

# Perspectives on Israel and Palestine

Trying to shed some light on a very confusing and tragic situation

Ed Munn  
Ross Loeser

February 25, 2024



## Perspectives based on two books:

- “The Hundred Years’ War on Palestine – A History of Settler Colonialism and Resistance, 1917-2017”
  - Rashid Khalidi
- “Israel – A Simple Guide to the Most Misunderstood Country on Earth”
  - Noa Tishby



Jordan River

## Why did we volunteer to share this?

- This conflict has lots of actual and possible negative outcomes.
- As Christians, we have an interest from a human standpoint – promoting peace and eliminating suffering.
- Many of us have opinions, but it is very complicated and we would benefit from more knowledge.
- We're hoping this information will help.



## 100 Years War on Palestine

### **Foundation:**

- For centuries, Palestine was an Ottoman province with no clear boundaries.
- There has been a “Colonial war against indigenous population”.
- For over a century, Palestinians have been depicted in condescending way.

## Israel, a Simple Guide

### **Foundation:**

- Ancient Jewish kingdom starts 1500 BC; 1<sup>st</sup> Temple 930-970 BC
- “Jewish people are indigenous to the land of Israel.” It is their ancestral land.
- History - Jews, Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Crusaders, Muslim Caliphate, Egyptians, Ottomans, British, UN.
- “There was never a sovereign state called Palestine”
- Israel is a Refugee State not a Colonial State

## 100 Years War on Palestine

### **First Declaration of War: 1917-1939**

- 11/2/1917, Balfour Declaration (British Foreign Sec. Arthur Balfour): called for a national home for Jewish people in Palestine. Arab majority (94%) not mentioned.
- 1922 League of Nations “Mandate for Palestine” - used Balfour text. Jewish population increased from 6% to 18% by 1926.
- 1933; rise of Nazis; Jewish immigration to Palestine
- 1936-9: Palestinian revolt; many deaths

## Israel, a Simple Guide

- In reaction to centuries of antisemitism the Zionist movement officially begins in 1896 Theodor Herzl – leader.
- Zionism is about allowing the return of Jews to their ancestral homeland -(Balfour Declaration).
- Beginning in 1910 refugees fleeing persecution settle in communal villages called kibbutzes.
- Holocaust (1941-1945) Casts a long shadow over the Jewish people – six million murdered.



Nature Preserve overlooking Lebanon & Syria



Israeli settlement



Palestinian Christian leader



Guard tower & wall in West Bank (Bethlehem)

Palestinian perspectives

# 100 Years War on Palestine

## **Second Dec. of War: 1947-48**

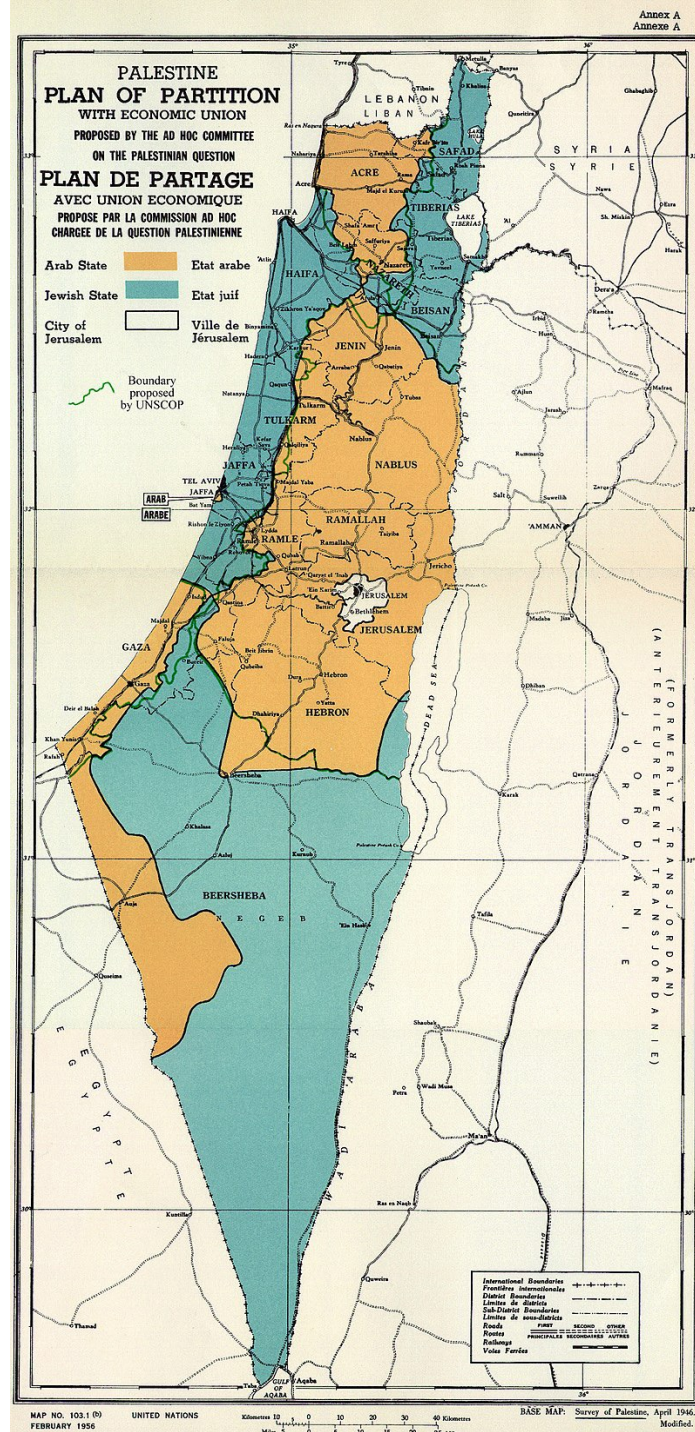
- After WWII, power goes to US & USSR
- Future of Palestine goes to UN Res. 181: divide Palestine into large Jewish state and smaller Arab one.
- Starting 11/47, Zionist paramilitary groups force Palestinians from several cities. Arab neighboring countries send troops, but suffer defeat -- 1948 war.
- 720k Palestinians displaced; 160k stayed and are now Israeli citizens. Today, 5.5 million descendants live in refugee camps.
- Nakba (catastrophe)
- Note: Gaza Strip, was governed by Egypt until 1967.

# Israel, a Simple Guide

- UN Partition Plan vote establishes a Jewish state 11/29/47 and an Arab state. Jewish leaders accept the Plan while all Arab leaders & countries reject it.
- May 14, 1948: British leave, Ben-Gurion declares Israel formed and reads Declaration of Independence.
- May 15, 1948 - all neighboring Arab countries attack. Certain of victory, they call for all Arab residents to leave.
- July, 1949 - after 10 months of a vicious war, all sign Temporary Truce with Israel. 700-750k people displaced. As a result, the new Jewish state (Israel) expands in size.
- Conflict remains - Israel demands security while Arabs demand return to pre-1948 land.



# 1947 UN Partition Plan



# 100 Years War on Palestine

## **Third Dec. of War: 1967 (Six-Day War)**

- Egypt, Jordan, Syria attack, but are decisively beaten.
- US now fully backs Israel.
- UN Security Council Res. 242 approved 11/22/67: legitimized 1949 boundaries... Palestinians not mentioned.
  
- April 10, 1975 - Israel assassinates 3 PLO leaders in their homes
- Jimmy Carter - Camp David 1978 - treaty with Egypt & Israel; ignores PLO.

# Israel, a Simple Guide

- Six Day War - several Arab countries about to attack, but Israel preemptively attacks. War over in 6 days. Israel takes Golan Heights, Gaza Strip, Sinai Peninsula, West Bank including the Old City of Jerusalem.
- UN Security Council Res. 242 accepted by Israel (concept: exchange of land for peace).
  
- 1972 Munich Olympics Massacre
- Yom Kippur War (Oct. 6-26, 1973) - Egypt, Syria and Iraq attack on Holy day, again with support from other Arab countries.
- Camp David Accords (1978) - Israel returns Sinai Peninsula in exchange for peace with Egypt.

# Israeli Perspectives



Israeli flag over Masada



Israeli soldiers in Jerusalem

The Hall of Names

# 100 Years War on Palestine

## **Fourth Dec. of War: 1982** (Israel invasion of Lebanon)

- Massive Israeli shelling of Beirut
- 10-weeks of terrible conflict
- Sharon and Begin intended to defeat PLO, but effect was to empower PLO.
- Hezbollah in Lebanon created.

## **Fifth Dec. of War; 1987-95** (First Intifada)

- Palestinian uprising all over West Bank & Gaza (grass roots)
- Resulted in Oslo framework (1993) - West Bank & Gaza split into A, B, C sections
- Author: key focus is always Israel security

# Israel, a Simple Guide


- PLO moves into Lebanon along Israel's northern border, launching attacks on Israel.
- After 270 terrorist attacks, Israeli military attacks Lebanon to remove PLO.
- PLO expelled from Lebanon. Ariel Sharon criticized for tactics, expanding the war into Beirut on his own.
- First Intifada - popular Palestinian uprising (protests, civil unrest, throwing stones, hurling Molotov Cocktails).
- Oslo Accords 1993 - Israel and PLO conditionally recognize each other's authority to govern. Palestinian Authority (PA) given partial administration over the West Bank and Gaza. Jordan and Israel sign peace treaty.




Map provided to the 2023 FPC Holy Land trip group.

**ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN INTERIM AGREEMENT**

*Wye Memorandum, Part 3, 20.3.2000*

**Area A** - Palestinian responsibility for civil affairs, internal security and public order 

---

**Area B** - Palestinian responsibility for civil affairs and public order of Palestinians. Israeli responsibility for security of Israelis 

**Note:** Persons intending to enter areas defined in the above mentioned memorandum are advised to consult the appropriate authorities.

## 100 Years War on Palestine

### **Sixth Dec. of War; 2000-2014**

- After Oslo things got much worse. Lots of travel restrictions, with the worst in Gaza.
- The PLO's more militant rival, Hamas, forms in Gaza (from Muslim Brotherhood) .
- Powder keg set off when Sharon visits Temple Mt. Second Intifada starts Sept. 2000 and lasts 8 years.
- Hamas runs full slate of candidates in 2006 Gaza elections and surprisingly wins; takes over Gaza.
- Much destruction and death in Gaza; Hamas sends missiles into Israel.

## Israel, a Simple Guide

- Second Intifada (2000-2005) started when former defense minister Ariel Sharon visited the Temple Mt. / Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- Defined by Palestinian suicide bombers indiscriminately killing Israeli civilians. Israel responded by retaking parts of the West Bank and Gaza.
- Second Lebanon War (July 12-Aug 14, 2006) - Hezbollah started as both political party and terrorist org. They fire thousands of missiles on civilians in the north of Israel. UN Buffer Zone installed.
- Israel leaves Gaza entirely, removes Jewish settlements (2005).

Painting in  
West Bank  
town of  
Bethlehem by  
Banksy



## 100 Years War on Palestine

### Additional points / factors (Khalidi)

No matter the history, there are now two peoples in Palestine. Their mutual acceptance can only be based on complete equality of rights. There is no other possible sustainable solution, barring the unthinkable notion of one people's extermination or expulsion by the other.

## Israel, a Simple Guide

### Additional points / factors (Tishby)

Three actions that can facilitate peace: (1) encourage investment in Palestine economy, (2) "shrink the conflict," (3) develop responsible Palestinian leadership.



## Summary Thoughts

- Exceedingly complicated situation.
  - Many entities have an interest in conflict: Jewish & Palestinian plus surrounding countries, plus major countries (e.g. US)
- Both sides have a claim to the land.
- Both sides are victims of major injustices (and feel them deeply)
  - For example - from Time Magazine, 12/23: The Hamas massacre... activated the 2000-year-old communal history of persecution every Jew carries... “we are trained in trauma.”
- Both sides feel hatred toward the other from atrocities in the past.
- Both sides have extremists

Unidentified children  
in Israel

