

# Notes on Hypocrisy

An articles collection



Israeli State  
Power and Its  
Liberal Alibis

“Kahane  
won”?

Western  
Recruits in  
1948 Palestine

Dan Freeman-Maloy

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<b>Design &amp; Layout</b>	Clare O’Connor
<b>Cover Image</b>	<i>Exodus</i> (1960). Hollywood’s spin on 1948 Palestine – based on an influential Zionist novel with the same title – represents a liberal telling of Israel’s history which for decades went nearly unchallenged in much of the West. Such liberal mythology is contradicted by the documentary record and increasingly brushed aside by the rising Israeli right, but is in different forms still marketed internationally.

# Introduction

This booklet reproduces and brings together three articles first published in 2011. Although the articles are distinct, they are connected by a number of shared themes: the Zionist fixation on “demography” and its implications for Israeli politics; the interplay between imperial policy, the colonization of Palestine, and the domestic politics of western powers; and the significance of liberal myths and hypocrisy within this reality. As Israeli politics break further and further away from the enlightened liberal image that Israel effectively projected to the West for decades, these themes remain critical to the international politics of the Palestine question.

Liberal colonial hypocrisy is hardly peculiar to Israel; it has been a standard feature of international politics over the past century. Speaking in 1956, Frantz Fanon noted that this is inevitable whenever ostensibly democratic countries pursue colonial policies. “In reality,” he observed, “a colonial country is a racist country. If in England, in Belgium or in France, despite the democratic principles affirmed by these respective nations, there are still racists, it is

these racists who, in their opposition to the country as a whole, are logically consistent.”<sup>1</sup>

What is remarkable about contemporary Israel is the continued vitality of its old-fashioned approach to colonial domination – in an era in which most powers have moved on to slightly more subtle means of dominating other societies – and the way in which the state’s democratic image continues to be marketed internationally at a time when the liberal forces *within* its political system are losing out to those more “logically consistent” about colonial commitments.

Those frustrated with liberal western hypocrisy have sometimes suggested that brazen racism might even be preferable. (See, for example, Malcolm X’s golden talk at the Oxford Union debates, easily available online.)<sup>2</sup> But we should be careful what to wish for. As one dissident Israeli put it, “There is something to be said in favour of hypocrisy and evasiveness – their presence at least indicates an uneasiness, and a concern about moral issues.”<sup>3</sup> The contradictions produced by such sentiments can sometimes provide room for constructive dissent. Their increasing absence from Israel’s reigning political scene has made a genuine internal challenge to the Israeli political system that much more remote. Especially given the balance of power between the Israeli state and the Palestinians, there is little in this to celebrate.

These dynamics in any case raise both the need and the opportunity for increased critical engagement with the Palestine question internationally, including in the West.

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The first two articles in this booklet address these topics directly. The first, “Israeli state power and its liberal alibis,” is taken from

1 Frantz Fanon, translated by Haakon Chevalier, “Racism and Culture,” in *Toward the African Revolution* (London and New York; Monthly Review Press, 1967), p. 40.

2 Malcolm X at the Oxford Union, December 1964 <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dmzaaf-9aHQ>>.

3 Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, *The Israeli Connection: Whom Israel Arms and Why* (London: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 1988), p. 237.

the early 2011 issue of *Race & Class*, the quarterly publication of Britain’s Institute of Race Relations.<sup>4</sup> The article – while admittedly somewhat academic – addresses some of the key relevant themes, and explores in particular the ongoing effort to market Israeli settler colonial policies to liberal western audiences as inseparable from Jewish rights to national self-determination.

The second article focuses at greater length on the challenge ostensibly liberal Zionism is facing from the right. Written in November 2011 for circulation online (through *Dissident Voice*, the *Palestine Chronicle* and *Socialist Bullet*), the article discusses the visible rise of unapologetic chauvinism within the Israeli political system and its implications for Israel’s historic marketing strategies in the West.

The final article addresses these themes from a different angle. The 1948 war – during which the state of Israel was established amidst operations which violently displaced hundreds of thousands of Palestinians – continues to define much of the contemporary debate. The article, written for the *Journal of Palestine Studies*,<sup>5</sup> focuses on a particular piece of this history: the involvement of military recruits from the West (mostly but not exclusively Jewish) in the forced displacement of Palestinians. This can be read in connection with the earlier articles as an important moment when the Israeli leadership’s longstanding determination to dominate Palestinian lands while excluding Palestinians came together with its strategic reliance on international support. More generally, the article provides an overview of the mass expulsion of Palestinians in 1948 and the context that made it possible.

4 Published as “Israeli state power and its liberal alibis,” *Race & Class* (Vol. 25, No. 3, January-March 2011), pp. 61-72. What follows is (I note for copyright reasons) technically an edited copy of the accepted version of the article.

5 Published as “Mahal and the dispossession of the Palestinians,” *JPS* (Vol. 40, No. 2, Winter 2011), pp. 43-61. This article has been slightly modified.

# Israeli state power and its liberal alibis

Writing for *Race & Class* in 1984, the late anti-imperialist analyst Eqbal Ahmad commented on the similarity between the Zionist project and the earlier settler colonialism which devastated indigenous societies across the Americas:

A colonialism committed to replacing the native people, it is racist and extremist by nature. Yet, a product of the western metropolis, constituted mostly of the dispossessed, of dissidents and the persecuted, it is often liberal in ideology, and humane in rhetoric. Hypocrisy, the compliment paid by vice to virtue, is the hallmark of the exclusionist settler style.<sup>1</sup>

For the Zionist movement and state, such hypocrisy has developed into the present period out of strategic necessity no less than enduring

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<sup>1</sup> Eqbal Ahmad, "Pioneering in the Nuclear Age: An Essay on Israel and the Palestinians," *Race & Class* (Vol. 25, No. 4, 1984), p. 6. This essay is also available in Carolee Bengelsdorf et al, eds., *The Selected Writings of Eqbal Ahmad* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), pp. 298-317.

ideological predisposition. It has, after all, been instrumental in enforcing the international underpinnings of Israeli state power. For his part, Ahmad persistently argued that “the primary task of revolutionary struggle is to achieve the moral isolation of the adversary in its own eyes and in the eyes of the world.”<sup>2</sup> Inverting this principle, Israel and its leading advocates have come to approach “the war of ideas” as a necessary front on which to defend belligerent policies.<sup>3</sup>

This article explores the tension between the trajectory of Jewish Israeli politics and their projection to the West in ostensibly liberal terms. It begins by briefly reviewing the relevant dynamics of metropolitan sponsorship which framed the development of Zionist settler colonialism. It then moves on to discuss the function of enlightened pretenses in enforcing these dynamics into the era of Israeli statehood. Finally, focusing on the contemporary period, it identifies how the politics of artificial demographic management and of pan-Jewish entitlement to Palestine – two central pillars of Zionist settler colonialism – are twisted into a conception of Jewish national self-determination designed as a liberal licence for Israeli state crimes. A direct challenge to these politics can help inform constructive action in the West.

## The exigencies of metropolitan sponsorship

Walid Khalidi’s introduction to his landmark anthology *From Haven to Conquest* (1971) remains one of the sharpest assessments of the relationship between Zionist activity in Palestine and its metropolitan backers in the decades leading up to 1948. At the outset, Khalidi

2 Eqbal Ahmad with David Barsamian, *Confronting Empire* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), p. 30.

3 William B. Caldwell et al., “Learning to Leverage New Media: The Israeli Defense Forces in Recent Conflicts,” *Military Review* (Vol. 89, No. 3, 2009). See also, for example, Natan Sharansky, talk delivered in session “From the Outside, Looking In: International Perspectives on the Middle East,” *The Eighth Annual Herzliya Conference* (January 22 2008), reiterating points made in Natan Sharansky with Shira Wolosky Weiss, *Defending Identity: Its Indispensable Role in Protecting Democracy* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2008), p. 175; and Gerald M. Steinberg, “Taking back the narrative,” *Jerusalem Post* (May 30 2009).

makes a central point: “The Zionists were the initiators. But they were also, as they still are, the protégés of their Anglo-American sponsors and the emanations of their power, resources and will.”<sup>4</sup>

An orientation toward this relationship has animated successive layers of Zionist leadership.<sup>5</sup> Chaim Weizmann, the preeminent Zionist diplomat in the interwar years, diligently asserted “the importance of a Jewish Palestine in the British imperial scheme of things ... in particular in respect to the Suez Canal.”<sup>6</sup> Under the leadership of David Ben-Gurion, the Zionist movement’s reorientation towards the United States was pursued amidst similar arguments.<sup>7</sup> The movement’s development of an influential metropolitan base owed much to its strategic alignment with such powers. Khalidi cogently describes this dynamic in terms of “a

4 Walid Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest: Readings in Zionism and the Palestine Problem Until 1948* (Washington: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1987), p. xxi.

5 The term “Zionist” can potentially refer to a range of political currents not appropriately tarred with the same brush. There have existed forms of “Zionism” opposed, for example, to Jewish statehood and to exclusionary demographic goals. However, “political Zionism,” fixated on Jewish statehood as defined in part by attainment of a Jewish demographic majority, from early on became more than just one variety of Zionism. “Following the pattern of every successful hegemonic movement,” writes Ephraim Nimni, “political Zionism itself became the movement, and the distinction between ‘Zionism’ and ‘Political Zionism’ ceased to have any meaning.” Without going too far into this discussion, suffice it to note that it is the Zionism which in this way defined the politics of the World Zionist Organization before 1948 and the Israeli state since that is being referred to in this article. Ephraim Nimni, “From Galut to T’futsoth: Post-Zionism and the Dislocation of Jewish Diasporas,” in Ephraim Nimni, ed., *The Challenge of Post-Zionism: Alternatives to Israeli Fundamentalist Politics* (London: Zed Books, 2003), p. 120.

6 Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949), pp. 178–9, 182, 192.

7 In 1946, for instance, the “Jewish Resistance Movement” – an alliance of the three main Zionist paramilitary organizations: the Haganah, the Irgun and the Lehi – submitted a memorandum to the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine that “discussed the future security of the country and adjacent states, and stressed that a Jewish state, equipped with appropriate weaponry, could militarily and politically ‘contribute our humble share’ to the strategic interests of the Anglo-Americans in the Middle East and defend Christian and other minorities while policing the area. This could be done without the help of a ‘single American soldier.’” Amikam Nachmani, *Great Power Discord in Palestine: The Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry into the Problems of European Jewry and Palestine, 1945–1946* (London: Frank Cass, 1987), p. 114.

triangular flow between the gentile great power sponsor, the Zionist metropolitan establishment and the metropolitan Jewish community."

The more the gentile sponsor's partiality for Zionism, the greater the self-confidence of the metropolitan Zionist establishment. The greater the self-confidence of this establishment, the greater its leverage against the metropolitan Jewish community. The more the metropolitan Jewish community is mobilized, the greater its leverage against the gentile sponsor. The greater the leverage against the sponsor, the greater the latter's partiality.<sup>8</sup>

The strength of this dynamic was as instrumental to Zionist achievements as the building of the movement's capacities in Palestine itself.

Khalidi notes that the Zionist *colons* were not alone in boasting such metropolitan representation. Organized constituencies associated with settler colonies in, for example, Algeria in the case of France, or Kenya in the case of Britain, fulfilled a similar function. But the Zionist project was notable for the diversified nature of its metropolitan support networks and for its ability to operate within the metropolitan political arena, lacking formal colonial ties, under a remarkable "halo of morality."<sup>9</sup>

This remained the case after 1948. Within the Zionist movement, a near consensus had taken hold over the preceding decades in favour of establishing a state with a Jewish majority in Palestine.<sup>10</sup> In practice, this was accomplished through massive ethnic cleansing of Palestinians – a central, constitutive aspect of the Israeli state's establishment. But this almost anachronistic burst of settler colonialism did not undermine the favoured metropolitan status of the Zionist enterprise. Indeed, "the very extremism of that original and massive act of violence," observed David Hirst, "helped Israel

8 Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest*, p. xviii.

9 Ibid., p. xxxiv.

10 See Yosef Gorny, *Zionism and the Arabs, 1882–1948: A Study of Ideology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); and Nur Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians: The Concept of "Transfer" Zionist Political Thought, 1882–1948* (Washington: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992).

seem less extreme, less oppressive, in its treatment of the few who stayed behind."<sup>11</sup>

The Israeli conquest of the heavily populated remainder of Mandatory Palestine in 1967 complicated the task of political-demographic exclusion. Golda Meir was hardly alone in expressing dread that she "would have to wake up every morning wondering how many Arab babies have been born during the night."<sup>12</sup> This sentiment remains a driving force in contemporary Jewish Israeli politics.

Within the Jewish Israeli political arena, the tension between humanist pretenses and exclusivist settler nationalism – a conspicuous feature of the Labour Zionist politics which anchored Zionist proto-state formation and Israeli state affairs into the 1970s – is currently giving way to unapologetic ethno-religious chauvinism. As Ilan Pappé has written, the late twentieth century saw the traditional Zionist approach contested both by "those willing to challenge fundamentally the tenets of Zionism in the name of democracy and liberalism, and those who would remain fanatically committed to those tenets at the expense of democracy and liberalism."<sup>13</sup> Regrettably, within Jewish Israel, recent years have seen the former camp lose strength and the latter surge. Assuming conventional Zionist premises, this development is understandable. If, as a matter of principle, the attainment of demographic and territorial aims by means of force is considered proper, then policies that pursue these goals can be credibly debated mainly in terms of feasibility and power. Such debates largely define the evolving contest between "traditional Zionist" hypocrisy and unapologetic "neo-Zionist" chauvinism, leaving genuine democratic forces little room for manoeuvre.<sup>14</sup>

11 David Hirst, *The Gun and the Olive Branch: The Roots of Violence in the Middle East* (London: Faber and Faber, 1977), p. 193.

12 Nira Yuval-Davis, "The Jewish Collectivity and National Reproduction in Israel," in Khamsin collective, ed., *Women in the Middle East* (London: Zed Books, 1987), p. 61.

13 Ilan Pappé, "The Square Circle: The Struggle for Survival of Traditional Zionism," in Nimni, ed., *The Challenge of Post-Zionism*, p. 58.

14 The outcome of the 2009 Israeli elections, in which the "Left" (Meretz, Labour) was decimated and the right-wing bloc strengthened, is illustrative.

Against this backdrop, the tension between Israeli territorial expansion and artificial demographic management is being addressed through the concentration of Palestinians into densely populated enclaves over which Israel symbolically relinquishes authority – ghettos whose inhabitants are afforded neither political nor social rights, and which Israel can still attack at will.<sup>15</sup> The arrangement is enforced through the massive application of violence. There is currently little within Israel’s domestic political environment to check this dangerous trend.<sup>16</sup>

At the same time, the Israeli state’s capacity to exercise violence continues to derive in large part from international, especially western, support. Granted, this support is to some extent a function of the perceived utility to sponsoring powers of the Israeli exercise of force itself (or of the “red lines” which the threatened use of force by Israel imposes on regional politics).<sup>17</sup> Historically, however, loftier rationales have encouraged this line of imperial thinking. Western foreign policy initiatives are uniform in their invocation of a higher moral purpose than power or profit – a gesture that is required if any policy is to gain domestic support, or at least acquiescence.<sup>18</sup> This requirement persists resiliently in Europe and North America, where liberal hypocrisy retains greater vitality than it does in Israel.

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15 For analysis of the implications of this model, see Jonathan Cook, *Blood and Religion: The Unmasking of the Jewish and Democratic State* (London: Pluto Press, 2006); James Ron, *Frontiers and Ghettos: State Violence in Serbia and Israel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

16 Notably, the decision to deploy troops against the densely populated Gaza Strip in early 2009 behind a “rolling fire-induced smokescreen” showcased an evolving model of Israeli warfare that is “almost universally supported by the Jewish public,” as strategic analyst Roni Bart observes. “Warfare – Morality – Public Relations: Proposals for Improvement,” *Institute for National Security Studies Strategic Assessment* (Vol. 12, No. 1, 2009), p. 19.

17 Israel Shahak, *Open Secrets: Israeli Nuclear and Foreign Policies* (London: Pluto Press, 1997), pp. 41–2. For more on this strategic rationale, see Noam Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel and the Palestinians* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1999); Jonathan Cook, *Israel and the Clash of Civilizations: Iraq, Iran and the Plan to Remake the Middle East* (London: Pluto Press, 2008).

18 See, for example, Eqbal Ahmad, “Political Culture and Foreign Policy: Notes on American interventions in the Third World,” in Bengelsdorf et al, eds., *The Selected Writings of Eqbal Ahmad*, pp. 205–218.

Even when their domestic resonance in Israel fades, then, the liberal pretensions of Israeli state policy are buoyed by their enduring utility on the international front.

## The strategic utility of hypocrisy

Western underwriting of the Zionist project and Israeli state power is in some respects similar to direct western military interventions. Both are intended to facilitate the projection of western power into strategically significant domains. Both develop in association with select interests under the guise of broader “national” ones. Both require marketing to domestic audiences to ensure a requisite measure of support or acquiescence. As noted above, however, the remarkable success with which Israel has historically been marketed to western audiences was in itself a strategic asset. This section reviews this dynamic in connection with the postwar clash between the Zionist project and the politics of decolonization.

The compelling anti-oppressive pretenses of the Zionist project (which, after all, developed against the backdrop of the grievous crisis facing European Jews) and the project’s clash with the politics of decolonization converged with convenient effects in certain sectors of the West. The combination dovetailed nicely with the management by leading western powers of their domestic political environments amidst the neocolonial campaigns of the postwar period. By depicting itself as a just response to European Jewish suffering and, after the Second World War, the appropriate heir of the fight against fascism, the Zionist movement gained broad legitimacy in the West on liberal grounds. Yet the Zionist leadership also demonstrated a close affinity with broader colonial currents and was often perceived in this light.

Chaim Weizmann’s autobiography, published in 1949, is illustrative. In seeking for his Jewish Palestine “a place in the modern family of nations,” to take just one example, Weizmann openly praises a supportive Belgian colonial official (with top-level experience in the Congo) as “a great administrator, statesman,

and man of the world,” expressing particular appreciation for his understanding “that there is a world of difference between the black Congo and white Palestine.”<sup>19</sup> Along similar lines, a U.S. member of the Anglo-American Committee on Palestine defended Zionist aspirations by employing the concept of “eminent domain” – as manifest, he explained, in “the United States’ conquest of Mexico, the American conquest of the Indians and the inevitable giving way of a backward people before a more modern and practical one.”<sup>20</sup> Israel effectively balanced its liberal and colonial credentials. Indeed, for many liberals, it came to embody a just colonialism whose cause helped lend moral credibility to its associates.

While hardly uniform, this dynamic was recurring, and was widely observed by astute western anti-imperialists. It was manifest in particular in states whose close alignment with Israel coincided with challenges both to their imperial authority abroad and to the domestic base for imperial campaigns. Maxime Rodinson observed that for postwar France, pursuing aggressive counter-insurgency in Algeria and hostile to the broader Arab nationalist currents anchored in Egypt,

alliance with Israel had a dual function: to provide military support in the East, and a justification to the liberal and Left-wing conscience. Support for a state widely accepted as socialist, support for the Jews whom Hitlerite persecution had turned into the living symbol of the minority oppressed by Fascism, all this lent the anti-Algerian faction a spurious but effective aura of militant anti-Fascism.<sup>21</sup>

This dynamic was likewise apparent in the United States of the late 1960s, when the U.S.-Israeli alliance became firmly entrenched – this at a time when the impressive resilience of Vietnamese anti-colonialism was being met with massive U.S. eradication efforts, precipitating a crisis in U.S. domestic cohesion.

19 Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, pp. 179, 376–7.

20 Nachmani, *Great Power Discord in Palestine*, p. 112.

21 Maxime Rodinson, translated by Brian Pearce and Michael Perl, *Israel and the Arabs, Second Edition* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), p. 119.

Noam Chomsky commented on this at a U.S. Zionist conference organized in early 1970. “The cold war consensus is eroding,” Chomsky observed, calling into question the longstanding framework of “effective ideological support for American intervention overseas and for the growing system of military state capitalism at home.”<sup>22</sup> Chomsky argued that in this setting, proponents of established state doctrine previously quite removed from questions of Israel and Zionism were going out of their way to associate the New Left with opposition to Israeli state power. The identification of a militarist U.S. foreign policy with Israel (and corresponding conflation of their opponents), Chomsky argued, was developing into an instrument of domestic political management used “to discredit the rising challenge to American militarism and to support the idea that America must be the gendarme of the world, the judge and executioner for world society. We will, I suspect, hear a good deal more of this in the coming years.”<sup>23</sup> Sure enough, the domestic leveraging of Israel’s political prestige became standard in subsequent decades.

This domestic dimension of alliance with Israel has been exploited to its fullest, especially in the U.S.. The smearing of critics of Israel as anti-Semitic has become routine.<sup>24</sup> This has involved remarkably crude episodes: for example, when the Reagan administration publicized Israeli involvement in the U.S.-orchestrated contra war against Sandinista Nicaragua as part of an effort to smear the Sandinistas and critics of U.S. aggression in Central America as anti-Semitic (and to sidestep Congressional reluctance to fund the war).<sup>25</sup> Yet, over time, the stigma surrounding criticism of Israel in the West inevitably faded.

The waning credibility of the “anti-Semitism” slur was partly, but by no means solely, a result of far-flung overuse. Israeli policies of military occupation, destructive invasions and systemic discrimination have also become increasingly difficult to defend

22 Noam Chomsky, “Israel and the New Left,” in Mordecai Chertoff, ed., *The New Left and the Jews* (New York: Pitman Publishing Corporation, 1971), p. 211.

23 Ibid.

24 See Norman Finkelstein, *Beyond Chutzpah: On the Misuse of Anti-Semitism and the Abuse of History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

25 Jane Hunter, “Israel: The Contras’ Secret Benefactor,” *NACLA Report on the Americas* (Vol. 21, No. 2, 1987), p. 21.

politically in their own right, as resilient Palestinian efforts and the growing availability of reliable sources have undermined one after another of Israel's diplomatic myths.<sup>26</sup> The final decades of the twentieth century thus witnessed not only the deepening of U.S.-Israeli strategic ties (connected to the broader U.S.-allied protectorate system), but also the opening of new opportunities to challenge this arrangement. The prominent incorporation of the Israeli state into U.S.-led imperial geopolitical policies is still accompanied by its parallel incorporation into the policy paradigms that rationalize them; the shift from the Cold War to the “clash of civilizations” and the “war on terror” has been fairly smooth in this regard. But as the identification of Israel with western militarism has solidified, the politics of western support for Israel have, if belatedly, emerged as a focal point for struggles against overseas imperial policy.

The ongoing discussion regarding how to accelerate and sustain this trend is moving in promising directions. The broad call from Palestinian civil society for a campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against Israel offers a constructive framework within which to challenge the international underpinnings of belligerent Israeli policies.<sup>27</sup> The institutional entrenchment of western state and corporate linkages with Israel, though supplemented by support from a range of organized domestic constituencies, may yet be susceptible to popular challenge. Commenting on the clear disconnect between state policy and popular sentiment in Britain, Israeli ambassador

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26 For discussion of the scholarly aspects of this development, see Ilan Pappé, “Introduction: New Historiographical Orientation in the Research on the Palestine Question,” in Ilan Pappé, ed., *The Israel/Palestine Question: A Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 1–7.

27 See Yasmeen Abu-Laban and Abigail B. Bakan, “Palestinian Resistance and International Solidarity: The BDS Campaign,” *Race & Class* (Vol. 51, No. 1, 2009), pp. 29–54. The BDS framework has encouraged both an action-oriented focus on institutional connections with Israel and, through its association with anti-apartheid analysis, a renewed inclusion of issues concerning Palestinian refugees and citizens of Israel in the analysis of the core aspects of Israeli state discrimination. These are crucial contributions. Ongoing discussion is required regarding how the “sanctions” objective can be most strategically pursued in relation to contemporary western state policy. There are grounds on which the tendency towards counter-productive polarization in certain of these discussions among allies can be overcome and existing gains built upon.

Ron Prosor recently remarked that “if the gap closes, it will be to our detriment”; the point is valid, and also applies elsewhere.<sup>28</sup>

Unsurprisingly, there is therefore a proliferation of Israel advocacy initiatives intended to head off the mobilization of a principled opposition that could close the widening gap between western state support for Israeli belligerence and the evolving public opposition to it. The remainder of this article identifies some of the key intellectual defenses which are being developed and promoted in this context to sustain the mythology of Israeli liberalism.

### **Ethnic cleansing towards democracy**

To call Amnon Rubinstein and Alexander Jakobson's recent book a representative sample would be to paint the politics of Israel advocacy in too favourable a light. *Israel and the Family of Nations: The Jewish Nation-State and Human Rights* (2009) is a particularly strong liberal Zionist polemic. It does, however, reflect some of the strongest lines of argumentation being used by those trying to undercut opposition to Israeli state power in “progressive” circles.

The book's basic argument is that, contrary to the claim that the Zionist conception of Jewish statehood contradicts principles of liberal democracy, “it is the denial of the legitimacy of the concept of a Jewish state that undermines the principles of universal equality, since it denies the right of the Jewish people to self-determination and national independence.”<sup>29</sup> The authors' polemical strategy is based on presentation of a flexible core rationale for Zionist politics accompanied by inoculation against the main points of criticism it is bound to encounter. Presented amidst varied expressions of

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28 Ron Prosor, talk delivered in session “Israel's Legitimacy Under Attack: New Tools for Advocacy,” *The Ninth Annual Herzliya Conference on the Balance of Israel's National Security and Resilience* (February 3 2009).

29 Amnon Rubinstein and Alexander Jakobson, *Israel and the Family of Nations: The Jewish Nation-State and Human Rights* (New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 2. For an earlier polemic pursuing a similar line of argumentation, see Ben Halpern, “Jewish Nationalism: Self-Determination as a Human Right,” in David Sidorsky, ed., *Essays on Human Rights: Contemporary Issues and Jewish Perspectives* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979), pp. 309–35.

conscientiousness and moderation, this rationale is then extended across the whole of the Zionist spectrum. Criticism of particularly indefensible Israeli policies is neatly packaged together with an unwavering defense of their righteous core.

The authors write that “significant and painful deviations have occurred during Israel’s history from Zionism’s liberal rhetoric and from the text of the Declaration of Independence,” but attack those who question the basic tenets of Zionist statehood based “on grievances, whether real, exaggerated or imagined, about injustices committed by the State in the past or in the present – as if criticism, however justified, of a policy pursued by a nation-state undermines a people’s right to independence.”<sup>30</sup> By presenting a conception of Jewish national independence and self-determination studiously entangled with the coercive exclusion of Palestinians, the authors seek to move opposition to the fundamental Israeli policies associated with this goal from the realm of legitimate critique to the category of denial of rights.

Their argumentation is hypnotically circular. Rubinstein himself having recently served as an adviser on demographic management to Israel’s National Security Council, demography is predictably at its centre.<sup>31</sup> From early on, the authors recall, “all the strands of the Zionist movement consistently held that the Jewish state, which they conceived as a democracy, could only be established on the basis of a Jewish majority, either in the country as a whole or at least in a part of it.”<sup>32</sup> The Zionists thus rejected colonialism, distinguishing themselves from settlers in South Africa who “were never bothered by the question of majority versus minority, since they had no intention of giving the right to vote to the black population under their control.”<sup>33</sup> After 1948, a Jewish majority was achieved, allowing Zionist statehood to flourish as a regime of “majority rule.”<sup>34</sup>

30 Rubinstein and Jakobson, *Israel and the Family of Nations*, pp. 96, 88.

31 Cook, *Blood and Religion: The Unmasking of the Jewish and Democratic State* (London: Pluto Press, 2006), p. 130, citing Aluf Benn, “Legislation seeks to hinder citizenship for Palestinians, non-Jews,” *Ha’aretz* (April 5 2005).

32 Rubinstein and Jakobson, *Israel and the Family of Nations*, p. 71.

33 Ibid., p. 73.

34 Ibid., p. 125.

In other words, Israel’s Jewish demographic and civic majority were long understood to be preconditions for the sort of democracy which could affirm the core tenets of Zionist statehood (including, naturally, continued maintenance of a Jewish majority). “Those who reject the Jewish state,” which has now been so affirmed, thus “do a disservice to democratic principles by failing to respect the democratically expressed will of the majority of Israel’s citizens.”<sup>35</sup>

A supplementary line of circular argumentation links up with the politics of pan-Jewish entitlement to Palestine. The authors remind us that the pre-state Zionist movement garnered support for “the establishment of an independent state for the Jewish people – not just for the Jewish population of Mandatory Palestine.”<sup>36</sup> As a result, the United Nations partition plan of 1947 earmarked for Jewish statehood “a territory larger than would have been justified if taking into account only the existing numerical ratios between Jews and Arabs in the country.”<sup>37</sup> The pan-Jewish right to self-determination in Palestine thus vested the drive for a Jewish nation-state in Palestine with democratic weight that balanced favourably against the claims of the Palestinian majority. Now that it is supplemented by a Jewish demographic majority, it is all the more justifiable to enshrine it in law – for example, in a Law of Return that applies to Jews only, and in Status Laws conferring juridical status upon international Zionist bodies – since “the country’s public character is determined primarily by the majority and influenced mainly by its culture and identity, with consideration given to the rights of the minority.”<sup>38</sup>

On the other hand, it is *unacceptable* to develop a concept of Jewish self-determination compatible with the return of Palestinians to lands from which they have been forcibly excluded since 1948, since this “empties it of content.”<sup>39</sup> The imperative “content,” again, is the same demographic balance which provides a conventional democratic mandate for its own maintenance.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid., p. 15.

37 Ibid., p. 18.

38 Ibid., p. 3.

39 Ibid., p. 138.

Their core rationale requires, at a minimum, a professed desire to protect the rights of an Arab civic “minority” in Israel, and is supplemented – in line both with the “two states for two peoples” formula and with their own rigid focus on nationality as the appropriate basis for political organization – by a call for Palestinian national self-determination beyond Israel’s borders. However, by avoiding consistent delineation of Israeli territory, the authors produce an effective licence for Israeli rule of Palestinian lands so long as the indigenous population can be reduced to a demographic as well as a civic minority.

This core rationale thus extends even to the territorially ambitious right of the Zionist spectrum: for instance, to the iconic leader of pre-state Revisionist Zionism, Ze’ev (Vladimir) Jabotinsky. By including safeguards for an Arab “minority” within his envisaged regime of Zionist governance, “Jabotinsky proves himself both a humanist and a realist.”<sup>40</sup> Of course, the authors add, his “magnanimous approach” and “the generosity of the constitutional arrangements he envisages for minorities” stemmed partly from the fact that for Jabotinsky, “the Land of Israel existed on both sides of the Jordan.”<sup>41</sup>

As ever, the authors offer little more than a cursory denial of the obvious requirement for ethnic cleansing on a grand scale to reduce the indigenous Arab population of Mandatory Palestine, including, in this interpretation, not only the whole of the West Bank but also much of Jordan, to a magnanimously tolerated “minority”. In this manner, the authors likewise transform the contemporary Zionist opposition to “retaining millions of Palestinians under Israeli sovereignty”<sup>42</sup> from an indication of exclusionary chauvinism and a blue-print for ethnic cleansing into a democratic virtue.

The authors, both associated with the “dovish” Zionism of the Meretz party, put forward an argument whose hypocrisy – coveting the effects of coercive population transfer while nominally disavowing it – points to why the political current they represent may have less of a future in Israel (where those more consistent about

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40 Ibid., p. 93.

41 Ibid., p. 94.

42 Ibid., p. 158.

these implications are politically on the rise) than in international advocacy. Their argument amounts to a call for critics not only to concede to Israeli power, but also to dignify it through the use of democratic principles which naturally have to be hollowed out in the process. The disjuncture between their avowedly liberal approach and the predominant terms of Jewish Israeli political discussion is unlikely to prevent it from being marketed internationally. Given the enduring ambivalence of the liberal West in facing the dire effects of Israeli state power, the skewed terms of discussion which liberal Zionist advocates seek to project (in palatable language) from Jewish Israel on to the West are likely to emerge as a standard nuisance in debates regarding Palestine.

## Conclusion

Applying the politics of decolonization to the Palestine question requires identifying and challenging not only local Zionist mechanisms of domination and exclusion of Palestinians, but also the international support systems that facilitate their maintenance. Hopeful trends in this connection are apparent. In the July 2009 issue of *Race & Class*, Yasmeeen Abu-Laban and Abigail Bakan rightly discuss the Palestinian-led boycott, divestment and sanctions initiative against Israel as a “positive and progressive step in coalition building and the advance of social movements” which can both challenge support for Israel in material terms and “disrupt hegemonic discourse that Israel is a progressive state”.<sup>43</sup> A coordinated backlash, the authors continue, can be expected and understood “as an inevitable feature of an ongoing dislodgement of an historic hegemonic discourse.”<sup>44</sup>

The history of western support for the Zionist enterprise and Israeli state power has produced not only varied corporate and state-level connections with Israel, but also a range of advocacy systems which will inevitably oppose any such challenge. Israel advocacy

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43 Abu-Laban and Bakan, “Palestinian Resistance and International Solidarity,” pp. 32, 42.

44 Ibid., p. 49.

networks cannot be expected to acquiesce in the loss of the Israeli state's liberal standing in the West. Strategies to effectively engage the politics of Israel advocacy will necessarily factor into a successful challenge to Israeli belligerence.

In this context, a direct and specific challenge to the core pillars of the liberal rationale for Zionist settler colonialism – the politics of Jewish demographic predominance and of pan-Jewish entitlement to Palestine – may be constructive. The question of demography is straightforward. The utter incompatibility of the Zionist politics of artificial demographic management with any but the most morally barren concept of “self-determination” is a truism that requires consistent emphasis.<sup>45</sup>

The question of pan-Jewish entitlement is a little more difficult. Cultural, religious and, in some sense, national organization are matters of voluntary association to the extent that they only affect voluntary adherents. To the extent that they are connected to systems of coercion and oppression of people not party to the voluntary association, they may legitimately be denounced. In its limited voluntary aspects, association between Jewish Israelis and western Jewish communal organizations is legitimately a function of the desires of those involved. But inasmuch as it is institutionally tied to the domination or exclusion of Palestinians, such association is open to a principled democratic challenge.

Various prominent Palestinian citizens of Israel and Jewish Israeli “post-Zionists” alike have suggested that the state-ordained function of western Jewish organizations within the Israeli polity, for example, falls squarely into the latter category.<sup>46</sup> At least in part, this is indeed the case. Where the rhetoric of pan-Jewish national rights is used to legitimize Israeli state domination or exclusion of Palestinians, it forms part of an illiberal colonial ideology and should be rejected as such. Since ostensibly pan-Jewish national mechanisms such as the Law of Return, the Status Laws, the Jewish

<sup>45</sup> Incidentally, there is reason to suggest more generally that the “national” qualifier on self-determination creates more problems than it solves, but pursuit of this topic is beyond the scope of the current article. See Omar Dahbour, *Illusion of the Peoples: A Critique of National Self-Determination* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2003).

<sup>46</sup> See, for example, Nimni, ed., *The Challenge of Post-Zionism*.

Agency and the Jewish National Fund are linked with these policies, they are also open to vigorous criticism.

The Jewish communal mainstream in much of the West – in line with the “triangular flow” identified by Walid Khalidi (cited above) – has in key respects attached itself to the exclusionary aspects of this relationship. On the one hand, the sharpening contradiction between liberal principles and Israeli state policy presents an opportunity to split broad western Jewish constituencies away from this ugly spectacle.<sup>47</sup> On the other, there is a need to confront the very notion that Jewish identity automatically confers any special say in the fate of Palestine.

Reversing the onus of defense away from critics of Israeli state power and on to the exclusionary Jewish ethno-nationalism embedded in Israeli politics will not involve a smooth transition. But it is long overdue. Efforts to prevent such progress need to be stripped of their liberal pretenses and confronted in light of their destructive implications.

<sup>47</sup> The reality frequently identified by Israel advocates as cause for concern – that there are limits to how long “the Jewish organizations will be able to pretend that the Jews are really behind them” (“Eventually, people will see through this”) – can help facilitate the process of stripping these organizations, and with them much Israel advocacy, of political credibility. These particular passages are taken from Shmuel Rosner (paraphrasing concerns voiced by an associate of his in the U.S.), “Another study, more proof: younger American Jews are alienated from Israel,” *Ha'aretz* / Rosner's Blog (September 6 2007), <<http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/pages/rosnerBlog.jhtml?itemNo=901587>>. Rosner expresses hope that broader U.S. support will compensate for this trend within the Jewish community.

## “Kahane won”? Kadima’s black flags and Israel’s image problem

Israel is currently experiencing an internationally visible collapse of its “liberal democratic” camp, raising significant problems for a state whose underlying theocratic and apartheid features have historically been partially covered from international view by liberal democratic pretenses.

Given that the governments of Greece and Italy are apparently being seized for direct political rule by the financial system,<sup>1</sup> one might suggest that dispensing with democratic niceties is the international order of the day. Perhaps, then, Israel won’t find itself all that isolated after all. But it might. In any case, developments in Israel and the commentary that they have triggered should provide the opportunity to forcefully brush aside any lingering illusions about Israeli establishment “moderation.” Such illusions are little more than an unfortunate hangover from years gone by, when Israeli colonial rule found unlikely allies even among ostensible western progressives.

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Roberts, “Italy and Greece: Rule by the Bankers,” *Socialist Bullet* (November 13 2011), <<http://www.socialistproject.ca/bullet/568.php>>.

## The authoritarian challenge to Ariel Sharon's democracy

The English-language webpage of *Ha'aretz*, Israel's daily "newspaper of record," offers an interesting view of the sinking ship that is liberal Israeli hypocrisy. The site currently features a section titled "Project Black Flag," borrowing the imagery from the Israeli legislature's Kadima opposition, whose representatives demonstratively waved black flags in the Knesset earlier this month in protest against the current wave of authoritarian legislation being pushed through by Israel's governing coalition.<sup>2</sup> (Kadima, recall, is the party launched in 2005 by Ariel Sharon and continuing to champion his legacy.) Below, I'll turn to some of the noteworthy associated commentary. First, its ideological and strategic context deserves some sustained attention.

Historically, the ample western arms, economic backing and political-diplomatic cover that have enabled Israeli actions were given to an Israel that was widely understood to "shoot and cry". Wars were forced upon it by nefarious enemies, and whatever abuses occurred during Israel's valiant self-defense were committed with a pained restraint. "We can forgive the Arabs for killing our children," Golda Meir is quoted, ad nauseam, as explaining to the world. "We cannot forgive them for forcing us to kill their children." Incidentally, that "the Arabs" (or the IHH,<sup>3</sup> or whatever other designated enemies of Israel) are to blame even for Israeli atrocities remains a familiar theme of Israeli diplomacy – and maddeningly, variations on this theme are often echoed by many people who really ought to know better. Israel, anyway, internally distraught at what it was being forced to do, featured in this story as a brave but enlightened character beset by difficult dilemmas, both strategic and moral.

<sup>2</sup> Project Black Flag, <<http://www.haaretz.com/black-flag-over-israel-s-democracy>>.

<sup>3</sup> The Turkish NGO involved in the Free Gaza flotilla, a number of whose members were killed during the May 31 2010 Israeli raid on the Mavi Marmara. For a brief review of the immediate details, see "The flotilla massacre and the cover-up" (June 1 2010), <<http://www.notesonhypocrisy.com/node/29>>.

An exaggerated and idealized projection of the pluralism internal to the Jewish Israeli political system has been internationally exploited to destructive effect for many decades. This has been widely observed by critical observers of the U.S. and Israeli political scenes. In his 1983 tome concerning U.S. policy and the Palestine question, Noam Chomsky, for example, expressed his usual understated disgust at this spectacle. In the aftermath of the horrendous massacres in 1982 Lebanon, Chomsky observed, U.S. Congressional liberals leveraged signs of dissent within Israel (which were largely driven by the tactical opposition of the Israeli Labour Party) to justify further increases in U.S. aid to finance Israeli military power and settlement construction.

Israel, so the logic went, was proving itself to be a vibrant democracy. Chomsky wrote:

Presumably there is ... a lesson here as to how to obtain further victories in Congress. It would be interesting to know how the reported 400,000 people who demonstrated in Israel in protest over the massacres will react to the fact – and fact it is – that the practical outcome of these efforts, given the way things are in the United States, was to accelerate the militarization of Israeli society and its expansion into the occupied territories.<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately, judging from recent Israeli "moderate" commentary, there is reason to suspect that some may have been quite satisfied.

Idealized exaggeration of Israeli pluralism has long been very widespread indeed, even in critical circles. For example: "One often hears statements," as the late Tanya Reinhart observed, interpreting the detailed accounts of state policy available in Israel's press "as signifying that the Israeli media is more liberal and critical of Israel's policies than other western media. This, however, is not the explanation." More to the point, she explained, it has less reason to be inhibited: "Things that would look outrageous in the western world are in Israel considered natural daily routine."<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless,

<sup>4</sup> Noam Chomsky, *The Fateful Triangle: The United States, Israel and the Palestinians* (Boston: South End Press, 1983 & 1999), p. 110.

<sup>5</sup> Tanya Reinhart, *The Road Map to Nowhere: Israel/Palestine Since 2003* (London: Verso, 2006), pp. 9-10.

the terms of discussion of Palestine in the West are so suffocating that critics are sometimes tempted to latch on to even the most morally bankrupt tactical dissent within the Israeli establishment to legitimize their own opposition.

This reflex serves to build up unrealistic expectations concerning prospective challenges to Israeli colonial rule from within the Jewish Israeli political system, to derail serious analysis and principled strategy, and sometimes to downplay the need for international action. Worst of all, it can take the form of “moderate” opinion in the West demanding that Palestinians simply try to partner with “moderate” Israeli establishment opinion – in other words, demanding Palestinian acquiescence to colonial rule (in thinning peace process packaging) in a spirit of false internationalism. Palestinian resistance politics can then be dismissed if they fail to orient themselves towards dialogue with the increasingly elusive force that is the Israeli peace camp.

For at least some leading Israeli intellectuals, the strategic value of such distortion is apparent. An Israel that appears to “shoot and cry” is understood to be better positioned to keep receiving the arms, economic backing and diplomatic cover necessary to keep firing than one that shoots and cheers. Hence the current dilemma.

Ilan Pappé, identified from the late 1980s as one of the Israeli “new historians” who challenged established Zionist orthodoxy, recounts an instructive exchange he had in the '90s with a colleague at Haifa University, Arnon Sofer – a rather iconic organic intellectual for the forces of racist Israeli demographic management. Pappé cites Sofer as explaining: “Between you and me, within four closed walls, you are one of us. But it is good that you are beautifying Israel’s image abroad.”<sup>6</sup> In Pappé’s case, such exchanges were predictably and definitively cut off by his political record in the ensuing years. They nonetheless reveal much about the outlook of advocates (à la Sofer) of an internationally palatable Israeli colonialism.

The visible rightward shift of Israeli politics is causing considerable unease in such quarters (as expressed in the recent commentary of Ari Shavit, sampled below).

6 Ilan Pappé, *Out of the Frame: The Struggle for Academic Freedom in Israel* (London: Pluto Press, 2010), p. 30.

## A fight that liberals can’t easily win

The political dynamics that have set Israel on its current political trajectory deserve serious consideration. Indeed, within the Jewish Israeli political arena, on purely logical grounds, one can understand why the contest between unapologetic ethno-religious chauvinism and liberal Zionist hypocrisy is gradually being resolved at the expense of democratic pretense.

People interested in this contest (and prepared to plug their noses while facing an icon from each side) ought to watch the 1985 debate, available online, between Harvard University’s Alan Dershowitz and Rabbi Meir Kahane.<sup>7</sup> For those without the nose plugs or stomach for the video, I’ll review a few relevant highlights.

Dershowitz (now here’s a real shock) offers little of original interest. Kahane, on the other hand, represents an interesting phenomenon. Since this debate finds Kahane in what for him constitutes good form, and at what for him most closely approximates good behaviour, I feel compelled to emphasize that this is a man who really does personify caustic, fascist venom (videos where he transparently expresses a visceral, hateful glee at the mass killing of Palestinians are also widely available). An open advocate of theocracy, violent expulsions and indiscriminate killing of civilians, Kahane explicitly urged his adherents to carry out paramilitary attacks against Palestinians along these lines, and many did and do (for his part, Kahane was assassinated in late 1990).

What is interesting about Kahane for present purposes is the way, rare if not unique, in which he presents the unapologetic Zionist case against liberal hypocrisy to an English-speaking audience. Notably, one can see – not in Kahane’s career or organizational work, which I won’t dwell on here, but in the logical course of the argument – the way in which he uses the consensual political Zionist demand for a Jewish majority state in the former Palestine to undercut the principled political basis for any genuine democratic opposition. While I do not wish to simply conflate the two, it is precisely the congruence of Kahane’s politics with Israel’s established political mainstream that makes the former at once dangerous and revealing.

7 See <<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=7174643040219291823>>.

I'll confine this brief review of Kahane's comments to two issues: (1) the indiscriminate killing of Palestinian civilians and (2) the contradiction between democracy and the consensual political Zionist commitment to racist demographic management.

(1) Asked about instances in the preceding period in which his adherents indiscriminately killed Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, Kahane positions these actions within (albeit towards the right of) the established Zionist canon. He explains:

Innocent people? This is a picture of a man named David Raziell [Kahane shows a portrait of Raziell]. He's a national hero in Israel. There is a village named after him, Ramat Raziell. Streets in Jerusalem, in Haifa, in Netanya, named after Raziell. Do you know who this hero was? There's a stamp – a stamp! – in Israel with his picture on it. You know who David Raziell was? He was the head of the Irgun in the 1930s ... David Raziell, the national hero of Israel, planted a bomb in the Arab marketplace in Jerusalem. It went off and it killed 27 Arabs.<sup>8</sup>

Those who continue in this tradition, Kahane later urges, should be fully supported by state forces:

it's a tragedy that those Jews took the law into their own hands. It was the job of the government of Israel to do what they did ... those so-called 'terrorists' were attempting to put the fear of G-d into the Arabs. Because the only thing that the Arab will ever understand is fear.

(Consider: to what extent does this sentiment fundamentally differ from official "deterrence" thinking?)

(2) More revealing, in many ways, are the exchanges between Kahane and Dershowitz on Arnon Sofer's intellectual stomping ground: state management of the demographic balance in territory governed by Israel. This is among the central defining axes of Israeli politics, and its treatment during the debate is extremely illustrative. In short, Dershowitz's rhetorical flailing and Kahane's forthright rebuttal stand together as a telling display of the pummeling that ostensible liberalism is likely to face in honest, principled debates

<sup>8</sup> All quotes come from the above video link unless otherwise indicated.

that assume shared political Zionist premises (especially on the question of "demography").

The debate moderator poses (1:00:49-) a basic question: Do "the Arabs" have the right "to become the majority in Israel" and "by democratic and peaceful means" to challenge the state's Jewish character? Loathe to really admit Palestinians into such an important in-house debate, Dershowitz responds by immediately re-framing the matter. Dershowitz begins:

We don't even have to reach that issue: what if *Jews* decide by democratic principles to vote against principles that Rabbi Kahane holds sacred? What if *Jews* tomorrow were to vote to repeal the Law of Return [which guarantees any Jew defined as such by the state to gain immediate citizenship and residency rights]? I would fight tooth and nail against that ... But Israel is a democracy. And if Rabbi Kahane and I, together, fail in our efforts to persuade *Jews* to maintain the Law of Return then we will have lost our fight for democracy ... We have to fight that [demographic] battle, we have to look at it as a challenge.

In facing this challenge, Dershowitz suggests that it is actually Kahane who undermines the Judaization of Palestine by advocating a Halachic (Jewish theocratic) regime which will dissuade Jewish immigration and settlement from abroad. Thus, Dershowitz asserts, a liberal democratic Zionism provides the sturdier defense against the threat posed by indigenous Palestinian demography (i.e., resident existence). Kahane replies:

I must say that was impressive. Dr Dershowitz took four minutes brilliantly not answering the question. The question wasn't whether it was a challenge. Of course, it's a challenge; agreed, it's a challenge. The question was: Assuming the Arabs "beat" us, would you be willing to accept that? The question is, Do they have a right to be a majority, in theory? Under democracy, of course they have that right! Under Zionism – not religious Zionism, but the Zionism of a man named Herzl, who wrote a book called *The Jewish State* – of course they don't have that right.

(Readers can, of course, refer to the video for the full exchange.)

Underpinning Kahane's polemical strength are the basic points of contact between his caustic calls for anti-Palestinian action and the policies of Israel's founding Labour Zionist mainstream. "We have," Kahane declares to the audience, "to face up to truth. We have to face up to so many truths. Among which is that Ben-Gurion, when he was the prime minister, didn't allow an Arab to leave his village at night without a special pass [recall that Palestinian citizens of Israel faced military governance from 1948 through to 1966]. Which I think is a magnificent example of democracy."

Likewise, albeit in a somewhat roundabout way, Kahane reminds the audience that debates about demography, "population transfer" and exclusion of Palestinian refugees were not simply triggered by post-1967 Israeli policy in the West Bank and Gaza or the associated fundamentalist settler camp. "There's not one Arab refugee living in Lebanon who comes from the West Bank," he emphasizes.

Every single one comes from the Galilee, from Haifa. There's not one Arab refugee in Gaza who comes from the West Bank. Half of them come from Jaffa, and from Ramle, and from Lydda, and from Be'er Sheva, and from what is now Ashdod and Ashkelon [all locations from which Palestinians were ethnically cleansed in 1948].

Kahane's point, for all the nominally defensive rhetoric with which he packages these remarks, is that if Israel accepts liberal democratic premises "there will be a Law of Return for Arabs – and rightly so, under democracy." Therefore, pursuit of consensual political Zionist aims is taken to require a rejection of democratic norms.

The relative coherence of Kahane's politics in this debate when compared to the rearguard tactical arguments made by Dershowitz is, in strategic terms, more apparent than real. Kahane's doctrinal rigidity (especially when conveyed in articulate Brooklyn English) involved an assault on the enlightened liberal pretenses that have greased Israel's arms procurement machinery in the West since the state's inception. In an earlier era, Ben-Gurion derided the politics of the Zionist far right as "verbal maximalism."<sup>9</sup> To speak publicly

9 Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World* (London: Penguin Books, 2000), p. 55.

of aggressive objectives at the expense of building the international support needed to realize them was, for the likes of Ben-Gurion, a novice move and a marker of political naivety.

Nowadays, concern for the possible ideological discomfort of western patrons is apparently weakening as a constraint on the terms of Jewish Israeli political discussion, and the genuine sway of liberalism is eroding even more visibly.

### **"Kahane is smiling"**

Gideon Levy is one of those rare Israeli journalists who has staked out a position of genuine democratic opposition to state policies. Among his many periodic pieces with a standard unifying theme – "damn, mainstream Jewish Israeli politics are a disaster that just keeps getting worse" (I paraphrase) – was an article published during Israel's most recent elections and titled simply, "Kahane won."<sup>10</sup> A recent *Ha'aretz* news report (November 16) picks up on the same theme.

Describing a Jerusalem rally marking the anniversary of Kahane's assassination, where "euphoria gripp[ed] the massive crowd," the reporter samples some of the video entertainment charging the "jubilant" atmosphere:

Clip after clip that had aired on Israel's commercial television stations over the last year was shown on the big screen of the Heichal David hall in Jerusalem's Romema neighborhood. There was a report broadcast by Channel 10 just two days ago about Ariel Zilber's new song, "Kahane was right." A Channel 2 report that praised longtime [Kahanist] activist Itamar Ben-Gvir as a "skilled media machine" and as "a kind of celeb" ... Then back to Channel 2, which showed [National Union MK Michael] Ben-Ari explaining how he would respond to rocket fire from the Gaza Strip: "24 hours, and there would be no more Beit Hanun [a city in northern Gaza which has been especially hard hit by indiscriminate Israeli artillery fire]." The crowd went

10 Gideon Levy, "Kahane won," *Ha'aretz* (February 8 2009), <<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/kahane-won1.269642>>.

wild. "Today, Rabbi Kahane is sitting in heaven and smiling," Ben-Gvir told the audience ... "Today, it isn't just Ben-Ari," Ben-Gvir noted. "In Yisrael Beitenu, in National Union, even in Likud they understand that Kahane was right."<sup>11</sup>

In earlier decades, the idealized international image of internal Israeli politics helped to colour perceptions of such displays. Consider the best known massacre of Palestinians by a follower of Kahane's teachings: Israel Defense Forces (IDF) physician Baruch Goldstein's February 1994 shooting spree in Hebron's Ibrahimi mosque, which killed 29 Palestinians and wounded another 150. An important poll, relayed by an Israeli commentator in the immediate aftermath of the killings, "established that at least 50 per cent of Israeli Jews would approve of the massacre, provided that it was not referred to as a massacre but rather as a 'Patriarch's Cave Operation,' a nice-sounding term already being used by religious settlers."<sup>12</sup> The commentator noted that this exposed as false mythology the notion that "with the exception of a few psychopaths, the entire nation, and its politicians included, has resolutely condemned Dr Goldstein, even though, luckily for us, all major television networks in the world were last week deluded by this untruth."<sup>13</sup> But crucially, the myth for the most part held.

Following the 1994 massacre, the Yitzhak Rabin government sealed the occupied West Bank and Gaza, repressed the ensuing wave of Palestinian protests (killing 33 Palestinians in the process), and put the Palestinian population of Hebron under a nearly six-week curfew to protect the settlement of Kiryat Arba (the messianic scourge which terrorizes Hebron, and in which Goldstein had resided); Rabin then moved on to join in accepting the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize.<sup>14</sup> This is a balancing and juggling act for which the

11 Yair Ettinger, "Israeli right-wing activist: Rabbi Kahane is sitting in heaven and smiling," *Ha'aretz* (November 16 2011), <[http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/israeli-right-wing-activist-rabbi-kahane-is-sitting-in-heaven-and-smiling\\_1.395821](http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/israeli-right-wing-activist-rabbi-kahane-is-sitting-in-heaven-and-smiling_1.395821)>.

12 Yuval Katz, writing for *Yerushalaim* on March 4 1994, cited in Israel Shahak and Norton Mezvinsky, *Jewish Fundamentalism in Israel* (London: Pluto Press, 1999), p. 104.

13 Ibid.

14 Graham Usher, *Palestine in Crisis: The Struggle for Political Independence after Oslo* (London: Pluto Press in association with the Transnational Institute and the Middle East Research & Information Project, 1995), p. 20.

Israel of Binyamin Netanyahu is less well suited.

Today, the main organizations of the Jewish Israeli establishment "left" are not only weak on principle (recall Labour Party leadership of the Defense Ministry that managed the assault on Gaza in 2008-9, and Meretz Party support for the Israel Air Force massacres that opened the campaign), but are also in disintegrating electoral free fall and facing a striking loss of their public influence. The implications of the possible collapse of the liberal Israeli establishment's domestic political sway are too numerous to even try to list here. (Those interested in details can peruse *Ha'aretz's* Project Black Flag.) Here I'll wrap up by sampling some strategic concerns expressed by veteran commentator and *Ha'aretz* editorial board member Ari Shavit.

Shavit, in his way, is attuned to global power relations and Israel's place within them. Early this year, as Egyptian popular rebellion challenged the Hosni Mubarak dictatorship, Shavit mused: "Following half a century during which the Arab world has been governed by dictators, the rule of tyranny is cracking at the seams. The Arab masses are no longer willing to suffer." That the Obama administration did not rigidly support Mubarak's rule in the face of this crisis was, for Shavit, a "betrayal." "It could be that the American empire was evil" in its reign over the past several decades, Shavit explained, but it has been beneficial for many and relied on a base of Third World "fear" and "obedience" that the U.S. leadership is not doing a good enough job of maintaining.<sup>15</sup>

Only time will tell whether the Obama administration's attempt to maintain basic strategic military and political-economic continuity in Egypt without Mubarak's personal participation will succeed in the face of the impressive popular resilience and courage on display in Egypt's streets and factories. Regardless, one needs to be a truly callous hack to consider these developments from the vantage point of imperial strategy. Just to give a sense of where Shavit's coming from.

15 Ari Shavit, "Obama's betrayal / As goes Mubarak, so goes U.S. might," *Ha'aretz* (January 31 2011), <<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/obama-s-betrayal-as-goes-mubarak-so-goes-u-s-might-1.340244>>.

This month, with the Israeli far right on a triumphant and internationally visible march through the Israeli mainstream, Shavit decries<sup>16</sup> the fact that “Israel’s enlightened elite” seems to have “lost its public hegemony.” While the forces of populist chauvinism may revel in this turn of events, Shavit pleads that their international implications cannot be ignored. “Israel’s alliance with the United States and Europe is based on shared values, and harming these values will erode the alliance.” Shavit continues:

...without the elite of Rehavia, Ramat Aviv and Ra’anana, Israel would have no existence. Without left-wing scientists, left-wing intellectuals and left-wing high-tech entrepreneurs, Israel would be a backward country, weak and pathetic. It would not be able to rule over Judea and Samaria [the biblical designation for the West Bank], it would not be able to defend itself [!] against Iran, and it would not survive in the storms of the Middle East.

Standing on such fine and noble principle, it’s no wonder that politics the likes of Shavit’s are facing a possible domestic collapse.

## Conclusion

Internationally, we also need to face up to some obvious truths. One of which is that the problem is not merely the Meir Kahanes and Avigdor Liebermans. There exists a grim and ominous continuity running from the explicit articulation by legal representatives of Israel’s Kadima-Labour coalition of “economic warfare” against the people of Gaza at the outset of 2008; through to the spoiling of 50,000 infant vaccines in April of that year, as even the general storage unit of Gaza’s Health Ministry was starved of fuel; and on to the deployment against Gaza at year’s end of soldiers among whom t-shirts soon circulated featuring a veiled, pregnant woman, her belly targeted in the cross-hairs of a rifle, alongside the slogan “one shot, two kills.”<sup>17</sup>

16 Ari Shavit, “Israel would be a backward country without the left-wing,” *Ha’aretz* (November 17 2011), <<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/israel-would-be-a-backward-country-without-the-left-wing-1.396005>>.

17 Michele K. Esposito, “Quarterly Update on Conflict and Diplomacy, 16

Ongoing shifts in Jewish Israeli politics appear to be increasing the clout of potentially genocidal political forces. This is, of course, extremely dangerous. The upsurge of democratic resistance to the regional order that has developed since the “Arab spring,” for its part, is being variously interpreted within Israel (to take another pair of *Ha’aretz* articles from the past week as examples) as a deterrent to aggressive Israeli action and a possible trigger for it.<sup>18</sup> But however these dynamics play themselves out, the burden of containing the Israeli threat cannot be forced solely upon those targeted by Israeli nuclear warheads.<sup>19</sup> For Israeli planners, the prospect of an erosion of Israel’s base of support in the West continues to function as a deterrent to escalating crimes – albeit, for now, a fairly weak and unreliable one. For those of us in the West, ongoing efforts to attach tangible social costs to the current course of Israeli policy are thus the priority.

The movement for boycott, divestment and sanctions has done much to expand and enrich efforts in this direction. I’ll not contribute much of substance here to the necessary accompanying strategic discussions, but will briefly point out a couple of political traps that should be avoided.

The first, in light of the above, is an exaggeration of the pluralism of the Jewish Israeli political scene or excessive reliance on the dissidents within it. In earlier decades, critics in the West often suggested that identification with established Jewish Israeli “peace forces” was an advisable means of engaging with the Palestine question (a politics that partially overlapped with the prominent public role of high-ranking dovish veterans of the Israeli military establishment in countering right-wing opposition to the

February-15 May 2008,” *Journal of Palestine Studies* (Vol. 47, No. 4, Summer 2008), p. 124; Dominic Waghorn, “Israeli Army T-Shirts Mock Gaza Killings,” *Sky News* (March 20 2009), <<http://news.sky.com/home/world-news/article/15245946>>.

18 Barak Ravid and Akiva Eldar, “Netanyahu delays demolition of Jerusalem bridge over Egypt, Jordan warning,” *Ha’aretz* (November 28 2011), <<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/netanyahu-delays-demolition-of-jerusalem-bridge-over-egypt-jordan-warning-1.398111>>; Amir Oren, “Egypt turmoil may prompt Israel to strike Gaza,” *Ha’aretz* (November 27 2011), <<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/features/egypt-turmoil-may-prompt-israel-to-strike-gaza-1.397949>>.

19 See Dan Freeman-Maloy, “‘All-out war’? Nixon’s logic in 21st-century Israel” (September 8 2011), <<http://www.notesonhypocrisy.com/node/41>>.

“peace process,” especially in the United States). There are of course genuine democratic movements doing important work under difficult circumstances in the Jewish Israeli political arena, mostly outside of the established “peace camp”. But those oriented towards the deteriorating terms of Jewish Israeli political discussion are, in the main, not positioned to constructively set the tone for critical international debate.

The second possible trap is an unhealthy fixation on Jewish dissent in the West. This is an awkward issue which I will only touch on briefly here. But the flip side of ongoing attacks on Palestinian citizens of Israel as fundamentally external to the Israeli polity is the state’s orientation towards those, abroad as well as resident, whom it defines as Jewish. Whether or not the current proposed legislation codifying “Israel’s status as the nation-state of the Jewish people” passes,<sup>20</sup> this is part of the Israeli political system’s basic orientation. Some quick points: It is necessary to develop a political climate of organized opposition that challenges both established Israeli state structures and the international organizations attached to them (e.g., the Jewish Federations of North America). Such opposition needs to be guided by an understanding that these formations do not truly represent the constituencies in whose name they claim to act (i.e., Jews everywhere; in this regard the overlap between predominant Zionist and anti-Semitic doctrine is striking). However, while specifically Jewish oppositional politics will be a necessary part of this process, they are best positioned as a very narrow part of the broader challenge that is required.

On principle, a careful approach here is necessary. If we reject, as we ought to, the idea that Jewish identity (as defined by whatever clerics) should bestow upon an individual social and political rights in Palestine/Israel that trump those of the country’s indigenous people, then we ought also to challenge the legitimacy of any political weight that accrues to an individual’s political positions by virtue of this definition. And anyway, for good reasons, this particular kind of identity-based oppositional politics suffers from some basic

20 Shlomo Avineri, “New ‘Jewish identity’ bill will cause chaos in Israel,” *Ha’aretz* (November 21 2011), <<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/new-jewish-identity-bill-will-cause-chaos-in-israel-1.396724>>.

structural weaknesses that will inevitably limit its strength. Fixation on Jewish dissident politics can thus simultaneously skew dynamics within our movements, limit the scope and integrity of oppositional work on the Palestine question, and reproduce a new dead end in the tradition of automatic deference to the Israeli peace camp. Discussion of how to avoid this trap needs to be pursued seriously, but elaboration of the issue is for another place.

The fundamental point is this. The “almost total silence about Zionism’s doctrines for and treatment of the native Palestinians” in ostensibly enlightened western circles was, as Edward Said put it, “one of the most frightening cultural episodes” of the 20th century.<sup>21</sup> Broad and coordinated effort will be required to overcome its effects. In the face of the ongoing surge of unapologetic chauvinism within Jewish Israeli politics, no illusions about Israel’s internal political scene should linger or be allowed to calm international concerns. Given the established character of the Israeli leadership, the character of the domestic pressure it faces, and the balance of power between Israeli state forces and the Palestinians, intense concern is called for. At the very least, this moment should prompt some left house-keeping through which allied hesitation in challenging the Israeli political system, as a system, is cleared away.

There are hopeful signs that the growing movements against austerity and for an expansion of social and democratic rights are incorporating critical engagement with the Palestine question within their development. No advocate for equality can support an Israeli state drifting towards theocracy and employing battlefield techniques against civilian populations in “defense” of an anachronistic colonialism. The international political space opened by the crumbling of liberal Israeli mythology should be filled with unflinching popular demands for equality, in Palestine as elsewhere.

21 Edward Said, *The Question of Palestine* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979 & 1992), p. 113.

## Mahal and the dispossession of the Palestinians

In 1948, thousands of overseas volunteers traveled to Palestine to take part in Zionist military operations. While various accounts of their participation are available, the record of those Zionist combatants formally designated as Mahal (from the Hebrew *Mitnadvay Hutz La'aretz*, “volunteers from abroad”) has been distorted in deference to conventional Zionist historiography. The Mahal recruits are generally depicted as “forgotten heroes,” as historian David Bercuson describes them in *The Secret Army*.<sup>1</sup> Providing the foreword to a study published amidst Israel’s jubilee celebrations in 1998, Binyamin Netanyahu praises the “contribution to the struggle for liberation” made by Mahal fighters.<sup>2</sup> “For them,” the authors of the study explain, “justice lay entirely on the side of the Jews”.<sup>3</sup>

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1 David Bercuson, *The Secret Army* (Toronto: Lester and Orpin Dennys, 1983), p. 233.

2 Craig Weiss and Jeffrey Weiss, *I Am My Brother’s Keeper: American Volunteers in Israel’s War of Independence, 1947–1949* (Atglen: Schiffer Publishing, 1998), p. 5.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 21.

The various memoirs written by volunteer combatants themselves likewise emphasize heroics in the service of a just cause.<sup>4</sup> Yitzhak Rabin summarizes the standard narrative in his forward to one such volume: “The contribution of this small band of men and women is a glorious chapter in the story of Israel’s struggle for freedom.”<sup>5</sup>

Estimates vary regarding the number of Mahal personnel interspersed throughout the Zionist forces. An initial Israeli census produced an estimate of 2,400, a figure now roundly considered low.<sup>6</sup> Bercuson asserts that there were “more than 5,000 foreign volunteers who served with the Israeli forces”; Benny Morris cites an estimate of “more than 4,000.”<sup>7</sup> A short study published by Israel’s Ministry of Education in 2007 puts the figure at approximately 3,500.<sup>8</sup> In any event, with total Israeli troop levels nearing 100,000 by the end of 1948, the significance of Mahal combatants did not lie in their numbers.<sup>9</sup> “Mahal’s special contribution,” in the words

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4 See for example Ben Dunkelman, *Dual Allegiance: An Autobiography* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1976); Harold Livingston, *No Trophy, No Sword: An American Volunteer in the Israeli Air Force During the 1948 War of Independence* (Chicago: Edition Q, Inc., 1994); Gordon Levett, *Flying Under Two Flags: An Ex-RAF Pilot in Israel’s War of Independence* (London: Frank Cass, 1994); Boris Senior, *New Heavens: My Life as a Fighter Pilot and a Founder of the Israeli Air Force* (Washington: Potomac Books, 2005). See also A. Joseph Heckelman, *American Volunteers and Israel’s War of Independence* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1974).

5 Dunkelman, *Dual Allegiance*, p. xii.

6 Netanel Lorch, *Israel’s War of Independence, 1947–1949, 2nd ed.* (Hartford: Hartmore House, 1968), p. 388.

7 Bercuson, *The Secret Army*, p. xiii; Benny Morris, *1948: A History of the First Arab-Israeli War* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), p. 85.

8 Yaacov Markovitzky, *Mahal: Overseas Volunteers in Israel’s War of Independence, Internet Edition* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Education Israel Information Center, 2007), p. 7.

9 Avi Shlaim suggests “a peak of 96,441” Israeli troops in December 1948; “Israel and the Arab Coalition in 1948,” in Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim, eds., *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 81. Amitzur Ilan records an Israeli “Formal Order of Battle” in October 1948 of 88,000; see *The Origin of the Arab-Israeli Arms Race: Arms, Embargo, Military Power and Decision in the 1948 Palestine War* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), p. 67. This source is cited in David Tal, *War in Palestine 1948: Strategy and Diplomacy* (London: Routledge, 2004), p. 5. For further figures, see Walid Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest: Readings in Zionism and the Palestine Problem Until 1948* (Washington: Institute for Palestine Studies, 2005), pp. 861–66.

of David Ben-Gurion, “was qualitative.”<sup>10</sup> Mostly English-speaking veterans of World War II, Mahal recruits devoted specialized skills to the Zionist military effort. Their expertise in modern military organization, artillery, armored warfare, naval, and aerial combat crucially facilitated the development (and early application) of Israeli military power.

This “glorious chapter,” as Rabin calls it, has gradually been written into the “heroic version” of Israel’s establishment.<sup>11</sup> The role of foreign recruits in the political and demographic transformation of Palestine effected in 1948 merits a more critical recounting. What is recorded in the annals of Zionist historiography as Israel’s War of Independence was experienced by Palestinians, some 750,000 of whom were displaced from their homes in the process, as colonial conquest. Widespread ethnic cleansing was among its principal features—a painful reality made more so by the denials, disinformation, and even celebrations that have surrounded it since. The present article reexamines the record of Mahal recruits in this light.<sup>12</sup>

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10 David Ben-Gurion, *Israel: A Personal History* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls/Sabra Books, 1971), p. 267.

11 Avi Shlaim’s designation of the narrative nurtured by official Zionist historiography; “Israel and the Arab Coalition,” p. 79. Autobiographical Mahal accounts and focused studies such as those cited above have supplemented more fragmented treatment of the topic by Israeli military historians. See for example Lorch, *Israel’s War of Independence, 1947–1949*; Ezer Weizman, *On Eagles’ Wings: The Personal Story of the Leading Commander of the Israeli Air Force* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976); David Eshel, *Chariots of the Desert: The Story of the Israeli Armored Corps* (London: Brassey’s Defense Publishers, 1989); Uri Milstein, trans. Alan Sacks, *History of Israel’s War of Independence* (New York: University Press of America, 1998).

12 This article relies on existing studies of the character and effect of Zionist military action against Palestinians, notably Nafez Nazzal, *The Palestinian Exodus from Galilee, 1948* (Beirut: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1978); Walid Khalidi, ed., *All that Remains: The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948* (Washington: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992); Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); and Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2006). This article extends in part from a piece previously published online by the author: Dan Freeman-Maloy, “60 Years Later: Canada and the Origins of the Israel-Palestine Conflict,” *ZNet* (May 4 2008), <[www.zmagg.org/znet/viewArticle/17552](http://www.zmagg.org/znet/viewArticle/17552)>.

## The Policy of Coercion and its International Underpinnings

From its establishment in 1897, the World Zionist Organization (WZO) pursued its ambitions concerning Palestine through organizational activity in Europe and North America and a strategic orientation toward the paramount imperial powers of the time. This approach succeeded in spectacular fashion during World War I when the Zionist movement secured British sponsorship for the creation of a Jewish “national home” in Palestine—a sponsorship given force by Britain’s occupation of Palestine during the war and incorporated into its subsequent rule over Palestine under a Mandate approved by the League of Nations.

With the growth of the prestate Jewish settlement (the Yishuv) during the period of British Mandatory rule (1922–1948), the center of Zionist decision making gradually shifted from Europe to Palestine. The WZO presidency of Chaim Weizmann, anchored in London, was overtaken by the leadership of David Ben-Gurion, based primarily “in the field.”<sup>13</sup> But militarily as otherwise, the strength of the Yishuv remained heavily dependent upon international support.

Funds from Western affiliates of the WZO—notably, the United Palestine Appeal (UPA), which channeled North American funds to Palestine through the Keren Hayesod (Foundation Fund)—were allocated according to the priorities of the Zionist Executive, including building military capacity.<sup>14</sup> In matters of formal politics and diplomacy, the WZO operated in post-World War I Palestine as the Jewish Agency, which enjoyed formal juridical standing within the British Mandatory regime.<sup>15</sup> Its military arm, the Haganah, though formally illegal, in practice also received important (albeit uneven) support from British authorities. This was most significant during the Palestinian Arab rebellion of 1936–1939, when sections of the Haganah were equipped and trained by the British to help put down the uprising within the framework of

13 For an analysis of this process, see Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest*, p. xlviii.

14 Ernest Stock, *Partners and Pursestrings: A History of the United Israel Appeal* (New York: University Press of America/Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 1987), pp. 35, 127.

15 For details, see Alysa Dortort and Daniel Elazar, *Understanding the Jewish Agency: A Handbook* (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 1985).

“Special Night Squads” and the Supernumerary Police force.<sup>16</sup> Their experience bolstered the Haganah’s capacities and contributed to shaping its military doctrine, particularly its preference for nighttime assaults on Arab villages.<sup>17</sup>

By the late 1930s, as Nur Masalha has shown, leading Zionist decision makers were engaged in frank internal discussions regarding the prospect of forcibly expelling (or “transferring”) Palestinians to clear the way for a Jewish state.<sup>18</sup> The fate of statist Zionism and its quest for a Jewish demographic majority would thus rest on coercive power. In a June 1938 discussion of transfer with the Jewish Agency Executive, Ben-Gurion emphasized that although the Zionist movement should seek Arab acquiescence, it “must enforce order and security and it will do this not by moralizing and preaching ‘sermons on the mount’ but by machine guns, which we will need.”<sup>19</sup> “For Ben-Gurion,” writes biographer Shabtai Teveth, “the Yishuv’s relationship with the Arabs of Palestine was now a military and not a political question.”<sup>20</sup>

Local military strength would derive from international political support. Planning a strategic break with Britain, Ben-Gurion launched an effort to establish an alternative support base in the United States, stating his ambition to “take control of American Jewry” for this purpose.<sup>21</sup> His American campaign gained early support from key U.S. Zionist figures, including Henry Montor and

16 See for example David Ben-Gurion, “Britain’s Contribution to Arming the Haganah,” in Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest*, pp. 371–74.

17 This preference was clearly manifest in 1948. See Yigal Allon, “Learning from Experience,” in Yigal Allon, ed., *The Making of Israel’s Army* (London: Vallentine, Mitchell & Co.), pp. 222–24.

18 Nur Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians: The Concept of “Transfer” in Zionist Political Thought, 1882–1948* (Washington: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1992). Ben-Gurion’s blunt statements favoring transfer are also recorded by his sympathetic biographer, Shabtai Teveth, in *Ben-Gurion and the Palestinian Arabs: From Peace to War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); for example, “We must expel Arabs and take their places.” (p. 189).

19 Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians*, pp. 107–8.

20 Teveth, *Ben-Gurion and the Palestinian Arabs*, p. 193. See the discussion in Walid Khalidi, “Revisiting the UNGA Partition Resolution,” in Ilan Pappé, ed., *The Israel/Palestine Question: A Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 99.

21 Allon Gal, *David Ben-Gurion and the American Alignment for a Jewish State* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1991), p. 40.

Abba Hillel Silver, and met with considerable success. In the spring of 1942, American Zionists emerged from their landmark conference at New York's Biltmore Hotel with the demand "that Palestine be established as a Jewish Commonwealth integrated in the structure of the new democratic world."<sup>22</sup> In earlier years, expressions such as "national home" had been used, as the demand for Jewish statehood "came to be regarded as quasi-immoral by many Zionists" in the United States.<sup>23</sup> But by 1944, the American Zionist movement was demanding a "Jewish commonwealth ... [which] shall embrace the whole of Palestine, undivided and undiminished."<sup>24</sup> A U.S. base of support for expansive, statist Zionism had been secured.

The threat of an Axis advance on the Middle East soon dissipated. The Zionist military build-up, underwritten by Zionist donors in the West, intensified. The UPA-funded Jewish Agency programs grouped under the heading "National Organization and Security," which amounted to slightly over \$3.8 million in 1945/46, grew to \$28 million for 1948, with \$25 million earmarked for "security needs."<sup>25</sup> Such tax-exempt fundraising was, however, vulnerable to U.S. government oversight. Visiting the U.S. in the summer of 1945, Ben-Gurion thus initiated a parallel support system for the military struggle that would shape the future of Palestine.

Ben-Gurion enlisted Henry Montor, then executive director of the UPA, to call a meeting of trusted donors who could act with discretion. This network established itself as a covert body known as the "Sonneborn Institute" and helped the Jewish Agency expand Haganah activity throughout the West.<sup>26</sup> This quickly extended beyond fundraising to include procurement and smuggling of military equipment from both North America and Europe (an effort which Ricky-Dale Calhoun outlines in the summer 2007 issue of this

22 Ibid., p. 201.

23 Ibid., p. 154, based on a review of the U.S. Zionist press from 1930 to 1941.

24 Hannah Arendt, "Zionism Reconsidered," in Jerome Kohn and Ron H. Feldman, eds., *The Jewish Writings* (New York: Schocken Books, 2007), p. 343, citing the Atlantic City resolution (October 1944).

25 Stock, *Partners*, p. 127.

26 The classic (if wholly uncritical) work on this subject is Leonard Slater, *The Pledge* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970).

*Journal*).<sup>27</sup> In 1948, this support system would prove invaluable as a means of circumventing the international military embargo imposed on all parties to the Palestine conflict. It would also serve as a means of recruiting skilled military personnel for the Zionist war effort.

## Haganah Restructuring and the Role of the Mahal

Following the success of Ben-Gurion's American campaign at Biltmore, a British diplomat concluded that "the Zionist aim is nothing less than the forcible seizure of Palestine after the war, relying on American influence to keep us [the British] quiet."<sup>28</sup> This correctly anticipated the postwar trajectory of statist Zionism. In October 1946, President Harry Truman endorsed the demand for Jewish statehood over British objections, providing crucial leverage to the Yishuv leadership in its developing push to eject Britain from Palestine.<sup>29</sup> By February 1947, Britain announced its intention to abandon the Mandate and turned the Palestine question over to the United Nations. As diplomatic developments paved the way for British withdrawal, the Haganah prepared to establish itself as the dominant military force in Palestine.

In December 1946, Ben-Gurion, who by this time had led the Yishuv for more than a decade, assumed direct control of the defense portfolio.<sup>30</sup> By late 1947, a consolidated military command structure (with Ben-Gurion at its apex) had taken shape. The principal Haganah combat force, the Field Corps, was initially organized into six brigades—the Golani, Carmeli, Alexandroni, Kiryati, Giv'ati, and Etzioni. The Palmach, a force associated with center-left Labor Zionism, retained distinct headquarters while operating under overall

27 Ricky-Dale Calhoun, "Arming David: The Haganah's Illegal Arms Procurement Network in the United States, 1945–1949," *JPS* (Vol. 36, No. 4, Summer 2007), pp. 22–32.

28 Gal, *David Ben-Gurion*, p. 202.

29 Amikam Nachmani, *Great Power Discord in Palestine: The Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry into the Problems of European Jewry and Palestine, 1945–1946* (London: Frank Cass, 1987), p. 256.

30 Tal, *War in Palestine 1948*, p. 24.

Haganah command. The far-right Zionist militias, the Etzel (Irgun) and Lehi (Stern Gang), operated autonomously but in recurring coordination with the Haganah. In November, the Haganah also established an “Air Service,” formally constituted as the Israeli Air Force (IAF) in May 1948; and a Seventh, Eighth (Armored) and Ninth Brigade were added to the Field Corps. It was in some of these latter units that Mahal recruits had the greatest impact.

To increase troop levels, the Haganah set up a Special Committee for Mobilization, issuing a mobilization order to the Yishuv in early December 1947.<sup>31</sup> For command and technical expertise, Ben-Gurion looked to veterans of World War II, both within the Yishuv and abroad.<sup>32</sup> Although begun earlier, international recruitment became more structured in January 1948 when the Jewish Agency Executive decided to establish a Committee for Overseas Mobilization.<sup>33</sup> In North America, the support system overseen by the Sonneborn Institute and the Jewish Agency’s U.S. section (headed by Abba Hillel Silver) established Land and Labor for Palestine as its recruitment arm.<sup>34</sup> In South Africa, the League for the Haganah enlisted support openly, attracting more volunteers from the Belgian Congo, Kenya, Rhodesia, and South Africa than the Haganah, interested only in skilled veterans, could usefully absorb.<sup>35</sup> By various means, recruitment extended from Western Europe to Latin America and beyond.

Public advocacy and clandestine military support for the drive toward Zionist statehood (including foreign recruitment) were often interconnected. The Canadian World War II veteran Ben Dunkelman, for example, acted in turn as the Ontario public relations officer of the Zionist Organization of Canada (ZOC) and as head of the Haganah’s Canadian steering committee before going to Palestine,

31 Ibid., p. 31.

32 Thousands of Jews from Palestine had enlisted with the British army during World War II.

33 Bercuson, *The Secret Army*, pp. 53, 72. In April, the Committee’s activities were subsumed under the authority of the Haganah’s Manpower Department.

34 Ibid., p. 36.

35 Markovitzky, *Mahal*, p. 16; Bercuson, *The Secret Army*, p. 53. Bercuson suggests that South African recruitment initially fell outside the main international structure.

where he became a brigade commander whose forces ethnically cleansed much of the Galilee in the summer and fall of 1948.<sup>36</sup>

Mahal was not the only fighting force “recruited” from abroad. The Haganah also sought to bring in Jewish immigrants from the Displaced Persons (DP) camps of Europe, many of whom were intercepted and held in British detention camps in Cyprus through 1948. These refugees were designated as “Gahal,” literally “recruits from abroad,” and are distinguished from Mahal by historians, as they were by Israeli authorities in 1948, because their combat role “cannot accurately be considered as voluntary.”<sup>37</sup> But while Mahal were indeed volunteers, they were actively recruited and were sometimes perceived as mercenaries. Disputes with Mahal over pay and terms of service (pertaining also to a loyalty oath that many Mahal recruits rejected) shook the IAF by the summer of 1948. Official salary arrangements were eventually put in place; meanwhile, “it was rumored that one fighter pilot earned \$2,000 (£500) per month and had been promised a \$500 (£125) bonus for every aircraft he shot down.”<sup>38</sup>

Until the Mandate expired, British authorities sought to prevent an influx of military recruits to Palestine. The United Nations subsequently sought to maintain barriers to the entry of prospective combatants.<sup>39</sup> Mahal recruits bypassed these restrictions by traveling under false pretexts or relying on air and sea routes that avoided interception.<sup>40</sup> Small groups were peppered throughout the Haganah from early spring 1948; greater numbers arrived after the Mandate ended.<sup>41</sup> They were most prominent in artillery, armored, naval, and aerial units, where specialized skills were required. Their presence

36 Dunkelman, *Dual Allegiance*, p. 151; Bercuson, *The Secret Army*, p. 61.

37 Hannah Torok-Yablonka, “The Recruitment of Holocaust Survivors during the War of Independence,” *Journal of Israeli History* (Vol 13, No. 1, 1992), p. 43.

38 Brian Cull, Shlomo Aloni and David Nicolle, *Spitfires over Israel: The First Authoritative Account of Air Conflict During the Israeli War of Independence, 1948–1949* (Boston, MA: Grub Street, 1994), pp. 287–88.

39 Lorch, *Israel’s War of Independence, 1947–1949*, p. 285.

40 See for example Bercuson, *The Secret Army*, pp. 58–59, 99.

41 Certain recruits designated as Mahal arrived earlier, some joining the Haganah and Palmach on naval vessels challenging British immigration restrictions and others helping to develop the Haganah Air Service.

would come to define certain units, such as the English company of the 82nd Tank Battalion and the 7th Brigade's (72nd Armored) "Anglo-Saxon" Battalion.<sup>42</sup>

One of the highest ranking foreign recruits, U.S. Colonel David "Mickey" Marcus, was recruited early on and became deeply involved in the structural overhaul of the Haganah.<sup>43</sup> A West Point graduate, Marcus had served on General Dwight D. Eisenhower's staff at Allied Expeditionary Force headquarters in Europe.<sup>44</sup> Arriving in Palestine at the beginning of 1948, he acted as a close organizational and strategic aide to Ben-Gurion as the Haganah expanded its operations. (He would go on to serve as commander of the Jerusalem front in late May before falling to friendly fire in early June, and he was the first Haganah officer to attain the rank of general.)<sup>45</sup>

Mahal recruits would play a particularly important role in the development and deployment of Israeli air power. South African Air Force veteran Boris Senior, for instance, was chosen to command the Haganah's first aerial squadron, established near Tel Aviv in late 1947.<sup>46</sup> (Senior had been recruited to the Irgun in Europe by Chaim Weizmann's rightist son, Ezer, but once the pair were in Palestine the Revisionist leadership redirected them to the Haganah. "When I finally met Menachem Begin," writes Senior, "his advice was that because the Irgun had no aircraft, Ezer and I should join the Haganah's air service."<sup>47</sup>) In the final count, an estimated 666 Mahal recruits served in the IAF by the end of 1948. They would comprise the leading component of its approximately 6,000-person staff, accounting for "almost 70% of the 525 IAF aircrew that served during the war, with a much larger percentage

42 Eshel, *Chariots of the Desert*, p. 17; Bercuson, *The Secret Army*, p. 183; Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence, 1947–1949*, p. 390. Nazzari, *The Palestinian Exodus from Galilee, 1948*, refers (p. 22) to the 7th in its entirety as the "Anglo-Saxon Brigade."

43 Bercuson, *The Secret Army*, p. 52.

44 Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence, 1947–1949*, p. 222; Milstein, *History of Israel's War of Independence*, p. 219.

45 Weiss and Weiss, *I Am My Brother's Keeper*, p. 132.

46 Cull, Aloni and Nicolle, *Spitfires*, p. 71.

47 Weizman, *On Eagles' Wings*, p. 48; Senior, *New Heavens*, p. 103.

of pilots."<sup>48</sup> English was thus the principal language of the IAF deployed in 1948 Palestine.<sup>49</sup>

The presence of specialized veterans became widespread in the second half of 1948. But from the outset, they helped the Haganah to operate aggressively within the political and military space opened by Britain's incremental withdrawal.

## The Onset of Direct Mahal Participation in "Transfer": Spring Offensives

Throughout 1947, Anglo-American divergence on the Palestine question, UN deliberations that had begun in April, and the growing certainty of British withdrawal formed the diplomatic backdrop to Haganah preparations. Developments came to a head late in the year. On 29 November, under intense U.S. pressure, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 181, recommending the partition of Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state. The full implications of this decision are not explored here,<sup>50</sup> but perhaps its most tangible effect, absent an enforcement mechanism, was to help precipitate the end of the Mandate.

As British forces gradually relinquished control of Palestine in anticipation of their departure, set for 15 May 1948, the Haganah stepped up its activity. The initial policy framework for Haganah operations against Palestinians amidst creeping British withdrawal was Plan C, which mandated disproportionate punitive "counter-measures" against Palestinians aimed at keeping lines with Jewish settlements open and deterring any action against them.<sup>51</sup> Yet neither sporadic Palestinian violence nor the entry into Palestine of Arab Liberation Army (ALA) irregulars in early 1948 could rationalize the wholesale demographic transformation of Palestine.

48 Bill Norton, *Air War on the Edge: A History of the Israel Air Force and its Aircraft Since 1947* (Leicestershire, UK: Midland Publishing, 2002) pp. 12–13.

49 See Lon Nordeen, *Fighters Over Israel* (New York: Orion Books, 1990), p. 14.

50 For details, see Khalidi, "Revisiting the UNGA Partition Resolution."

51 For the English text, see Walid Khalidi, "Plan Dalet: Master Plan for the Conquest of Palestine," *JPS* (Vol. 18, No. 1, Autumn 1988), pp. 20–23.

As Haganah operations reached the limits of ostensible retaliation, Plan C gave way to an operational policy of depopulating Palestinian communities within seized territories.

Ilan Pappé traces the decision-making process underlying this development to a small cluster of Arab affairs advisers and members of the Haganah High Command assembled by Ben-Gurion, and referred to in one of Ben-Gurion's journal entries as *Mesibat Mumhim* ("a party of experts").<sup>52</sup> Pappé's thesis, which meshes with Nur Masalha's examination of the Zionist politics of transfer and with Walid Khalidi's assessment of the Israeli documentary record,<sup>53</sup> runs counter to standard Zionist assertions that purely military (rather than political-demographic) objectives guided the Haganah's expulsion policy. This article will not explore this controversy.<sup>54</sup> Suffice it here to emphasize that Haganah policy and Mahal involvement converged in 1948 in the expulsion of thousands of Palestinians from their homes.

Plan D, which spelled out the Haganah policy of offensive transfer, was finalized in early March. The plan set the framework for a broad assault, specifically mandating extensive expulsion of Palestinians: "In the event of resistance, the armed force must be wiped out and the population must be expelled outside the borders of the state"; and the razing of their villages: "Destruction of villages (setting fire to, blowing up, and planting mines in the debris), especially those population centers which are difficult to control continuously."<sup>55</sup> Orders were given and an assault force three times larger than any used in previous Haganah operations was assembled.<sup>56</sup> Thus poised, the Haganah initiated Plan D on 5 April with the launch of Operation Nachshon.

Official Israeli accounts generally describe Operation Nachshon

52 Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, p. 267 (n. 16).

53 Masalha, *Expulsion of the Palestinians*, especially pp. 181–99; Khalidi, "Plan Dalet."

54 "It might be asked," writes Gabriel Piterberg of this debate, "whether ethnic-cleansing-as-result . . . is not, empirically and ethically, as important as cleansing-as-intention." *The Returns of Zionism: Myths, Politics and Scholarship in Israel* (London: Verso, 2008), p. 56.

55 Walid Khalidi, "Text of Plan Dalet (Plan D), 10 March 1948: General Section," *JPS* (Vol. 18, No. 1, Autumn 1988), p. 29.

56 Gunther E. Rothenberg, *The Anatomy of the Israeli Army* (London: BT Batsford), p. 48.

as an effort to lift the siege on the Jewish section of Jerusalem (to free it from "the Arab noose choking the city," as Yigal Allon put it).<sup>57</sup> More to the point, it was an assault aimed at incorporating the Jerusalem area—which under UN General Assembly Resolution 181 was to be an internationalized zone—within the Jewish state, and at linking it with the coastal plains where Jewish settlement was concentrated. This meant occupying a wide swath of Palestinian villages.<sup>58</sup> Ethnic cleansing was the plan's obvious corollary. Thus launched on a wide scale, it continued with the additional dozen operations executed within the Plan D framework through May.

In this setting, groups of Mahal recruits began arriving in April. Their incorporation into fighting units took two main forms: the placement on an individual basis of veterans with specific expertise and the wholesale integration of groups into preexisting units. The two forms will be illustrated here with reference to early recruits from Canada.

Ben Dunkelman had fought with the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada during World War II and had received intensive officer's combat training in the use of mortars in Britain. He was recruited by the Haganah in 1947 and arrived in Palestine in early April 1948. Dunkelman participated ad hoc in a variety of operations before being assigned in May to the Planning Staff of the Palmach's Harel Brigade. In this capacity, he claims primary responsibility for the progress of Operation Maccabi.

Like Operation Nachshon, Maccabi was intended to establish a "Jerusalem Corridor" cleared of Palestinian villages and Arab irregulars. Its primary consequence was the capture of Bayt Mahsir, a village of approximately 2,000 people located in the hills south of the main road to Jerusalem. Bayt Mahsir was subjected to sustained artillery fire and aerial attacks before falling to Palmach troops on the morning of 11 May.<sup>59</sup> Dunkelman attributes defeat of the village, which had stood firm in the face of previous attacks, to his insistence on a surprise predawn assault relying on "heavy covering fire from

57 Yigal Allon, *Shield of David: The Story of Israel's Armed Forces* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1970), p. 196.

58 See the relevant map of destroyed villages in Khalidi, *All that Remains*, p. 264.

59 Senior, *New Heavens*, p. 154; Dunkelman, *Dual Allegiance*, pp. 213–14.

a Davidka mortar” (a Haganah artillery piece whose inaccurate, notoriously loud 40-kilo shells—filled with nails and other assorted shrapnel—had a crucial “morale-shattering” effect, in his words).<sup>60</sup> Hours after the village was taken, the Harel Brigade reported to Haganah Chief of Operations Yigal Yadin that “we are currently blowing up the houses. We have already blown up 60–70 houses.”<sup>61</sup> Eventually, the entire village was destroyed.

Dunkelman was a critical admirer of Haganah artillery, praising the Davidka as “one of the wonders of the 1948 war.”<sup>62</sup> But he was eager to introduce more advanced equipment and techniques. To this end, he approached Ben-Gurion and came away from their meeting with “full and complete authority over all phases of the operation: production, distribution, and training of crews.”<sup>63</sup> Ben-Gurion’s memoirs confirm that he authorized Dunkelman “to deal with the production of 6-inch mortars.”<sup>64</sup> The Canadian artillery expert was thus intimately involved in developing one of the main assault weapons used by Israeli forces to depopulate Palestinian communities over the next several months.

In contrast to Dunkelman’s individual deployment in specialized roles, twenty-seven Canadian volunteers arriving in Palestine around the same time were lodged together at a Haganah training camp before being assigned to the Giv’ati Brigade.<sup>65</sup> The Giv’ati Brigade, which had been the anchor of Operation Nachshon, continued to play a prominent part in Haganah offensives.<sup>66</sup> The recruits arrived at their post just as the Giv’ati Brigade attacked the village of `Aqir on 4 May.<sup>67</sup> They soon comprised around half of one of the two companies constituted as the 52nd Battalion. A few days later, the Giv’ati Brigade launched “Operation Barak,” aimed at extending its

60 Ibid., p. 213.

61 Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, p. 140.

62 Dunkelman, *Dual Allegiance*, p. 195.

63 Ibid., pp. 224–25.

64 Ben-Gurion, *Israel*, p. 116.

65 For details, see Bercuson, *The Secret Army*, pp. 99–101.

66 Giv’ati Brigade commander Shimon Avidan served as overall commander of Operation Nachshon; Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, p. 233.

67 The attack on `Aqir precipitated the exodus of approximately 3,000 Palestinians, according to a *New York Times* report cited in Khalidi, *All that Remains*, p. 360.

control of the coastal area west of Lydda and Ramla. The offensive, which pushed deep into the Gaza district, targeted such Palestinian centers as Isdud (now Ashdod), Majdal (now Ashkelon), and Yibna in what Giv’ati headquarters described as an effort “to force the Arab inhabitants ‘to move’.”<sup>68</sup> Yibna and many smaller villages in the area were conquered and depopulated in this operation. On 11 May, the 52nd Battalion with its “Canadian platoon” spearheaded the depopulation and destruction of Bashshit, a Palestinian village with more than 1,600 residents.<sup>69</sup>

In sum, the onset of Mahal involvement in the Haganah was intertwined with the bolstering of its capacities, the expansion of its sphere of operations, and the turn toward widespread ethnic cleansing which together framed its activity in early 1948. By the time the British Mandate ended, the forcible depopulation of Palestinian communities within territory seized by the Haganah had become a well established pattern—one that Mahal recruits had participated in setting.

## Build-up of the Israeli Air Force and Armored Corps

On 14 May 1948, Israel declared statehood. The next day—the formal end of the Mandate—the neighboring Arab countries deployed regular expeditionary forces to Palestine. The new Israeli government formalized the establishment of the IAF and moved to consolidate full authority over all Zionist military organizations through the creation of a unified Israel Defense Forces (IDF).<sup>70</sup>

Expansion of the IAF addressed one area where the Haganah faced a potentially serious challenge following the entry of Arab state forces into the fighting. Until then, the aerial component of the fighting was one-sided. For months, and notwithstanding the constraints placed on Zionist activities by the British, the Haganah

68 Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, p. 256.

69 Mahal accounts of this attack are detailed in Bercuson, *The Secret Army*, pp. 102–6.

70 The IDF was formally established on 28 May, and it absorbed the Revisionist militias.

Air Service, its light aircraft equipped with machine guns and hand-thrown explosives, flew combat missions with impunity in loose conjunction with Haganah ground forces.<sup>71</sup> After 15 May, however, planes of the Royal Egyptian Air Force could down Israel's improvised bombers, and for a time IAF operations were forced into the night.<sup>72</sup> Egypt was even able to deploy improvised bombers of its own: On 18 May, Tel Aviv's central bus station was hit, killing an estimated forty-two people.<sup>73</sup>

Israeli aerial vulnerability was short-lived. Despite a UN-imposed military embargo on Palestine, weaponry and personnel from abroad continued to pour into the country through 1948, relying on stealth and the benign neglect (or purchased cooperation) of authorities in jurisdictions around the world. The principal transport hub for this circuitous procurement was a former Luftwaffe airfield at Zatec, Czechoslovakia, and within days of the end of the Mandate modified German "Messerschmitt" fighter planes procured by the Haganah via Zatec arrived and were soon deployed to deflect Egyptian raids. By the end of May, the IAF was in a position to bomb not only Palestinian population centers (e.g., Isdud, Lydda, Ramla, and Ramallah) and Arab state forces in Palestine, but also the Jordanian capital of Amman; on 10–11 June two tons of explosives were dropped on Damascus.<sup>74</sup> From Zatec, where a largely American group of volunteers operated under the auspices of Czech authorities, an assortment of transport planes including several C-46 Commandos procured from the U.S. War Assets Administration formed an air bridge to Palestine.<sup>75</sup> Aerial arms shipments began on the eve of Operation Nachshon and continued through the summer (often with new recruits aboard).

After less than a month of regular military engagements that did little to slow the dispossession of the Palestinians, the first truce between Israel and the regular Arab forces went into effect on 11

71 For examples, see Cull, Aloni and Nicolle, *Spitfires*, p. 100; Eliezer Cohen, *Israel's Best Defense: The First Full Story of the Israeli Air Force* (New York: Orion Books, 1993), pp. 12, 14.

72 Cull, Aloni and Nicolle, *Spitfires*, p. 148.

73 Lorch, *Israel's War of Independence, 1947–1949*, p. 264.

74 Cull, Aloni and Nicolle, *Spitfires*, pp. 154, 165.

75 *Ibid.*, pp. 73, 149.

June, lasting until 8 July. The truce provided the occasion for a new wave of Israeli military reorganization during which command was further centralized under Ben-Gurion. At the same time, new equipment and Mahal recruits were used to bolster Israeli air power and lay the foundation for an Israeli armored corps.

With the onset of the truce, the IAF prepared to establish definitive aerial dominance. Among the IAF's many acquisitions during the truce were three B-17 "Flying Fortress" bombers, procured at the initiative of the American Mahal operative Al Schwimmer (who went on to found Israel Aircraft Industries) and prepared for combat under the command of Mahal recruit Ray Kurtz, commander of a B-17 squadron for the U.S. Air Force during World War II.<sup>76</sup> Veteran-flown aircraft, now including fighter planes and heavy bombers, would be deployed throughout Palestine to deadly effect.<sup>77</sup>

Meanwhile, the IDF established an armored corps in which Mahal personnel factored prominently. It founded its first regular armored unit—the 8<sup>th</sup> Brigade—and reinforced the 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade with heavier equipment. The 8<sup>th</sup> Brigade consisted of one tank battalion and one commando battalion (the 82<sup>nd</sup> and 89<sup>th</sup>, respectively). The 82<sup>nd</sup> Tank Battalion was mostly staffed by recruits from Britain, South Africa, and Russia and was organized into two companies, one "English" and one "Russian."<sup>78</sup> The reinforced 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade—which according to one Israeli lieutenant colonel "was to become the IDF's foremost armored formation in later wars"—was placed under Dunkelman's command, and Mahal recruits were posted throughout its ranks.<sup>79</sup> Indeed, the 7<sup>th</sup> included perhaps the largest concentration of English-speaking Mahal of any unit outside the IAF: 170 during the summer and

76 *Ibid.*, p. 173; Bishara A. Bahbah, "Israel's Private Arms Network," *MERIP Middle East Report* (No. 144, Jan.–Feb. 1987), p. 9.

77 On the basis of interviews with Palestinian refugees, Birzeit University's Saleh Abdel Jawad concludes that "aerial bombardment was one of the deadliest forms of killing since July 1948, especially in southern Palestine and the central Galilee." "Zionist Massacres: The Creation of the Palestinian Refugee Problem in the 1948 War," in Eyal Benvenisti et al., eds., *Israel and the Palestinian Refugees* (New York: Springer, 2007), p. 66.

78 Eshel, *Chariots of the Desert*, pp. 13–14, 17.

79 *Ibid.*, p. 19.

approximately 300 by the fall.<sup>80</sup>

Many Mahal recruits fighting within Haganah units actively identified, like Boris Senior, with the Revisionist militias. Thus when Ben-Gurion asserted his authority by moving against an Irgun naval arms shipment in mid-June (in what became known as the Altalena affair), it was partly the outright refusal of Mahal aircrew to obey orders to prepare for action against the Irgun vessel that forced Ben-Gurion to employ artillery from the shore.<sup>81</sup>

On 9 July, the first truce collapsed. Extended fighting raged for a week and a half before commencement of a second, still shakier interstate ceasefire. The period between the two ceasefires, defined by rapid Israeli advances in which Mahal personnel helped bring heavier equipment to bear in the conquest and depopulation of Palestinian communities, is known in Israeli historiography as “the Ten Days.”

### From Lydda to Saffuriyya

The two main components of the Ten Days offensive (9–18 July) were “Operation Dani” in central Palestine and “Operation Dekel” in the north. Mahal-heavy armored and aerial units participated in both. Operation Dani aggressively hammered the emerging boundary of the West Bank inland from the coast in a series of large-scale attacks and harsh expulsions targeting the Palestinian towns Lydda and Ramla; Operation Dekel extended the Israeli-controlled coastal strip in the north into the central Galilee and occupied Nazareth. Both operations were executed well beyond the boundaries of the Jewish state mandated by Resolution 181.

Operation Dani had originally been named “Operation Mickey” in honor of U.S. Col. Marcus, killed the previous month, but the

<sup>80</sup> Markovitzky, *Mahal*, p. 31.

<sup>81</sup> Cull, Aloni and Nicolle, *Spitfires*, p. 176. For more details on the Mahal and the Altalena affair—including foreign recruits on the Irgun side, for example the Altalena’s American captain and Canadian gun captain—see Bercuson, *The Secret Army*, pp. 149–51; Weiss and Weiss, *I Am My Brother’s Keeper*, pp. 143–52.

name was changed amidst concerns that it may have been leaked.<sup>82</sup> Its main objective was the conquest of Lydda and Ramla, which had thus far been successfully defended by their inhabitants (operating with limited support from regular Arab armies). A large composite force was assembled for the attack, including the 8th (Armored) Brigade (with its 82nd and 89th battalions), units from four others, and a range of aerial and artillery units, all operating under the command of Yigal Allon. The 8th Brigade formed part of the northern arm of a pincer movement aimed at encircling the two communities, severing them from the West Bank and conquering this heavily populated swath of territory.

Lydda, whose population had more than doubled to 50,000 as a result of the influx of refugees from occupied villages nearby, had resiliently fended off previous attacks. Spiro Munayyer, a volunteer with the town militia, recounts: “The people were conscious of the gravity of the situation and, after what had happened in other cities, were well aware that this war would determine whether they would be able to remain in their city and homeland.”<sup>83</sup> However, the only regular forces deployed in defense of Lydda (and Ramla) were the 125 soldiers of the Transjordanian Arab Legion’s Fifth Infantry Company—hardly a sufficient reinforcement for irregular defenders facing an assault force which Walid Khalidi estimates as 8,000 strong.<sup>84</sup>

The attack began after nightfall on 9 July with the advance of ground forces and sustained aerial bombardment of Lydda and Ramla that continued, alongside artillery strikes, through 10 July.<sup>85</sup> Contrary to the initial plan, the 89th (Commando) Battalion made quicker progress than the tanks of the 82nd, punching through Lydda’s defenses with a column of jeeps and half-tracks in a devastating 11 July raid during which as many as 200 Palestinians were killed.<sup>86</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Lorch, *Israel’s War of Independence, 1947–1949*, p. 334.

<sup>83</sup> Spiro Munayyer, with an introduction by Walid Khalidi, “The Fall of Lydda,” *JPS* (Vol. 27, No. 4, Summer 1998), p. 88.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>85</sup> Lorch, *Israel’s War of Independence, 1947–1949*, p. 335.

<sup>86</sup> Munayyer with Khalidi, “The Fall of Lydda,” p. 92; Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, p. 426.

Benny Morris relates the recollections of one 89th Battalion fighter who participated in the assault:

[My] jeep made the turn and here at the ... entrance to the house opposite stands an Arab girl, stands and screams with eyes filled with fear and dread. She is all torn and dripping blood – she is certainly wounded. Around her on the ground lie the corpses of her family ... Did I fire at her? ... But why these thoughts, for we are in the midst of battle, in midst of conquest of the town. The enemy is at every corner. Every one is an enemy. Kill! Destroy! Murder! Otherwise you will be murdered and will not conquer the town. What [feeling] did this lone girl stir within you? Continue to shoot! ... Where does this desire to murder come from? What, because your friend ... was killed or wounded, you have lost your humanity and you kill and destroy? Yes! ... I kill every one who belongs to the enemy camp: man, woman, old person, child. And I am not deterred.<sup>87</sup>

The Arab Legion company soon withdrew and the town was overrun and occupied. Early the next day, the IDF carried out another major massacre, killing some 250 Palestinians while losing only 3–4 soldiers to Palestinian resistance in the process.<sup>88</sup> Yigal Allon proudly notes: “The lesson was not lost on Ramle; on 12 July, Ramle surrendered to the IDF.”<sup>89</sup> The inhabitants of both towns were expelled eastward in massive waves of tens of thousands. Historian Aref al-Aref, who conducted interviews with refugees soon after the expulsions, estimates that 350 died from heat and thirst during the forced march into the West Bank.<sup>90</sup>

While the 82nd Tank Battalion (with its “English company”) did not play as infamous a role as the 89th, it did participate in the occupation, depopulation, and destruction of villages in the area and in at least some of the documented abuses that followed.<sup>91</sup> Records

87 Ibid., p. 426.

88 Ibid., p. 428.

89 Allon, *Shield of David*, p. 217.

90 Munayyer with Khalidi, “The Fall of Lydda,” p. 82.

91 The 82nd Brigade appears to have participated in the occupations of Dayr Tarif (where its advance was delayed early in Operation Dani) and Barfiliya, and in the destruction of al-Tira and ‘Inabba. Khalidi, *All that Remains*, pp. 356, 361, 379. Fol-

based on participants’ accounts are unlikely to be complete in this regard, but there is little reason to presume that the Mahal present during the offensive’s killings and expulsions were mere witnesses.<sup>92</sup> Nor do 82nd Battalion veteran and Israeli journalist Amos Kenan’s reflections on the pervasiveness of rape in Dani’s aftermath— “At night, those of us who couldn’t restrain ourselves would go into the prison compounds to fuck Arab women”—suggest that his Mahal-heavy unit was detached from such crimes.<sup>93</sup>

In the north, meanwhile, sustained bombing raids by Israeli aircraft targeted central Galilee villages in the Nazareth district (defended only by village militias and forces from the all-volunteer ALA) beginning the night of 8–9 July.<sup>94</sup> The following night, 7th Brigade units supported by the Carmeli Brigade’s 21st Battalion initiated Operation Dekel, capturing an ALA position at Tall Kiswan and occupying Kuwaykat, a village of over 1,000 people.<sup>95</sup> One villager recalled: “We were awakened by the loudest noise we had ever heard, shells exploding and artillery fire . . . the whole village was in panic . . . women were screaming, children were crying . . . Most of the villagers began to flee with their pajamas on.”<sup>96</sup> Two people were killed and two wounded during the bombardment. “I don’t know whether the artillery softening up of the village caused casualties,” a company commander from the 21st Battalion later reflected, “but the psychological effect was achieved and the village’s non-combatants fled before we began the assault.”<sup>97</sup> Indeed, throughout this offensive, heavy mortar fire preceded

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lowing the expulsions, it was under orders from Yitzhak Rabin to respond to any returning villagers with live fire, and it was additionally accused by the local Israeli military governor of unauthorized looting. Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, pp. 442, 459 (n. 176), 454 (n. 86).

92 Some of their reactions as witnesses are recorded in Bercuson, *The Secret Army*, pp. 166–67.

93 Amos Kenan, “The Legacy of Lydda: Four Decades of Blood Vengeance,” *The Nation* (February 6 1989), pp. 155–56. Discussed in Norman Finkelstein, “Rejoinder to Benny Morris,” *JPS* (Vol. 21, No. 2, Winter 1992), pp. 70–71.

94 Cull, Aloni and Nicolle, *Spitfires*, p. 182.

95 Dunkelmann, *Dual Allegiance*, p. 244; Nazzal, *The Palestinian Exodus from Galilee*, 1948, p. 24.

96 Nazzal, *The Palestinian Exodus from Galilee*, 1948, pp. 72–73.

97 Khalidi, *All that Remains*, p. 22.

the occupation of villages—hardly surprising given 7th Brigade commander Dunkelman’s particular expertise.<sup>98</sup>

On 13 July, the 7th Brigade launched the major offensive toward Nazareth, capturing Shafa `Amr on 14 July (in what may have been the most dramatic instance of Druze collaboration with Zionist forces in 1948).<sup>99</sup> After capturing a number of smaller villages in the vicinity, the 7th pushed southeast from Shafa `Amr to conquer Nazareth itself on 16 July.

Dunkelman’s objection to the depopulation of Nazareth is well established. According to Ben-Gurion, Moshe Carmel, commander of the northern front, gave an order “to uproot all the inhabitants at Nazareth.”<sup>100</sup> Dunkelman—mulling the fate of “one of the most sanctified shrines of the Christian world” and wary of the “severe international repercussions” of rash action<sup>101</sup>—asked for higher authorization. His immediate superior thus asked the IDF General Staff for a ruling: “Tell me immediately, urgently, whether to expel the inhabitants from the city of Nazareth. In my view all, save for clerics, should be expelled.”<sup>102</sup> Ben-Gurion vetoed the expulsion, and the inhabitants remained.

Dunkelman’s scruples in the case of Nazareth (apparently stemming from fears of diplomatic fallout over the expulsion of Christians) did not prevent him from participating in the depopulation of Palestinian communities elsewhere. Just prior to the attack on Nazareth, for example, Dunkelman and his 7th Brigade had taken the lead in capturing the predominantly Muslim village of Saffuriyya,

98 Ibid., p. 19.

99 Referring in particular to the role of his subordinate Joe Weiner—“a former permanent force sergeant-major in the Canadian artillery who had been with me in the mortars”—Dunkelman describes his tactical reliance on this planned circumventing of village defenses: “Everything went according to plan. While the Moslem section was being shelled, the assault force—the 79th Armored Battalion under Joe Weiner, with two companies from Arele Yariv’s 21st Battalion—approached the walls. They and the Druze defenders fired harmlessly over each other’s heads. The attackers quietly passed through the Druze lines, entering the village and taking the Moslems from the rear. Within a short time, the whole village was securely in our hands.” *Dual Allegiance*, pp. 247, 261. See also Laila Parsons, *The Druze between Palestine and Israel, 1947–1949* (London: Macmillan Press, 2000), pp. 78–83.

100 Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, p. 419.

101 Dunkelman, *Dual Allegiance*, p. 266.

102 Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, p. 419.

whose population of over 4,000 had been swollen by an additional 2,500 refugees from Shafa `Amr. Historian Nafez Nazzal quotes one of the villagers, the quartermaster of the Saffuriyya militia, describing the nighttime assault of 15–16 July:

Three Jewish planes flew over the village and dropped barrels filled with explosives, metal fragments, nails and glass. They were very loud and disrupting . . . they shook the whole village, broke windows, doors, killed or wounded some of the villagers and many of the village livestock. We expected a war but not an air and tank war.<sup>103</sup>

The advancing ground forces also targeted the village with artillery, and most of its inhabitants fled under the pressure of these attacks. (Those who remained were also eventually expelled.)<sup>104</sup>

Indeed, far from being a model of restraint, Dunkelman’s 7th Brigade in due course positioned itself alongside the 89th Battalion as one of the crueler combat forces of the period. Ilan Pappé writes: “In many of the Palestinian oral histories that have now come to the fore, few brigade names appear. However, Brigade Seven is mentioned again and again, together with such adjectives as ‘terrorist’ and ‘barbarous.’”<sup>105</sup> While Operation Dekel had its devastating components, worse from the 7th Brigade was still to come.

## **Aerial Cleansing in the South, “Mass Murder” in the North**

Prominent Mahal participation in various components of the emerging Israeli military system continued until the signing of the 1949 armistice agreements which set Israel’s de facto borders until June 1967. Two significant episodes from October–November 1948 will serve as examples: IAF participation in establishing the territorial and demographic reality that is the contemporary

103 Nazzal, *The Palestinian Exodus from Galilee, 1948*, quoting Salih Muhammed Nassir, p. 75.

104 Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, p. 158.

105 Ibid. p. 158.

Gaza Strip; and 7th Brigade participation in the conquest of the Upper Galilee.

In the south, the summer ended with Egyptian forces still in control of a significant swath of territory along Palestine's coast up to Isdud and linked to the West Bank through a corridor to the Hebron area (to the southwest of which Israeli forces controlled much of the Negev). This situation, combined with UN proposals that Israel forgo claims to the Negev in return for annexation of the Galilee, threatened to halt Israeli expansion in the south. Israel's response was to launch a major offensive in mid-October. Operation Yoav hammered away at the sizeable Gaza district, reducing it to the current dimensions of the Gaza Strip while tripling the Strip's population through the large-scale cleansing of adjacent areas.<sup>106</sup> Here the IAF—predominantly a Mahal force—was deployed on an unprecedented scale.

The aerial component of the campaign, at its height from 15 to 19 October, involved relentless attacks on Palestinian population centers and Egyptian forces alike. Israeli bombers dropped a total of 151 tons of explosives, including napalm.<sup>107</sup> Various communities that were ultimately conquered (e.g., Majdal) were in large part depopulated by aerial (alongside naval) attacks; communities within the contemporary Gaza Strip itself were no less ruthlessly bombarded.<sup>108</sup> The IAF then turned its attention to the north, where it helped complete the conquest of the Galilee with literally no aerial opposition.

By this time, most of northern Palestine was already under Israeli control. But a pocket of resistance remained in the Upper Galilee. This was the target of Operation Hiram. After a week of heavy

106 Strictly speaking, a further narrowing of the Strip occurred even after the armistice agreements of 1949. See Salman Abu-Sitta, *The Atlas of Palestine 1917–1966* (London: Palestine Land Society, 2010), p. 98. Concerning population increase, “tripling” is the calculation of Sara Roy, *The Gaza Strip: The Political Economy of De-development* (Washington: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1995), p. 15. Morris, in *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, suggests (pp. 472–473) an increase of 100,000 to 230,000.

107 Cull, Aloni and Nicolle, *Spitfires*, pp. 273, 263.

108 Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, p. 472; Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, p. 194. Intensive bombing of the area is chronicled in nearly all historical accounts which address the use of air power in 1948 Palestine.

aerial bombardment of villages in the remaining pocket (beginning 22 October), the main ground operation was launched by the 7th Brigade, which over the next three days carried out operations marked by widespread expulsions, massacres, and rape.

The plan for Operation Hiram centered on Sa'sa', a village located at a particularly strategic junction. “If you control these crossroads,” a leading Haganah planner had earlier advised Dunkelman, “you control the whole of Galilee!”<sup>109</sup> Beginning the night of 28–29 October, units from four brigades were deployed in the assault, with the three 7th Brigade battalions under Dunkelman operating on the northeastern front of a pincer movement aimed at conquering Sa'sa' and enclosing the major part of the resisting “pocket” to its south. Pushing northwest from Safad, the 7th Brigade rapidly occupied the villages of Qaddita, Mirun, Safsaf, and Jish.<sup>110</sup> Nafez Nazzal relays a Palestinian woman's recollection of the aftermath of the overnight shelling and Safsaf's occupation on 29–30 October:

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.<sup>111</sup>

Jish was also subjected to large-scale killing and looting.<sup>112</sup>

109 Dunkelman, *Dual Allegiance*, p. 237. (The planner in question was Prof. Yohanan Ratner.) It is perhaps not coincidental that Sa'sa' was the target of one of the earliest Haganah atrocities in the area, committed the night of 14–15 February. Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, pp. 77–78.

110 Edgar O'Ballance, *The Arab-Israeli War, 1948* (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), pp. 186–87; Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, p. 473.

111 Nazzal, *The Palestinian Exodus from Galilee, 1948*, quoting Umm Shahadah al-Salih, p. 95.

112 Morris cites Gershon Gil'ad, IDF intelligence officer for the northern front, who reported that “‘150–200' Arabs, ‘including a number of civilians,’ died in the battle for Jish.” *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, p. 474. “Two days after the seizure of Jish,” a member of the Knesset from the (Arabic) Nazareth Democratic List reported, “the army surrounded the village and carried out searches. In the course of the search soldiers robbed several of the houses and stole 605 pounds, jewelry and other valuables. When the people who were robbed insisted on being given receipts for their property, they were taken to a remote place and shot dead.” Tom Segev, with

After these initial conquests, the 7th Brigade split. The 71st Battalion occupied al-Ras al-Ahmar, Rihaniya, `Alma, and Dayshum, and the 72nd and 79th battalions moved west to occupy Sa`sa` itself (where they again committed “mass murder,” according to Israel Galili, former head of Haganah National Staff).<sup>113</sup> The 72nd and 79th then attacked a series of points along the border with Lebanon, conquering a string of Palestinian villages as far east as al-Malikiyya and making cross-border incursions as far into Lebanon as the Litani River. In Saliha, they committed another massacre; the diary of Jewish National Fund official Yosef Nahmani, writes Benny Morris, “refers to ‘60–70’ men and women murdered after they ‘had raised a white flag’.”<sup>114</sup> More than 50,000 refugees are reported to have been pushed out of Palestine by Operation Hiram.<sup>115</sup>

In internal IDF discussions as the operation concluded, Dunkelman expressed continued reservations about expelling Christians.<sup>116</sup> Meanwhile, he and the hundreds of Mahal recruits under his command emerged with impunity from a campaign that subjected predominantly Muslim villages to mass killings and expulsion into Lebanon.

## Conclusion

The record of Mahal recruits forms an important part of the history of cross-continental participation in the Zionist enterprise, extending from its inception to the present. This history cannot be separated from the processes of colonization and dispossession that have devastated Palestine. In recent decades, much progress has been made in challenging the “heroic” narrative of the Zionist war effort of 1948. In light of the research that is now available, the expulsions

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Arlen Neal Weinstein, English ed., *1949: The First Israelis* (New York: The Free Press, 1986), p. 72.

113 Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, pp. 473–74; Khalidi, *All that Remains*, p. 497.

114 Another Israeli official refers to “94 in Saliha blown up in a house.” Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, p. 500 (n. 118).

115 *Ibid.*, p. 473.

116 *Ibid.*, p. 477.

and other atrocities that characterized many of the operations in which these recruits participated should be impossible to ignore.

Indeed, the persistence of coercive Israeli “demographic” policies and the renewed salience of transfer proposals within Israeli political discourse over the past decade necessitate serious examination of this history as more than a scholarly exercise.<sup>117</sup> In 1948, Mahal involvement formed part of an international setting that proved conducive to the displacement and exclusion of Palestinians by the force of Israeli military power. This history may serve as a reminder of the need to develop an international climate more obstructive of such policies in the years ahead.

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117 See Daryl Li, “The Gaza Strip as Laboratory: Notes in the Wake of Disengagement,” *JPS* (Vol. 35, No. 2, Winter 2006), pp. 38–55; Jonathan Cook, *Blood and Religion: The Unmasking of the Jewish and Democratic State* (London: Pluto Press, 2006).

## —— About the Author

Dan Freeman-Maloy is an activist and writer currently studying as a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) doctoral fellow at the University of Exeter's Centre for Palestine Studies.

Email: [dfm@riseup.net](mailto:dfm@riseup.net).

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