

Zionist Violence Against Palestinians

By Muhammad Hallaj

Rev. Don Wagner, national director of Palestine Human Rights Campaign, toured the occupied territories in February 1988. He visited the family of Khader Tarazi, a 19-year-old Palestinian beaten to death by Israeli soldiers in Gaza on February 8. The head of the Chicago-based human rights organization related the family's account of the incident:

Witnesses claim that Khader did not participate in the stone throwing but ran as soon as the scene turned ugly. Four soldiers from the tough Golani Brigade saw Khader run and followed him to the home of a former neighbor, Um-Issam, a friend of the family. Khader ran inside and hid under a bed. The soldiers smashed down the door and searched the house, finding the frightened boy in a bedroom. They dragged him out into the living room and began to beat him with clubs and the butts of their guns. The elderly Um-Issam (approximately 65-66 years) screamed and tried to interfere but was clubbed and pushed aside. Khader had collapsed from the initial beating and was lying on the floor. One of the Golani [soldiers], crazed with rage, lifted Khader over his head and slammed his body to the

cement floor. Um-Issam, who witnessed everything, later said blood flowed from his mouth and eyes. Another soldier kicked him in the genitals. Khader did not react. His limp body lay motionless in a pool of blood.

Within a few minutes two officers entered the house. By this time neighbors had heard the screams and noises and had gathered at a safe distance in adjacent houses in the alley. One neighbor who understood Hebrew heard an officer use his "walkie talkie" to contact another IDF unit to report their capture and the beating. The officer then asked what they should do next. The reply came back loud and clear, "Finish him off."

Khader was then dragged out of the house and thrown on the hood of the jeep, with his head hanging over the front and his feet straight back toward the windshield. His arms were stretched outward

and tied down in a crucifixion position. Then the Golanis began to beat him again, clubbing him on the head, back, arms and legs. Scores of people witnessed the scene. Blood spurted out of his mouth and nose, running down the front of the jeep. Many feel that Khader was dead at this point. The jeep drove away with the boy still tied to the front.

Family members told us that on receipt of the body, one of Khader's cousins who is chief surgeon at Gaza's Shifa Hospital examined the body and photographed it prior to the funeral. He noted that the back was broken, the right front skull was fractured, bones in each arm and the right hand were broken, multiple lacerations appeared on the back, stomach, face, legs and arms. Internal injuries could not be measured. Khader was mutilated.

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(Photographs of the recent uprising, appearing in this issue, are courtesy of the author.)

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About This Issue

Why are Palestinians under occupation revolting? According to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, it all began when a lone Palestinian from southern Lebanon, using a hang-glider, assaulted an Israeli army post and, singlehandedly, killed several Israeli soldiers. He broke the barrier of fear, explained Shamir, adding that all Israel had to do to put down the uprising was to "reestablish the barrier of fear." To that end, he warned

that any Palestinian challenging Israel's rule "will have his head smashed against the boulders and walls of these fortresses."

The Prime Minister's quote prompted this issue of *The Link*. How precisely has Israel managed over the years to erect and maintain a reign of fear over two million Palestinians? The answer is given by Dr. Muhammad Hallaj, a Palestinian and former Vice President of Bir Zeit University

on the occupied West Bank.

An answer is also given, in part, by Israeli writer and educator, Simha Flapan, in his book, *The Birth Of Israel: Myths and Realities*, published just prior to his death last year. A review of *Birth of Israel* by Middle East specialist, Nimr Ibrahim, appears on page 14. This and other current books are offered at special discount prices on pages 15-16.

John F. Mahoney,
Executive Director

Mattityahu Peled, retired Israeli general and presently member of the Knesset, once remarked that "the Israelis have become the Mongols of the Middle East."¹ In recent months, many others have reached the same conclusion as Israeli brutality against the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza evokes a nearly universal sense of revulsion.

Israel has been savaging the Palestinians for decades, but the violence which exploded in December 1987 against the Palestinians has been too

brutal and excessive to escape attention during the uprising. Israel's apologists, embarrassed by the image of a state gone berserk, have tried to blame Israel's globally-condemned behavior on exceptional circumstances. It is the occupation, they say, which corrupts the occupier. From its very beginning, however, the Zionist movement considered violence against the Palestinians unavoidable in its reckless adventure to create a Jewish society, then a Jewish state, in Palestine.

ering" of the world's Jews a feasible proposition. For both reasons, the Zionists could not entertain the possibility of Arab-Jewish coexistence in Palestine. Joseph Weitz, who was in charge of Zionist colonization, declared:

Between ourselves it must be clear that there is no room for both peoples together in this country.... We shall not achieve our goal of being an independent people with the Arabs in this small country. The only solution is a Palestine, at least Western Palestine (west of the Jordan River) without Arabs... And there is no other way than to transfer the Arabs from here to the neighbouring countries, to transfer all of them; not one village, not one tribe, should be left.... Only after this transfer will the country be able to absorb the millions of our own brethren. There is no other way out.³

Since its establishment in 1948, Israel justified its frequent use of violence on the grounds of self-defense. The continuing belligerency between Israel and the Arab states gave credibility to Israel's contention that it must rely on force to ensure survival. Since the rise of the Palestine Liberation Organization, it further argued that violence against the Palestinians

Historical Background

Though the Zionist movement portrayed this adventure, during the first half of this century, as a constructive effort, it was of necessity a destructive undertaking. To build up a Jewish presence in Palestine, the Arab presence had to be undermined and destroyed. Dr. Fayez Sayegh described the Zionists' dual necessity this way: "Just as the heartbeat consists of two rhythmic operations—pumping-in and pumping-out—so too the program of Zionism consists of two inter-

related operations, each of which is essential for the heartbeat of Zionism and neither of which is dispensable: The detachment of Jews from their respective countries and their mass transfer to Palestine, and the detachment of the indigenous Palestinian Arabs and their mass transfer from Palestine."²

The state of the Jews which the Zionists wanted to establish could not be a pluralist society. Space was also needed to make the Zionist "ingath-

in particular is essential to its struggle against "Arab terrorism," a catch-all expression describing any resistance or opposition to Israel's acts and policies.

The use of violence has always been a principal Zionist policy toward the Palestinians, even before the estab-

lishment of Israel. During the inter-war period, when the massive Zionist colonization of Palestine began, the Zionists debated their options and concluded that the transformation of Palestine to Israel was not possible without recourse to force against the indigenous Palestinian Arab society.

The Mandate Period

When the Zionist movement resolved to solve the "Jewish problem" with the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine and to set up the World Zionist Organization in 1897 to pursue that objective, it laid down a two-track strategy followed ever since. On one hand, it believed in and prepared for the inevitability of conflict with the Arabs, while at the same time projecting a benign image that stressed the possible cooperation and peaceful coexistence between Zionist movement and Arab nationalism. Accordingly, the Zionist movement was portrayed as "the national liberation movement of the Jewish people," and a partner in the Arab and Asian nationalist struggle against European colonialism for self-determination and independence. Zionist emissaries sent to India, for example, hoped to secure the endorsement of Mahatma Gandhi and other Indian nationalist leaders.

Gandhi and Nehru refused to recognize Zionism as a national liberation movement. Zionism, Gandhi said, was working to undermine the authentic nationalist movement of the Palestinian Arabs whom it was trying to reduce to a minority in their own country.⁴ Nehru also understood the colonial nature of Zionism. When the Jews go to Palestine, he said, "with the object of dominating the country, they could hardly expect to be welcomed by the Arabs." Instead of aligning themselves with the Palestinians in their struggle for independence from Britain, the Zionists, he continued, "had thought fit to take the side of British imperialism and to

seek its protection against the inhabitants of the country."⁵

Portraying itself as a potential ally of Arab nationalism, the Zionist movement argued that a Jewish state in Palestine would assist the other Arab states financially and in their struggle against European colonial powers. Outside of Palestine itself, the Zionists contended, Zionism and Arab nationalism were compatible. In reality, the Zionists worked against Arab nationalism throughout the Arab world. In 1918, for example, during a meeting of the Zionist Commission, Chaim Weizmann said that to convince the British to sponsor Zionism by issuing the Balfour Declaration the previous year, he told them that Zionism would be the means of "breaking the Arab belt from Morocco to Damascus."⁶

Abundant evidence suggests that the Zionist claim of compatibility with Arab nationalist aspirations, even beyond Palestine, was only disingenuous. Their scheme required the imposition of a European colonial presence in the Middle East, something diametrically opposed to Arab nationalist sentiments and interests. When the Syrian nationalist leader Riad al-Sulh, for example, went to France as a member of a delegation to lobby for Syria's independence, he learned that Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann "had been in Paris and had spoken with the French Government, urging them not to grant independence to Syria," which prompted him to complain that "the Jews were opposed to the liberation of the Arabs from a foreign yoke."⁷

In 1922, the Palestinian editor of *al-Karmel* newspaper forewarned any Arab politician who believed that Zionism was interested in the welfare of the Arabs. "Anyone who thinks that the sacrifice [of Palestine] is likely to help save another spot," he said, "is suffering from a repugnant brain disease and should stay out of the world of Arab politics until he gets well."⁸

The early Zionists saw themselves as colonizers, and historically colonization never happens without resistance by the native population. Jabotinsky used this argument to advocate the establishment of a Jewish armed force in Palestine. "I don't know of a single example in history," he told a Zionist meeting in 1921, "where a country was colonised with the courteous consent of the native population."⁹

This view, widely shared in the Zionist movement, held that the only way to deal with the Arabs was to make them realize that the Zionist project would continue whether they liked it or not.¹⁰

Ben-Gurion agreed. In 1919, he admonished his Zionist colleagues not to bother with the Arabs: there was no possibility of reaching an understanding with them, because there was not a single Arab who agreed that Palestine should be Jewish.¹¹ It was all right, said another Zionist spokesman, to sugar-coat the Balfour Declaration to make it easier for the Arabs to swallow, but the Arabs should understand that they must be prepared to live as a minority in Palestine.¹²

Although the Zionists loudly proclaimed that Zionism and Arab nationalism were compatible, they never completely concealed their belief to the contrary. As Arthur Rupin, who headed the Zionist colonization effort in Palestine for some time, wrote to historian Hans Kohn in 1930:

The [Zionist] aim is to bring the Jews [to Palestine] as a second nation into a country which is already settled by a nation and fulfill this through peaceful means. History has seen such penetration by one nation into a strange land only by conquest, but it has never occurred

that a nation will freely agree that another nation should come and demand full equality of rights and national autonomy at its side. The Zionist aim has no equal example in history.¹³

When they were not engaged in public relations, the Zionists occasionally admitted the legitimacy of Arab resistance to Zionism. During the Palestinian rebellion against British rule (1936-1939), Ben-Gurion explained to his political party that the Arabs were fighting "what they regard as a usurpation of their homeland by the Jews." He continued: "In our political argument abroad, we minimize Arab opposition to us. But let us not ignore the truth among ourselves. I insist on the truth, not out of respect for scientific but political realities." He continued to explain that "politically we are the aggressors and they defend themselves." Ben-Gurion said that the Arabs fight because "the country is theirs, because they inhabit it, whereas we want to come here and settle down, and in their view we want to take away from them their country."¹⁴

The Zionists made it clear that they had military force in mind when they spoke of the need to impose a fait accompli in Palestine. Vladimir Jabotinsky suggested that the Arabs must know that "not by force, not by constitutional means, and not by divine miracle can you prevent a Jewish majority in Palestine." An "iron wall" of Jewish military regiments, he said, ought to be erected. He opposed the establishment of a secret Jewish militia, proposed by some, and called for a regular Jewish army for added psychological impact. To be duly intimidated, the Arabs needed to see visible Jewish military power. "Two thousand regular Jewish troops," Jabotinsky argued in 1921 as the establishment of a Jewish armed force in Palestine was being debated within the Zionist movement, "will have a greater impact on the Arabs than ten thousand armed civilians."¹⁵

Other Zionist leaders agreed, not only for security reasons to protect the emerging Jewish colony in Palestine, but also for political reasons: to strike fear in the hearts of the Arabs

who might want to oppose the progress of Zionism. Eliahu Golomb, founder and first commander of the Haganah, said that the primary function of a Jewish armed force was "to accustom the Arabs to the idea that our fate is to be the rulers of this land."¹⁶

1948 War

Until recently, the Zionist version of Palestine's history went essentially unchallenged. Largely a collection of myths, always contested by the Arabs but only recently corroborated by Israeli research, it served to justify Zionist and Israeli violence against the Palestinians and other Arab peoples. These myths included the following:

1. The Jews came to Palestine with the best of intentions, to live in peace with the indigenous Arabs and to cooperate with them for the good of both peoples.
2. Arab intransigence created tension between the two communities in Palestine. The Arabs opposed and resisted Jewish immigration, and when the U.N. partitioned Palestine in 1947, the Jews were willing to settle for half of the country if the Arabs had not invaded it, inflicting upon themselves a greater loss of territory.
3. Ever since that first Arab-Israeli war, the Arabs have been sworn to destroy the Jewish state, forcing it to live from war to war for forty years.
4. The Palestinians—who abandoned their country voluntarily to facilitate the Arab invasion in 1948—have been engaged in terrorism against Israel, making it necessary for it to retaliate in order to ensure its survival and the security of its citizens.

Collectively these myths imply the Arabs ruined a beautiful friendship and brought upon Israel and themselves a life of endless danger and

Eventually, with the passage of the U.N. resolution to partition Palestine in 1947, the Zionist colonists would use the resolution to sanction the massive use of violence to impose a Jewish state, to expand its territory and to de-Arabize the country by the eviction of the Palestinians.

destruction. Recent access to information, previously restricted, and wider attention to writing Palestinian history, have exposed much of the Zionist mythology about Israel and its dealings with the Arabs.¹⁷

Israel's 1948 "war of independence" in actual fact is a misnomer. Wars of independence have always been fought by colonized indigenous societies against foreign rulers. In Israel's case, the 1948 war which brought about a Jewish state in Palestine was fought by a recent immigrant minority—including non-citizens—against a native majority. A war of conquest and usurpation, its purpose was to de-Arabize Palestine and to implant a Jewish society and state. Depiction of the 1948 war as Israel's war of independence glosses over this fact and projects Zionism as a national liberation movement which fought British imperialism to secure Jewish independence. It also reinforces the claim that Zionism meant no harm to the Arabs until they chose to clash with it, precipitating the Arab-Israeli conflict.

According to this view, the Jewish minority in Palestine was satisfied with the country's partition, recommended by the U.N. General Assembly in 1947, and all subsequent events—the outbreak of Arab-Jewish armed conflict, the Zionist conquest of additional territory, the displacement of the Palestinians, and the disappearance of Arab Palestine—were all the result of the unwise Arab policy to challenge the new Jewish state.

The Arabs, however, consistently

defended their lawful right not only to intervene militarily on behalf of the threatened population in Palestine, but also to contain an essentially expansionist state which exploited a favorable international climate and chaotic local conditions to maximize its gains at the expense of a defenseless civilian population. It was not until recently that Israeli researchers began to confirm this Arab view of the war of 1948. In his most recent book, written shortly before his death, Simha Flapan considered seven myths about Israel's dealings with the Arabs. Included was the notion that the Jews in Palestine welcomed the country's partition and were prepared to live in peace alongside an Arab Palestinian state had the Arabs not chosen to go to war to frustrate partition and the new state of Israel.¹⁸

In truth, the Zionist leadership continued to view a small Jewish state in a partitioned Palestine as a "lever," a first step to the conquest of the entire country. In his *Memoirs*, David Ben-Gurion urged Zionist colleagues in 1937 not to reject the opportunity to establish a small Jewish state, when the British first proposed the partition of Palestine that year. A Jewish state, he said, no matter how small, would be "the most powerful lever for the gradual conquest of all of Palestine."¹⁹

When the United Nations proposed partition again, in 1947, giving the Jews a larger part of the country, the Zionist leadership accepted it with equally bad faith. As the Arabs tried to prevent the dismemberment of Palestine and its de-Arabization by opposing partition, the Zionists debated two strategies. One advocated "a deescalation of tension to facilitate the peaceful implementation of the U.N. Partition Resolution." The other was a doctrine of "total war" advocated by then army chief of operations Yigal Yadin. Its objective was to win "more land and less Arabs" by taking advantage of the outbreak of hostilities to conquer as much territory as possible and by expelling its Arab population. In the end, the hard-line position won out, "largely due to Ben-Gurion's influence."²⁰ A consensus emerged regarding "the elimina-

tion of the Palestinian factor and the winning of maximum territory for the Jewish state, both by way of military *faits accomplis*." Flapan's study shows that "on these fundamental objectives there was no difference of opinion within the Zionist leadership, only a division of labor."²¹

The Zionists wanted a demographically homogeneous state, as purely Jewish and geographically extensive as possible; the U.N. partition resolution fell short of both objectives. To construe that Arab opposition to partition triggered subsequent events, wrote Flapan, "is to ignore the essential part of Zionist strategy: the elimination of the Palestinian people as contenders for, and even as inhabitants of, the same territory."²² Zionist acceptance of partition, Flapan reasoned, was an act of opportunism: "In short, acceptance of the U.N. Partition Resolution was an example of Zionist pragmatism par excellence. It was tactical acceptance, a vital step in the right direction—a springboard for expansion when circumstances proved more judicious."²³

The outbreak of hostilities afforded the Zionists "judicious" circumstances, and they waged the "total war" advocated by Yadin to give the new Jewish state "more land and less Arabs." By the time the war was over, Israel had expanded its territory considerably and reduced its Arab population, according to Ian Lustick, to an "instant minority."

To justify their position, the Zionists developed a propaganda theme portraying the Arabs as "followers of Hitler." In Flapan's words, "The righteousness that allowed the Jews to defy accepted ethical norms was further intensified by the fact that *they projected onto the Arabs the wrath and vengefulness that they felt toward the Nazis*. This process was facilitated by propaganda that consistently depicted the Arabs as the followers of Hitler."²⁴ Even before the U.N. recommended partition, and months before armed conflict began in Palestine, Ben-Gurion was already conceptualizing the yet-to-happen conflict as a war of annihilation against the Jews. On August 8, 1947, almost four months before fighting broke out, he

told a Zionist gathering in Switzerland:

The aim of Arab attacks on Zionism is not robbery, terror, or stopping the growth of the Zionist enterprise, but the total destruction of the Yishuv [Jewish community in Palestine]. It is not political adversaries who will stand before us, but the pupils and even teachers of Hitler, who claim there is only one way to solve the Jewish question, one way only—total annihilation.²⁵

The perceived necessity to make Palestine "a land without people," fortified by the myopic view that the Jews were avenging the Nazi holocaust, caused the Zionist war on the Palestinians to be a most unrestrained and ruthless one. Often it would degenerate into a genocidal onslaught where Palestinians suffered indiscriminate mass killing, as was the case in the Deir Yassin and Duwayma massacres, the most notorious but by no means only massacres against the Palestinians during the war of 1948.²⁶

Nor were the massacres aberrations from a "civilized war," an absurdity promoted by the Zionist myth about the "the purity of Jewish arms." Throughout Palestine, Jewish forces killed and terrorized, destroyed and looted²⁷ to conquer as much land with as few survivors as possible. Behind a thick smoke screen of propaganda about the Israeli "miracle," the practically defenseless Palestinians suffered one of the most vicious, indiscriminate assaults on a civilian population.

Although no record exists of the total number of Palestinian victims, accounts of Israeli brutality are sufficiently available to establish the genocidal nature of the Zionist conquest of Palestine. An American academic familiar with the story put it this way:

Except for the extermination of the Tasmanians, modern history knows no cases in which the virtually complete supplanting of the indigenous population of a country by an alien stock has been achieved in as little as two generations. Yet this, in fact, is what has been attempted in Palestine since the beginning of the twentieth century.²⁸

Duwayma Massacre

They killed some eighty to one hundred Arabs, women and children. The children were killed by smashing their skulls with clubs....In the village there remained Arab men and women who were put in houses without food. Then the sappers came to blow up the houses. One officer ordered a sapper to put two old women into the house he was about to blow up. The sapper refused, and said that he will [sic] obey only such orders as are handed down to him by his direct commander. So the officer ordered his own soldiers to put the old women in and the atrocity was

carried out. Another soldier boasted that he raped an Arab woman and then shot her. Another Arab woman with a day-old baby was employed in cleaning jobs in the yard....She worked for one or two days and then was shot together with her baby....Cultured and well-mannered commanders who are considered good fellows...have turned into low murderers, and this happened not in the storm of the battle and blind passion, but because of a system of expulsion and annihilation. The less Arabs remain, the better.

[Letter from Israeli soldier dated November 8, 1948, published in *Davar*, September 6, 1979. Quoted in David Gilmour, *Dispossessed: The Ordeal of the Palestinians*. London: Sphere Books, 1983, pp. 68-69]

Full-Scale Terrorism Used

Terror and violence were the primary means of transforming Palestine into Israel. Nafez Nazzal showed how widespread the use of violence and terror was in the war to establish the state of Israel. He interviewed Palestinian refugees who had lived through the experience, people from 32 Galilean towns which until 1948 accounted for 40 percent of the population of Galilee. "I selected from two to seven villages involved in each military operation carried out by the Zionists in occupying Galilee," he wrote, "to learn from the refugees involved the processes of occupation and dispersion."²⁹ At the end of his study, Nazzal concluded that the expulsion of the people of Galilee—as in other regions of Palestine—was the result of "a conscious and wilful Zionist policy" which involved "an organized campaign of exemplary terror; the spreading of rumours and psychological warfare; lethal attacks on the civilian population of Galilee, sieges of the larger towns, and the physical expulsion of large numbers

of people after the military occupation of their towns and villages."³⁰

Accounts of Palestinian refugees who lived through the Zionist conquest of Palestine provide an anthology of horrors, of people chosen at random and shot in cold blood, of captives terrorized and made to flee to unknown and cruel fate, of whole towns looted and destroyed. A few examples suggest the story:

1. "When El Bi'na and Deir el Assad [villages] were taken by the Jews, my family and I were in El Bi'na's orchards to the north. The Jews grouped us with the other villagers, separating us from our women. We remained all day in the village courtyard...we were thirsty and hungry. Two villagers asked permission to bring water to the elderly and the children. The Jews took the men to get the water, but they shot them instead. The Jews searched us, took what little money we had, our rings and watches, and chose about 200 men at random and drove away with them in trucks towards Er

Rama. We do not know what happened to them. The rest of us were to proceed north to Lebanon."³¹

2. "During the morning of October 30, a few villagers decided to carry white flags and meet the Jews west of the village. They were to tell the Jewish soldiers that the villagers had gotten rid of the ALA [an Arab volunteer force] and that the village was safe and prepared to surrender. We were surprised when suddenly another Jewish force approached the village from the east. The Jews joined up at the village and soon after ordered us to assemble at 'Ain Majd el Kurum in the center of the village. Jewish soldiers picked twelve of our men at random, blindfolded them, and shot them in front of us. I kept praying that my husband would not return to the village. One night, I joined about 60 families who had decided to leave to Lebanon, where I met my husband...The Jews did not stop us from leaving."³²

3. "As we lined up, a few Jewish soldiers ordered four girls to accompany them to carry water for the soldiers. Instead, they took them to our empty houses and raped them. About 70 of our men were blindfolded and shot to death, one after the other, in front of us. The soldiers took their bodies and threw them on the cement covering of the village's spring and dumped sand on them."³³

Such indiscriminate violence, occasionally deteriorating to mass slaughter, cast the Palestinians in 1948 as a nation of refugees and the remnants of Palestinian society as an "instant minority" in the Jewish state.³⁴ Although the continuing Zionist myth—that the Palestinians had abandoned their country voluntarily or under orders from Arab leaders in preparation for the Arab invasion—had been exposed earlier,³⁵ more recent research based on newly discovered Israeli documents of the period leaves no doubt about the role of violence in the disruption of Palestinian society and its displacement.³⁶

Actual violence, reinforced with psychological warfare, deliberately created fear of more violence and

caused more Palestinians to seek safety by fleeing their homes. Writing about the conduct of the war in the Galilee region, Yigal Allon explained how he looked for ways "to cause the tens of thousands of sulkily Arabs who remained in Galilee to flee."

I gathered all of the Jewish Mukhtars [village heads], who have contact with Arabs in different villages, and asked them to whisper in the ears of some Arabs, that a great Jewish reinforcement has arrived in Galilee and that it is going to burn all of the villages of the Huleh. They should suggest to these Arabs, as their friends, to escape while there is still time. And the rumor spread in all areas of the Huleh that it is time to flee. The flight numbered myriads. The tactic reached its goal completely.³⁷

Psychological warfare was not always conducted in such "good taste." In one instance, "the Israelis brought up jeeps with loudspeakers which broadcast recorded 'horror sounds.' These included shrieks, wails, and anguished moans of Arab women, the wail of sirens and the clang of fire-alarm bells, interrupted by a sepulchral voice calling out in Arabic: 'Save your souls, all ye faithful: The Jews are using poison gas and atomic weapons. Run for your lives in the name of Allah'."³⁸

In 1948, Jewish forces were so indiscriminately brutal with the Palestinians that a cabinet minister in the first Israeli Government compared their deeds to Nazi brutalities. Aharon Cizling, minister of agriculture, reported to the cabinet on November 17, 1948 that he had received information about atrocities which led him to believe that "now Jews too have behaved like Nazis." He asked for an investigation but agreed that "Obviously we have to conceal these actions from the public, and I agree that we should not even reveal that we're investigating them."³⁹

Atrocities against the Palestinians were neither isolated, rare occurrences nor the work of dissident fanatics. True, the most notorious atrocity of the 1948 war, the Deir Yassin massacre, was committed by

Menachem Begin's Irgun terrorist group, but in most cases they were the work of Jewish forces under the command of the mainstream Jewish establishment, headed by Ben-Gurion. The fact that the establishment and the extremist fringe agreed on the objectives meant that they never let the means get in the way. Both wanted as much land with as few Arabs as possible, and the atrocities were proving to be an effective means to that end. Contrary to subsequent accounts, "Ben-Gurion tended to ignore the human tragedy of the Palestinian Arabs. He viewed their plight with the same pragmatic purposefulness which generally characterized his national policy: 'Land with Arabs on it and land without Arabs on it are two very different types of land,' he told his party's

central committee, as if he were a real estate agent discussing business."⁴⁰

For this reason, it is not surprising that recent research does not ascribe Israeli violence to extremist groups and establishes it as a general policy characterized more by a division of labor than a difference of opinion. The establishment used it and never tried to deter the extremist elements when they used it, no matter how brutally. For example, after the Irgun perpetrated the Deir Yassin massacre, the local Haganah commander, David Shaltiel, wanted to disarm them. "David," he was told, "you'll bloody your name for life. The Jewish people will never forgive you."⁴¹ He relented. Three days later, the Haganah and the Irgun formed an alliance to attack Haifa together, which they did a few days later.

The Military Build-up

The end of the war of 1948 did not put an end to Israeli violence against the Palestinians. As Israel busied itself during the 1950s and 1960s by "ingathering" Jewish settlers on confiscated Arab land,⁴² it also built up an increasingly powerful military machine, periodically using it to terrorize the Palestinians on both sides of the "green line." Occasionally, it committed massacres reminiscent of the massacres during the 1948 war. In 1953 in Qibya, in 1956 in Kufr Kassem, and in 1966 in Sammu', Israel committed massacres as its propaganda machine filled the world with protestations of Israel's quest for peace with the reluctant Arabs. In the case of Qibya, for example, the Israeli army crossed the armistice line, in October 1953, in what became the first in a series of "reprisal raids." To avenge the death of three Israelis, allegedly killed by Arab infiltrators from Jordan, the Israelis attacked the Palestin-

ian village with a newly-formed commando unit under the command of Ariel Sharon and "destroyed the whole village, blowing up the houses with their inhabitants still inside them and killing sixty-six people."⁴³ No less reprehensible than the massacre itself was Israel's insensitivity about its crime. "There's no need to get upset," said Pinhas Lavon, a Ben-Gurion protege who shortly later became Israel's defense minister, because "there was no fine mahogany furniture in the village."⁴⁴

The crime of Kufr Kassem was even more atrocious since there was no provocation, real or imagined. Forty-nine villagers, as they returned home from work outside the village, were shot to death by regular Israeli soldiers for violating a curfew of which they had not been informed. Operating under "shoot to kill" orders, the Israeli soldiers simply mowed down the victims as they reentered their vil-

lage. The Israeli Government took great pains to hide the news of the Kufr Kassem massacre from the Jewish population, but "certain circles spread news of the massacre throughout the Arab sectors, apparently to 'encourage' the Arabs to leave."⁴⁵

Despite the incessant nature of violence, it is remarkable how every new wave of violence evokes expressions of surprise and disbelief as well as laments about the "endangered Zionist soul," and the "threatened moral fiber" of Israeli society. Israel was not only born in violence but it has also lived by violence. It brought turmoil in its wake, precipitating a major conflict every decade (1948, 1956, 1967, 1973, 1982), not counting limited armed skirmishes such as the "war of attrition" along the Suez Canal in 1970 and the invasion and occupation of south Lebanon in March 1978. Israel has routinely used air power to bombard concentrations of Palestinians in adjacent countries so often that air strikes are not considered newsworthy unless the results reach intolerable levels.

Such was the case when Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982 and indulged in uncontrollable killing and destruction, culminating in mass killings in the Beirut refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila by Israel's proteges in Lebanon.⁴⁶ The fact that it was hardly provoked equally forced the world to pay attention. As Abba Eban wrote in the introduction to the published version of the report of the Kahan Commission, which investigated the massacres in the camps: "The border with Egypt was serene in the shelter of the peace treaty concluded in March 1979. There had been no turbulence from Jordan since 1970... Syria was full of militant and vengeful rhetoric, but there had been not a single act of violence since June 1974... Even the northern border with Lebanon had been tranquil for nearly a year," since a U.S.-brokered truce prevailed between Israel and the PLO.⁴⁷ Similarly, although violence has been a constant feature of Israeli rule in the territories occupied in 1967, it barely merited attention until it exploded with unprecedented fury twenty years later, in December 1987.

The Uprising

Since it occupied the remainder of Palestine, the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in 1967, Israel has relied on various types of violence and coercion to subdue their Palestinian population. Over a period of twenty years, Israeli soldiers and armed settlers have killed, blown up homes, attacked college campuses and places of worship, imprisoned without charges or trials, deported, confiscated property, closed newspapers, schools and hospitals, and generally terrorized a captive community. Yet, ironically, for a time at least, Israel's occupation was characterized as "humane," or "benevolent" and "enlightened." Like the 1982 invasion

of Lebanon and the consequent atrocities, it took a massive dose of Israeli brutality to expose the violent nature of Israel's rule in the occupied territories.

Although the ordeal of the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza sporadically captured world attention for brief moments (e.g., the assassination attempts against three mayors in 1980), the ordeal was a continuing fact of life. Before the current uprising exploded on December 9, 1987, the occupied territories have been constantly bleeding under Israel's "iron fist." A report released before the uprising by the Jerusalem-based Arab Studies Society said that

Israel was not only born in violence but it has also lived by violence.





the use of violence by the Israeli occupation authorities against Palestinians has been steadily increasing for a number of years. At the point of distribution in 1987, the report recorded: 17 political killings, 129 serious injuries, 86 homes demolished or sealed, more than 13,000 trees destroyed, 4,500 political prisoners on the average languished in Israeli detention centers, 105 persons under administrative detention, 77 under town arrest, 50 curfews have been imposed, and closure orders have been issued against educational and other institutions 48 times. The report prophetically warned that "1987 may prove to be as bloody as 1982" in the occupied West Bank and Gaza.⁴⁸ The most recent Israeli violent outburst in the occupied territories would indeed shock an incredulous world.

It began on December 9, 1987 when a Palestinian was shot dead by Israeli troops during a funeral for four Palestinians killed the previous day when an Israeli truck rammed their vehicles

at an army roadblock in the Gaza Strip. The following day, the funeral of the murdered Palestinian turned into a protest demonstration and two more Palestinians were shot dead. Three more died the next day, and "grief turned into anger and protest escalated to a mass uprising."⁴⁹ Israel excused the high number of casualties by explaining that Israel, being a democracy, had no riot control forces and its army was inexperienced in putting down civil unrest!

Six months after the uprising began, more than 200 Palestinians have lost their lives (according to official figures believed to be underestimates), thousands have been injured—many maimed for life—and thousands more suffer in Israeli prisons. Homes have been demolished, people deported, trees uprooted, hospitals and mosques tear gassed.⁵⁰

No less shocking than the number of casualties is the manner in which they have been inflicted. After several weeks of global condemnation for the

use of "excessive lethal force" against protesters, the Israeli cabinet announced in mid-January 1988 a new policy described by Yitzhak Rabin, Israeli's defense minister, as a policy of "force, might, beatings."⁵¹ Jonathan C. Randall of the *Washington Post* wrote that "A Reuter correspondent reported seeing Israeli troops equipped with new baseball bat-sized clubs in action against demonstrators in the Kadurah refugee camp in Ramallah during house-to-house searches."⁵² Correspondents' reports from the occupied territories indicated that the beatings were severe, usually causing serious injuries, that they were widespread, and that they were not always done during confrontations with demonstrators but during searches of homes or in prisons. *New York Times* correspondent John Kifner quoted a Palestinian doctor saying that the injuries indicated that the beatings took place inside people's homes during searches, because "we have as many

as four or five people from the same family" arriving at the hospital for treatment.⁵³ *The New York Times* reported that "In many cases, the beatings occurred not when protesters were caught during street clashes, but in nighttime raids on refugee centers. In some cases young men say they have been put aboard buses, beaten by soldiers and then dumped on the roadside." It added that "The precise extent of the beating is difficult to measure, but it is clear that the practice has become widespread."⁵⁴ The Hebrew press reported at the end of January 1988 that "72 young people had been admitted to government hospitals in the last week as a result of beatings, the vast majority for broken bones." Doctors at one of the Gaza hospitals, however, said that "they had been seeing at least a dozen and sometimes as many as 30 cases a day."⁵⁵

Obviously, breaking people's limbs would incapacitate them. As the Israeli military correspondent Joshua Brilliant put it: "A detainee sent to Far'a Prison will be freed in 18 days unless the authorities have enough evidence to charge him. But if troops break his hand, he won't be able to throw stones for a month and a half."⁵⁶

An American medical team, representing the Boston-based Physicians for Human Rights, visited the occupied territories February 4-February 12, 1988, and reported that people were beaten with the obvious intent to break their limbs, often more than one limb and in more than one place.⁵⁷ "If this were a war," said one doctor, "much of what we observed would be considered atrocities."⁵⁸

Extrapolating from their own observations, team members reported that conservatively the "total injury figure for the [then] two-month uprising [is] well in excess of 10,000 cases."⁵⁹ Conceding that the figures are "crude guesses, made simply to establish a range," their report says that the injuries, nevertheless, "numbered in thousands, rather than hundreds," making it justifiable to describe the situation as "an epidemic of violence."⁶⁰

The Physicians for Human Rights

report confirms press stories about the deliberate nature of injuries caused by beating, based on the nature of injuries they observed. "A highly effective way to break the metacarpal bones," they indicated, "is to force a victim to place his palm against a wall or table and then to hit the back of the hand with club or rifle butt. A highly effective way to break the radius in midshaft is to forcibly extend the subject's arm, outstretched with thumb side up, and then strike the forearm from above, hitting downward with considerable force perpendicular to the long axis of the bone." They also noted that "almost all of these hand and arm fractures occurred on the dominant side—on the right in right-handers, on the left in left-handers."⁶¹

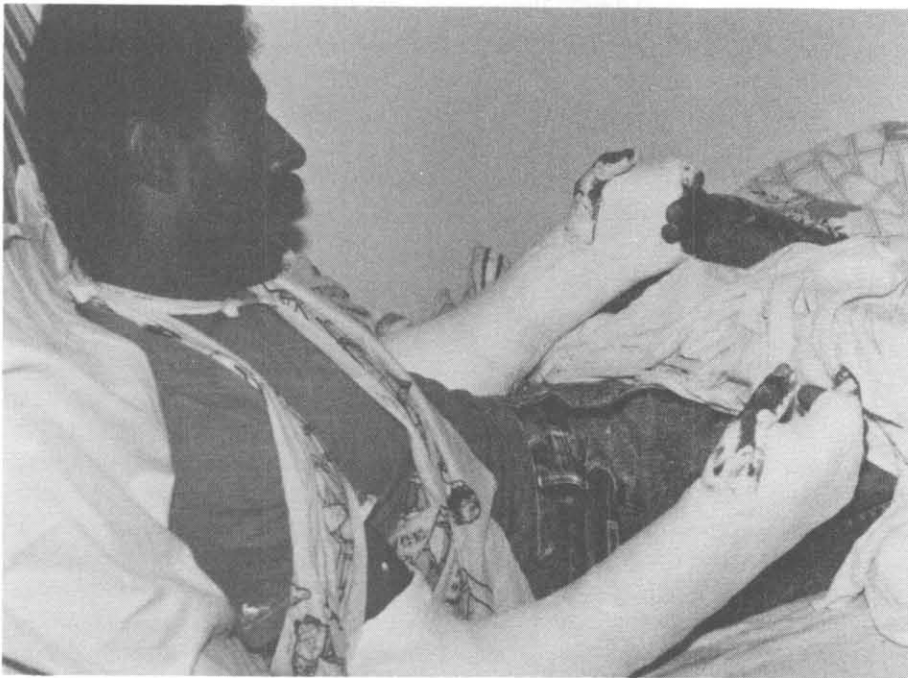
The deliberate nature of the bone-breaking injuries was not only shown

by the type of injuries observed, but also by "the significant absence of certain kinds of injuries," the types that "would have been expected in free-swinging melees, in people resisting arrest or actively attacking others."⁶² In other words, the medical report confirms media accounts of people being beaten up in their homes or while under arrest rather than in street rioting.

In the Gaza Strip, the visiting American physicians said the beatings were particularly vicious. "Indeed," they explained, "the word 'beating' does not properly convey the literal pounding and mauling with clubs and other weapons required to produce the injuries we saw."⁶³

Accounts of deliberately inflicted injuries were not only recorded by the media, on film, but also by participat-





ing Israeli soldiers. "We went into almost every second house," one soldier told the Israeli daily *Hadashot*. "We tied up the men outside with their faces to the wall, and, during questioning, soldiers hit them with clubs. The men screamed from pain and the women who heard them also screamed."⁶⁴

The town of Ramallah, in the West Bank, acquired its own "wailing wall" as the result of the "beating" policy. A wall alongside a vacant lot near the town center became a favorite place for beating people. The bloodstained wall, Glen Frankel of the *New York Times* noted, "has become the new symbol of Israel's occupation."⁶⁵ Near the wall is a taxi stand, and one taxi driver described a beating in this way: "We saw the soldiers grab a kid from the street near the vegetable market. They tied his hands behind him and beat him all the way from the street to the wall. They pushed him up against the wall and then the soldiers, about six or seven of them, kicked him, punched him and smashed his head and body with their rifle butts."⁶⁶

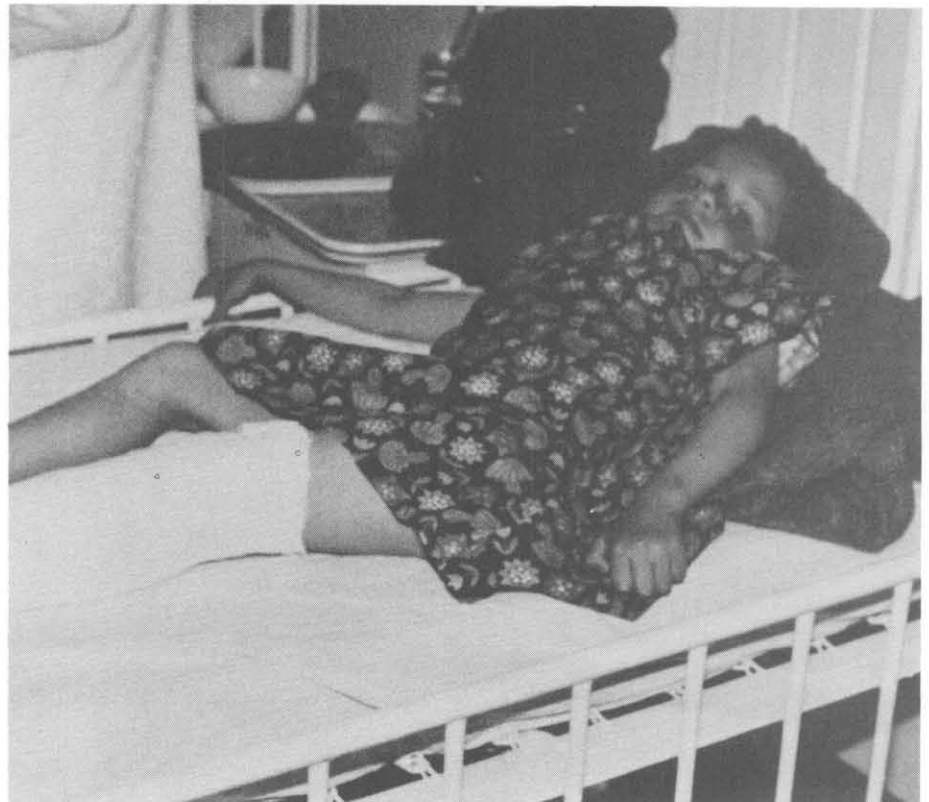
A middle-aged Israeli saleswoman, reading a *Jerusalem Post* story about the blood-spattered wall, put her sandwich away. "I can't eat my sandwich anymore," she burst out. "This is like what was done in the camps." She

seemed to be referring to the Nazi concentration camps of World War II."⁶⁷ Maj. Gen. Amram Mitzna, who commands Israel's troops in the West Bank, confessed: "I don't feel so well when I wake up in the morning."⁶⁸ And American actor Woody Allen said he was "appalled beyond measure... Beatings of people by soldiers

to make examples of them? Breaking the hands of men and women so they can't throw stones? Dragging civilians out of their homes at random to smash them with sticks in an effort to terrorize a population into quiet?" He asked incredulously: "Am I reading the papers correctly?"⁶⁹

One of the most dangerous consequences of using brutality as a matter of public policy is that it encourages excesses. When Israeli soldiers are authorized to beat up people to a pulp, some of them will be tempted to bury them alive, as some soldiers did in the village of Salim in the West Bank early in February 1988.⁷⁰

Shooting and beating protesters was reinforced with the use of tear gas, not only in street demonstrations, but also in hospitals and places of worship.⁷¹ The most dangerous use of tear gas was in closed areas, such as shops and homes, an act which could and did produce fatalities. The *Washington Post* indicated that "Palestinian doctors and officials working for the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) that operates refugee camps contend there have been more than 1,200 injuries, dozens of miscarriages and at least 11 deaths from tear



gas since the uprising began December 9." There appeared to be "much evidence indicating that on numerous occasions soldiers and police have violated the manufacturer's printed warnings by firing the gas into enclosed areas such as rooms or small courtyards."⁷² In addition to dangerous use of tear gas, the Israelis have used highly toxic gases. A doctor associated with the United Nations visited the occupied territories and revealed in Vienna in the middle of April that "Israeli soldiers have used new and highly toxic gases against Palestinian demonstrators in the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank."⁷³

After a visit to the occupied territories, Rev. Donald Wagner of Chicago wrote about Israel's use of tear gas, which has caused injuries and fetal deaths, and raised the question whether Israel is using a type of chemical warfare against the Palestinians.⁷⁴ The Database Project on Palestinian Human Rights related that, as of May 31, 1988: "More than 50 people have died after tear gas inhala-

tion; 2 people have lost organs after being directly hit by canisters; and at least 150 pregnant women have suffered miscarriages or intrauterine fetal death after being gassed. A 4-year-old boy was burned to death in Gaza City when a gas canister fired into his home ignited a kerosene stove; 2 of his siblings were badly burned and hospitalized."⁷⁵ Early in May, accounts of Israeli misuse of tear gas and pressure by Arab-American and human rights organizations, prompted TransTechnology, the American supplier of tear gas to Israel, to stop selling tear gas to Israel.⁷⁶

In addition to various types of lethal and potentially lethal force, Israel has employed other means of pressure, including the use of rubber bullets, extended curfews, disruption of telephone communications, restriction on movement, depriving the occupied territories of gasoline, and the forced closure of vegetable markets. The purpose, explained military and government officials, "is to create hardships that will induce the population to stop the protests."⁷⁷ Palestin-

ian women who managed to escape curfews to forage for food for their families were caught and had their food confiscated and dumped on the ground.⁷⁸ On March 14, 1988, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, while visiting the United States, explained to the United Jewish Appeal's Young Leadership Convention why Israel had to be tough on the Palestinian protesters. The rioting by Palestinians in the occupied territories, he said, "was not a demonstration of civil disobedience but a war," waged not merely against the Israeli occupation but "against Israelis, against the existence of the State of Israel."⁷⁹

An Israeli soldier explained why, even during curfews, they lobbed tear gas canisters at homes and went into them to beat up people: "In order to make our presence known in camps during curfews," he said, "we were given orders to knock on doors, enter inside and take the men out. We were to separate and beat them, especially the young ones."⁸⁰ The idea is to reestablish the awe that the army had apparently lost, and to "strike fear" in



the hearts of the Palestinians, as a senior Israeli military source explained.⁸¹

In its own mind, Israel again sees itself fighting for survival by trying to parade before the Arabs—as Zionist leaders had counselled decades before—visible Jewish power. The alternative, however, is for Israel to face the issue of Palestinian nationalism, something which Zionism has never been able to do, before or now. The Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres aptly described the mentality of the Israeli Government when, the cabinet, he said, “had for weeks devoted

virtually its entire discussions to the fine points of security procedures for dealing with rioting, while completely ignoring the political solutions needed to quell the situation in a lasting way.” He added: “Anybody perusing cabinet minutes at some time in the future will never believe his eyes.”⁸²

More than twenty years ago, one observer described Israel as “a small country, armed to the teeth, strong in national spirit but sorrowfully lacking in foresight.”⁸³ Today, the observation is more valid than ever.

A Savage State

The phenomenon that has prevailed among us for years and years is that of insensitivity to acts of wrong...to moral corruption....For us, an act of wrong is in itself nothing serious; we wake up to it only if the threat of a crisis or a grave result—the loss of a position, the loss of power or influence—is involved. We don't have a moral approach to moral problems but a pragmatic approach to moral problems....Once, Israeli soldiers murdered a number of Arabs for reasons of blind revenge...and no conclusion was drawn from that, no one demoted, no one was removed from office. Then there was Kufr Kassem [massacre of 1956]...those responsible have not drawn any conclusions. This, however, does not mean that

public opinion, the army, the police, have drawn no conclusion; their conclusion was that Arab blood can be freely shed. And then came the amnesty for those of Kufr Kassem, and some conclusions could be drawn again, and I could go on like this....

All this must bring about revulsion in the sense of justice and honesty in public opinion; it must make the [Israeli] State appear in the eyes of the world as a savage state that does not recognize the principles of justice as they have been established and accepted by contemporary society....

Moshe Sharett, former Israeli Prime Minister [Quoted in Livia Rokach, *Israel's Sacred Terrorism: A Study Based on Moshe Sharett's Personal Diary and Other Documents*. Belmont: AAUG Press, 1980, p. 36]

Notes

1. Quoted in Noam Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel and the Palestinians* (Boston: South End Press, 1983), p. 396.
2. Fayeze A. Sayegh, *Zionism: A Form of Racism and Racial Discrimination* (New York: Office of the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations, 1976), p. 7.
3. From Weitz's 1940 Diary, quoted from Davar in David Hirst, *The Gun and the Olive Branch: The Roots of Violence in the Middle East* (London: Futura, 1983), p. 130.
4. See dialogue between Gandhi and Zionist emissary in G. H. Jansen, *Zionism, Israel and Asian Nationalism* (Beirut: IPS, 1971), pp. 177-178.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 183.
6. From the minutes of the second meeting of the Zionist Commission (8 March 1918) quoted in Simha Flapan, *Zionism and the Palestinians*

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7. David Ben-Gurion, *My Talks With Arab Leaders* (Jerusalem: Keter Books, 1972), p. 71.
8. Y. Porath, *The Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab Nationalist Movement, 1918-1929* (London: Frank Cass, 1974), p. 114.
9. Neil Caplan, *Palestine Jewry and the Arab Question, 1917-1925* (London: Frank Cass, 1978), p. 198.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 186.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
13. Message cited in Susan Lee Hattis, *The Bi-National Idea in Palestine During Mandatory Times* (Haifa: Shimona Publishing Co., 1970), pp. 48-49.
14. Quoted in Flapan, p. 142.
15. Caplan, p. 114.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 34.
17. Much of the recent revisionist history of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has been contributed by Israeli writers such as Tom Segev, Simha Flapan and Benny Morris.

18. Simha Flapan, *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987).
19. Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 22.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 77.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 51.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 98. Emphasis in the original.
25. Minutes of the Zionist Action Committee, quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 98.
26. On the Deir Yassin massacre, see Hirst, pp. 123-129. For excerpt from account of eyewitness Red Cross representative Jacques de Reynier, see Walid Khalidi, ed., *From Haven to Conquest* (Beirut: IPS, 1971), pp. 761-766. On the Duwayma massacre, see David Gilmour, *Dispossessed: Ordeal of the Palestinians* (London: Sphere Books, 1982), pp. 68-69. On Sammu' and other instances of Israeli violence, see George Weller, "Dateline: Palestine," *The Link*, vol. 21, No. 2 (June-July 1988).
27. On the problem of looting by Jewish troops, see Tom Segev, 1949: *The First Israelis* (New York: The Free Press), 1986.
28. Janet Abu Lughod, "The Demographic Transformation of Palestine," in Ibrahim Abu Lughod, *The Transformation of Palestine* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1971), p. 139.
29. Nafez Nazzari, *The Palestinian Exodus From Galilee, 1948* (Beirut: IPS, 1978), p. 2.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 105.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 95.
34. The expression is from Ian Lustick, *Arabs in the Jewish State* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980), p. 47.
35. For example, Erskine Childers, "The Other Exodus," *Spectator*, 12 May 1961, pp. 672-675.
36. For the most authoritative recent research on Palestinian displacement in 1948, see Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
37. Quoted in Hirst, p. 142.
38. Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 141.
39. From cabinet minutes, quoted in Segev, p. 26.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
41. Hirst, p. 129.
42. For information on Israel's treatment of its Arab citizens after 1948, including the confiscation of land, see Sabri Jiryis, *The Arabs in Israel* (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1976).
43. Gilmour, p. 167.
44. Michael Bar-Zohar, *Ben-Gurion: Armed Prophet* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1968), p. 178.
45. For an account of the massacre, see Jiryis, pp. 140-153.
46. On the Sabra and Shatila massacres, see *The Complete Kahan Commission Report* (Princeton: Karz-Cohl, 1983); Amnon Kapeliouk, *Sabra and Shatila* (Belmont, MA: AAUG Press, 1984); and the *Journal of Palestine Studies*, vol. xii, No. 3 (Spring 1983). On the war in Lebanon, see Ze'ev Schiff and Ehud Ya'ari, *Israel's Lebanon War* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984); Dov Yermiya, *My War Diary* (Boston: South End Press, 1983); and Jacobo Timerman, *The Longest War: Israel in Lebanon* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1982).
47. *Kahan Commission Report*, p. v.
48. Summary of unpublished report in *Palestine Perspectives*, No. 32 (November/December 1987), p. 7.

49. Muhammad Hallaj, "Revolt in Occupied Palestine," *American-Arab Affairs*, No. 24 (Spring 1988), p. 41.
 50. For a list of fatal casualties to 17 April 1988, compiled by the Database Project on Palestinian Human Rights, see *Palestine Perspectives*, No. 35 (May/June 1988), pp. 11-15. Updated list, to 31 May, shows 269 fatalities.
 51. *The Washington Post*, 21 January 1988, and *The New York Times*, 22 January 1988.
 52. *The Washington Post*, 21 January 1988.
 53. *The New York Times*, 22 January 1988.
 54. 31 January 1988. The paper reported in its 9 February issue that 50 beating victims were hospitalized in Gaza for injuries sustained the previous day.
 55. From *Yediot Ahronot*, reported in *Ibid.*
 56. Quoted in *The New York Times*, 22 January 1988.
 57. For information on the number and types

of injuries see Physicians For Human Rights, *The Casualties of Conflict: Medical Care and Human Rights in the West Bank and Gaza Strip* (Somerville, MA: 30 March 1988).
 58. "A Society Being Smashed Up," *Palestine Perspectives*, No. 34 (March/April 1988), p. 5.
 59. Physicians for Human Rights, p. 16.
 60. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
 61. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
 62. *Ibid.*
 63. *Ibid.*
 64. *The New York Times*, 31 January 1988.
 65. *Ibid.*
 66. *The New York Times*, 26 January 1988.
 67. *Ibid.*
 68. *The Washington Post*, 29 January 1988.
 69. *The New York Times*, 28 January 1988.
 70. *The Washington Post*, 15 February 1988. For affidavit by eyewitness, see *Palestine Perspectives*, No. 34 (March/April 1988), p. 7.

71. For a report on using tear gas in al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, see *The Washington Post*, 16 January 1988 and *The New York Times* of the same date.
 72. *The Washington Post*, 31 May 1988.
 73. *The Washington Times*, 14 April 1988.
 74. Donald E. Wagner, "CS Tear Gas a Form of Chemical Warfare?" *Middle East International*, 5 March 1988, p. 18.
 75. Database on Palestinian Human Rights (Chicago), 31 May 1988 report.
 76. *The Washington Post*, 8 May 1988.
 77. *The New York Times*, 13 January 1988.
 78. *The Washington Post*, 19 January 1988.
 79. *The New York Times*, 15 March 1988.
 80. *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 28 January 1988.
 81. *Ibid.*
 82. *The New York Times*, 31 January 1988.
 83. Commander E. H. Hutchison, *Violent Truce* (New York: Devin-Adair Co., 1956), p. 142.

Notice

An authoritative account of the atrocities committed by Israelis against Palestinians in the occupied territories during the recent uprising has been published by the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights in its newly released 1988 Report.

The introduction to this 98-page

document is written by Dr. Israel Shahak, chairperson of the League, professor of organic chemistry at Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and himself a survivor of Hitler's Bergen-Belsen concentration camp.

Readers wishing to order a copy should send \$10 (for surface delivery)

or \$12 (for air mail delivery) to the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, P.O. Box 14192, Tel Aviv, Israel. Orders may also be sent directly to Dr. Israel Shahak at 2 Bartenura Street, Jerusalem, Israel.

Book Views

The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities

By Simha Flapan

Pantheon Books, NY, 1987, 277 pp., \$18.45.

Reviewed by Nimr Ibrahim

Since its emergence as a political movement in the late nineteenth century, Zionism has assiduously publicized a number of ideas about Palestine and the Arab world. The goal has been clear: to justify the stated Zionist goal of a national Jewish home in Palestine, to win the world's sympathy and support and to discredit Arab positions. So prevalent and widespread are these ideas, especially in the West, that they have passed for historical truths.

The official Zionist story is oft told: Palestine was barren and largely uninhabited; the Zionist leadership agreed to the U.N. partition of Pales-

tine in 1947 into Arab and Jewish states; the Arabs rejected partition and declared war on the newborn Israeli state; the Palestinians left their homes voluntarily despite efforts by Jewish leaders to persuade them to stay; Israel continues to work for peace and regional security, but the Arabs do not respond positively.

In *The Birth of Israel* Simha Flapan charges that these historical truths are propaganda and generated myths. Drawing on extensive research and recently declassified Israeli documents, he reconstructs the real events surrounding Israel's birth in 1948. He shows that Zionist acceptance of the U.N. partition plan was a tactical move in an overall strategy aimed at first thwarting the creation of a Palestinian state in collaboration with Emir Abdullah and, secondly, increasing the territory assigned by the U.N. to the Jewish state. Palestinians' expulsion from their homes, he asserts, was

prompted by Israeli political and military leaders, who believed that Zionist colonization and statehood necessitated the transfer of Palestinian Arabs to Arab countries to maintain a Jewish majority. Flapan demonstrates that Israel exploited the 1948 war for territorial gain and refused to make concessions.

Flapan's work is an excellent study of the use of propaganda. He notes that these myths were central to the creation of structures of thinking of paramount importance in shaping Israel's policy for almost four decades.

Mr. Flapan wants to give peace a chance to succeed. He feels strongly that the triumph of propaganda has obstructed peace forces in Israel. He calls for a fresh approach and a new outlook. Israel, Flapan contends, is in the midst of a deep moral, social, economic and political crisis, surely to be exacerbated without dramatic

policy change. Israel struggles between opposing visions—on the one hand an enlightened democratic state, on the other, a fundamentalist militarist society. The outcome will have a significant impact on the Palestinian's future as well as on prospects for regional peace.

The Birth of Israel, a courageous and bold work, lucid and critical, dis-

mantles the myths surrounding Israel's beginning and offers new evidence based on judicious use of new released documents. Flapan's scholarship makes a striking contribution to peace.

Nimr Ibrahim is a writer and lecturer on Middle Eastern affairs.

Books To Order

Review Selection

□ Simha Flapan, *The Birth of Israel: Myths and Realities*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1987, 277 pp., \$18.45. Noted Israel scholar reconstructs the actual events behind the official myths about Israel's founding. Our price, \$11.25.

□ Lila Abu-Lughod, *Veiled Sentiments: Hope and Honor in a Beduin Society*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986, 317 pp., \$10.95. This groundbreaking anthropological study of Beduin tribes uses the private poetry of Arab women as the key to uncovering the relationship between personal desires and public code of honor. Our price, \$7.25.

□ James Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American-Iranian Relations*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988, 520 pp., \$25.00. Comprehensive analysis of U.S. relations with Iran from the 1940s to the present. Our price, \$16.25.

□ Elias Chacour, *Blood Brothers*, Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 1984, 224 pp., \$6.95. A Palestinian priest known for his social work in the Galilee tells the story of his search for conciliation between Palestinian and Jewish Israelis. Our price, \$4.95.

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□ Noam Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel and the Palestinians*, Boston: South End Press, 1983, 481 pp., \$11.00. Chomsky argues that the "special relationship" between Israel and the United States has led to a disastrous U.S. foreign policy. Our price, \$7.95.

□ Noam Chomsky, *Pirates and Emperors: International Terrorism in the Real World*, Brattleboro, VT: Amana Books, 1986, 174 pp., \$8.95. An incisive study of the decep-

tions and double standards to which U.S. and Israeli officials and the media routinely resort in discussing the issue of terrorism. Includes a sharp critique of U.S. policy in the Mideast. Our price, \$5.50.

□ James Ennes, Jr., *Assault on the Liberty*, New York: Random House, 1979, 299 pp., \$14.95. The author was an officer on the bridge during the prolonged and brutal attack on the USS *Liberty* by Israeli planes and torpedo boats in 1967 that killed 34 American crewmen and wounded 171 others. Our price, \$4.95.

□ Paul Findley, *They Dare To Speak Out: People and Institutions Confront Israel's Lobby*, Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill and Company, 1985, 362 pp., \$8.95. The former eleven-term Congressman from Illinois discusses how Americans are victimized for opposing the Israel lobby. Our price, \$5.95.

□ Haim Gordon and Leonard Grob, eds., *Education for Peace: Testimonies from World Religions*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987, 240 pp., \$14.95. Sixteen essays addressed to students and professors in peace studies and comparative religion. Concluding essay focuses on experiment that transformed 300 mutually suspicious pupils from Israeli-Jewish and Palestinian high schools into mutually supportive friends. Our price, \$8.95.

□ Stephen Green, *Living By The Sword: America and Israel in the Middle East*, Brattleboro, VT: Amana Books, 1988, 279 pp., \$19.95. Investigates covert U.S.-Israel relations from 1967-1987, with special focus on U.S. role in the Israeli nuclear weapons program and Israel's role in the Iran-contra scandal. Our price, \$11.95.

□ Stephen Green, *Taking Sides: America's Secret Relations with a Militant Israel*, Brattleboro, VT: Amana Books, 1987, 370 pp., \$9.95. Information from formerly classified documents about: Israel's shaky relationship with the Eisenhower administration, the nuclear power plant at Dimona, and U.S. participation in the 1967 war. Our price, \$6.50.

□ David Grossman, *The Yellow Wind*, New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1988, 216 pp., \$17.95. Impassioned account by Israeli journalist of the costs of occupation for both Israelis and Palestinians. Our price, \$10.25.

□ Grace Halsell, *Journey to Jerusalem*, New York: Macmillan, 1982, 193 pp., \$7.95. Memoir of an American journalist's year in the West Bank and Gaza. Our price, \$3.95.

□ Grace Halsell, *Prophecy and Politics: Militant Evangelists on the Road to Nuclear War*, Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill and Company, 1986, 210 pp., \$14.95. An exploration of the close relationship between prominent right-wing fundamentalists and Israeli ultra-nationalists. Our price, \$8.95.

□ David Hirst, *The Gun and the Olive Branch*, London: Futura Publications, 1978, first edition reprinted 1983, 367 pp., \$7.95. This perceptive introduction to the Palestinian/Zionist conflict covers the years from 1880 to 1974. Our price, \$2.75.

□ Jon. Marshall, Peter Scott, Jane Hunter, *The Iran-Contra Connection*, Boston: South End Press, 1987, 313 pp., \$11.00. Authors argue that Iran-Contra was only the latest in a long tradition of U.S. covert activities. Two chapters detail Israel's role in the Iran-Contra operation. Our price, \$7.95.

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