour wrote then, was “*rooted in age-long traditions, in present needs, in future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires and prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land.*” Those “Arabs” were simply expected to somehow noiselessly disappear. In the 1950s, four decades after Balfour, we still encounter the same sentiment, when John Foster Dulles echoed Ben Gurion’s dismissive words about the dispossessed Palestinians: “the old ones will die, and the young ones will forget.”

Yet, subsequent Palestinian generations that grew up in the diaspora developed a strong commitment to Palestine, visible in their organizational efforts and the survival of a vital sense of Palestinian identity. That accomplishment was facilitated by three factors, all of which had to do with Palestinian agency, and none with the help of any state:

1. the continuing role of traditional Palestinian culture;
2. the rise over time of a parallel revolutionary culture; and
3. the building of a globally networked Palestinian civil society.

The first factor grew out of the necessity of organizing life in the refugee camps, but more generally from the mutual help needs to which diasporic life gave more urgency. The refugee camps in particular were meant to be temporary settlements. That meant lack of many elements of continuity, such as property rights and their recognition, building permits, connections to urban infrastructures, and work restrictions. Nadya Hajj (2017) has documented how with the passing of generations, all these rules were negotiated according to the familiar patterns of Palestinian village culture, including how to rebuild refugee camps destroyed in wars. Without much in the way of state help, old and familiar patterns of mutual help, local solidarity, forbearance and hospitality, simply migrated from the Palestinian village to the refugee camps [1]. There they continued to do what they had always done, namely organize life at the local level and in ways that were accepted without need for coercion, state law, external regulation, and in situations—such as in Lebanon until the late 1960s—when the state entered the camps only as a source of repression, threat and surveillance.

By the late 1960s, a new culture emerged in the refugee camps: modern revolutionary culture. While its origins date back to the early 1950s, revolutionary culture did not become a mass phenomenon until after the Arab armies defeat in 1967, which finally demonstrated to the Palestinians that the liberation of their homeland was now their sole responsibility. That revolutionary culture expressed itself in the form of modern organizations that functioned as political parties, along with militias and distinct ideologies; operated across the refugee camps as well as everywhere Palestinians lived; had

conscious and proud affinities to anti-colonial movements and thought across the global south; and fostered meritocratic criteria of leadership that bypassed kin or other traditional considerations. In the refugee camps, these two cultures, the traditional village and the modern revolutionary culture, lived side by side, and together gave a deeper and more programmatic shape to Palestinian identity.

At the same time, another global process was underway, which involved the building of an interconnected Palestinian civil society (Bamyeh 2007). One form that civil society took was quasi trade unionism or professional associations, with organizations whose name was often preceded with “general” as appellation—as in “General Union of Palestine” students; workers; women; pharmacists; physicians; and so on. Another form that civil society took was of charitable or community associations carrying the name of their descendants’ original city—as in Yafa association, Haifa association, and many others, across many countries. As time went on, those were joined by further research outfits, heritage preservation initiatives, educational institutions, and further types of professional associations. The larger of those eventually became members of the PLO, just as did all of the revolutionary organizations until 1987.

Through those processes, Palestinian society regrouped itself, precisely during a period when it was expected to disappear. The reemergence of Palestine as a strong identity rooted in a networked social reality testified to the self-organizing capacity of society, precisely in the absence of its state. Always present in that story was a sense of injustice that called forth resistance, and resistance, in turn, brought forth the forces of agency and the practices of self-determination.

Obviously, the fact that people have or are capable of developing tools to allow them to live without a state is no justification for denying them a state, if that is how they imagine their liberation, which is how most Palestinians imagine it today. But they imagine

that because they are dispossessed by a state. In this sense, to imagine liberation to take the form of an independent, sovereign state is perfectly understandable, and does not in fact contradict the point of this essay: a two-state solution would still be preferable to the occupation. And by extension, a one-state solution would be preferable to the two-state solution. Yet further, a no-state solution would be preferable to the one-state solution, since it liberates us from the expected struggles to take over the state and its power; immunizes ethnicity, religion, and all other identities against being mobilized into state-oriented power struggles; and removes the instrument that has generated this unending suffering to begin with.

One therefore should not think of these state options (two, one, none) as mutually exclusive choices, but in order of preference. Each solution, after all, solves some problems as it creates others. The question therefore concerns which solution solves most while creating least problems. The central point to which the next two sections are devoted is that the modern state in our region has been a colossal failure, compounded manifold by the entry into the region of a determined and genocidal settler colonial project that by its very nature must claim unlimited security needs—which means unlimited right to oppress, dispossess and criminalize large populations, indefinitely. Therefore, one needs a framework to consider the state as the perennial problem and think beyond it. And this critique addresses primarily “really existing” states, not non-existing states that are legitimately imagined by the oppressed to be their salvation.

The Palestinian cause remains an epic story of our times, not only because of its great tragedy, but also because it reveals human ingenuity, capacity for survival against great odds, betrayals, magnificent armies, and great powers’ unabashed hostility. This cause, and the collective sense of peoplehood around it over several generations, was an accomplishment that has taken place not only without the help of any state, but even more so against the wishes of some of the most important states in the world.

## **2. The no-state realities**

Palestinians are not alone in crafting a mode of collective life without a state. Rather, their experience is a dramatic variation of other populations' capacities for living without a state or under a hostile one. If we extend our look into the larger region around Palestine, we notice analogous social processes that are less tied to the specific eliminationist logic of settler colonialism, but to something that other state systems in the region share with colonial structures: states designed to treat society with suspicion. Recent decades have witnessed intensified state repression throughout the region, and a vast increase in investments in coercive and military functions of the state [2]. During the same time, we witness the rise of parallel societies, shanty towns, and informal networks that organize common life outside the state (Bayat 2007, Ismail 2006, Singerman 2020), and eventually mass rebellions nearly everywhere in the region in 2011 and 2019.

The definite disengagement of state and society in the Arab region became evident when modern states began to abandon social roles they had assumed or tried to assume in an earlier postcolonial era. As we know, early postcolonialism was teeming with ideas of state-engineered development, progress, sovereignty, equality and popular participation. Those times were filled with hopes for a helpful, benign, and progressive state. In the 1950s and 1960s, such hopes galvanized around new governing revolutionary elites who typically came from marginal or rural social backgrounds, typically young military "free officers," who were often surrounded by an aura of charisma [3]. The eventual decay of the free officers' systems was a combined effect of the unaccountable structure of their state and its diminishing capacity—even as the state found it necessary to pour ever more resources into repression and the military.

Other transformations compelled large numbers of people to rely more on each other and regard social networks as their most reliable source of help. Those included demographic growth and rural to

urban migrations. The latter in particular led to what sometimes is called “ruralization” of cities (rather than simply “urbanization”)—in essence mimicking the phenomena witnessed earlier in Palestinian refugee camps: cooperative village cultures simply migrate to new urban settlements, not because of any recalcitrant “traditionalism,” but because they are necessary sources for life in hostile environments. We begin to see the origins of shanty towns, built cooperatively but illegally and without support infrastructure, but with mutual help and mutual recognition of rights, until millions of such small efforts led to large facts on the ground that states found necessary to recognize. The neoliberal era, in particular, also taught large numbers of people throughout the region how to live without the state, especially as the state itself transformed into something akin to an organized crime syndicate, at whose pinnacle stood a political and business elite fused as a single integrated group (Haddad 2011, Beinín et al. 2021, Leenders 2024).

These two processes, one from the top and the other from below, led to a general environment in which more and more people began to treat the state not as helpful factor, but as something to work their way around; or as something to avoid; or as an enemy. Much of the popular literature from the pre-revolutionary era beginning in 2011 rotates in fact precisely around a radical critique of the state and a parallel celebration of common social or historical cultures of populace (Bamyeh 2025a).

Eventually, the state also became accustomed to treat much of its population as a natural nemesis to guard against. Out of this equation there emerged the two waves of Arab uprising in 2011 and 2019. The uprisings displayed an originality noteworthy in that (unlike past revolutions or social movements in the same region) they generated no revolutionary leadership that would be in a position to take over the state. In that sense, the revolutions seemed more energized by a desire for revenge against the state than by a clear plan to transform the state itself into an instrument of the revolution. The

central slogan of all those movements rotated around overthrowing the “regime.” But given the revolution’s anarchist style and lack of interest in leadership or even guidance, it would seem that their unconscious slogan was more about overthrowing the state [4].

In the following section, we explore the dynamics out of which emerged this contemporary revolutionary perspective.

### **3. Settler colonialism and the modern state**

The contemporary revolutionary perspective outlined above could partially be traced to historical foundations that had never disappeared, even though they retreated to the background during the hopeful era of early postcolonialism [5]. The relation of modern states to populations can be charted out with varying degrees of complexity, but we can outline some basic dynamics that have led to the increasing gulf between the two. Before the colonial era, states in the region tended to be relatively unintrusive, and for a few decades after colonial times they were entrusted by much of their population as possible engines of social justice, progress, and modern emancipation. Prior to modern states, historical patterns of social organization in the Middle East involved systems of multiple and overlapping loyalties; vague borders that could be crossed with ease; and unrestricted movement of populations. The latter in particular was significant given the centrality of long-distance commerce, pilgrimage and the networked nature of learned communities, tribal populations and religious orders throughout the region. The historical state was only occasionally visible to most people. There was of course an empire at the top, but most people did not experience it directly, especially as the empire tended to leave people alone to govern themselves according to their own laws and rules, so long that taxes were paid and no rebellion happened.

As a result of that generally decentralized order, local autonomies were the customary norm, and the major Middle Eastern cities tended to be historically multi-ethnic as well as multi-religious, and in such a way that no state, real or imagined, could serve as the required depository of any particular collective identity. The trans-historical reality that I had described at length elsewhere (Bamyeh 2019b: 137–203) was more visible than it would be in the colonial and postcolonial eras: the state operated according to a “science” specific to it—typically Machiavellian—while popular cultures operated according to completely different, capacious but familiar mores best captured in terms of what people tended to recognize as “our traditions.” The separation of these two realms—science of rule and morals of ordinary life—is evident in the sharp differences between the “mirrors of princes” genre and actual histories of states on the one hand, and the traditional patterns of everyday life on the other. The state was not expected to “represent” society or stand in for its “historical mission.” Only in later, nation-state times, would such claims emerge and appear necessary.

However, that historical reality had important social consequences, since “traditional life” was always lived away from the state, and there was no imagination that it could be deposited into it. For example, Jewish communities thrived in the entire region, with main concentrations in Iraq, Persia, Egypt, Yemen, and throughout North Africa. For centuries, few Jews who had lived throughout the region felt compelled to go to their “promised land,” which was nearby and where nothing prevented them from doing so [6]. Ethnicity and religion did not operate as exclusive sites of loyalty, especially as they were mixed with a rich fabric of other equally important forms of belonging, including guild, tribe, spiritual order, kin, locality, learned community, and patrimonial loyalties. Most of those, especially guilds and tribes, had their own customary conflict resolution rules—more practical and understood by their constituents than state law. One did

not have the framework that would develop later in European nationalist ideology and disseminate globally afterwards, whereby the nation will be foregrounded as a primary depository of collective loyalty.

Palestine is important in this context because it marks a location in the global south upon which a state that explicitly regarded itself to be “Western” would impose itself unto an alien environment. It came to the region with an aggressive, European-style nationalism, including sharpening the meaning of borders in a way that had been unfamiliar to all other populations in the region. This new reality would be first discovered by Palestinian peasants in the summer of 1948 when, following the Armistice, they sought to return from their refugee camps back to their fields in time for the harvest. Whenever found they were shot at the borders of the new Israeli state (Glubb 1954: 556). That was a new experience of what borders would mean from that point on: modern borders (and certainly not only in Palestine) would become a place of death and human abjection (Halle 2024, Washington 2023).

Since borders began to acquire their coercive meaning, nothing worked well in the entire region, until today. Between 2023-25 the region was teeming with six major wars, including Gaza, Sudan, Libya, Yemen, Syria, and Lebanon, in addition to smaller zones of hostilities, not to mention a history of civil wars in Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon, Algeria, as well as frequent foreign interventions, and periodic mass rebellions. The region houses countries facing financial collapse next to others that are fabulously rich, thus enjoying the dubious distinction of being the most unequal region in the world. The enormous wealth squandered on this most militarized region on earth (Kamel 2024) have only created opportunities for more wars; more reliance on force as means to resolve conflict; more illusions about sabotage and intrigue as means to attain influence; and ruling orders whose main purpose is the upkeep of the unaccountable kleptocracies that run most states.

None of the catastrophes mentioned above are unfortunate accidents. Rather, they are built into the modern political structure of the region. With the possible exception of the states that could claim some form of historical rootedness, all states in the region, including Israel of course, are imposed structures. None emerged out of organic cultural development, needs of civil society, or correspondence to any social reality on the ground. Each state imposed itself on some unwilling population—which is what new states anywhere typically do. Israel in particular required, to be established, numerous massacres; a war that involved expelling three quarters of the Palestinian populations; followed by the confiscation of their land and properties for the benefit of Jewish settlers. This new reality could only be maintained with a new understanding of “borders”: they must be made as impenetrable as possible. Over time, with the resulting militarization of the entire region, such a strong conception of borders became the way for each state to carve itself out as a fortified enclave in what had been an interconnected region. Many of those new enclaves were not imagined to be able to stand on their own without the support or even active protection of a great foreign power—as in the gulf region, or the Iraqi monarchy until 1958, or Israel from its inception.

Violence—colonial, anti-colonial, postcolonial—became therefore a regular feature of political life in the region. The states were set up and continue to think of each other as competitors. This reality is evident not only in their ordinary political conflicts, but more destructively in how they cause all local conflicts within any specific country to become an interminable civil war. The examples abound, including Lebanon, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Sudan. In all those arenas, civil wars were made more lasting, if not instigated, by regional powers vying with each other for control, namely by sponsoring or creating different factions dependent on them, within countries facing internal crises that could have been resolved without civil wars.

We need only consider the histories and costs in lives and resources of those various wars to understand the enormous destruction to various local societies caused by modern states, whose only regional playbook teaches primarily the art of competition among states [7]. In their modern version, these states had been built after the European model, where states too thought of each other essentially as competitors within webs of constantly shifting alliances, until they thoroughly destroyed Europe twice within just three decades of the twentieth century. Eventually, out of the ashes of European wars there emerged something called the European Union, and along with it, the principle (until this writing at least) of free movement within Europe—basically mimicking the historical reality that colonial European powers had destroyed in the Middle East.

While the European transformation may signal that states can learn from their mistakes, we have no mechanism to ensure that these same states, so long that they continue to have enough power at their disposal, would not forget all that learning one day. The rise of right-wing populism in Europe, the US, and elsewhere verifies that all this “progress” in state learning and humanizing can be undone, very quickly. The more the state becomes its own *raison d'être* (rather than as an instrument for a purpose other than itself), the state is bound to, at least periodically, encounter factors that foster irrational politics (Bamyeh 2000: 59-87).

New states often begin their career as natural enemies of a substantial portion of the populations under their jurisdiction. Memoirs of intellectuals who participated in the public life of Middle Eastern colonial entities in their early days, such as Ma'ruf al-Rasafi in Iraq, already noted that by imposing a weak dynasty on that new country, the British guaranteed that the dynasty would continue to rely on British imperial protection—a pattern similar to what the British had earlier engineered in the smaller gulf emirates. Similar protectorate systems—especially ones ruled by a new and less rooted political class, operated according to the same logic. The new rulers were

aware of their dependence on Western imperial powers as a force against other competing states, but also against opposition among their own population. The complaints of Arab autocrats as recently as in 2011 about lack of support by Barack Obama against the raging internal rebellions then, showcased how aware ruling elites continued to be of their dependent status [8]. A clear mark of such dependency was a pervasive crisis of “legitimacy,” long seen as a core problem of modern Middle Eastern states [9].

The absence of legitimacy also meant the absence of security. In this sense, insecurity is not the result of some irrational “terror,” but of states rejected by populations they have victimized. This is an especially acute problem for the Israeli state in particular. Based on an ideology of eternal Jewish victimhood, the state is ideologically and culturally designed as to be incapable of seeing itself as a victimizer. During the Gaza war, there was a near consensus among its Jewish population that it had done nothing wrong to justify attacks on it by its dispossessed victims. Out of such self-congratulatory ideology of innocence, there emerged a collective opinion mandating unlimited savagery against “human animals” who had no reason to complain. The fact that the Palestinians were therefore treated with increasingly vindictive cycles of violence, but regarded with much sympathy by most ordinary people in the surrounding region, could only make Israel feel even less secure and more threatened by a region that increasingly rejects it, and for increasingly good reasons. Over time, the behavior of the Israeli state could only magnify the rejection of it in the vast territory surrounding it. Which then generates even more security “needs.”

In this case, escalating security needs, without a natural limit, are symptoms of a profoundly unjust system. In general, security becomes a problem when you have many enemies. In the case of systems founded and maintained by acts of injustice, you have many enemies because you have created them. You can, of course, resolve the problem of security through means other than more force against

those who are already victims of your force. But if you do not care too much about acquiring legitimacy from the victimized population, then obviously you are going to have a security problem, and in that case you deserve it. The fundamental law here is that security problems are often generated by the powers that complain about it.

The insecurity problem is inherent to all settler colonial projects, which are all based on an idea and a practice, or a cultural perspective and material claims. Namely, unrelenting racism toward the indigenous population, which in turn justifies control by the settler population of the natives' lands and resources, as well as their expulsion or near extermination when they stand in the way. There has never been a settler colonial project in which this combination of idea and practice was not observed, and no settler colonial project ever came to an end without either abandoning this combination, as attempted in South Africa, or through revolutionary violence, as in Algeria.

Otherwise, the native population becomes a permanent "security problem" for the settler colonial system, so long its racism remains inseparable from its material appetite. For example, when Gaza was under direct Israeli occupation between 1967-2005, 7000 Jewish settlers were encouraged to move there, living next to but completely separate from 1.5 million Palestinians. The 7000 settlers controlled 45% of the land of Gaza, and fully half of its water resources. In simple math, less than 0.5% of the population fully controlled half of the essential resources of life in a desperately poor territory, in which 99.5% of the crammed population had no voice and no right to protest. The more extensive and ongoing settlement project in the West Bank and Jerusalem follows a similar logic, with much larger settler populations, greater power to extract land, scarce water, infrastructure, and unlimited "security" claims, against a native population with no voice and, again, no right to protest.

The fact that this whole system is illegal under international law, and that its illegality does not stand in the way of its further consolidation, has meant that those subject to it had two options: to surrender to their increasingly unbearable fate, or resist in the terms laid out long ago by Malcolm X: “by any means necessary.” In terms of the right to resist when the law is useless, Malcolm X’s statement may be interpreted as such: the oppressed have the right to resist by any means, including violence. The fact that the “means” chosen by them may prove ineffective does not negate that they, and they alone, have the right to choose styles of resistance, learn from them, and adjust them as they, and they alone, deem necessary. The validity of this principle becomes most established in the eyes of the oppressed to the extent that no one else is helping undo the injustice, leaving them alone in full control of their decision as to how to resist. Malcolm X was in effect introducing a fundamental law of ethics: those who have never helped undo injustice, have no right to criticize the method of resisting it.

In contrast to the settler colonial system over Palestine, most modern Arab states had a different problem. Being substantially colonial creations whose existence has disrupted regional historical linkages, they had to confront strong broader affinities that transcended their designated borders. Pan-Arabism, pan-Islamism, or leftist internationalism eyed the national state with suspicion, preferring larger, non-colonial imaginations of political order. In other words, the trans-border imagination looked for political orders signifying indigenous choice, historical rootedness, meaningful global missions, or longed for a disappearing environment of borderlessness and traditional interdependence.

Yet as mentioned before, like in much of the global south, the modern Arab state was in its early days seen as harbinger of postcolonial hopes, including governance endowed with civic and responsible virtues. That feeling was strongest for about two decades under the “free officers” type of regimes that overthrew the old aristocratic

orders and unleashed a wave of enthused populism. Those new elites were originally seen as “man of the people” type, close to poor or marginal social segments to which they themselves belonged or to which they had been close. The “free officers” had little relation to the old aristocratic elites that, after 1948, were increasingly seen as responsible for the loss of Palestine and as being lackeys of their former colonial patrons.

During the last two decades of the 20th century, the political systems established by the new officers in several countries began to be broadly regarded as corrupt, and enthusiasm for their leaders waned dramatically. When Gamal Abdel Nasser died in 1970, five million people marched in his funeral, and ordinary people in the entire Arab region genuinely felt the passing of a legend of postcolonial hopes. By contrast, no one marched in the funeral of his fellow free officer and successor, Anwar Sadat, after he was assassinated eleven years later. Even less remarkable was the fate of Sadat’s successor, Hosni Mubarak, who was overthrown in a genuine popular revolution thirty years later.

The reasons as to why such postcolonial systems began to be seen as “corrupt” in all countries that witnessed mass uprisings in 2011 and 2019 are multiple. But a principal underlying fact was the rise of a new neoliberal elite from which no wealth flew out in any social direction—in sharp contrast to the old patrimonial elites or the earlier free officers’ systems of social welfare. In this light, “corruption” was another name for this new reality, in which most social wealth was monopolized by a new and alien economic class, whose wealth was substantially based on its connection to the upper echelons of government. What the Arab rebels called “corruption” in 2011 and 2019, therefore, was simply a code name for their largely accurate perception that political and economic elites had become one and the same. But now with a “business model” that required no circulation of enough wealth in exchange for enough loyalty by large enough segments of the populace.

In that way, the Arab state came back to being broadly rejected by its people, and we see that in how the revolutionary waves of 2011 and 2019 rejected what they called “the regime,” but were at the same time suspicious of all elites. Such revolutions may seem unfamiliar to us in showing determined opposition to the regime but little interest in the state. My own analysis of this puzzle traces it to historical memory in its popular form, that is, as *judgment* (Bamyeh 2025a). It is not, in other words, the kind of memory that registers all details, but one that emerges as a social consensus [10], on the necessity for a revolution that does not repeat the mistakes of a previous one. And this can be translated precisely in the style and apparent consensus during the revolutions themselves: we have tried vanguards, saviors, free officers, and political parties before. We have tried neoliberalism. We have tried Saddam Hussein. All evolved to be self-serving and destructive. As one taxi driver opined about politicians: “they are all good; it is the seat of power that corrupts.” This perspective may itself be just a rediscovery of an older wisdom about the fundamentally corrupting nature of the state. Elsewhere I had summarized that perspective, overlooked yet encountered in many treatises of premodern Islamic political philosophy: “if you put a pure person in a polluted place, you more pollute the person than purify the place” (2019b: 170).

This ancient perspective on the state was evidently reawakened after the exhaustion of the great hopes of post-independence, further diminished by the impotence of postcolonial states, most evident in their incapacity or unwillingness to do much for the cause of Palestine. The anti-state consciousness of the Arab uprisings, therefore, emerged from an accumulating social memory as a form of judgment on persistent state failures, in spite of changes of its personnel and mission throughout the postcolonial era. In other words, anti-statism did not emerge because the people had read books about anarchism, nor because those millions saw themselves as anarchists or even knew what the term meant. But this is organic anarchism

(Bamyeh 2019a), the kind that emerges out of the fact that for generations, large strata of the population, living outside the state, without the state, or around the state, produced this unself conscious but socially rooted anarchist culture, whose form they expressed in the uprisings of recent times.

#### **4. Reality/realism**

Those who consider themselves realists must answer the question as to whether the two- or one-state solutions are any more realistic than what is being proposed here. In what follows, I would like to conclude with two propositions about “realism” itself as an approach to what we call “reality.” First, that excessive realism is generally incapacitating. Second, “understanding” reality according to the prevailing approaches in modern social science typically leads to a dead-end. While defenders of the status quo will not be bothered by either proposition, both are especially important for those who wish to change it.

First, those who have changed history in dramatic ways have often been unrealistic people. For example, a prophet, fixating on his mission and not paying enough attention to the might of empire, ending up on a cross. The story, as we know, does not end there. What had appeared as a disastrous failure at the beginning, opened up a path to a new world culture. Unwavering commitment to cause, whatever reality may suggest, has always been the heart and soul of revolutionary fervor. During the heat of the Iranian revolution, when its odds were still not clear, Khomeini was asked by his aides about what he thought the Americans would do. Reportedly he replied that because we were on the right path, the Americans would be with us. But we know, and as Khomeini himself would find out, that was a delusion, and that ordinary politics do not work that way.

But here we had a man who had an iron resolve, an uncompromising vitality, and an unshakable conviction that he was on the right path. Whatever one thinks of his ideology, those attributes had always been the fundamental ingredients of the revolutionary spirit, which rarely follows the dictates of reality. And that is because reality that one wishes to destroy typically appears immune to challenge, precisely because it is solidly established as reality. That, after all, was how the shah of Iran seemed to be on the eve of the revolution; or as Batista seemed to be when Castro and a handful of his comrades sailed on a little boat to Cuba in the most amateurish way; or as the legendary Spanish empire seemed as Simón Bolívar persisted in his fight against it after thoughtless campaigns resulting in five disastrous failures.

Or, as have the Palestinians been doing since their *Nakba*: dispossessed, weak, and dispersed, they took it for granted that they must fight a mighty enemy supported without limits by the greatest power in today's world. The Palestinian movement, therefore, has generally been unrealistic. But this lack of realism was also associated with its most rallying moments, such as the 1936 revolt, the great mobilization out of the refugee camps in the late 1960s, the first intifada beginning in 1987, the "marches of return" in 2018, or even the "Aqsa Flood" in 2023. And it must be mentioned in this connection that the greatest misfortunes that bedeviled this movement, such as the withdrawal from Beirut in 1982 or the Oslo agreement, were the handywork of "realistic" minds. But revolutionary histories everywhere show us that feeling the necessity of revolution is proportional to the immovable character of a reality that consciousness regards as loathsome. Which is why revolutions, including the Palestinian revolution, must not only reject reality, but also realism as a main compass of their art of movement. And that is because realism means surrendering to a reality so repugnant that resistance, even when it includes death and sacrifice, appears preferable to it.

Second, the presumably best way to understand an unresponsive reality, namely through a “science” devoted to it, is generally unhelpful for those who wish to change it in dramatic ways. I am talking of professional analytical approach to reality, such as that practiced by sociologists, political scientists, or economists. Like myself, those analysts spend much time trying to understand why reality is the way it is and not another. Their analysis typically ends when they understand this point. The “scientific” analysis ends up saying that this reality has come about by a structure that had been necessary to bring it about or sustain it. But simply “understanding” the solid structures that had been necessary for this reality, objectionable as it might be, gives you no handy tools to change it, precisely because you have *understood it*. Thus, the kind of scientific approach to reality that takes and highlights the role of “structures” leads nowhere beyond existing reality, even when it makes us understand why it is the way it is. And while this understanding might be valuable as an item of pure knowledge, it also immobilizes action when it shows no way beyond what the “understanding” had posited as structures and necessities.

That is why people who do revolutions do not typically go to graduate school, and do not become sociology professors. This is not to devalue professional practices of knowledge, but a way of saying that those who do revolutions cannot pay too much attention to immobilizing knowledge. Instead, they seek knowledge that allows action, even if it is wrong knowledge. That is the case even when revolutionaries continue to produce “knowledge” that, like Lenin’s writings on capitalism in Tzarist Russia, is inaccurate but specifically produced in order to justify revolution. Here it should also be mentioned that Zionism itself was not a realistic movement either. While a constellation of global forces in the 1920s-1930s favored it, that alone would not have made it viable had it not been already sustained by a determined commitment to it by its adherents.

When reality is as unbearable as it is today, and when realism as a perspective is unhelpful, you have to go beyond both. You must either do something that is spectacular and shows others the way in terms of revolutionary action, or in terms of proposing a way beyond the shackles of a “realistic” perspective that only leaves us within its suffocating limits. If imagination always has the capacity to supersede the limits of reality, then imagination becomes a necessity, and not a luxury, especially in situations where reality is as obscene as we see it in Palestine today. More than twenty years ago, I proposed that the question of Palestine calls for solutions that transcend the customary limits of state reason, not only because of the demonstrated failures of that thinking, but because Palestine offers the whole world an opportunity to think about a future more noble, more broadly chosen by its people, more voluntary, more interconnected and free than the current state systems offer humanity. Then (2003) I thought that the cause of Palestine provided us with opportunities to imagine a framework of conflict resolution both in tandem with the spirit of our times but also ahead of it. While I did not couch the argument then in terms of a “no-state solution,” I did suggest elements of a path toward it, including developing new imaginations around joint sovereignties, half-states, multiple citizenships, mixed identities, and unrestricted movement of people.

Realists will of course ask all kinds of questions about how to construct a no-state somewhere when it is surrounded by a world of states. But we are not talking about a magic transformation from one day to the next; nor are we talking about an experiment confined to that small slice of the world. We are talking about the failure of all available or conceived realities. The no-state solution, therefore, is not a proposal about one unfortunate small territory. It also addresses longings elsewhere in the region, and increasingly throughout the world in which states, including democracies, are producing unpalatable results, demagogues in office, the most sophisticated technolo-

gies of destruction, and offer little generosity other than to the most fabulously rich. This is the world sustained by realist minds.

Palestine is the place that reveals that such a world must come to an end. That process begins with the idea that freedom from the state is necessary and possible. It begins, in other words, with this new consciousness. Once we have that consciousness, a no-state in historic Palestine will not be or remain alone in the world. It will emerge from larger convictions that are percolating, albeit in unconscious form, throughout the surrounding region, convictions that long for a better reality, one that is imagined to have roots in civilized regional and global histories and social traditions that precede the modern state, everywhere. Such histories become useful for life today not because we imagine them accurately—as the professional historian would. But their imagined attributes are to a substantial extent real if we want them enough, and far more humane than anything we have today: open movement, inter-communal life, and demure orders of customary authorities rather than centralized systems of excessive power, ruled by oligarchs and criminals, at whose disposal the most sophisticated technology is used to rule an increasingly dystopian world.

The tendency to think of states as problem solvers and the state as embodiment of collective liberation is based on nothing other than the fact that we are familiar with the state but not with its alternative. Thus, in spite of everything that it does wrong, the state continues to be imagined as the only vehicle of salvation we have. But like all that which is expected primarily because of its familiarity, the accumulation of its error eventually leads to a qualitative change in perspective: one begins to ponder the alternative, just as an experiment that repeatedly produces the wrong result leads to a reconsideration of the theory on which it had been based. A new knowledge, a new paradigm if you will, emerges as we know from an accumulation of errors, from repeatedly hitting the same old wall.

The state is a problem to many people in the world today, and not only in Palestine. An abundance of recent literature lists all kinds of indicators about increasing lack of faith in democracy within democratic orders, a symptom of which is populist energy that, while contaminated with fascist and racist tendencies, also draws much appeal as the one visible force that expresses strong opposition to an unsatisfactory status quo produced by ordinary politics [11]. Palestine possesses global resonance because it is the theater that shows today where all states, including ones that claim to be democratic, could end up: as unapologetically lawless entities, precisely because they have the capacity to become such, and because “state reason” offers no natural immunity against disasters it itself produces.

Finally, how the no-state solution will come to be is a question that requires other essays and the contributions of those who find virtue in it. But the solution begins with the idea itself, and the idea establishes itself not by force, but by persuasion, like all anarchist ideas that cannot, by definition, be imposed on those who do not want them. Historical change, after all, is a change in ways of looking at the world, and entails an expansion of the realm of the possible, gradually and one step at a time. And the idea is based on realities—not the “reality” I just criticized, but the ignored realities of social self-organization and organic anarchy, mobilized as critique and alternative to the repressive capacities of modern states, especially those based on an ideology of settler colonialism. Out of this awareness, this consciousness, the no-state approach begins to take root, one step at a time, and with it the no-state will one day become our reality, also one step at a time. One only hopes that this awareness would not require another 100 years of war, mass incarcerations, and police states.

One way to begin the process is by using the evil that exists and transforming it into its opposite. For example, begin by taking away the coercive apparatus of the state, but keeping its useful functions. Those acquire then specific technical managerial qualities that

require no state, but would be appendages to a society that discovers, after so many unsuccessful experiments with the opposite, the virtues of what it had demonstrated itself to be capable of: self-governance rather than relying on untrustworthy distant powers; the value of cooperation rather than atomized submission to monopolies and oligarchies; and the toleration of the dynamism of life rather than the expectation of the moral good out of indoctrination into common orthodoxies and blind loyalties. Hobbes, and those who follow him, would not accept any of this, insisting that what I am describing would be a “war of all against all.” But this is what we have today, already in our world of states, that have already waged world wars, dropped nuclear bombs on civilians (unapologetically), and massacred millions in imperialist adventures (unapologetically as well).

The route to a no-state solution begins not with states dissolving themselves, since no state will dissolve itself. The starting point begins precisely by ceasing to want to live with the problem only because we think that we lack a realistic capacity to overcome it. In this case, the idea establishes itself before reality is ready for it. And the idea establishes itself not because of its realism, but because of its *necessity*. The feeling of necessity, in turn, comes out of deep revulsion at what realism has produced—an annihilation of an entire population in broad daylight, and in full view of a realist, impotent world.

Once the idea is there, in sufficient number of minds, it will change reality, in ways that no realist perspective can apprehend today. That is, after all, how all revolutions in history have begun: by widespread feeling of their necessity, not a realistic knowledge of their prospect. The resulting determination, carried out by enough wills, is how unrealistic revolutions bring about a new reality. The process may not require a “revolution” in the familiar sense of the term. But it requires an evolving awareness of an alternative that, if gradually evolving, also leads to a gradual emergence of the alternative until, one day, the state melts away. The process will be more peaceful to

the extent that we become more aware of its necessity, rather than if we continue to think of any alternative to the state as an aberration of the norm. Because it is real, the state will melt gradually. But also because it is real, its end begins with the idea: that it can vanish, that it must vanish, without remorse.

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## Notes

[1] The Gaza strip is in fact a perfect illustration of this dynamic. 75-80% of its population are already refugees from 1948 Palestine. Its occupation (1967-2005) and siege (since 2006) by Israel added further stresses that highlighted the importance of social networks and extended kin for survival, as well as the role of charitable Islamic organizations that were the forerunners of Hamas.

[2] The most recent available statistics show that while the region contains about 5% of the world's population, it is responsible for 10% of the world's arms trade. See *SIPRI Military Expenditure Database* (2025); and *Forecast International* (2025).

[3] While “free officers” was the name of the Egyptian group, I am using it here to refer as well to military officers who took over government in Iraq, Syria, Libya and Yemen, since they all shared the same sociological profile. Regarding the charismatic quality that was associated with them, see Bamyeh (2023).

[4] I have explored the evolution of this popular anarchist spirit in several articles, most recently Bamyeh (2025a. See also 2025b and 2019a).

[5] I have addressed this phenomenon in some detail (Bamyeh 2019b: 205-220) with specific reference to how Islam operates at the social and political levels in the manner of “reserve discourse”: namely not as an ever present outline of solutions to problems, but as

an additional resource that is normally kept in reserve, becoming available to employ when other solutions fail. The more general argument here is that social traditions—so long they are not fully rejected—also operate in the same manner.

[6] This is also evident in the fact that until 1948, Zionism remained a largely Ashkenazi movement with little appeal among Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews. See in particular Avi Shlaim's (2023) memoirs.

[7] The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is perhaps the most recent egregious example here. A relatively small country with enough wealth to encourage global ambitions, the UAE embarked in recent years on several costly interventionists in Sudan, Libya, Syria, and Yemen—all with questionable rewards but encouraged only by an existing capacity to intervene.

[8] King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia complained bitterly about how Barack Obama prevented Mubarak from simply slaughtering the rebels in the streets of Cairo. More evidence for the relation of dependence would be an abundant catalogue across decades. Suffices here to point out to public discussions in Egyptian press in 2010 about who would follow the aging Mubarak if he decided not to seek another term. Those discussions focused on the choices favored by the US, the army, and other important Arab leaders. I never saw any discussion then that mentioned the opinion of the Egyptian people. And in a place like Lebanon, the selection of the president or prime minister is usually discussed in the open in terms of which candidate would be favored by which external player, and how internal crises or stalemates between local actors could be resolved when their foreign patrons reach a deal. This same logic—namely that internal politics depend substantially on what foreign actors decide—plays out completely in the open now with respect to Libya, Syria, and Yemen.

[9] The seminal argument about the centrality of legitimacy was already noted by Michael Hudson in 1977. The main difference

here is that while Israel enjoys legitimacy by its Jewish citizens, it is not seen as such by other half of the population it controls, nor by most population in the region—including populations of countries that have signed a peace treaty with it.

[10] The word “consensus” is an approximation. My calculations, based on available data from Egypt and Libya, suggest that this “consensus” amounts to about three quarters of the population (See Bamyeh 2025b).

[11] A cursory look at the most recent World Survey data shows that half of the world’s population is dissatisfied with the performance of their political system (WVS, Wave 7, Q252 (indicators 1-10).

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The Voice of Religious Jews world wide in their Torah based opposition to the State of Israel

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