

The Origins of the Israel-Palestine Conflict: Settler-Colonialism, Apartheid and Political Zionism

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Introduction

The Israel-Palestine conflict cannot be understood without understanding its historical and ideological origins. Whereas conventional opinion focuses on the idea of Palestinian rejectionism of Israel's right to exist - allegedly rooted in extremist Islamist ideology - as the historical cause of the conflict, a historiographical review of well-established research by Israeli scholars suggests otherwise.

Zionism originated as a fundamentally political movement shaped to fulfill British imperial ambitions in the Middle East, and with negligible grounding in the Orthodox Jewish faith. Consequently, the success of the Zionist project and its culmination in the founding of the State of Israel relied on violent processes of settler-colonization deploying strategies of genocide and ethnic cleansing. These culminated in the erection of a legal apparatus containing the seeds of an apartheid system based on systematic discrimination against non-Jewish Palestinians.

1. Zionism and the British Empire

The creation of the State of Israel was rooted in the historical trajectory of Western European, particularly British, imperialism. British imperialist interests in the Middle East coincided closely with a strategy described by Zionist theoretician Theodore Herzl as establishing "a portion of the rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilization as opposed to barbarism."¹ Zionism, then, was developed primarily as a political ideology representing British imperial interests in the region. According to Leonard Stein:

"The British Government's business was to win the War and to safeguard British interests in the post-war settlement. Fully realizing that these in the end must be the decisive tests, Weizmann was never under the illusion that the Zionists could rely on an appeal *ad misericordiam*. Zionist aspirations must be shown to accord with British strategic and political interests."²

The Zionist project had to be made to fit into these interests. Declassified documents from the post-Second World War period show that both the US and Britain saw the Middle East ultimately as a repository of vast energy reserves that needed to be monopolized. The British government noted that the Middle East is "a vital prize for any power interested in world influence or domination," since control of the world's oil reserves also means control of the world economy.³ Similarly, by 1953, the US National Security Council noted that: "United States policy is to keep the sources of oil in the Middle East in American hands."⁴ In sum, Anglo-American power aimed to dominate and control Middle East affairs to ensure monopoly over regional resources.

Thus, US-Western policy in the Middle East after the Second World War was overwhelmingly fearful of the danger of nationalist Arab social movements that might threaten this monopoly. But in effect, this policy was an extension, as well as a rehabilitation, of colonial policy after the First World War when the British aimed to

dismantle Ottoman Turkey. The arbitrary creation of borders within what was formerly a single empire, carved the region into twelve previously non-existent nations.

This policy was, moreover, not entirely new. About a century earlier, between 1820 and 1840, Mohamed Ali Pasha, “the Egyptian Napoleon,” challenged Western hegemony by industrialising and uniting Egypt, Arabia and Syria. Britain and Austria sent forces to crush him. The trade route over Suez was retained for the English Crown, and the Arab world remained divided, dependent and under-industrialized.⁵ To prevent further re-current outbreaks of indigenous nationalism, a strategically-located colony was needed that could act as a wedge and a listening post between North Africa and the Middle East. British Prime Minister Palmerston introduced the idea – later promoted by Disraeli - of using the Jewish nation as a proxy, who would defend the land as their own. Zionism, then was seen as a political strategy to secure the British empire. As early as 1840, the repatriation of the Jews to Palestine was planned by Britain as a geopolitical strategy for colonial domination of the Middle East. As Samir Amin observes in a United Nations University study:

“Britain in the 19th century, the United States nowadays – have always deemed it essential to their predominance to maintain Egypt in such a ruinous condition that it could not become the pivot of a revived Arab nation, that is, a genuine partner in the worldwide capitalist system. The plan of creating an artificial European state in Palestine to undermine such a possibility, was dreamed up by Palmerston in 1839, a score of years before Zionism even took shape.”⁶

Zionism, in other words, is a modern political ideology whose origins lay in the British empire’s expansionist ambitions to develop a direct presence in the Middle East that would provide a means of continuing control, and a mechanism to counter local nationalist-inspired insurgencies against British influence. Indeed, Herzl, who founded the World Zionist Organization, was not even born until decades later in 1860.

2. Zionism as Jewish Heresy

Herzl himself admitted that his political doctrines had no religious basis in Judaism, commenting that: “I do not obey a religious impulse.” He also confessed that he had no particular interest in the ‘Holy Land’, and that his principal reason for choosing Palestine as a national home for the Jewish community was due to the opposition to his ideas from his Jewish friends. He referred to the “Mighty Legend” of the ancient Palestinian homeland as a “rallying cry of irresistible power,” capable of convincing and attracting Jewish opponents. Consequently, he asserted that: “The Jewish Question is for me neither a social question nor a religious question... it is a national question.” Thus, in his letter to British colonial trafficker Cecil Rhodes, he described Zionism as a fundamentally “political program,” rather than a religious one.⁷

Before the First World War then, while many Orthodox Jews supported what might be termed ‘spiritual Zionism’ - which sees Palestine as the cultural center of Judaism - they explicitly rejected Herzl’s brand of political Zionism, which advocated the necessity of establishing a State in Palestine exclusively for the Jewish people. While conventional opinion holds the view that Zionism was a religious movement

associated directly with the Jewish faith, it is unsurprising in this context that the staunchest opposition to Zionism originally came almost universally from Torah leaders. Orthodox Jewish authorities not normally associated with anti-Zionism were centuries ago leading opponents of Zionism, which they rejected as a heresy lacking genuine support within Judaism and contradicting the teachings of the Torah. Indeed, at this time, Zionism was opposed by practically every Orthodox Jewish Rabbinical authority in Europe. These authorities denounced political Zionism as a vile heresy, and argued that according to explicit Torah teachings, only the Messiah could resurrect the Kingdom of Israel on the basis of good deeds and spiritual elevation. Zionism's leading theoreticians such as Theodore Herzl and Maz Nordau, were not versed in the teachings of Judaism and indeed openly admitted to not believing in Judaism. Accordingly, they were unperturbed by religious objections to Zionism.⁸

The strength and universality of the Orthodox Jewish opposition to Zionism over a century ago is worth highlighting with some examples. In 1892 Rabbi Isaac Meyer Wise, at that time widely recognized as representing majority Jewish opinion in the US, denounced the Zionist project as entirely antithetical to the spirit and letter of Judaic teachings:

“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.”⁹

Similarly, Rabbi Shalom Dov Ber Schneerson of Lubavitch (1866-1920), a universally revered Hasidic leader, wrote as follows in response to the Zionist ideology:

“Not via our desire did we leave the Land of Israel and not via our power will we come back to the Land of Israel. Our Father, Our King sent us out into exile and He will redeem us. And He will gather us from the four corners of the earth and lead us upright with the Messiah, the righteous redeemer to the Holy Land... Behold, even if these men [the Zionists] were to be perfect with G-d and His Torah and even would it be possible to conceive of them achieving their goal, we must not listen to them in this area to redeem ourselves with our own strength. Are we not forbidden to ‘force the end’ [even] by excessive prayer? And certainly by force and physical means? In other words we are forbidden to leave exile by force. And this means [force] will not result in our redemption and the salvation of our souls.”

Rabbi Chaim Soloveichik of Brisk (1853-1918), the founder of the ‘yeshiva approach to Talmudic study,’ specifically described Zionism as an anti-Jewish movement: “The Zionists do not make Jews heretics in order to have a state, they want a state in order to make Jews into heretics!” He also commented that: “The Jewish people have suffered many [spiritual] plagues - the Sadducees, Karaites, Hellenisers, Shabbatai Zvi, Enlightenment, Reform and many others. But the strongest of them all is Zionism.” His son, Rabbi Velvel Soloveichik (1886-1960) elaborated that this was because Zionism had “attacked the center point of Judaism.” It is also worth noting the views of Germany's renowned Orthodox Jewish authority, Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch. In response to the writings of an early advocate of Zionism, he commented that:

“He has written to me more than three or four times and sent me his writings and books in order to convince me to support his plans... In the end he has accused me of wanting to delay the

redemption. I have requested that he leave me alone on this matter for that which he considers a great mitzvah [good deed] is to me no small aveivah [sin].”

Rabbi Hirsch elsewhere noted that:

“During the reign of Hadrian when the uprising led by Bar Kochba proved a disastrous error, it became essential that the Jewish people be reminded for all times of an important, essential fact, namely that (the people of) Israel must never again attempt to restore its national independence by its own power; it was to entrust its future as a nation solely to Divine Providence... This close connection with states everywhere is not at all in contradiction to the spirit of Judaism, for the independent national life of Israel was never the essence or purpose of our existence as a nation but a means of fulfilling our spiritual mission... Land and soil were never Israel’s bond of union... For this [Messianic] future which is promised to us in the glorious predictions of the inspired prophets as a goal of the Galus [exile], we hope and pray, but actively to accelerate its coming is prohibited to us.”¹⁰

We should also note Rabbi Hirsch’s authoritative reminder recorded in the *Washington Post* that: “Zionism wants to define the Jewish people as a national entity... which is a heresy.”¹¹

As noted by Samuel Freedman, professor of journalism at Columbia University, such views were not minority opinions, but expressed the perspective of the vast majority of Rabbinical authorities in the Orthodox Jewish community worldwide, as well as in the US. Freedman points out that Herzl only succeeded in generating support from some members of Orthodox Jewry through unsavoury means, including bribery and the offer of power in the prospective Jewish national homeland:

“When the resolutely secular Theodore Herzl more than a century ago began seeking allies in his plan for a Jewish homeland, he found precious few in religious circles, because conventional Orthodox theology held that Jews could only return to Zion when the Messiah arrived. Herzl managed to attract a more nationalistic and modernistic strain of the Orthodox, known as the Mizrachi, or religious Zionists, in part by promising them autonomy over religious life in Palestine.”

Indeed, these machinations continued long after Herzl’s demise, and even after the establishment of the State of Israel. The new head of state after 1948, Ben-Gurion, established an official ‘Orthodox’ rabbinate supportive of Zionism, in an effort to buy off the anti-Zionist opposition:

“After the founding of Israel in 1948, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion raised the informal arrangement to the echelon of law. The Orthodox rabbinate received monopoly control over conversion, marriage and burial rites; yeshiva students enjoyed exemption from military service, otherwise the very essence of Zionist commitment. The nascent Jewish state consciously appropriated religious imagery - using a term for the synagogue, *knesset*, as the name for the parliament; choosing the seven-armed candelabrum of the Second Temple as a national symbol. In part, Ben-Gurion was practicing classic machine politics, buying off the opposition. In part, he was banking on the secular, socialist certainty that organized religion was a relic bound to die off.”¹²

The driving force behind the evolution of Zionism in the twentieth century, then, was never religious, but political. Moreover, having originated as a vision for the consolidation of British imperial power in the Middle East, its success was due largely to its extraordinary ability to continue to appeal to Anglo-American imperial interests, long after the demise of the British empire.

3. An Exclusively Jewish State

More than a century ago, the Arab claim to Palestine was unchallenged. The area had been long inhabited by a minority Jewish population. Palestinian Jews did not identify themselves as a separate “nation” in opposition to the Palestinian Muslim majority. Indeed, national identification was not linked to religious or even ethnic affiliations - Muslims, Christians and Jews all considered themselves to be Palestinian Arabs.

Zionism aimed to permanently alter this state of affairs, envisaging the establishment of an *exclusively* Jewish State. This exclusionary conception of Jewish national identity innovated by Zionism explicitly implied that Jews would predominate over a subordinated indigenous non-Jewish population, from whom they would be largely separated, and who would ultimately be completely expelled from the land. Joseph Weitz, the Director of the Jewish National Fund (JNF) affiliated to the World Zionist Organization, wrote in 1940:

“It should be clear for us that there is not room for two peoples in this country. If the Arabs leave it, there will be enough for us... There is nothing else to do but to remove them all; we mustn’t leave a single village, a single tribe... We must explain to Roosevelt and all the heads of friendly states that the land of Israel isn’t too small if all the Arabs leave and if the borders are pushed back a little to the north, as far as the Litani, and to the east, on the Golan Heights.”¹³

Hence, although the 1917 Balfour Declaration had promised a national Jewish homeland without prejudicing native Arab rights in Palestine, it was bitterly opposed by Zionist leaders. Initial drafts of the Declaration prepared by Zionists with Lord Balfour’s approval, provided that: “*Palestine* should be reconstituted as *the* national home of the Jewish people.”¹⁴ This manifested the *British imperial* commitment to establish a Jewish State encompassing the entirety of Palestine – with no meaningful stipulations regarding Palestine’s majority non-Jewish inhabitants. Ironically, it was only intervention by the highest-ranking Jew in the British government, Sir Lord Edwin Montagu – Minister of Munitions and Secretary of State for India – that weakened the British commitment to Zionism in the final adopted text, promising “the establishment *in Palestine of a national home*” for the Jewish people (italics added). Montagu recorded his concerns about the discriminatory character of the Zionist enterprise in a secret memorandum as early as August 1917:

“Zionism has always seemed to me a mischievous political creed...[I]t seems to be inconceivable... that Mr. Balfour should be authorised to say that Palestine was to be reconstituted as the ‘national home for the Jewish people’. I do not know what this involves, but I assume that it means that Mohammedans and Christians are to make way for the Jews, and that the Jews should be put in all positions of preference... [and] that Turks and other Mahommedans in Palestine will be regarded as foreigners.”¹⁵

Thus, also included as a consequence of Montagu’s intervention were more fleshed-out legal stipulations concerning the task of safeguarding the rights of the majority non-Jewish inhabitants of Palestine. The text stated that “nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine.” Zionists reacted to the Declaration initially with outrage. Chaim Weizmann expressed his fear that the Declaration “can be interpreted to mean such limitations on our work as completely to cripple it.” Eventually, however, it was

recognized that it was precisely this sort of language that could be used to veil Zionist ambitions in Palestine. Hence, opposition turned into *re-interpretation*, and Weizmann decided the Declaration “would mean exactly what we make it mean – neither more nor less... and a foundation had to be built for it through years of exacting work.”¹⁶

Thus, Zionist pioneers such as Golda Meir later denied the very existence of the Palestinian people, prior to the founding of the State of Israel: “There is no such thing as a Palestinian people... It is not as if we came and threw them out and took their country. They didn’t exist.”¹⁷ Crucially then, the 90 per cent of the Palestinian population who were non-Jewish were totally denied any form of participation in the formulation of the Declaration, although it dealt with their own rights and status in their own land. As the Center for Economic and Social Rights in Washington rightly observes: “This points to the imperialist underpinnings not only of the Balfour Declaration, but of most application of international law to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict leading right up to the partition resolution.”¹⁸

4. The UN Partition Plan: Mechanism of Settler-Colonization

4.1 The Denial of Palestinian National Self-Determination and the Seeds of Apartheid

Zionist policies toward the majority indigenous non-Jewish Palestinian population set out from the beginning to dispossess them from the land. So conspicuous was the repressive character of these policies that pioneer Zionist writer Ahad Ha’am observed:

“Serfs they [the Zionists] were in the lands of the Diaspora, and suddenly they find themselves in freedom [in Palestine]; and this change has awakened in them an inclination to despotism. They treat the Arabs with hostility and cruelty, deprive them of their rights, offend them without cause, and even boast of these deeds; and nobody among us opposes this despicable and dangerous inclination.”¹⁹

In November 1947, the UN General Assembly passed resolution 181, known as the Partition Plan, which recommended the partition of Palestine into “Arab” and “Jewish” states. Under the resolution, the Jewish minority was to receive the majority of the land, which included most of the fertile areas, and thus to be granted politico-territorial dominance. The Palestinians initially rejected the resolution on the grounds that it violated their right to self-determination in a single state for the entirety of Palestine. This early Arab rejection of the Partition Plan was indeed a direct response to the recognition that the Plan effectively contained the seeds of a settler-colonial apartheid system – that is, a system legally enforcing the separation and segregation of the population along ethnic and religious lines, and permitting the dominance of a particular ethnic-religious group open to foreign immigration and influence. As

American political scientist Professor Stephen Shalom of William Paterson University observes:

“The Zionists declared that having gone through one of the great catastrophes of modern history, the Jewish people were entitled to a state of their own, one into which they could gather Jewish refugees, still languishing in the displaced persons camps of Europe. The Zionist bottom line was a sovereign state with full control over immigration. The Palestinians argued that the calamity that befell European Jews was hardly their fault. If Jews were entitled to a state, why not carve it out of Germany? As it was, Palestine had more Jewish refugees than any other place on Earth. Why should they bear the full burden of atoning for Europe's sins? They were willing to give full civil rights (though not national rights) to the Jewish minority in an independent Palestine, but they were not willing to give this minority the right to control immigration, and bring in more of their co-religionists until they were a majority to take over the whole of Palestine.”²⁰

Sami Hadawi, a Palestinian Christian who lived through the period in which Israel was created, explains the indigenous position well:

“Arab rejection was... based on the fact that, while the population of the Jewish state was to be [only half Jewish] with the Jews owning less than 10% of the Jewish state land area... the Jews were to be established as the ruling body - a settlement which no self-respecting people would accept without protest, to say the least... The action of the United Nations conflicted with the basic principles for which the world organization was established, namely, to uphold the rights of all peoples to self-determination. By denying the Palestine Arabs, who formed the two-thirds majority of the country, the right to decide for themselves, the United Nations had violated its own Charter.”²¹

The Partition Plan effectively denied the Palestinian right to self-determination. The international community was well aware of the tensions between the UN Charter and the Partition Plan in this regard. Indeed, the resolution only passed under intense US pressure on UN member states. Truman administration Under-Secretary of State S. Welles noted that: “By direct order of the White House American civil servants had to use direct or indirect pressure... to ensure the necessary majority in the final vote.”²² Similarly, then US Defense Secretary James Forrestal observed: “The methods used to pressure and to constrain the other nations within the UN were close to scandalous.”²³ In the words of John Quigley, Professor of Law at Ohio State University:

“By this time [November 1947] the United States had emerged as the most aggressive proponent of partition... The United States got the General Assembly to delay a vote ‘to gain time to bring certain Latin American republics into line with its own views.’... Some delegates charged US officials with ‘diplomatic intimidation.’ Without ‘terrific pressure’ from the United States on ‘governments which cannot afford to risk American reprisals,’ said an anonymous editorial writer, the resolution ‘would never have passed’.”²⁴

In this sense the moral and legal legitimacy of UN resolution 181 recognizing a two-state system in which the State of Israel would retain politico-territorial dominance is at least highly questionable.²⁵ Ultimately, however, early Palestinian opposition to the Partition Plan gave way to widespread recognition that resolution 181, although paving the way for settler-colonialism and apartheid, also provided international recognition of the Palestinians right to their own state. Eventually, the vast majority of Palestinians accepted the Plan as inevitable, due to its backing by Britain and other world powers. Thus, when the Mufti of Palestine called on Palestinians to resist the Partition Plan by force, very few Palestinians actually complied. Incoming Israeli Prime Minister Ben-Gurion himself admitted that the “decisive majority” of

Palestinians “do not want to fight us.” One Zionist Arab affairs expert similarly noted that the majority “accept the partition as a *fait accompli*.” Hence, the ensuing outbreak of violence from 1947 to 1948 between Zionist militias and followers of the Mufti was devoid of popular indigenous support.²⁶

4.2 Israeli Rejectionism of Palestinian Statehood

Indeed, while exploiting UN resolution 181 to legitimize the programmes of settler-colonization designed to consolidate the politico-territorial dominance of the State of Israel, it was Israel that moved increasingly away from truly acknowledging the validity of the same resolution. In contrast, Palestinians point out that resolution 181 constitutes the UN’s legal declaration of their right to independent Palestinian statehood. Indeed, the prime source of rejectionism of UN resolution 181 increasingly came not from Palestinians, but from Zionist officials who privately rejected its validity, precisely because it expressed UN recognition of specific rights due to the indigenous population. The resolution, like the Balfour Declaration, was considered insufficient to meet the goals of Zionist expansion. As Israeli historian Professor Benny Morris of Ben-Gurion University explains:

“While the Yishuv’s leadership formally accepted the 1947 Partition Resolution, large sections of Israeli society – including... Ben Gurion - were opposed to or extremely unhappy with the partition and from early on viewed the [ensuing 1948] war as an ideal opportunity to expand the new state’s borders beyond the UN-earmarked partition boundaries and at the expense of the Palestinians.”²⁷

Indeed, the Zionist leadership had planned from the very beginning to absorb the entirety of Palestine to consolidate the State of Israel as not simply the *dominant* politico-territorial entity in the region, but the *only* sovereign entity. In internal discussion in 1938, the first David Ben-Gurion declared that: “[A]fter we become a strong force, as a result of the creation of a state, we shall abolish partition and expand to the whole of Palestine... The state will only be a stage in the realisation of Zionism and its task is to prepare the ground for our expansion into the whole of Palestine.”²⁸ Much later, after the founding of Israel, he declared: “The State of Israel considers the UN resolution of 29 November 1947 to be null and void.”²⁹ And even later, Israeli Prime Minister Menachim Begin announced:

“The partition of the Homeland is illegal. It will never be recognized. The signature of institutions and individuals of the partition agreement is invalid. It will not bind the Jewish people. Jerusalem was and will forever be our capital. Eretz Israel (the Land of Israel) will be restored to the people of Israel. All of it. And forever.”³⁰

Such sentiments were rooted in the very heart of mainstream Zionist ideology. Leading Zionist theoretician Theodore Herzl, founder of the World Zionist Organization, outlined at the inception of the Zionist movement his vision for the indigenous Palestinians: “We shall try to spirit the penniless population across the border by procuring employment for it in the transit countries, while denying it any employment in our own country.” He added that “expropriation and the removal of the poor must be carried out discreetly and circumspectly”, to avoid international outcry.³¹

5. Origins of the Settler-Colonial Regime: Genocide and Ethnic Cleansing

5.1 Plan D

The implications were clear. Israeli military analysts predicted that as a result of the Partition Plan and Zionist attempts to establish a totalizing State in Palestine in violation of the limits set out in resolution 181, either the Palestinians would be expelled from their own land, or they “would be crushed.” It was assumed that “some of them would die and most of them would turn into human dust and the waste of society, and join the most impoverished classes in the Arab countries.”³² The mass forcible expulsion of Palestinians from their homes was therefore an integral dimension of Zionist plans. As Professor Norman Finkelstein writes:

“One can imagine an argument for the right of a persecuted minority to find refuge in another country able to accommodate it; one is hard-pressed, however, to imagine an argument for the right of a persecuted minority to politically and perhaps physically displace the indigenous population of another country. Yet... The latter was the actual intention of the Zionist movement.”³³

According to the late Yitzhak Rabin, the first Israeli Prime Minister clarified from the outset his wish to expel the Palestinian population to make way for the Zionist State. Rabin relates that: “We walked outside, Ben-Gurion accompanying us. Allon repeated his question, ‘What is to be done with the Palestinian population?’ Ben-Gurion waved his hand in a gesture which said ‘Drive them out!’”³⁴ Israel’s first Minister of Education Professor Ben-Zion Dinur echoed Ben-Gurion’s sentiments when he declared in 1954: “In our country there is room only for the Jews. We shall say to the Arabs: Get out! If they don’t agree, if they resist, we shall drive them out by force.”³⁵

Israeli historians record that these sentiments manifested in a clear pattern of Zionist policies designed to expel the indigenous non-Jewish Palestinian population, in order to permanently separate off Jews from Arabs, to retain a State that was as exclusively Jewish as possible. According to Professor Benny Morris: “Ben-Gurion clearly wanted as few Arabs as possible to remain in the Jewish state. He hoped to see them flee. He said as much to his colleagues and aides in meetings in August, September and October [1948].” However, this was not always enunciated in an official written format:

“Ben-Gurion always refrained from issuing clear or written expulsion orders... he preferred that his generals ‘understand’ what he wanted done. He wished to avoid going down in history as the ‘great expeller’ and he did not want the Israeli government to be implicated in a morally questionable policy... But while there was no [written] ‘expulsion policy’, the July and October [1948] offensives were characterized by far more expulsions and, indeed, brutality towards Arab civilians than the first half of the war.”³⁶

Similarly, according to Israeli historian Simha Flapan, National Secretary of Israel’s Mapam Party from 1954 to 1981, and a noted scholar and writer:

“That Ben Gurion’s ultimate aim was to evacuate as much of the Arab population as possible from the Jewish state can hardly be doubted, if only from the variety of means he employed to achieve this purpose... most decisively, the destruction of whole villages and the eviction of

their inhabitants ...even [if] they had not participated in the war and had stayed in Israel hoping to live in peace and equality, as promised in the Declaration of Independence.”³⁷

Israeli historian Ilan Pappé, Associate Professor in Middle East History at the University of Haifa, concurs with these assessments. He argues that: “There was an unwritten Zionist plan to expel the Arabs of Palestine in 1948.” From 1 April 1948 to the end of the war, “Jewish operations were guided by the desire to occupy the greatest possible portion of Palestine.” The Zionists “were cautious enough not to write it although there was this ‘plan D’ (Dalet), that reveals enough of the systematic expulsion.” Plan Dalet (D) was first prepared by Zionist military forces in March 1948. The plan “defined a very important principle: any Arab village or neighborhood that would not surrender to the Jewish forces, that would not raise the white flag, would be uprooted, destroyed and the people expelled.” The Zionists “knew well that there was very little chance for more than five or six villages to surrender. Why should they surrender, especially after (the massacre of) Deir Yassin in April and the big fright in the Arab community?...

“In fact, only four villages rose the white flag. All the rest were potentially an object of expulsion. I must add that a few other neighborhoods rose the white flag but it didn’t help them... All this is very clear. We have to remember that the UN partition plan of November 1947 would have left an equal number of Jews and Arabs in the Jewish state. This contradicted the idea of a Jewish state. So they had to make sure that as few Arabs as possible were still there. And that’s what happened.”³⁸

5.2 “War of Independence”, or War of Aggression?

On 14th May 1948, Britain ended its mandate over Palestine and the Zionists officially announced the establishment of the State of Israel. No sooner did the British begin their withdrawal, Zionist forces consolidated their occupation of southern and western Jerusalem. Pablo de Azcarate, secretary of the Consular Truce Commission, reported:

“Hardly had the last English soldier disappeared than the Jews launched their offensive, consolidating their possession of Katamon which they occupied two weeks before and seizing the German Colony and the other southern districts of Jerusalem. The last remaining Arabs were liquidated, and from henceforth, the Jews were absolute masters of the southern part of the city.”³⁹

When Arab armies crossed the border on 15th May, they clearly did so after Israel’s declaration of independence, and primarily in response to the Zionist offensive in Jerusalem and elsewhere. Israel’s own intransigence had thus solicited the Arab intervention – in more ways than one. Israel had officially declared its independence *three and a half months before* the date specified in the UN partition resolution. That three month period had been proposed by the US as a time for truce, on condition that Israel postpone its declaration of independence until the specified date. While the Arab states accepted the truce, the Zionists rejected it. Instead, they covertly arranged with King Abdullah of Jordan to allow his Arab Legion to invade the territories officially assigned by the UN to the Palestinian state. This covert plan to crush the potential emergence of an independent Palestinian state was likely approved by Britain, which retained close imperial ties with Jordan. Arab states responded with invasion, not to throw Israel into the sea as often mistakenly claimed, but to defeat

Zionist expansionism and foil the Israel-backed scheme to be implemented by Jordan.⁴⁰

Indeed, the ensuing violence largely occurred on the territory that belonged to the Palestinian state or the internationalized Jerusalem – *not* within Israel’s borders as recognized in the UN partition plan. In other words, the Zionists were patently *not* fighting to defend its existence within its recognized borders, but rather to *expand* those borders at the expense of Palestinian self-determination and statehood. Zionist forces retained a quantitative and qualitative military edge, sharpened thanks to the fact that Arab forces were deeply uncoordinated and frequently operating at cross-purposes.⁴¹

Officially, Israel claims that Palestinians fled their homes voluntarily under instruction from Arab leaders via radio, in order to clear the way for the incoming Arab armies. Yet there is no evidence for this. The American and British governments closely monitored all radio broadcasts from the area, and found instead that contrary to official Israeli claims, not only were there no such Arab orders to flee, there were numerous orders from Israel directing Palestinians to remain in their homes, to allow Zionist forces to claim the territory.⁴²

5.3 Plan D in Action: Throwing Palestinians into the Sea

Systematic massacres and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians followed as an inevitable consequence of the Zionist insistence on attempting to expand Israel’s borders and grab as much territory as possible. Tzvi Shiloah, a senior veteran of the Mapai Party and a former deputy mayor of the town of Hertzeliyah recalled that “in 1948, we deliberately, and not just in the heat of the war, expelled Arabs. Also in 67 after the Six-Day War, we expelled many Arabs.”⁴³ Not only were Palestinians deliberately expelled, their villages were destroyed in the hope that they could never return. During May 1948, Zionists contemplated ways of making the Palestinian exile permanent. Professor Benny Morris notes that “the destruction of villages was immediately perceived as a primary means of achieving this aim.” Indeed, Zionist forces carried out massacres of the indigenous population even earlier than May:

“On 10 April, Haganah units took Abu Shusha... The village was destroyed that night...Khulda was leveled by Jewish bulldozers on April 20...Abu Zureiq was completely demolished...By mid- 1949, the majority of the [350 depopulated Arab villages] were either completely or partly in ruins and uninhabitable.”⁴⁴

There can therefore be no doubt that the exodus of over three quarters of a million Palestinians from their homes was a deliberate strategy by the Zionist army. This conclusion has been well-documented by the Israeli military historian Aryeh Yitzakhi – Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Eretz Yisrael Studies at Bar Ilan University (Tel Aviv) and Senior Lecturer in Military History in Israeli Defence Force (IDF) courses for army officers. Yitzakhi is particularly qualified in this area due to his in-depth acquaintance with IDF archives, on which his conclusions are based. In the 1960s, Yitzakhi served as director of the IDF archives within the framework of his IDF service in his capacity as historian. “The time has come,” he observes, “to face the ocean of lies in which we were brought up. In almost every conquered village in the

War of Independence, acts were committed, which are defined as war crimes, such as indiscriminate killings, massacres and rapes...

“For many Israelis it was easier to find consolation in the lie, that the Arabs left the country under orders from their leaders. This is an absolute fabrication. The fundamental cause of their flight was their fear from Israeli retribution and this fear was not at all imaginary. From almost each report in the IDF archives concerning the conquest of Arab villages between May and July 1948 - when clashes with Arab villagers were the fiercest - a smell of massacre emanates. Sometimes the report tells about blatant massacres which were committed after the battle, sometimes the massacres are committed in the heat of battle and while the villages are ‘cleansed’. Some of my colleagues, such as Me’ir Pa’il, don’t consider such acts as massacres. In my opinion there is no other term for such acts than massacres. This was at the time the rule of the game... In the first phase a village was usually subjected to heavy artillery from distance. Then soldiers would assault the village. After giving up resistance, the Arab fighters would withdraw while attempting to snipe at the advancing forces. Some would not flee and would remain in the village, mainly women and old people. In the course of cleansing we used to hit them. One was ‘tailing the fugitives’, as it used to be called (‘mezanvim baborchim’)... In a typical battle report about the conquest of a village we find: ‘We cleansed a village, shot in any direction where resistance was noticed. After the resistance ended, we also had to shoot people so that they would leave or who looked dangerous’.”⁴⁵

This grim record of acts of genocide and ethnic cleansing against the indigenous Palestinian population is corroborated by another Israeli military historian Professor Uri Milstein. Yet Milstein goes even further than Yitzhaki in his conclusions about Zionist killings of Palestinians: “If Yitzhaki claims that almost in every village there were murders, then I maintain that even before the establishment of the State, each battle ended with a massacre. In all Israel’s wars massacres were committed but I have no doubt that the War of Independence was the dirtiest of them all.”⁴⁶

The most commonly cited example of such terror is the massacre at the village of Deir Yassin on 9 April 1948, in which 254 Palestinian inhabitants, including men, women, children, and old men, were massacred by Irgun troops whose leader was the future Israeli Prime Minister Menachim Begin. Begin himself described the massacre as a “victory” without which the State of Israel could not have been established. He admitted that: “The Haganah carried out victorious attacks on other fronts... In a state of terror, the Arabs fled, crying, ‘Deir Yassin’.”⁴⁷

Numerous other massacres were committed by Zionist forces in the same vein. One of the biggest but least publicised massacres is that of al Dawayima village in Hebron District (population 4,300). On the afternoon of Friday, 29th October 1948, three units of the 89th Battalion (8th Brigade) entered the village from three directions, leaving the east open, and occupied it “without a fight” according to an Israeli soldier’s testimony. The soldier continued:

“The first wave of conquerors killed about 80 to 100 Arabs, women and children. The children they killed by breaking their heads with sticks. There was not a house without dead. One woman, with a newborn baby in her arms was employed to clean the courtyard... [They] shot her and the baby... This was not in the heat of battle.... but a system of expulsion and destruction.”⁴⁸

Israeli historian Teddy Katz at the Middle East Department of Haifa University has also uncovered credible evidence that Israeli troops massacred 200 Palestinians in a single village on the very day – 14th May 1948 – that Israel came into existence. Basing his conclusions on testimonials and information from witnesses including soldiers, Katz observed that “at least 200 people from the village of Tantura were

killed by Israeli troops” in what was “definitely one of the biggest massacres”. “Palestinians were killed inside their homes and in other parts of the village”, while Israeli soldiers “shot at anything that moved.”⁴⁹

Recorded testimonials from 40 eyewitnesses, both Arab and Jewish, prove that around 100 civilians were shot to death by Zionist forces in a “rampage.” The other 100 or so were marched to the nearby beach, where the men were separated from the women and children. All of them were lined up along a wall near the mosque where they were shot in the back of the head. Commenting on Katz’s work, fellow Israeli historian Professor Ilan Pappé – one of the few to have read all the transcripts of more than 60 hours of Katz’s taping of eyewitness evidence – writes that: “They include horrific descriptions of executions, of the killing of fathers in front of children, of rape and torture.” Pappé describes Katz’s thesis “as a solid and convincing piece of work whose essential validity is in no way marred by its shortcomings,” which amount only to four minor mistakes. Katz’s research is significant because it clearly and convincingly reveals the founding of the State of Israel in terms of “the expulsion, direct and indirect, of some 750,000 Palestinians, the systematic destruction of more than 400 villages and scores of urban neighbourhoods, as well as the perpetration of some 40 massacres of unarmed Palestinians.”⁵⁰

As a result, by 1949 the Zionists had successfully driven out approximately 770,000 Palestinians who thus became refugees in their own country, and taken control of 80 per cent of their land. Only 100,000 remained of a population approaching one million. This was a form of genocidal settler-colonialism, supported by the US, Britain and Western Europe, at the height of worldwide decolonization. “Whole Arab cities - such as Jaffa, Acre, Lydda, Ramle, Baysan, and Maida - 338 towns and villages, and large parts of others, containing nearly a quarter of all buildings standing in Israel during 1948, were taken over by new Jewish immigrants”, writes Don Peretz, Director of the Middle East Program at the State University of New York:

“Ten thousand former Arab shops, businesses and stores were left in Jewish hands as well as some 30,000 acres of groves that supplied at least a quarter of the new state’s scarce foreign currency earnings from citrus. Acquisition of this former Palestinian Arab property helped greatly to make the Jewish state economically viable and to speed up the early influx of refugees and immigrants from Europe.”⁵¹

Meanwhile, Palestinian refugees were forced to live in squalid conditions; prevented from returning to their homes; permanently debarred – separated - from the territory on which they had once lived, and which had now become the exclusive property of the Zionist State and its Jewish citizens; and confined to restricted areas under an expanding Israeli occupation. “The winter of 1949, the first winter of exile for more than seven hundred fifty thousand Palestinians, was cold and hard”, reports the People’s Press Palestine Book Project.

“Families huddled in caves, abandoned huts, or makeshift tents... many of the starving were only miles away from their own vegetable gardens and orchards in occupied Palestine - the new state of Israel... At the end of 1949 the United Nations finally acted. It set up the United Nations Relief Works Administration (UNRWA) to take over sixty refugee camps from voluntary agencies. It managed to keep people alive, but only barely.”⁵²

6. Palestinian Dispossession and the Right of Return

International law recognizes the Palestinian refugees' inviolable right of return to their ancestral homeland in United Nations General Assembly resolution 194. The basis of the resolution lay in the findings of the UN Mediator for Palestine, Count Folke Bernadotte. In his first report submitted to the UN he wrote that: "The right of the Arab refugees to return to their homes in Jewish-controlled territory at the earliest possible date should be affirmed by the United Nations... It would offend basic principles to prevent these innocent victims of the conflict from returning to their homes, while Jewish immigrants flood into Palestine and, what's more, threatening to permanently replace the dispossessed Arab refugees who have been here for centuries." He described an ongoing process of "Zionist pillage on a grand scale and the destruction of villages without apparent military need."⁵³

UN resolution 194 included stipulations for the establishment of a Conciliation Commission on Palestine to facilitate the resolution's implementation. According to the Commission's authoritative interpretation of the resolution:

"The General Assembly had laid down the principle of the right of refugees to exercise a free choice between returning to their homes and being compensated for the loss of or damage to their property on the one hand, or, on the other, or not returning to their homes and being adequately compensated for the value of the property abandoned by them."⁵⁴

Israel, however, has consistently ignored the Palestinian right of return in violation of international law on the pretext of maintaining the exclusively "Jewish" character of the settler-colonial State. Israel's blocking of the Palestinian right of return virtually mimics the policy of "separation" under South African apartheid, with whites segregated from non-whites – in this case, Jews partitioned off from the exiled non-Jewish Palestinians.

While permitting the unimpeded influx of Jewish immigrants into Israel after what many Jews consider to be a 2,000 year absence, the Zionist "Law of Return" follows an entirely different policy in relation to non-Jews, with the result that Palestinians are officially to remain exiled forever. When after 1948 Palestinian refugees attempted to return to their homes in the land that had by then become the State of Israel, they were deemed "infiltrators", and clashed with Israeli settlers, army and police. An estimated 2,700-5,000 Palestinian refugees were killed by Israeli forces while attempting to cross the borders. To stave off the return of the indigenous population, the Israeli army began launching attacks on Palestinian refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Benny Morris has documented extensively the numerous killings committed by Israeli forces during this period.⁵⁵

There are at least 4.6 million Palestinian refugees, some living in the Occupied Territories of West Bank and Gaza administered by Israeli occupying forces, and others living in camps in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. Palestinians forced to leave their homes in 1948 are still unable to return after 53 years. As noted by Professor Anita Shapira of the Department of History at Tel Aviv University: "The [Israeli] Law of Return gave preference to any Jew born in Britain or Morocco over an Arab born in Jaffa and driven into exile as a result of the 1948 war... Arab settlements have been short-changed and discriminated against for decades."⁵⁶ The policy is rooted in the

guidance of the foremost pioneers of the Zionist movement. Ben-Gurion recorded in his diary on the 18 July 1948 that “We must do everything to ensure they [the Palestinian refugees] never do return.”⁵⁷

Conclusions

Thus, the outcome of the consolidation of the State of Israel was an inherently discriminatory system of military occupation which - consistently de-humanizing, segregating and policing the non-Jewish Palestinian population - relied on continuous policies of violence to sustain Israeli politico-territorial dominance.

The same policies that were instrumental in the founding of the State of Israel continue to prevail and characterize the course of the Israel-Palestine conflict: the objective of territorial expansion for colonization by exclusively Jewish settlers; the deployment of massive force with impunity against the Palestinian civilian population to block their right of return to their homelands, and to encourage their permanent expulsion from the Occupied Territories; and the erection of sophisticated legal mechanisms specifically for non-Jewish Palestinians to geographically separate them from Israelis; control their movements; restrict their economic, political and cultural activities; and ultimately marginalize their social power and cohesive group identity.

In this sense, Israel’s character as a *settler-colonial state* is indelibly bound up with its utilization of policies similar to those conducted under the South African ‘*apartheid*’ regime. Further, Israel’s violent structure and policies are grounded *not* in Judaism, but in a particularly politicized variant of modern Zionism. This bastardized form of Political Zionism – developed on the back of British imperialism – was considered largely heretical to the original Judaic interpretation of ‘spiritual Zionism.’ In this earlier and more traditional sense of Zionism, Israel is not even a truly Zionist state, but a corrupted parody of Zionism. In summary, then, Israel is a Settler-Colonial Apartheid regime based on a heretical (anti-Judaic) form of Political Zionism.

This suggests that policymakers attempting to find a path to peace in the Israel-Palestine conflict, will make little progress unless, among other important issues outside the scope of this briefing, they look to ways of fundamentally reformulating Israeli-influenced modern conceptualizations of Zionism, in a manner that recognizes both the right of Jews to live in what they believe to be their spiritual homeland, as well as the right of the non-Jewish Palestinians to return to their homes and be equal citizens in a genuinely inclusive, democratic state, protecting the inalienable rights and representing the legitimate interests of non-Jewish and Jewish citizens.⁵⁸

Notes & References

- ¹ CESR Report, *Peace Without Justice: Abandoning Rights in the Oslo Process (Draft Copy)*, Center for Economic and Social Rights, New York, 14 April 2000, p. 12, <http://www.cesr.org>.
- ² Stein, Leonard, *The Balfour Declaration*, Vellentine-Mitchell, London, 1961, p. 126. The ongoing interests of the West in relation to Israel's regional role in the Middle East were outlined by the U.S. Senate's ranking oil expert, Senator Henry Jackson, in May 1973. Jackson stressed the necessity of "the strength and Western orientation of Israel on the Mediterranean and Iran [under the Shah] on the Persian Gulf". Israel and Iran were "reliable friends of the United States" who, along with Saudi Arabia "have served to inhibit and contain those irresponsible and radical elements in certain Arab states... who, were they free to do so, would pose a grave threat indeed to our principle sources of petroleum in the Persian Gulf", which are needed primarily as a reserve and a lever for control of the global economy (Cited in Chomsky, Noam, *Deterring Democracy*, Vintage, London, 1995, p. 55).
- ³ Introductory paper on the Middle East by the UK, undated [1947], FRUS, 1947, Vol. V, p. 569.
- ⁴ NSC 5401, quoted in Heikal, Mohammed, *Cutting the lion's tail; Suez through Egyptian eyes*, Andre Deutsch, London, 1986, p. 38.
- ⁵ See 'An alternative path: the case of Egypt, Muhammed Ali and modernization', Supplementary Readings in the History of the Ottoman Empire, Consortium for Middle Eastern and African Studies (CMEAS), University of Alberta, 1997, <http://www.humanities.ualberta.ca/ottoman/module4/tutorial4b.htm>. After 1917, the Ottomans were replaced by the secular, strongly anti-Islamic Kemal Ataturk, who made Turkey a Western bridgehead to Central Asia and the Middle East, and a regional industrial power.
- ⁶ Amin, Samir, 'The Middle East conflict in a world perspective', in *Maldevelopment: Anatomy of a Global Failure*, United Nations University Press, 1990, www.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu32me/uu32me0f.htm.
- ⁷ Patai, Rafael (ed.), *The Complete Diaries of Theodore Herzl*, Herzl Press, New York, 1960.
- ⁸ Palumbo, Michael, *The Palestinian Catastrophe: The 1948 Expulsion of a People from their Homeland*, Faber & Faber, Boston, 1987, p. 5-8.
- ⁹ *Yearbook VII*, Conference Centrale des Rabbins Americains, 1897, p. xii.
- ¹⁰ Cited in A Friend of Neturei Karta, *Exile and Redemption*, op. cit.
- ¹¹ *Washington Post*, 3 October 1978.
- ¹² Freedman, Samuel G., 'Israel, up against the wall', *Salon*, 22 June 2000, <http://dir.salon.com/news/feature/2000/06/22/israel/index.html>. Freedman is the author of *Jews vs. Jews: The Struggle for the Soul of American Jewry*, Simon & Schuster, 2000.
- ¹³ Weitz, Yossef, *Journal*, Tel Aviv, 1965.
- ¹⁴ Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, op. cit., p. 664, italics added.
- ¹⁵ Great Britain, Public Record Office, Cab. 24/24, 23 August 1917.
- ¹⁶ Weizmann, Chaim, *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weizmann*, East and West Library, London, 1950, p. 302, and Weizmann, Address at Czernowitz, Romania, 12 December 1927.
- ¹⁷ *Sunday Times*, 15 June 1969.
- ¹⁸ CESR Report, *Peace Without Justice: Abandoning Rights in the Oslo Process (Draft Copy)*, op. cit., p. 13.
- ¹⁹ *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, December 1998, p. 123-124.
- ²⁰ Shalom, Stephen, 'Background to the Israeli-Palestine Crisis', *Z Magazine*, May 2002.
- ²¹ Hadawi, Sami, *Bitter Harvest*, Caravan Books, 1979
- ²² Cited in Welles, S., *We Need Not Fail*, Boston, 1948, p. 63.
- ²³ Forrestal, James, *Forrestal's Memoirs*, Viking Press, New York, 1951, p. 363.
- ²⁴ Quigley, John, *Palestine and Israel: A Challenge to Justice*, Duke University Press, Durham, 1990
- ²⁵ The legal validity of the resolution is thus also open to question, particularly due to the fact that it conflicts with the stipulations and spirit of the UN's own Charter. Indeed, a one-state solution that is in harmony with international law, in which both Jews and Palestinians can freely participate, can be formulated. See CESR Report, *Peace Without Justice: Abandoning Rights in the Oslo Process (Draft Copy)*, op. cit.
- ²⁶ Flapan, Simha, *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities*, Pantheon, New York, 1987, p. 55, 73-77.
- ²⁷ Morris, Benny, *Tikkun*, March/April 1998
- ²⁸ Cited in Chomsky, Noam, *The Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel and the Palestinians*, Pluto Press, London, 1999.

- ²⁹ *New York Times*, 6 December 1953.
- ³⁰ Begin, Menachim, *The Revolt: Story of the Irgun*, p. 335.
- ³¹ Patei, Rafael (ed.), *The Complete Diaries of Theodore Herzl*, Vol. 1.
- ³² Cited in Chomsky, Noam, *Towards a New Cold War*, op. cit., Chapter 7; Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle*, op. cit., Chapter 2.
- ³³ Finkelstein, Norman, *Image and Reality of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, Verso, New York, 1996
- ³⁴ Leaked censored version of Rabin memoirs published in *New York Times*, 23 October 1999.
- ³⁵ Cited in Ben Zion Dinur (chief ed.) and Yehuda Slutzky (ed.), *Sefer Toldot Hahaganah (History of the Haganah)*, 3 parts, 8 vols, Tel Aviv, 1959-1973
- ³⁶ Morris, Benny, *The Birth of the Palestine Refugee Problem 1947-1949*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987
- ³⁷ Flapan, Simha, *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities*, Pantheon Books, New York, 1987.
- ³⁸ Pappe, Ilan, *The Making of the Arab-Israeli Conflict 1947-1951*, I. B. Tauris, London, 1992; Loos, Baudouin, 'Interview of Ilan Pappe', *Le Soir* (Brussels) 29 November 1999
- ³⁹ Collins, Larry and Dominique Lapiere, *O Jerusalem!*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972, p. 412.
- ⁴⁰ Flapan, Simha, *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities*, op. cit., p. 153-86.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 187-199.
- ⁴² Hitchens, Christopher, 'Broadcasts', in Said, Edward W. and Hitchens, Christopher (ed.), *Blaming the Victims: Spurious Scholarship and the Palestinian Question*, Verso, New York, 1988, p. 73-83.
- ⁴³ *Modelet*, no.12, October 1989
- ⁴⁴ Morris, Benny, *The Birth of the Palestine Refugee Problem 1947-1949*, op. cit. Indeed, the whole basis for the intervention of neighbouring Arab armies in Palestine was the dire condition of Palestinians under Zionist tutelage. Benny Morris points out that "it was precisely the unignorable plight and suffering of the Palestinian Arabs during April-May of that year [1948] that forced the hand of the reluctant Arab political and military leaders to take the plunge and invade Palestine on 15-16 May." (*Tikkun*, March-April 1998)
- ⁴⁵ Cited in Erlich, Guy, 'Not Only Deir Yassin', *Ha'ir*, 6 May 1992.
- ⁴⁶ Cited in *ibid.*
- ⁴⁷ Begin, Menachim, *The Revolt: Story of the Irgun*, p. 162.
- ⁴⁸ Soldier's testimony cited in Morris, Benny, *The Birth of the Palestine Refugee Problem 1947-1949*, op. cit., p 222
- ⁴⁹ Amr, Wafa, 'Israeli Researcher Uncovers 1948 Bloodbath', Reuters, 19 January 2000
- ⁵⁰ Pilger, John, 'Ethnic Cleansing and the Establishment of Israel', *New Statesman*, 19 June 2002. Katz, a devout Zionist who used to live on a kibbutz, was awarded a top grade by the Middle East Department at Haifa University for his Masters degree thesis. However, when his research was publicised in the Israeli press, several Zionist veterans of the massacre at Tantura sued him for libel, while several Jewish witnesses recanted. Subsequently, Katz's MA degree was cancelled by his university – although the case had not yet even been heard in court. Despite support for his research from other prominent Israeli academics, Katz has been made the brunt of a highly politicised campaign to silence the endorsement and publication of the very research his university had originally accredited as top grade work.
- ⁵¹ Peretz, Don, *New Outlook*, September 1969
- ⁵² *Our Roots Are Still Alive*, People's Press Palestine Book Project; cited in *The Origin of the Palestine-Israel Conflict*, Jews for Justice in the Middle East, Berkeley, CA, 1998.
- ⁵³ UN Document A/648 (21 Sept.-12Dec. 1948), p. 14, filed 16 September 1948.
- ⁵⁴ *Historical Survey of the Efforts of the U.N. Conciliation Commission for Palestine to Secure the Implementation of Paragraph 11 of G.A. Resolution 194 (III)*, paragraph 38; UN Document A/AC.25/W.81/Rev.2, p. 20-21.
- ⁵⁵ Morris, Benny, *Israel's Border Wars 1949-1956* (Hebrew version), Tel Aviv, 1996, p. 156, 113-114. In contrast to the up to 5,000 Palestinian casualties, Israeli casualties amounted to approximately 190-220 dead during 1949-1954.
- ⁵⁶ Shapira, Anita, 'Jewish identity, Israeli identity', *JPR Newsletter*, Institute for Jewish Policy Research, Spring 2000
- ⁵⁷ Cited in Zohar, Michael Bar, *Ben-Gurion: The Armed Prophet*, Prentice-Hall, 1967, p. 157.
- ⁵⁸ Of course, the drive for Jewish and non-Jewish peaceful co-existence requires efforts by both sides to seek truth and reconciliation, yet ultimately the violent origins of Israel continue to define its politico-territorial dynamic in its relations with Palestinians, and therefore being by far the dominant party to the conflict – and the historical originator of violence – the most significant moves must come from inside Israel itself.