

## A Century of Israeli Terrorism and the Domination of the Arab World

Richard Wood

"It is an entire nation out there that is responsible. It is not true this rhetoric about civilians not being aware, not involved."

Israeli President Isaac Herzog, Oct. 13, 2023

"We are too humane. Burn Gaza now no less!"

Nissim Vaturi, Deputy Speaker of the Israeli Knesset, Nov. 23, 2023

The use of terrorism, here understood as political violence against non-combatants to instigate fear, intimidation and demoralization in a targeted community, for explicit tactical objectives, has been foundational to the Zionist campaign to establish an exclusively Jewish state, to eliminate the Palestinian community's presence within it, and then to dominate the region of the Arab World presenting any threat to its geographically expansive objectives. Although terrorism is often associated with Islamic movements since 9/11, more appropriate are the U.S. nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in which 214,000 Japanese civilians were incinerated on August 6 and 9, 1945, forcing the Japanese surrender three weeks later, on September 2. As did the U.S. in Korea, Vietnam, Central America, Iraq, and Afghanistan, Israelis have relied upon virulent state terrorism as a primary strategy of warfare since 1948, and they continue to do so in Gaza in 2024.

The Israeli state was founded on terrorist violence and an unusual combination of distinctly illiberal measures. Ben Gurion adamantly resisted calls for an Israeli constitution (Israel still lacks one today), because he wanted to prevent the codification of the relationship between the religious claims and privileges of religious Jews and the liberal democratic principles of a secular state. Zionists needed the disparate passions of religious and secular Zionism, secured by the obfuscation of their inherent contradictions, to unify the Jews of Palestine and subsequently Israel, and thus consolidate power. Ben Gurion also never sought to define the borders of the state, because Israeli leaders intended to exceed geographic limits indefinitely, using state terror whenever possible in the West Bank and Gaza, as well as

across the borders of Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan. Palestinians who were incorporated into the Jewish State after 1948 were denied any political rights; at Ben Gurion's insistence, they lived under martial law until 1966.

Unchallenged by any major states (except rhetorically by Iran and Turkey) and bolstered unequivocally by the U.S., Israel leveled devastating attacks on Gaza from 2008-2024, which have killed more than 30,000 people and destroyed the entire physical environment of Gaza, including large apartment complexes, hospitals, schools, U.N. shelters, as well as murdering medical personnel, academics, scientists and journalists.<sup>1</sup> Israeli leaders have declared their intention to occupy and settle in Gaza again (having evacuated its forces and settlers twice before in March of 1957 and September of 2005). The ongoing IDF destruction of Gaza and the genocide and starvation of its civilian population since October of 2023 is so overwhelming that the crisis unfolding has elicited international condemnation, except in Europe and the U.S., where the War on Terror ideology has been reinvigorated.

The forerunner of the contemporary Israeli Defense Forces was the Haganah (Defense), which in 1947-48 conducted systematic terror against Palestinians. The Haganah was organized in 1920 by members formerly associated with the Jewish Legion, including David Ben Gurion and the Zion Mule Corps (of the British Army) of which Ze'ev Jabotinsky was also part. Some members also later received training as volunteers in the British Army in World War II (as did Palestinians; but their experiences were quite different). That military training was in preparation for the armed confrontation with Palestinian nationalists, whose mobilization they both knew was certain to come. Control of the Haganah was assumed by the Histadrut (General Federation of Labor), under the auspices of Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, Eliyahu Golomb, David Ben Gurion, and Yosef Hecht, in June of 1920. This action followed the formation of the first HaShomer HaTzair (Young Guards/Watchman, which incorporated the earlier Bar-Giora) militia, by Jewish settlers in the Galilee in 1919 (to defend early settlements). HaShomer action in settlements in the far north (just east of southern Lebanon) in 1920 brought about the death of Zionist martyr Joseph Trumpeldor in the armed defense of the Tel Hai Jewish settlement located near the Lebanese border (from Jabal Amil Shi'i Arabs and al-Khalisa Bedouin). The formation of the Haganah involved the training of militia and the use of arms by Ze'ev Jabotinsky near the Old City of Jerusalem from March to April of 1920, training conducted within view of Palestinian Arabs. This militarization gained momentum after violent riots by Palestinians and Zionists during the Nebi Musa (Prophet Musa) Muslim gatherings in the Old City from April 4-7. Jabotinsky was briefly jailed after the riots by the British police for the arms found in his apartment.<sup>2</sup>

Just over a decade later, in April of 1931, the Irgun (also known as IZL, ETZEL, and *Irgun Zva'i Le'umi*/National Military Organization) was founded by Revisionist Zionist followers of Ze'ev Jabotinsky, largely to accelerate what he and his supporters saw as the slow pace of the organization of the Haganah from 1920-31. While the Haganah organized the first

assassination of a Jewish anti-Zionist in 1924, Irgun assassinated a Labor Zionist (1933) and initiated the first serious terrorist actions against the Palestinians during the Uprising in 1936. LEHI (or LHI: *Lohamel Herut Israel*, Fighters for the Freedom of Israel) was a splinter group of Irgun, founded in June 1940 by Avraham Stern of Irgun. Lehi's first major actions were unsuccessful attacks on the British High Commissioner Harold MacMichael near Jerusalem in 1944 and the murder of British official Lord Moyne in Cairo later in 1944. In 1946, after the end of World War II, when major Zionist leaders agreed to conduct armed operations against the British, a coordinated effort called the Hebrew Rebellion Movement (Tnu'at HaMeri Ha'Ivri), led by David Ben Gurion of the Jewish Agency, included all three – the Haganah, directed by the Jewish Agency from 1935, as well as Irgun (IZL) and Lehi (Stern Gang). Ben Gurion became Chair of the Jewish Agency in 1935 and thus commanded the unified Zionist campaign against Britain for almost a full year. Haganah's elite and underground elite forces, the Palmach (*Plugot Machatz*; Strike/Shock Companies, founded in 1941), participated in the campaign against Palestinians from 1946-1947. The Israeli Defense Forces, constituted by all of these militia during the 1948 War, carried out dozens of terrorist massacres and expulsions of Palestinians (such as Tantura, Dayr Yasin, Lydda, et al). Pinhas Lavon helped to plan and carry out several terrorist bombings inside Iraq and Egypt from 1951-1954. As well, the IDF Special Forces Unit 101, led by Ariel Sharon and those directed by Lavon and Moshe Dayan, continued to conduct terror operations against Egyptians in Cairo and Alexandria and against Palestinians in the Jordanian-controlled West Bank and Egyptian-controlled Gaza. They also conducted operations from 1953 in Qibya to the IDF massacre in Kfar Qasim in October of 1956, as well as the 1956 invasion of Egypt in the Suez Crisis.<sup>3</sup>

In conjunction with these military incursions, Jewish settler antagonism and Palestinian counterviolence began with attacks upon Jewish settlers and Palestinian Arab peasants in and around the early Jewish settlements, during conflicts with local people over the loss of Palestinian tenancy on lands purchased by Jews in the Galilee, conflicts over the grazing of animals on those lands, the cultivation of land, robberies, wages, and personal conflicts. In anger at the Jewish settlers' colonization efforts and their plans to increase land purchases and displace local tenant farmers who had lived and worked in these areas for decades if not centuries, Palestinian Arab peasants engaged in violent and provocative actions against them. For example, six Jews were killed in the Tiberias area between 1909-1911, a Christian German settler was killed in 1910, while several Palestinian Arabs were also killed from 1882-1911. Jewish settlers routinely blamed Arabs for the conflicts, which sometimes erupted into gunfire and fatalities. While this was largely the case, there were other Jewish observers and writers who blamed the Jewish settlers. Ahad Ha'am (Asher Ginsburg) of the then Russian-province of Ukraine, wrote the following after a 1987 trip to Palestine:

We who live abroad are accustomed to believing that the Arabs are wild desert people who, like donkeys, neither see nor understand what is happening around them. This is a grave mistake... They [Jewish settlers] correspond [with] the Arabs

with hostility and cruelty, deprive them of their rights, offend them without cause and even boast of these deeds, and nobody among us opposes this despicable and dangerous inclination....

If the time comes when the life of our people in Eretz Israel develops to the point of encroaching upon the native population, they will not easily yield their place... There is certainly one thing we could have learned from our past and present history: how careful we must be not to arouse the anger of other people against ourselves by reprehensible conduct.<sup>4</sup>

Ha'am's perspective was an exception to the norm, however. Up to present, Jewish settlers continue to play a critical role in extending the systematic terror of Israel's more formal political and military organizations against Palestinian villagers and townspeople. As of 2021, these groups range from Gush Emunim (Bloc of the Faithful), the Kach Party (of Rabbi Meir Kahane), Nachala, and Otzma Yehudit (Jewish Power) to the Religious Zionism Party (formerly the National Union-Tkuma/Revival and Yamina/Rightward). Today these groups also wage electoral campaigns in Israeli elections for the Israeli annexation of the West Bank and Gaza and the expulsion of the Palestinians, operating with the support of the Netanyahu government and its cabinet ministers. As of February 1, 2024 even the U.S. has begun to denounce West Bank settlers' violence and terrorism against Palestinians, as well as to express 'concern' about disproportionate violence in Gaza. In order to understand

### **Early Zionism's Organizational Bifurcations and Political Coalescence**

Beyond the general understanding of the development of Israeli political and military organizations in relation to settler violence, it is also critical to assess the impact of tensions internal to these organizations as they assessed and responded to both Palestinian and British resistance to Zionist priorities. While local and spontaneous conflicts in the settlements began upon their formation, organized Palestinian and Israeli terrorism began over two years after the Balfour Declaration in April of 1920 during the Jerusalem riots and those in Jaffa during the first two days of May 1921. After clashes between Zionist organizations erupted into gunfire and Palestinians organized attacks on Jews, fearing that their community was under assault, over 100 people were killed (roughly half Jewish and half Palestinian). Many Jewish immigrants were killed on May 1st (including Hebrew writer Yosef Haim Brenner); a day later, on May 2nd, Palestinians were killed by British police and Zionists, both in an orange grove and in their homes. The terror resumed in 1923 with the assassination of Tawfiq Bey, a Palestinian policeman who was thought to have facilitated the murder of Jewish immigrants in a hostel there in 1921. A HaShomer/Circle militia (from the Galilee) was allegedly responsible for the 1923 killing. A Russian Jewish immigrant and militant activist, Manya Shochat, was part of that group. The next Zionist terrorist attack was the assassination not of a Palestinian, but of a Dutch Jewish writer, political activist, and Haredi anti-Zionist Jacob (Ya'akov) de Haan, ordered by Yosef Hecht and carried out by Avraham Tehomi of the Haganah. De Haan was a well-known Dutch writer and Jewish

activist who emigrated to Jerusalem in 1919 and soon became active in the Mizrahi religious Zionist movement and soon after became a spokesperson for the Eda Haredit Haredi anti-Zionist organization, in Jerusalem. De Haan was also gay and had become somewhat controversial for his alleged sexual liaisons with Palestinian Arab youth, as well as his advocacy of cooperation with Palestinian and Jordanian Arabs, which included a meeting with the Sharif of Mecca, Husayn ibn ‘Ali (1916-1924) and his son, the future Amir ‘Abdullah ibn Husayn (r. 1946-51), in Amman. De Haan was planning to travel to London to meet with British Haredi anti-Zionist Jews on June 30, 1924, when he was shot near a synagogue in Jerusalem by Tehomi. Yosef Hecht, who ordered the assassination, defended the action in his diary; despite his defense, Zionists denied responsibility at the time and blamed Palestinians for the murder.<sup>5</sup>

Concurrent to disputes elaborated via riots on the ground, a definitive discursive battle was also underway. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Zionists regularly published articles and books calling for the establishment of a Jewish State in Palestine, including extensive plans for the conquest of Palestine by armed force and the expulsion or forcible transfer of the Palestinian Arab majority into the neighboring state of Transjordan or Iraq. Palestinians and Arab nationalists in turn also published manifestos, newspaper articles, and books contesting Zionism, the Balfour Declaration, and British imperialism and the Mandate.

The British government, initially supportive of a ‘National Homeland’ for Jews in Palestine as proclaimed in its 1917 Balfour Declaration, walked back their support following the violent riots between Palestinian Arabs and Jews in 1920, 1921, and 1929 (during which hundreds were killed and wounded, including 67 Jews in their Hebron homes). The British Shaw Commission later issued the 1930 Passfield White Paper, which recommended limiting Jewish immigration and Jewish land purchases, both of which were major demands of the majority Palestinian Arab leadership and population. These grievances and political disputes contributed significantly to the riots that followed.

The British National Government of Ramsay MacDonald (1931-1935)—which included conservatives, Labor representatives, and liberals such as Herbert Samuel (Zionist and Home Secretary, after serving as High Commissioner in Palestine from 1920-25) and Colonial Secretary Philip Cunliffe-Lister—shifted British policy slightly away from the Zionist project when it indicated possible limitations on Zionist activity that had up to that point sought to achieve a majority through increased immigration. Jewish immigration to Palestine from 1919 to 1931, under conservative, pro-Zionist British leaders, had increased the Jewish population from over 56,000 to 175,000. Jewish immigration increased dramatically from 1931 through 1936, doubling the number of Jews in Palestine from 175,000 to nearly 400,000. At least 60,000 Jewish immigrants arrived in 1936, significantly more people than in the entire Yishuv (the Jewish community in Palestine) in 1919. The move by Britain to curtail immigration in an effort to address outbreaks of violence between Jewish settlers and Palestinians not only represented a policy shift on the part of Britain, it also instigated a

series of bifurcations among the Zionist organizations concerning their commitment to the formation of the Israeli state.

In 1931, Revisionist Zionists, followers of Ze'ev Jabotinsky, became impatient with mainstream Zionists such as Zionist Organization leader Chaim Weizmann in London and David Ben Gurion and his colleagues in the Histadrut (in Tel Aviv), and formed a separate Revisionist Zionist Organization. They demanded that the mainstream Zionist movement make its demands for a Jewish State in Palestine more explicit and public, instead of the cautious diplomatic dance with British officials that required delays and compromises. In 1933, with the rise of the Nazis and Hitler in Germany, many Zionist leaders became concerned with various efforts to save Jews from the heightened violent atmosphere in Europe. Many Zionists organized a boycott of all German products in 1933 and as that effort was growing, the Jewish Agency's political director, Haim Arlosoroff, a rising figure in moderate socialist Zionist activist circles, signed off on an agreement with German Nazis to allow mass Jewish immigration to Palestine if a variety of German products could be exported for sale in Palestine. Ben Gurion supported this Ha'avara Agreement (as 60,000 Jews were able to emigrate with their substantial property to Palestine), but Jabotinsky and the Revisionists denounced it and called for the continuation of the boycott. Revisionists had also opposed Arlosoroff's conference with some prominent Arabs in Jerusalem in April 1933. On June 16, 1933, Haim Arlosoroff was assassinated in Tel Aviv by radical Revisionist militant Abba Ahimeir and two colleagues, identified by Arlosoroff's widow. The Revisionists had denounced Arlosoroff and other Labor and socialist Zionists in their publications and speeches. From October 27-30 of 1933, more violent clashes between Jews, Arabs, and British police in Jaffa took the lives of 27 people and injured 243, with 46 of these injuries critical.<sup>6</sup>

In October of 1934, after Arlosoroff's assassination, to ease tensions between the mainstream Zionist movement and the Revisionists, Ben Gurion met with Jabotinsky six times in London to discuss cooperation and the reduction of tensions. The two agreed on the importance of the "conquest of labor" (ending Palestinian Arab labor on Jewish settlements), a major concern of the Histadrut labor movement. They also agreed to recognize Revisionist labor unions and the right of organized labor to strike against Zionist businesses, as well as the authority of the Zionist Organization, which the Revisionists had challenged by their formation of a separate organization in 1931. Ben Gurion also agreed to distribute some British entry certificates for immigration to European Jews who were affiliated with Revisionist organizations. These agreements were made public soon after the meetings were concluded, to great consternation among Zionist moderates. Histadrut promptly rejected the deal Ben Gurion had made with Jabotinsky. Despite the disagreements and ideological battles among Zionist factions internally, the subsequent meetings and agreements indicated that friction between the mainstream and radical orientations of the Zionist movement was politically resolvable and thus ultimately productive of a shared aspiration, the imperialist formation and expansion of a Jewish state. This fact became far

more obvious in the years 1936-1939, 1944-45, and 1947-49, when all of the Zionist factions worked in tandem in violent conflict and terrorist actions against the Palestinians and the British, after World War II and before the U.N. Partition Plan.<sup>7</sup>

### **Terrorism and the Palestinian Uprising of 1936-1939**

Increasing numbers of Jewish immigrants (140,000 from 1933-1935; 200,000 by 1939) and Jewish settlements across Palestinian territory contributed to the growing political radicalization of the Palestinian leadership and peasantry, which erupted into a national uprising from 1936 through 1939. The early planning for the revolt (*al-thawra al-kuhbra*) was initiated by the armed guerilla bands of Islamist leader Shaykh Muhammad Izz al-Din al-Qassam and his Black Hand network, in the northern regions of Palestine until he was killed along with three colleagues in the village of Shaykh Zayd (near Yab'ad, a few miles west of Jenin, in the West Bank) on November 20, 1935. An arms shipment to the Haganah of Lewis guns, rifles, and ammunition was discovered by Palestinian workers in the Jaffa Port, a portent of escalating aggression that contributed to Shaykh al-Qassam's decision to launch a rebellion. The Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Husayni, had declined al-Qassam's appeal to join the revolt; but he did authorize a six-month Palestinian general strike from May 16th until late October, declared under the auspices of members of the Supreme Muslim Council, who had established the Arab High Committee in Jerusalem in late April.<sup>8</sup>

Attacks by Palestinians killed 37 Jews in the first two months of the Uprising, and the Haganah and Irgun eventually responded with attacks on Palestinians. The war escalated with attacks by Palestinian armed peasant militias on the British Mandate authorities and Zionist communities (including the Palestinians' assassination of the Galilee District Commissioner in September of 1937, setting off the second phase of the Uprising). These actions, which finally transformed the conflict into a struggle between two competing nationalist movements, both of which used terror against civilians and were suppressed by the superior force of 100,000 British troops. The entire Palestinian national leadership was killed or exiled, and the peasantry was disarmed. In the process, however, more than 900 Jews were killed in Palestinian attacks. British forces, led by Captain Oren Wingate eventually trained and deployed some 6,000 Jewish police and auxiliary forces (of the Haganah) in their suppression of the Uprising, reportedly doing so through torture and summary executions. Some 3,800 Palestinians were killed (108 men were hanged), and 14,000 more were injured.<sup>9</sup>

In the summer of 1938, Zionists set off bombs in Palestinian markets across Palestine; these were specifically conducted by the British and Zionist underground's Special Night Squads (*Plugot Ha'LAYla Ha'Meyyukhadot*), established by ardent Zionist and racist Captain Orde Wingate (under the authority of Lieutenant-General Commanding-in-Chief, Archibald Wavel) and the leaders of the Jewish Supernumerary or Settlement Police (*Shotrim Musafim*), Yigal Aron and Moshe Daya. They constituted a force originally of 6,000 that expanded to 22,000 by 1947 and later became the core units of the mature Haganah of the late 1930s, as

well as the IDF. Allon and Dayan became leaders of the IDF during the 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973 Wars. Wingate's men killed 81 Palestinian militants (in Jurdieh and Dabburiyya, and on Mount Tabor, in northern Palestine), 54 of them in two days in October of 1938. This occurred before and after attacks on Jews had killed 19 in Tiberias in the autumn months. According to Ari Pedahzur and Arie Perliger, Irgun conducted "sixty terrorist attacks that killed more than 120 Palestinians and injured hundreds more" during the Uprising of 1936-1939.<sup>10</sup>

After the British and Zionist response to the Palestinian Uprising, the British National Government of Neville Chamberlain (1937-1940, including Lord Halifax (in 1938) as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Malcolm MacDonald (1938) as Secretary of State for the Colonies) held a failed London Conference on Palestine from February through March of 1939, and issued White Papers after the Peel and Whitehead Commission Reports of 1937 and 1938. The papers elaborated the causes and consequences of the Palestinian Uprising, the most serious threat up to that point to the British Mandate Authority in Palestine. The 1937 White Paper noted many of the political forces that led to the crisis: these included the rise of the Nazi Party in Germany, pressure on the Polish Jewish community, the unprecedented flow of Jewish migrants and refugees to Palestine, the impacts of what was characterized as a "highly intelligent and enterprising race, backed by large financial resources, on a comparatively poor indigenous community, on a different cultural level," and the increasingly exclusivist nationalist movements among Jews and Arabs, making conciliation between the communities less and less likely. The 1937 White Paper also recommended a partition of Palestine to allow for Jewish and Arab states, an idea that Ben Gurion had also put forward in November of 1929 after the riots in Jerusalem and Hebron had deeply impacted British concerns about the impact of the Balfour Declaration. In 1937, Ben Gurion, Golda Meir, and other Jewish Agency officials openly discussed with the British High Commissioner the "forcible transfer" of Palestinians from lands they had lived in for hundreds of years. That same year Ben Gurion wrote, "Our movement is maximalist. Even all of Palestine is not our final goal." The 1939 White Paper, issued under British Secretary of State for the Colonies, Malcolm MacDonald, stated that 450,000 Jews now lived in Palestine (an increase of 80,000 since 1936) and that a Jewish State "could not have been intended" by the Balfour Declaration if "established against the will of the Arab population of the country." The paper indicated that it should not be a part of the Government's policy and would be "contrary to the obligations to the Arabs under the Mandate." The Arab population should not be "made the subjects of a Jewish State against their will," the paper determined.<sup>11</sup>

The same White Paper instead proposed an independent state in Palestine within the next ten years, in which the Arabs and Jews would "share government in such a way as to ensure that the essential interests of each community are safeguarded." On Jewish immigration, paper indicated that the number should be limited to 75,000 over the following five years, due to immigration's "adverse effects on the economy" and allowed "no room for further



transfers of Arab land” if “Arab cultivators are to maintain their existing standard of life and a considerable landless Arab population is not soon to be created.” The British High Commissioner would “be given general powers to prohibit and regulate transfers of land.” Ben Gurion and the Jewish Agency regarded MacDonald as “the most dangerous enemy of the Hebrew nation after Hitler” and a “swindler, liar, fraudster, dissembler, and traitor,” a “despicable fellow.” With that level of vitriol it is not surprising that with the MacDonald’s issuance of the 1939 White Paper, Zionists began to target British officials in Palestine as early as 1942.<sup>12</sup>

The Zionists of Palestine were outraged by the shift in policy. Hajj Amin al-Husayni, of the Arab Higher Committee, also rejected the White Paper (from exile in Iraq) because he sought a total rejection of the Jewish National Home policy and argued that the White Paper still prevented the independence of Palestine, whose future remained in the hands of the British Government and the League of Nations Mandate. In July of 1940, however, after returning from exile, Jamal al-Husayni of the Arab Higher Committee (a relative of Hajj Amin al-Husayni) and Musa al-Alami of the Arab Office (Jamal al-Husayni’s brother-in-law and graduate of Cambridge University) signed an agreement to the policy of the White Paper after the London St. James Conference.

As the Palestinian Uprising continued in 1939, Zionist attacks on Palestinians in the months following the issuance of the 1939 White Paper resulted in the deaths of 38 Arabs and the wounding of 44 more. Ze’ev Jabotinsky also outlined a plan for attacks against the British Mandate Authority to take place in October of 1939, which was sent to the Irgun High Command. In this plan, the Irgun (part of Jabotinsky’s revisionist Zionist Movement) would occupy British Government buildings and other centers of power, raise Zionist flags, and absorb the resulting military attacks to expose the willingness of British authorities to kill Jews in Palestine. An independent Jewish state would be declared by leaders in exile, in both Europe and the U.S. Irgun did not put the plan into action, for fear of the high number of Irgun casualties it would have entailed. Avraham Stern, leader of Irgun splinter group Lehi, however, began to plan for an armed militia of 40,000 to enter Palestine and engage in fighting for the establishment of the Jewish state against the British; but the outbreak of World War II in September 1939 delayed these plans.<sup>13</sup>

Irgun attacked workers in a banana grove in the Galilee in April of 1936, the first of sixty such attacks. The attack was carried out as a “reprisal” for Palestinian attacks on Jews in their homes in Jaffa (killing nine) during the first month of the Palestinian Uprising of 1936-39. Ben Gurion knew after these attacks that a decisive war with Palestinians for control of the land had finally arrived. Haganah militants attacked a bus in April 1938 to kill Arab civilians, after an Arab attack had killed four Jews. More attacks followed on Arab cars, buses, cafes, and stores in the summer of 1939. Shlomo Ben-Joseph was one of the three assailants in the 1938 attack and was the first Zionist hanged by the British.<sup>4</sup> In July of 1939 in the wake of the 1939 White Paper’s rejection of a Jewish State, opposition to continued high levels of immigration, and the suspension of further land purchases, a series of Irgun-

orchestrated attacks on British Mandate Authority income tax bureaus and the Jerusalem Post Office followed. On August 2, 1939, Irgun attacked the Royal Broadcasting House in the Melisends neighborhood in Jerusalem and killed two employees, one a Jewish broadcaster, and damaged the building, forcibly transferring its functions to Ramallah. On August 26, 1939, Palestine Police Force officer of the Criminal Investigations Department, Ralph Carnes, and his colleague, Ronald Barker were assassinated outside Carnes' home in the Gan Dahavia quarter of Jerusalem by the Irgun.<sup>14</sup>

### **World War II, the Holocaust, and Terror against the British Mandate Authority**

The September 1939 outbreak of World War II led Irgun to suspend its terrorist campaign until 1943, but protests by thousands of Jews in Palestinian cities on March 2, 1940 led to clashes with British police during which three Zionists were killed. Irgun operative Avraham Stern opposed Irgun's passive support for the British war effort and continued to plan for action against the British. Stern's splinter faction, Lehi, continued to organize armed actions with an ideology that combined communist and fascist elements in opposition to British imperialism in Palestine and elsewhere; this was unlike the strictly Zionist nationalist ideology of the Irgun. Another Lehi leader and former Irgun militant, Yitzhak (Yzernitsky) Shamir, a member of the Revisionist Polish Betar militia as a youth, was well aware of Stern's appeals to Mussolini and Hitler for alliances against the British occupation of Palestine in 1941. A series of botched bank robberies were followed by the killing of two Jewish police officers in January 1942, leading to criticism of the group's actions in the Palestinian Jewish community during the War.<sup>15</sup>

From June to the 9th of September 1940, while Ben Gurion was traveling abroad, Italians bombed Tel Aviv several times and killed over 100 people there, including five Arabs. Ben Gurion reportedly feared that the fascists would destroy the *yishuv* in Palestine. During the first phase of the German Blitz, the systematic bombing of London from September 7th through November 3rd of 1940, David Ben Gurion was visiting, staying in hotel rooms and occasionally with his friend, Arthur Lourie. He did not take shelter from the bombing and later praised the British people for their endurance and refusal to surrender to the Germans. He referred to the British people's survival of the daily bombing by Germany for two months as human nobility.

I have never had a more profound experience. I saw the glory of man at its most sublime zenith...I know of no more majestic and sublime sight in all of history...London became sanctified for me. I felt holiness in that place...It was the utmost human vision of the greatness and moral beauty of which man is capable...The English nation will acquire a place in human history that no nation has yet had.

Just six years later, however, Ben Gurion would order murderous attacks on British forces and officials in the armed struggle for a Jewish state. Ben Gurion would certainly not have admired the same courage and refusal to surrender among ordinary Palestinians in Gaza

from October 2023 through the early months of 2024, a period over twice as long as the British experience in London, with over 30,000 killed (two thirds of them women and children) under the relentless bombing, shelling, and ground invasion by the IDF including snipers and militarily engineered starvation.<sup>16</sup>

Concerns about Jewish refugees from Europe in 1940 reached a fever pitch. The British were determined to prevent more Jewish immigration into the region for fear of destabilizing the fraught political balance and losing the allegiance of the Arabs for the war effort against Germany and Italy, while Zionists were anxious to dramatize the issue of refugees to bring more attention to the 'need' for a Jewish state. On November 23, 1940, the Haganah sunk the British ship *The Patria*, a ship being used as a temporary detention vessel for 1900 refugees and migrants from Europe, which had departed from Romania. The British Mandate Authority would not allow the ship to enter Palestine and was preparing to reroute it to Mauritius, a British colony in the eastern Indian Ocean. The ship was bombed with explosives intended to prevent its departure; however, the power of the blast sunk the ship in 15 minutes leading to the deaths of 217 Jews and 50 crew members. Moshe Sharett took responsibility for the decision to bomb *The Patria*, not intending to sink the ship. Decision makers also consisted of Golomb, Galili, and Katznelson, of the 'Activist faction' of the Mapai leadership, which included Ben Gurion (who was in the U.S. from October until January of 1941). The IZL was also planning to attack the ship, and Irgun leader David Raziel was shocked to hear the explosion as he prepared to launch an attack himself. Zionist Munya Mandor claimed that he planted the bomb on *The Patria* and later adamantly defended his action as patriotic. Since the British allowed the surviving 1685 Jewish refugees to stay in Israel, Ben Gurion also defended the action as beneficial to the Zionist movement. The British assumed the bombing was organized by the Irgun and they continued to pursue them across Palestine, since the Jewish Agency had already renounced violence and had publicly supported the British in their war against Germany.<sup>17</sup>

A year and half later, toward the end of January 1942, Lehi leader Avraham Stern was caught in an apartment and shot dead by British police, and most Lehi operatives were soon arrested and imprisoned. Its leaders, including future Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir (in office October 1986- July 1992; d. 2012) were arrested. They later escaped in November 1942 from Mazra prison and continued planning terrorist attacks. Lehi then conducted seven unsuccessful attempts to assassinate British High Commissioner for Palestine, Harold MacMichael (over the spring and summer of 1944), who was blamed for the sinking of the MV Struma (by the U.S.S.R.), another ship that left Romania with 781 Jewish refugees on board near the coast of Istanbul, in February of 1942. British officials had urged Turkish authorities not to allow the ship to proceed to Palestine in concert with the 1939 White Paper policy. MacMichael and his wife were nearly killed when Lehi militants attacked his car on a road near Jerusalem on August 8th of 1944. A few months later, to recover its reputation, Lehi organized the assassination in Cairo of Walter Guinness (Lord Moyne) for November 6, 1944. He had joined the Colonial Office in 1941 as part of the Churchill

Government and was appointed Deputy Resident Minister of State from 1942-44 as well as Minister-Resident for the Middle East until his assassination. Two Lehi operatives, Eliahu Hakim and Eliahu Beit-Tsouri, carried out the operation on bicycles, shooting and killing Lord Moyne and his driver outside his home in Cairo. The operation was planned by Yizshak Shamir. Lehi by this time had shifted its allegiance from the Nazis to the U.S.S.R., due to the Nazis' ongoing genocide of European Jewry. The two assassins of Lord Moyne were apprehended within a few hours, confessed, and after their trial were hanged in March of 1945.<sup>18</sup>

The Irgun began its campaign of terrorism against the British Mandate Authority during World War II, after Menachem Begin was recruited from his position in the Soviet-backed Polish Free Army, which transported him through Iran and Iraq. Begin had been a leader of the Revisionist youth movement of Betar, in his native Poland (occupied at the time by the U.S.S.R.). Begin was recruited to replace Ya'akov Meridor and David Raziel, the previous leaders of Irgun, who were both involved in sabotaging oil fields in Fallujah, Iraq during World War II (paradoxically, on behalf of British forces against Nazi Germany; Raziel was killed in the operation; Meridor was arrested later, identified by an Irgun informant). Begin began his command of Irgun units in a campaign of violent resistance to the British forces in Palestine. By February 12th and 27th of 1944, Irgun was active in bombing attacks against British income tax offices in Jerusalem, Haifa, and Tel Aviv as well as Criminal Investigation Department (CID) offices of the Palestine Police in Haifa, Jaffa, and Jerusalem. On March 23, 1944, three police constables were killed and one wounded in Jaffa; a CID station was also destroyed; and a police superintendent was killed in Jerusalem. On the same day, Lehi militants assassinated the British chief clerk at the Tel Aviv District Police HQ and another constable was killed in Jerusalem, after two were shot. Moshe Shertok/Sharet, Ben Gurion's lieutenant in the Jewish Agency, was terribly upset at the terrorist attacks and feared that these groups had assumed de facto control of the Zionist Movement through their violence (the Irgun and Lehi later also conducted the infamous massacre at Dayr Yasin on April 9, 1948, killing between at least 107 Palestinians, before the proclamation of Israeli statehood a month later.)<sup>19</sup>

The Jewish Agency met with leaders of the Revisionist Zionist organizations between February and March of 1944 to attempt to stop the attacks and isolate them from the mainstream Zionist organizations to no avail. Irgun's Menachem Begin has just arrived in Palestine and announced a revolt against the British Mandate in April of 1944. In July and August of 1944, Land Registry offices were attacked, with Jews and Palestinian Police (British) constables killed, by Irgun and Lehi. British trucks carrying explosives were hijacked. Between October 23 and December of 1944, the Jewish Agency turned over the names of 561 people they believed were involved in the campaign of terror (a period nicknamed the 'Hunting Season' by Zionist leaders), but only a small number proved useful to British authorities, who believed the Jewish Agency was merely targeting its own domestic, revisionist Zionist political opponents. Irgun leader Ya'akov Meridor was captured

with information provided in March of 1945, through an informant, Jankelis Chilevicius, who was arrested and transported to the U.S. With Chilevicius' help, the British discovered an American Irgun organization, the Bergson Group, led by Hillel Kook (aka Peter Bergson), the son of Rabbi Rav Abraham Isaac Kook (d. 1935), an important figure in the religious Zionist Movement in Palestine, a movement which was recruiting and directing some Irgun actions in Palestine from the U.S.<sup>20</sup>

On November 1, 1945, the British Government of Prime Minister Clement Attlee, Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, and Colonial Secretary George Henry Hall summoned Chaim Weizmann, the leader of the Zionist Organization in London and Moshe Sharett, political director of the Jewish Agency (and second in charge to Ben Gurion) to a meeting in London, in which they accused the Jewish Agency of collaboration in attacks on three British patrol boats on the Palestinian coast; they charged Weizmann and Sharett with monitoring illegal immigration of Jewish refugees and migrants, the severing of railway lines in Palestine in 242 different locations, the bombing of a Jerusalem postmaster's office, and the damage done to seven locomotives. Weizmann and Sharett told the officials that they abhorred violence and that the Jewish Agency "repudiates recourse to violence." Attlee had recently won the July 5-26, 1945 election against Winston Churchill, after the end of the war in Europe. Irgun and Lehi informally suspended their operations until the end of World War II in Europe.<sup>21</sup>

The Germans surrendered on May 7, 1945, and on May 12th Irgun mortars were discovered in many locations in Palestine by the British Army. On May 14th Irgun destroyed 400 telegraph poles across Palestine. On May 22nd Irgun issued demands including that 1) the Britain Government proclaim its intent to establish a Jewish state; 2) grant of authority over Jewish immigration to the Jewish Agency; 3) secure an international loan to assist in the transportation of all Jewish refugees to Palestine; and 4) provide assistance in obtaining reparations from Germany. In August of 1945, three Irgun members were caught with submachine guns, rifles, pistols, grenades, explosives, and Irgun pamphlets in Palestine; and the MI5 agent Joseph Davidesca was murdered in Cairo (Davidesca had captured Joseph Sytner, the assassin of British official Lord Moyne, in 1944). In November of 1945, British police naval vessels were bombed, and the Palestine railway system, stationmasters' offices, and trains were sabotaged. The British had 25,000 troops in Palestine to fight the insurgents and 75,000 more in support roles for them by November, as well as 20,000 police officers. On November 6, 'riots' by Jews in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv erupted and three Jews were shot and killed by British troops, as well as 70 injured in the protests. More confrontations took place on November 14th. On November 23rd, Haganah militants attacked police stations in Givat Olga and Siona-Ali (Ziona), wounding 18 people. Massive searches in the Galilee in the same period led to the deaths of eight Jewish people and the wounding of 75, while 65 British soldiers and 16 police were also wounded. Hundreds were arrested and 77 remained in custody long after. On December 27, CID offices were attacked by Zionists and seven Jewish combatants and three British police constables were killed. Eighteen people were

killed in these clashes over two months, the largest number since the Irgun campaign had begun in 1944.<sup>22</sup>

On December 29, the Jewish Agency leaders were summoned to the British Government House and admitted to High Commissioner Alan Cunningham that they were no longer in control of the Jewish community in Palestine. The next day, Ben Gurion et al. declared that the British Government no longer had the right to rule the country. On January 12, 1946, 70 Zionists attacked the Benyamin Railroad Line, derailed a train, and injured three British constables. Irgun, on that same day, attacked the Palestine Broadcasting Service in Jerusalem, and launched an attack on the Coast Guard in Givat Olga and on a radar station on Mt. Carmel. On January 29 and February 3, 1946, 26 Irgun members dressed as Royal Air Force (RAF) personnel stole weapons at a base in Agir, near Gaza and in Tel Aviv. On February 25, 1946, Irgun destroyed 28 British Halifax transport airplanes at Qastina Air Field (now the Israeli Hatzor Air Base). On April 25, 1946, Lehi militants killed six British soldiers in a Tel Aviv police station and a paratrooper in pursuit of them. There had now been 47 major violent incidents since November 1, 1945, in which 18 British soldiers and 8 British police had been killed, and 101 soldiers and 63 police wounded or injured. Damages of more than 4 million pounds sterling on British property had been inflicted upon the Mandatory Authority. An unknown number of Zionist militants had been killed and wounded.<sup>23</sup>

### **The Hebrew Rebellion Movement 1945-1946 and the Unified Zionist Terror Campaign**

According to author Tom Segev, after negotiations that began in August of 1945, Ben Gurion ordered Moshe Sneh, Chief of the National Command of Haganah (after Golomb's death) to sign a cooperation agreement in October of 1945 with the Irgun and Lehi to organize the Jewish Resistance/Rebellion Movement (Tnu'at HaMeri Ha'Ivri) and conduct armed operations jointly and separately against British Mandate Authorities. The X Committee was formed to coordinate these actions and to carry out "sabotage and reprisals for every Jew murdered by White Paper authorities" while each action should "carry great weight and make a great impression." Human casualties were to be kept to a minimum, but no prohibition of killing was ordered. Ben Gurion left for Paris, from where he would lead the campaign. On March 26, 1946, Ben Gurion was questioned in London, by British Supreme Court Justice, Sir John Edward Stapleton and claimed he had "no idea what the Haganah was" despite Stapleton's certainty that it was run by the Jewish Agency. Three months later, from June 16-17th of 1946, Palmach, the elite leadership of Haganah, blew up eleven bridges (the Night of the Bridges) in Palestine; and the following day Irgun abducted five British soldiers to stop the execution of two Irgun militants in the Acre Prison.<sup>24</sup>

On June 29, 1946, 1000 British soldiers and 7000 police raided the offices of the Jewish Agency, other Zionist institutions in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, and 30 Jewish settlements to secure arms caches and documents proving the collusion of Jewish Agency officials (Ben Gurion, Moshe Sharett, David Remez, and Yirshak Gruenbaum) with the armed attacks on

British forces and installations. Ben Gurion was in Paris and feared for his safety, while the others were arrested, along with 2718 Zionist officials and activists, including half of Palmach's personnel. A total of 33 arms caches were discovered across Palestine. A report to the British Parliament detailed the direct involvement of the leaders of the Jewish Agency, including Ben Gurion, as well as the Haganah, Irgun, and Lehi organizations; it also detailed the murder and kidnapping of 6 British officers on June 18th, and attacks on other personnel and police. British raids (Operation Agatha) on June 29, 1946 were called 'Black Sabbath' by the Zionists.<sup>25</sup>

Outrage generated by the British raids led Ben Gurion to contact Moshe Sneh of the Haganah and authorize the bombing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, on July 22, 1946. The hotel was the site of the Secretariat of the British Mandate Authority, the headquarters of the British Army, and its social life. The bombing of the hotel was the deadliest terrorist attack by Zionists until the 1947-1949 War. Despite a last-minute withdrawal of authorization, the bombing was carried out by Irgun operatives under the direction of Menachem Begin, killing 91 people and injuring 69, mostly the staff of Chief Secretary John Shaw of the Mandate Authority. Among the killed were 21 top level British officials, as were 41 Palestinians, 28 Britons, and two Jews as well as two Irgun operatives. Prime Minister Clement Attlee called the bombing "an insane act of terrorism" and the worst committed in Palestine until 1946. The Jewish Agency (responsible for the Haganah) condemned the act by "a gang of criminals" and called Irgun "the enemy of the Jewish people," despite Ben Gurion and Sneh's direct involvement. On August 23rd, a month after the bombing, Haganah was ordered by the Jewish Agency and Ben Gurion to cease cooperation with Irgun and Lehi. The British government informed the U.S. it would act unilaterally on Palestine after the bombing of the hotel. In September and October of 1946, the British proposed a democratic, unitary state in which Jews would be protected as a "religious minority" and no further Jewish immigration would be allowed. Relations between the U.S. and Britain were shattered by these events, as the Attlee Government was stunned by the Zionist violence and was now intent on restraining them, while the Truman Administration was becoming far more supportive under the pressure of a large and active Zionist community in the U.S.<sup>26</sup>

Irgun terror attacks continued from October 1st through November 19, 1946, during which 76 British military personnel and 33 police were killed. Sabotage continued, and rail transport was completely paralyzed. In a Tel Aviv rampage, British constables injured 29 Jews. On November 20th, an income tax office was blown up by explosives. The British War Ministry favored collective punishment against the Jewish community to stop the attacks, the same policy it had applied to the Palestinians in the 1930s and would be applied to Palestinians by Israelis for 75 years after statehood.

By February of 1947, the British decided in favor of a partition of India as a response to the Quit India campaign of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. At least 4000 people were killed in the Punjab in India, and over 7000 Muslims were killed in Bengal.

These parallel events convinced the British to move toward partition of both of its colonies in South Asia and in Palestine. Irgun conducted 18 major terrorist and sabotage actions in Palestine by March 1, 1947, when the Officers Club at Government House in Jerusalem was bombed and 20 more British personnel were killed and more than 30 were injured. On March 2nd, Alan Cunningham declared martial law in Palestine with all soldiers given police powers and orders to shoot anyone who disobeyed orders. Between March 3rd and 12th, at least 15 more attacks by Irgun injured scores of British personnel at facilities in several Palestinian cities.<sup>27</sup>

On March 31st Lehi bombed the Haifa oil refinery, the fire from which illuminated the nearby skies for weeks. Then, between April 21st and May 4th, 10 more British troops and constables were killed when the Acre prison was attacked by Irgun and Lehi militants working together; 36 militants were freed, as were 86 other Jewish prisoners and 131 Palestinian Arab prisoners. Most of the Zionists were quickly re-captured as they were easily identifiable in the Arab town of Acre (Akka); but the Palestinians remained free, blending easily into the local population. On June 9th, two British off-duty police and constables were kidnapped and held to prevent the execution of five Irgun militants on trial at the Acre prison. Another British soldier was killed on June 30th in Tel Aviv. On July 12th, the British police were found hanged in an orchard in Natanya. Upwards of 5000 British forces searched Natanya for the killers and interrogated 1427 people, with 17 detained. On July 18th the refugee ship Exodus arrived in Palestine with 4554 Jewish refugees on board, organized by Haganah. The British forces boarded the ship, killed two in the melee, and sent the ship to France and eventually Hamburg, overseen by British troops and West German police; they housed the passengers in camps in Poppendorf and Amstau, provoking international condemnation.<sup>28</sup>

### **The Terrorism of the Nakba (the 1947-49 War)**

Just days before the May 14-15, 1948 Declaration of Independence in Tel Aviv, a small group of Israeli leaders met there on March 10th to organize and implement Plan D (or Dalet, in Hebrew), which was an explicit program of forcible siege and destruction of Palestinian urban neighborhoods, towns, and villages, which would include bombardment with bombs and grenades, the rolling of burning cars into crowds, attacks by snipers, the encirclement of villages, the burning of houses and other buildings. It would also entail the rounding up of suspects compiled from the Village Lists of the 1930s through 1947, which were used to identify possible Palestinian activists, families of those arrested or exiled in the 1936-39 Uprising and those sympathetic to these people for isolation, mass murder, and forcible expulsion. Five hundred and thirty-one villages were destroyed during the war, and at least half of the 800,000 Palestinians in the country were driven out of Israeli security zones and along roads to Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza refugee camps, established by the United Nations. Nearly 200,000 Palestinians were driven into Gaza, where a population of 80,000 already lived. Campaigns around Isdud (Ashdod), Majdal (Ashkelon), in the Negev (around Beersheba), and elsewhere drove many of these people into Gaza in



1948. Gaza in 1949 housed one quarter of the entire Palestinian population. They lived in Gaza in terrible conditions of acute hunger, cold, disease, and extreme disorientation, just as 2 million of their relatives do today in February of 2024, some 75 years later. This initial campaign of terror and forcible expulsion (ethnic cleansing) lies at the heart of the debate on Israeli statehood, Zionism, and the Palestinian Resistance but has been systematically erased from the history that most people in the West know and understand.<sup>29</sup>

The massacres in the Galilee and in the southern regions of Palestine, in the areas around Gaza and in the Negev became well known to the Israeli Cabinet in meetings on November 7th and 17th of 1948, led by Prime Minister David Ben Gurion, which included grief-stricken appeals by Haim-Moshe Shapira (formerly member of Mizrachi, the religious Zionist organization and Minister of Health and Immigration), David Remez (Transportation Minister, later Education Minister), Aharon Zisling (Minister of Agriculture and a founder of both Haganah and the Palmach), and Modechai Bentov (Minister of Labor and Construction) for investigations and punitive action against the officers and soldiers involved in these massacres. At the November 7th meeting Shapira said that “all of our moral foundations are being undermined” and it was also said that “he put his face in his hands in shame and disgrace” after reading accounts of the massacres. Zisling said, “After receiving the letter I couldn’t sleep the whole night. I felt that something was being done that was affecting my soul, the soul of my home, and the soul of all of us here. Now Jews too have behaved like Nazis and my entire being is shaken.” Remez said “the deeds done remove us from the categories of Jews and the categories of human beings altogether.” He continued, saying “[w]e are sliding down a terrible slope—true, not the whole army, but if there are deeds like these and they are recurring in quite a few places, they are undoubtedly horrific to the point of despair.” The criminals were striking at the soul of the whole government,” he determined. Members of the Israeli Cabinet had received reports that 90,000 of 120,000 Palestinian Arabs had been driven from the Galilee by force with reports of massacres in villages such as Reineh, Meron, and al-Bureij, as well as Hula, in southern Lebanon, 8 miles due west of Qiryat Shmona in northern Israel.<sup>30</sup>

These included fourteen Palestinians who were murdered in Reineh, near Nazareth that September. In Meron 35 were killed by IZL, who ordered them to dig a burial pit and then were thrown in, bayoneted, and shot to death. In Hula on October 31st and November 1st, 33 were killed by units commanded by Shmuel Lahis, after 1000 residents had fled. Large numbers were reportedly massacred in al-Burj (now Modi’in), al-Rina, and Dawayima. Ben Gurion pointed out that the events in the south were just as serious (including at Lydda, where as many as 427 people may have been killed). Despite the seriousness of the revelations disclosed in the Cabinet meetings, a “circle of silence” apparently prevented the proper investigation of the massacres and Ben Gurion promptly dismantled the committee of Shapira, Remez, and Bentov, who were tasked with an investigation of the massacres. Ben Gurion instead assigned the task to Israel’s first Attorney General, Ya’akov Shimshon Shapira (not to be confused with Haim Moshe Shapira, who denounced the massacres),

whose cursory dismissal of the events caused protests in December 1948 meetings. It is quite curious that Minister Aharon Zisling, a founder of Haganah and the Palmach and the only Minister with a military background who expressed strong objections to the massacres, was not assigned any role in the investigations. Shapira later stated that “[i]f these deeds are covered up, the blame will lie with the entire government, if it does not bring the offenders to justice.” He recommended a public committee to investigate the allegations, but the Israeli government went to great lengths, classifying documents and all of the reports until the present day, to prevent disclosure of these massacres.<sup>31</sup>

On September 17, 1948, three weeks before these cabinet meetings were held in Tel Aviv, Count Folke Bernadotte, an aristocratic Swedish diplomat whose work with Red Cross rescue efforts in Germany in April 1945, helped to gain the release of 31,000 Jews from German concentration camps, was traveling to Jerusalem as a mediator for the U.N Security Council. His task was to negotiate with Israeli officials, Arab state military spokesmen, and Palestinian notables. He had secured ceasefires in the 1948 War through threats to invoke sanctions, powers he did not possess (in June and July). Bernadotte hoped to freeze the battle lines where they were in September, as a border of the partition of the two states, as well as to facilitate the return of the non-combatant Palestinian refugees to their homes and to make Jerusalem an internationally administered city, all as methods to bring an end to the war. On his way, however, his motorcade was stopped at a Lehi roadblock erected by the militants in the Katamon neighborhood in Jerusalem. The militants assassinated him and a French Colonel Serot, sitting next to him, on the orders of Yitzhak Shamir, Nathan Friedman (Natan Yellon-Mor), Yisrael Eldad, and the planning by Yehoshua Zettler. Lehi regarded him as a threat to the Zionists and an ally of the British and later accused him of anti-Semitism. Israel’s investigation never publicly identified those involved and some of the participants were later pardoned. Lehi members admitted the assassination was their work in 1977, and two of the operatives confessed in 1988. Yehoshua Cohen, who shot and killed Bernadotte and Col. Serot, later became the personal bodyguard of Ben Gurion.<sup>32</sup>

### **Israeli Terror Attacks in Iraq, Syria, and Gaza from 1950-1956**

In 1950-51, Israeli agents carried out bombings in Baghdad to create social and political conditions there that would encourage Iraqi Jews to emigrate to Israel. According to Israeli writer and Oxford University revisionist historian Avi Shlaim, originally an Iraqi Jew himself, Ya’akov Karkoukli, an Israeli agent stationed in Baghdad, told Shlaim about his own knowledge of the attacks. Karkoukli said that his fellow agent, Yusef Basri “carried out attacks against Iraqi Jews in a coffee shop, a car dealership, and enlisted Syrian Arab Saleh al-Haidari to attack the Mesuda Shemtov Synagogue (in which four Jews were killed), among other attacks’ on Jews, under the direction of Meir Max Bineth, an Israeli intelligence officer who supplied Basri and al-Haidari with weapons and explosives. Bineth later committed suicide after his involvement in Operation Susannah, which involved terrorist bombings in Egypt in 1954. At least 110,000 Jews fled Iraq in the months following the attacks. Shlaim reported that he possessed police reports with “incontrovertible evidence” of the veracity of

Karklouki's account. The operations in Iraq and Egypt suggest the possibility that attacks in other Arab nations may have been carried out by Israeli agents as well.<sup>33</sup>

Between 1949 and 1953, the IDF also carried out 1,400 attempted ambushes of Palestinians who entered the areas claimed by the Jewish State to see their lands, visit relatives, harvest crops, reclaim property left behind during the Nakba, or to attack and kill Israelis along the borders of the Jewish state. Eighty-nine Israelis were killed in these raids, and Jordan claimed that hundreds of Palestinians and Jordanians were killed inside its border by the Israeli raids. Most of the attacks were unsuccessful, although 13 missions were successful in repelling Palestinian 'intruders,' according to Moshe Dayan. The Mixed Armistice Commissions of the United Nations condemned the Israeli raids on more than forty occasions. On Christmas Day of 1951, the IDF destroyed the Christian village of Iqrit, 16 miles northeast of Acre, after the Israeli Supreme Court ordered that the residents of the village be allowed to return there from Lebanon. In August 1953, Ariel Sharon's Special Forces Unit 101 attacked al-Bureij Camp in Gaza and killed 20 civilians and blamed it on kibbutzniks. In October 1953, Sharon's Unit 101 conducted Operation Shoshana in Qibya village, located in the West Bank (under Jordanian control); there they killed 70 Palestinians and destroyed 45 houses in the worst massacre since those of Dayr Yasin, Tantura and Lydda in 1948. The Qibya attack was a reprisal for a Palestinian attack on Yahud, in which a Turkish Jewish woman and her two children were killed on October 13, 1953. Ben Gurion denied involvement in the massacre, which was untrue. Moshe Sharett denounced the massacre and refused to authorize it, but was overruled by Ben Gurion, while he was traveling in Tiberias. Haim Moshe Shapira, the Cabinet member who had denounced the 1948 massacres also denounced the Qibya massacre and Minister of Justice Pinhas Rosen and Moshe Sharett challenged the ethics of Ben Gurion's "lies and fabrications" to the public that Mizrahi Jews from Arab countries and holocaust survivors had committed the atrocities. Ariel Sharon said afterwards, "We were determined to turn the village into a pile of rubble," a sentiment that has proven to be an enduring preoccupation of the IDF in Gaza up to 2024.<sup>34</sup>

In December of 1948, for a brief period of a few weeks, an All-Palestine Government was established in Gaza and declared itself an independent state with Hajj Amin al-Husayni, the former Mufti of Jerusalem; he was unanimously elected as its president despite his association with Hitler during the war. A National Council of 150 members was appointed, which promised to hold elections for a representative Assembly. Eighty-three of these 150 members traveled to Gaza to further the political consolidation of the new state. No Arab state, nor the Arab League recognized this Palestinian initiative, and it quickly dissolved into thin air. Al-Husayni was deported to Egypt. Jamal-al-Husayni, the cousin of the former Mufti, soon after recognized the sovereignty of King Abdullah over the West Bank. Egypt eventually assumed responsibility for Gaza, despite tentative plans to transfer a part of the refugee population into the Sinai, which protests by Syria and Palestinians prevented. Nasser suggested after 1952 that Jordan assume responsibility for Gaza as well. As Jean-Pierre Filiu pointed out in his history of Gaza, it is remarkable that an independent state of Palestine did

briefly exist, based in Gaza City, and failed due to a lack of support from Arab States and Israeli hostility, none of whom had any intention of allowing Palestinians any sovereignty or statehood.<sup>35</sup>

In the summer of 1954, 1000 Egyptian Muslim Brothers managed to enter Gaza to assist Palestinians in their resistance to Israel after fighting there during the 1948 War. They established ties with the future leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Saleh Khalaf (Abu Iyad) and Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad), who formed small commando units ultimately under the leadership of Egyptian Colonel Mustafa Hafiz Darwish. Darwish insisted that Palestinian *fedayin* sever ties with the Muslim Brothers. That summer, the IDF carried out Operation Susannah under the direction of Israeli Defense Minister Pinhas Lavon and Binyamin Gibli of Aman and the Israeli Military Intelligence Unit 131. The operation included several bombings in Cairo and Alexandria by Egyptian Jews against Egyptian post offices, cinemas, and Egyptian and American libraries. No Egyptians casualties were caused, but four Jewish operatives eventually perished, and eleven were given up to Egyptian police by Avri Elad, a German Jewish former SS officer who may have been turned against Israel by Egyptians. Two Egyptian Jews were executed, two committed suicide (including Max Bineth, who had also been involved in the Iraqi bombings), and seven received prison sentences. The campaign led to a political scandal, the Lavon Affair, from 1955-1960, in which responsibility for the operation was shifted from one to another of those involved after a trial was held in Cairo from December of 1954 to January of 1955. The intention of the operation was to undermine a British plan to withdraw forces from the Suez Canal in 1956 (which did take place), after a campaign of armed resistance in the Canal Zone by Egyptian militants and Muslim Brothers and other Egyptian militants. Israelis also wanted to persuade the U.S. that Egypt under the leadership of Gamal Abdel Nasser (since 1952) was unstable. It was part of the preparations for a larger campaign to subvert and overthrow Nasser.<sup>36</sup>

The Zionists' Plan Nevo (or the Lavi Plan) was also approved in the summer of 1954 by Ben Gurion; it envisioned a strategic expansion of Israeli territory into Gaza and into the Sinai Peninsula, a possible operation to capture oil fields in Saudi Arabia, and movement by the IDF east of the Jordan River. This would also include the transfer of the Palestinian refugees of the West Bank into Iraq so that Jordanian territory in the west could be seized by Israel. Ben Gurion had read Gamal Abdel Nasser's *The Philosophy of the Revolution* (1954), a call for Pan-Arab unity and an explanation of the 1952 Free Officers coup and subsequent "social revolution" within Egyptian society (carried out against British colonial influence, the corruption of King Farouk's regime, and to thoroughly revolutionize the incompetent Egyptian military whose performance in the 1948 War he found reprehensible). Nasser's book had convinced Ben Gurion that his promotion of Arab nationalism was the greatest political and military threat to Israel. Moshe Dayan had tried to persuade Ben Gurion before the Suez Canal was nationalized in 1956 to launch a war against Nasser to overthrow his regime. Nasser had been suggesting the turnover of Gaza to Jordan and demanding the

return of Gaza refugees to their land or monetary compensation, as well as the return of the Negev to Egyptian control. Nasser had fought in Gaza during the 1948 War, as had hundreds of other Muslim Brothers (he later turned against the M.B. and violently suppressed the organization). Nasser had been based in Nuseirat Camp, and he backed the Palestinian *fedayin* (self-sacrificers) attacks on the IDF and Jewish settlements in the south in the early to mid 1950s. In February of 1955, Egyptian forces infiltrated Israel from Gaza and advanced to the outskirts of Tel Aviv where they killed an Israeli civilian. The IDF reprisal raid on February 28th killed 38 Egyptians and two Palestinians. Eight IDF soldiers were killed in the attack. By April 3rd, Ben Gurion announced his intention to occupy Gaza as Moshe Dayan had convinced him of the need to conquer Gaza.<sup>37</sup>

Menachem Begin, Ben Gurion's major political rival, had just led the Herut Party to double its strength in the Knesset elections in 1955, putting more pressure on Ben Gurion to intensify Israeli action against Gaza and Nasser. Moshe Dayan and Ben Gurion decided, in late October 1955, to attack the Egyptian police station in Khan Yunis, Gaza. Israeli leaders were incensed at Egyptian and Palestinian *fedayin* attacks inside Israel and at the agreement by Soviet-dominated Czechoslovakia to sell tanks, aircraft and MiG fighters to Egypt in September (after the U.S. refused to transfer arms to them). The attack on Khan Yunis was the largest IDF operation since the 1948-49 War. Seventy Egyptians were killed and one IDF soldier. Ben Gurion, Dayan, and Ariel Sharon observed the action from a position on the Gaza border. Operation Mivtza Har Ga'ash/Sabcha/ Volcano was carried out November 2nd to 3rd, 1955, in which 81 Egyptians and 6 Israeli IDF soldiers were killed and 55 Egyptians were captured in an attack to expel Egyptian forces from the Nitzana region of the Demilitarized Zone. In December of 1955, Operation Mivtza 'Aleï Zayit (Olive Leaves) inside Syria near Lake Kinneret (the Sea of Galilee) killed over 50 Syrian soldiers and 6 Israelis; and 33 Syrian soldiers were captured, after alleged Syrian attacks on Israeli fishing from Syrian outposts on the northeastern lakeshore. Moshe Sharett and the Israeli Cabinet were outraged by the operation, led by Ariel Sharon, because it took place during negotiations with the U.S. on arms sales, which were postponed as a result.<sup>38</sup>

In February and March of 1956, Palestinian guerillas attacked several Jewish settlements near Gaza including the Nahal Oz settlement, killing four Israelis. The IDF responded by shelling Palestinians in Gaza, killing 15 women, 12 children, and 9 men. Ben Gurion ordered the operation stopped after the civilian casualties became known. In April of 1956, after the village of Patish was attacked by Palestinians, killing a young 21-year-old IDF commander Ro'i Rotberg. Dayan spoke at his funeral, "Let us not today cast blame on the murderers. What can we say against their terrible hatred of us? For eight years now, they [the Palestinians] have sat in refugee camps in Gaza and before their eyes we are turning the land and the villages where they and their forefathers lived into our possession." Moshe Sharett again protested the operations against Gaza and new settlements near the Gaza border as "falsifications and lies," a "horrible catastrophe" in which "we are to blame" and which contributed to a security crisis.<sup>39</sup>

### **The Israeli Invasion of Gaza and the French Plan against Egypt in the Suez Crisis of 1956**

French Defense Minister Maurice Bourges-Maunoury, Ambassador to Israel Pierre Gilbert, and later Prime Minister Guy Mollet encouraged and supported Moshe Dayan's and Shimon Peres' goal to invade Egypt and overthrow Nasser. French Mystere IV fighter jets, tanks, and plane loads of arms were shipped to Israel from France, each shipment welcomed personally by Ben Gurion. These sales gave Israel renewed military superiority over Egypt, despite their acquisition of arms from Czechoslovakia. In late October of 1956, 16 IDF soldiers were killed by Palestinian guerillas in cross-border raids from the West Bank. Immediately afterward on October 29 at Kfar Qasim, the IDF killed 48 Palestinians including 23 children (8-12 years old), and a pregnant woman; those killed were lined up and shot by an IDF battalion in retaliation. Ben Gurion and Moshe Dayan had approved the massacre, saying "do what you have to do...." But a ministerial committee absolved them and punished Major Schmuel Malinki for ordering it, as well as Lieutenant Gabriel Dahan and Shalom Ofer for carrying out the orders. Malinki was later given a security post at the Dimona Nuclear facility and Ben Gurion bemoaned the widespread impression of his guilt, saying "I was suspected of perpetrating murder." Ariel Sharon soon replaced Dayan as head of the IDF after the operation.<sup>40</sup>

The French decided that the removal of Gamal Abdel Nasser's government was an urgent strategic necessity to end Egypt's support for the Algerian Arab nationalist revolutionaries of the FLN, who had been fighting the French occupation since 1954. They were convinced Nasser was sending arms to Algeria via Libya. They proposed an alliance with Israel and agreed to sell them substantial arms in June of 1956. Prime Ministers Edgar Jean Faure (Feb. 1955-Feb. 1956), and later Guy Mollet (Feb. 1956-May, 1957), met with Shimon Peres and suggested an Israeli invasion of Egypt. The Israelis had been involved in a series of battles with Egyptians and Palestinians in Gaza and with Jordanians and Palestinians in the West Bank. They agreed to the plan to invade Gaza and the Sinai, and to attack the Canal Zone on October 14th. The British were ambivalent about Israeli involvement but reluctantly agreed. The French alliance with Israel was one the Israelis had hoped for since 1948; it meant attaining an alliance with a Great Power committed to defend them in any future crisis. French officials blamed Nasser for assisting the Algerian insurgents, and they also felt deprived of what they viewed as their rightful role in Palestine by the British occupation there since the 1919.<sup>41</sup>

On October 29, 1956 Israel's IDF invaded Gaza (whose Egyptian governor surrendered on November 6th) and the Sinai Peninsula in order to occupy both territories (also hoping to seize the Straits of Tiran to end the Egyptian naval blockade there), while French and British forces planned to bomb Egyptian airfields and seize control of the Canal Zone Canal. These advances, they hoped, would lead to the overthrow of Gamal Abdel Nasser's government in Egypt. French officials (and the British Government of Anthony Eden) explained its planning to Israeli leader Shimon Peres who, with Moshe Dayan, convinced Ben Gurion of

its practicality and its probability of success.<sup>42</sup> Once the plan was clear, they launched the attack.

The British and French demanded a ceasefire, as planned on October 31, when Israelis had crossed the Sinai, which they knew Nasser would reject. They followed this with air assaults on Egyptian airfields (along with French shelling of Rafah). They also landed paratroopers and amphibious forces in Port Said, which took place on November 5th and 6th. Their forces advanced 23 miles south of Port Said. They demanded that Egypt cede control of the canal to the French-British company, the Suez Canal Company that had owned it since 1869 (or a new international Suez Canal Users Association); they wanted this done before Nasser's nationalization of the property on July 19th (two weeks after the U.S. refused to finance the Aswan Dam). Nasser in turn sank vessels in the canal to prevent it from being used for any purpose, commercial or military. Surprisingly, both the U.S.S. R. and the U.S. opposed the invasion of Egypt and the attempt to seize the canal and were made aware of the outlines of the plan months before it was put into action. Soviet Premier Nikolai Bulganin threatened to strike Britain and France with nuclear weapons and to strike Israel as well.<sup>43</sup>

Israel's invasion and occupation of Gaza (simultaneously with that of Sinai) took place on November 1st of 1956, the day after French artillery shelled Rafah. Rafah was occupied and the Egyptian military governor surrendered to Israelis in Gaza City on November 2nd. Most Palestinian *fedayin* escaped by sea to Cairo. The Egyptians in Khan Yunis, however, refused to surrender, and the Israeli Air Force bombed the city with huge civilian losses. Many Palestinian civilians were lined up, blindfolded, and summarily executed on November 3rd. Estimates of those killed ranged from 275 to 525 (the latter by Abdulaziz Rantisi, founder of Hamas, who was an 8-year-old boy in Khan Yunis at the time). Another 57 men were said to have been disappeared. General Moshe Dayan arrived in Gaza on November 4th. All men between 15-60 years of age were then rounded up in all eight Palestinian refugee camps between November 3rd and the 7th. The men were identified by Colonel Haim Gaon, appointed by Dayan as military administrator, who possessed a list of 640 *fedayin* thought to be living in Gaza. Thirty-six men were discovered in a mass grave in Gaza City weeks later, while in Rafah between 111-197 men were lined up and executed on November 12th (103 of them were refugees). The Israeli Defense Forces massacred between 930 and 1230 Gazan Palestinians within two weeks and were forced to withdraw by U.S. pressure between March 1-7, 1957.<sup>44</sup>

The U.S., under Republican President Dwight Eisenhower, who was also Commander of Allied Forces in Europe during World War II, demanded that Israeli, British, and French forces withdraw. Eisenhower threatened to halt U.S. aid to Britain's struggling economy and even to sell its government bonds of \$100 million pounds sterling. The U.S. also vetoed an IMF loan to Britain during the crisis. Eisenhower, like FDR before him, had opposed the resumption of European colonial regimes in the Middle East since the end of the war and had hopes of bringing Nasser's Egypt into an alliance with the U.S. (against Soviet influence across West Asia). The U.S. had backed Britain in the 1953 coup in Iran to thwart Prime

Minister Mosaddeq's nationalization of Britain's oil industry there, so it is likely that the British expected U.S. acquiescence in this effort to reverse Egypt's financial nationalization of the canal, despite the British evacuation of its forces in 1956 and the approaching termination of the Suez Canal Company's 100 year lease in 1969. This optimism existed despite the obvious American opposition to the intervention for months.<sup>45</sup>

Bulganin's (and Krushchev's) threats to use missile strikes in Europe, along with U.S. threats to seriously harm Britain's economy shocked the world. The U.N. Security Council and General Assembly both passed very critical resolutions demanding a ceasefire and the withdrawal of all foreign forces from the Canal Zone, the Sinai, and Gaza. Britain and France withdrew their forces by December 23, 1956; and under intense pressure from the U.S., Israel withdrew almost four months later, on March 19th of 1957. The Suez Crisis was a brief but dramatic turning point in Middle East politics, perceived as having allowed cover for the Soviet suppression and occupation of Hungarian rebels and the heightening of Soviet prestige immeasurably among the Arab states and the public via its successful confrontation with Israel and European imperialism. The humiliating reversal for Britain and France forfeited Great Power status for both nations and greatly enhanced Soviet and American power in the Middle East. It was only a temporary setback for Israel, since the IDF had so easily defeated the Egyptian Army in the Sinai. Nevertheless, Nasser's status in the Arab World rose to staggering heights for having faced down the British, French, and Israelis.<sup>46</sup>

The U.S. soon realized, however, that Nasser would not serve as a pliant U.S. ally and Egypt shifted its alignment to the Soviets after they supplied weapons sales from Czechoslovakia. The U.S. decision not to finance the Aswan Dam nor to provide military technology hurt U.S. relations with Egypt. By 1965 Eisenhower had reportedly come to regret his decision to force Israel to withdraw from Sinai. When the Israelis launched pre-emptive strikes against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria in May of 1967, the U.S. supported their action, marking the inception of its long support of Israel's military and political ambitions from that time until the present. This support was forthcoming despite the Israelis' devastating attack on the USS Liberty on June 8, 1967, approximately 12 miles south of the Sinai Peninsula near the Straits of Tiran. The closing of the straits by Egypt had been one cause of the war. The USS Liberty was conducting surveillance on Israeli and Egyptian forces for the National Security Agency; the Israeli attack resulted in the deaths of 34 U.S. naval personnel and the wounding of 171. The ship was clearly marked as a U.S. ship and was repeatedly strafed by Israeli jets. The U.S. had refused to join the Israeli war effort and had opposed Israeli actions just nine years before, in the Suez Crisis.<sup>47</sup>

After the debacle of the Suez Crisis, in addition to the preemptive strikes against Egypt Mossad (Israel's intelligence agency) orchestrated a plan in the late 1950s to assassinate German scientists who were developing Kahira missiles for Nasser in Egypt. Yitzhak Shamir and five other Lehi militants had been hired by Mossad in 1956, after Ben Gurion lifted the ban on hiring Lehi militants in the Israeli security services. Golda Meir supported the project, despite opposition from Ben Gurion and Shimon Peres. Operation Damocles was



put into action. Letter bombs were sent to several of the scientists, killing, injuring, and blinding several of them. Ben Gurion stopped the campaign and Mossad leaders Isser Harel and Yitzhak Shamir left the Mossad. Shamir later worked in Menachem Begin's Likud Party and opposed the Egyptian Peace Treaty that Begin signed with Anwar Sadat in 1979. Begin also later regretted his decision to sign the treaty, at the urging of U.S. President Jimmy Carter.<sup>48</sup>

### **The Efficacy of Terror and Aggressive War: The Israeli Invasions of Lebanon and Gaza 1982-2024**

Fifteen years after its pre-emptive attacks on Arab States in the 1967 War, on June 6, 1982 Israel invaded Lebanon. The purpose of the Israeli invasion was to destroy the PLO bases there and punish Lebanese Muslims and Druze for allowing Palestinians to operate so openly. After international condemnation of the Israeli aggression in Lebanon, Menachem Begin, Prime Minister of Israel since 1977, resigned in 1983. The horrific bombing and destruction of Beirut as well as Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon's and the IDF's coordination of the massacres of 2,000-3,500 Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps conducted by the Maronite Christian Phalange fascists had wrecked Israel's international standing. The massacres were condemned by the UN Security Council on September 19, 1982, and condemned as acts of genocide by the United Nations General Assembly on December 16, 1982 (by a vote of 123-0, with 22 abstentions). The U.S. had guaranteed on September 1, 1982 the safety of Palestinians in Lebanon as a precondition of the PLO evacuation from Beirut to Tunis.

After Begin's resignation, Yitzhak Shamir became Prime Minister of Israel (1983-84; 1986-92). The two terrorist leaders of Irgun and Lehi had both reached the pinnacle of Israeli political power, amid horrific acts of genocide against the Palestinians. Shamir was defeated after the four years of the Palestinian Intifada (1987-1993), in which over 1,480 Palestinians were killed by the IDF and Israeli settlers (281 of the Palestinian dead under age 18); also killed were 188 Israelis (94 of them IDF soldiers; 4 under 18). Israel gained the perpetual patronage of the United States during and after the 1967 War, despite their full knowledge of the impact of Zionist terrorism on the British Mandate and on the Palestinians, as well as of Israel's extension of this approach to the Lebanese people and to Egyptian and Iranian societies (whose nuclear program and scientists were regularly sabotaged and killed through terrorist actions).<sup>49</sup>

Sixty-six years after the 1967 war, Israel continues its terrorism—not only in Gaza, but in the West Bank as well. While not generating the same media coverage as Gaza, since October of 2023 attacks in the West Bank have now killed over 370 Palestinians, for a total of over 500 in the year of 2023. In an incident on January 24th of 2024, Israelis disguised as doctors and nurses killed three Palestinian militants in a Jenin hospital in the West Bank. In addition to IDF attacks in the West Bank, a campaign of accusations made by the IDF and echoed by the U.S., that UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency) workers in Gaza

participated in the October 7th Hamas attacks, will likely hamper even further efforts to provide aid to the starving population in Gaza. These accusations made against UNRWA were also made by the IDF about U.N. workers in Gaza following the 1956 massacres and occupation there. The genocide perpetrated in Gaza and the West Bank from December of 2008 and most recently from October 8, 2023 is a direct outgrowth of U.S. complicity in Israeli terror over the past 80 years (with the exception of the Suez Crisis). This understanding does not preclude the observation that Palestinian terrorism against Zionists, Israel, the British Mandate Authority, and others has been a major element in the Israeli-Palestinian wars of the past century, including the attack on Israelis by Hamas on October 7.<sup>50</sup>

The use of terror in defense of a people's community and territory against European colonial occupation and aggressive war can arguably be regarded as ethically distinct from terror used as a means of imperialist and colonial domination. This is especially salient considering the massive loss of civilian life in colonial, 'conventional,' and counterinsurgent warfare by Great Powers over the past 175 years (and by Israel since 1948). Without campaigns of concerted Israeli terrorism for decades against the British Mandate Authority and the Palestinians, the Jewish state in Israel would never have come into being nor would it have survived. Through the military support provided by the U.S. to Israel and through U.S. interventions in Lebanon, Libya, Kuwait, Iraq, Syria, and Yemen, the Arab States have been rendered utterly submissive to and complicit with both Israel and the U.S. since 1967 (with brief exceptions by Egypt, Iraq, Hezbollah, and Yemen). It is comprehensible, under these circumstances, that strategic terrorism has continued to be waged by Israel as a tool to intimidate its enemies and eliminate obstacles to its objectives. It follows that terrorism will continue to be deployed by its opponents too, as a means of political resistance to Israeli aggression and in the quest for sovereignty by Arabs and Muslims against Israeli expansion, the imperialist policies of the United States, and their supine Arab client states.

## Notes

1. The Zionist and Israeli murder and targeting of Palestinians is not merely a response to Palestinian terrorism or the Hamas attacks on October 7th, but is a consistent strategy of Zionist and Israeli state terrorism, conducted since before the 1936-39 Palestinian Uprising, but greatly accelerated during and after it. Both Israelis and Palestinians have utilized terrorist attacks against each other since the beginning of the conflict over Jewish settlements in the 1880s. See Richard Wood, "The Origins and Trajectory of the Palestinian-Israeli Wars," *Milestones* (February 2024).

The massacre by the Palmach and/or the Haganah of 60 Palestinians villagers, including women and children, in Balad al-Shaykh near Haifa on December 31, 1947 (a month after the November 29 U.N. Partition Plan announcement and before the Israeli declaration of statehood on May 15), is a good example of the ongoing war. Villagers had occasionally attacked Jewish workers near the village on their way to Haifa, and Jewish settlers had also attacked villagers. On December 30, 1947, Irgun killed 6 Palestinian workers at a Haifa cement factory, followed by an Arab massacre of 41 Jewish workers there after the attack. The massacre took place the day after, despite Haganah criticism of the Irgun attack as unprovoked. *Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question*, s.v. "Balad al-Shaykh," <https://www.palquest.org/en/place/16929/balad-al-shaykh>.

Examples of Israeli terrorism conducted by groups not directly sponsored by the state include the attempted assassinations in 1980 of West Bank Palestinian mayors (Bassam Shaka of Nablus, Karim Khalaf of Ramallah, and Ibrahim Tawil of El Bireh) by the Jewish Underground, a group of militant settlers heavily armed by the IDF; the group also sought to destroy the Dome of the Rock, to launch the Jewish reclamation of the Temple Mount (*Haram al-Sharif*). They attacked two Hebron mosques in 1983 and attempted to attack Hebron University in 1984. Another private terrorist effort was that of American physician Dr. Baruch Goldstein, a childhood friend of Rabbi Meir Kahane (both IDF Veterans) and member of his Kach movement and the Jewish Defense League in the U.S. He served as a physician in the IDF and in the militant settlement of Kiryat Arba, in Hebron, in the West Bank. Dressed in his IDF uniform, he massacred 29 Muslims at prayer and wounded 120 with an automatic weapon in the Ibrahimi Mosque (The Cave of the Patriarchs) in Hebron on February 25, 1994. In the protests that followed the massacre, 20 more Palestinians were killed and another 120 were injured. See Ami Pedahzur and Arie Perliger, *Jewish Terrorism in Israel* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), Kindle version locations 1197-673 on the Jewish Underground and locations 1678-1979 on Dr. Baruch Goldstein, Meir Kahane, and the Settlers Movement.

On May 11, 2022, Palestinian Christian and Aljazeera reporter, Shireen Abu Akleh, also a citizen of the U.S., was reporting on the IDF forces' attack on the Jenin Refugee Camp and was murdered by the IDF in a targeted assassination. The Biden Administration was very reticent to criticize the IDF for her murder. The IDF apologized for her death a year later in May of 2023, after claiming for weeks that she was killed in the crossfire of a gun battle with Palestinians. Khamil Ahmed, Lydia McMullan, Elena Morresi, Garry Blight, and Harry Fischer, "The killing of Shireen Abu Akleh: What One Morning in the West Bank Reveals about the Occupation," *The Guardian*, March 21, 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2023/mar/21/the-killing-of-shireen-abu-akleh-what-one-morning-in-the-west-bank-reveals-about-the-occupation>;

Forensic Architecture, “Shireen Abu Akleh: The Extrajudicial Killing of a Journalist; Extended Report,” November 3, 2022, <https://forensic-architecture.org/investigation/the-extrajudicial-killing-of-shireen-abu-akleh-extended-report/#fn1>;

An Aljazeera documentary revealed that there was no gunbattle that could possibly have caused her death. See Chris McGreal, “Shireen Abu Akleh Documentary to Raise Pressure on Biden over Inquiry” *The Guardian*, December 4, 2022, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXy9SUDqUHK](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/dec/04/shireen-abu-akleh-documentary-faultlines-israel-biden-palestine#:~:text=The%20Israel%20defense%20forces%20(IDF,she%20was%20wearing%20a%20helmet; Aljazeera, “The Killing of Shireen Abu Akleh,” <i>Faultlines</i>, <a href=).

Among those journalists not silenced by Israel’s repression are social media activist-journalists such as Motaz Azaiza, Bisan Owda, Plestia Alaqad, and Hind Khoudary as well as veteran Aljazeera reporter Wael al-Dahdouh, who lost most of his family by targeted Israeli terrorism. See Kenneth Mohammed, “Gaza Social Media Activists are a Potent Force for Change in the Fight Against Racism”, *The Guardian*, February 20, 2024, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2024/feb/20/gaza-palestinian-protesters-social-media-activists-fight-racism-inequality>. This article includes links to articles about several of these Palestinians and how to access their reports.

2. Tom Segev, *A State at Any Cost: The Life of David Ben-Gurion*, trans. Haim Watzman (New York: Picador/Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2019), 120, 159-63, 275-79; Bruce Hoffman, *Anonymous Soldiers: The Struggle for Israel, 1917-1947* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2015), 9-14. Hoffman is a Professor and Director of the Georgetown University Center for Jewish Civilization and has a long association with U.S. and Israeli counterterrorism efforts and related academic affairs. His account is decidedly pro-Israeli, but his history of the formation of Haganah and its relationship with Jabotinsky and Pinhas Rutenberg, who helped found the Jewish Legion in the British Army, and the Histadrut is accurate. Hoffmann also included the testimony of English missionary, Frances Newton, who blamed the 1920 riots on Zionist provocation of the Muslim Palestinian participants in the Nebi Musa gathering. His attribution of calls to violence by Palestinian Arif al-Arif at the Nebi Musa gathering has been contradicted by others.
3. Ami Pedahzur and Arie Perliger, *Jewish Terrorism in Israel*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 11-13. According to the authors, Irgun’s first terrorist action was the “murder of two Palestinian Arab workers in a banana grove in the [Plain of] Sharon region [in Galilee] on April 20, 1936.” The Bar Giora and HaShomer HaTzair militias (and HaShomer’s subgroup The Circle, a secret kibbutz) were

- founded to protect Jewish settlements. Hashomer was organized outside and inside Palestine, as Jewish/ socialist Zionist youth movement and militia in Galicia, a region of Ukraine and eastern Slovakia, under the Habsburg Empire in 1913, to defend Jews from pogroms. A chapter was founded in the Galilee in 1919 to defend Jewish settlements, but excluded Ben Gurion from the organization, which made him suspicious of its independence from the Histadrut and Haganah, which were founded a year later in 1920. Ben Gurion effectively worked to marginalize the HaShomer and develop the Haganah to supplant it in Palestine in the 1920s; simultaneously HaShomer founded a federation of four kibbutzim and a political party under the name Kibbutz Artzi in 1927 and 1936 respectively, which positioned itself to the left of Histadrut and Ben Gurion. HaShomer briefly attempted unsuccessfully to work more closely with Palestinian Arabs for a binational state. One HaShomer HaTzair militia in Warsaw, Poland, led by Mordechai Anielewicz, Simha Rotem, Zivia Lubetkin, and Yitzhak Zuckerman of the Jewish Fighting/Combat Organization, was a leading force in the armed force of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising (1942-44). See Linda Jacobs Altman, *The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising* (Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Pub., 2012). HaShomer HaTzair in Israel became associated with MAPAM, the leftist alternative to MAPAI in the Israeli labor movement and after 1967 with the Meretz Party. The international organization still exists today, as it does in Israel, although with a far more right-wing orientation. Noam Chomsky worked with HaShomer briefly when he lived on the HaZorea kibbutz in Israel in the summer months of 1953, but he never became a member as he opposed both the Stalinist and Trotskyist factions of the organization. Mouin Rabbani, "Reflections on A Lifetime of Engagement with Zionism, the Palestine Question and American Empire: An Interview with Noam Chomsky," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 41, no. 12 (2011), <https://oldwebsite.palestine-studies.org/jps/fulltext/42599>; On Trumpeldor and the Tel Hai events, see Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 2019, 120, 140, 159-60.
4. Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 2019, 93-95. Segev describes the conflict and violence at the Sejera settlement where Ben Gurion lived for fourteen months during 1908-1909, which led to gunfire and the deaths of Jewish settlers Israel Korngold and Shimon Melamed and which affected Ben Gurion for the rest of his life. Israeli historian Benny Morris describes some of the conflicts between Jews and Palestinian Arabs, including some of those killed in the early decades of Jewish settlements in his book, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1881-2001* (New York: Vintage/Random House, 2001), 40-56. Morris has a tendency in his writing to emphasize Jewish victims and Palestinian aggression in these accounts, perhaps due to the paucity of Arab writing about the conflicts around the settlements. Regarding Ahad Ha'am, see Alan Dowty, Ahad Ha'am, and Asher Ginzberg, "Much Ado about

- Little: Ahad Ha'am's Truth From Eretz Yisrael, Zionism, and the Arabs," *Israeli Studies*, 5, no. 2 (Autumn, 2000): 154-81, [https://www.jstor.org/stable/30245555?read-now=1&seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/30245555?read-now=1&seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents). Ahad Ha'am's 1891 article was published in a St. Petersburg Jewish newspaper, called *Ha-Melitz*. Ha'am's later articles about the settlements virtually ignored these conflicts with Palestinian Arabs, apparently assuming like most Jewish nationalists (according to Dowty) that improved economic prospects would eventually ease tensions and mollify Arab opposition.
5. On the Palestinian Arab and Zionist Jewish attacks on each other's communities during and after the Jaffa Riots of May 1-2 of 1921, in which over 100 were killed (over 50 from each of the communities and 175 injured), see Oren Kessler, "1921 Riots in Jaffa 100 Years On: Mandatory Palestine's First 'Mass Casualty' Attack," *The Times of Israel*, May 1, 2021, <https://www.timesofisrael.com/1921-jaffa-riots-100-years-on-mandatory-palestines-1st-mass-casualty-event/>. Most of the Jews, including well know Hebrew writer Yosef Haim Brenner, were killed by Palestinians. Most of the Palestinians were killed by British police. On the murder of Tewfiq Bey by the HaShomer/Circle group and Manya Shochat, see Rachel Yanait Ben-Zvi, trans. Marie Syrkin, *Before Golda: Manya Shochat, a Biography*, (Lexington, MA: Plunkett Lake Press, 2016); Nir Mann, "He Laid the Foundations for Israel's Army. His Story Was Kept Secret -Until His Diary Turned Up," *Ha'aretz*, May 9, 2020, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2020-05-09/ty-article-magazine/.premium/he-laid-the-foundation-for-israels-army-but-his-story-was-kept-secret-until-now/0000017f-e18d-d38f-a57f-e7dffecf0000>. The anti-Zionist Haredi organization Neturei Karta considers de Haan a martyr for anti-Zionist and religious Jews.
  6. Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 234-36, 249-53; Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame; Britain's Dirty Wars and the End of Empire*, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), Kindle version, location 390.
  7. Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 247-52. On the "conquest of labor" see Segev (79). Menachem Ussishkin, a major Zionist leader in the Jewish National Fund, said that Arab labor in the settlements was a "cancerous leprosy" and "[w]hen a horse becomes aware of its strength, he throws the rider to the ground." Arab labor on the settlements would lead the laborers to demand their share of the settlements and to refuse to sell their land. Regarding Ben Gurion's concurrence with the views of Jabotinsky, Ben Gurion wrote in 1921 that "We have a right to Palestine as a nation, not as a minority. We have a right to Palestine, not the Arabs. We should and can, from a moral point of view, use all means to break the opposition of the Arabs...When they attack us, we have the right to defend ourselves and if necessary to spill blood as well" (168). In 1922, Ben Gurion wrote, in a Yiddish text, *Yizkor*,

published in Tel Aviv, that “We [Zionists] came not as beggars, but as conquerors.” His work as editor and contributor to the text made Ben Gurion famous among the Jews in Palestine, far more than his organizing efforts since 1908 (132, 139).

The tension and conflicts between Ben Gurion (the first Israeli Prime Minister, 1948-1963) and mainstream Labor Zionists and the Revisionists, under the leadership of Jabotinsky (d. 1940), have been greatly exaggerated and misunderstood. Jabotinsky and Ben Gurion understood that the conflict would eventually erupt into war and both leaders were willing to wage such warfare until victory over the Palestinians was achieved. Both knew that Jews had to become the majority in Palestine to rule a Jewish state effectively. Neither were ideologically fascist in their professed ideas, supporting democratic, representative government for Jews and the recognition of minority rights for Palestinians, as well as free speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and freedom of religious practice (or the lack thereof) for Jews. On the other hand, Ben Gurion maintained martial law for Palestinians inside Israel until 1963, when he retired. Jabotinsky and the Revisionists did support brief dalliances with fascist groups in Italy, but never with German Nazis; although Irgun and Lehi splinter groups were more willing to engage with fascist organizations in Europe. Jabotinsky insisted that he did not advocate or support fascism or dictatorship. Both men advocated and planned for the forcible expulsion of Palestinians and an expansive Israeli state that would extend far beyond the Jordan River and perhaps as far as Sinai, Syria, Lebanon, and the oilfields of Arabia. Both men were thus advocates for democratic governance for Jews and de facto, fascist expulsion and aggression against Palestinians.

8. Mark Sanagan, *Lightning Through the Clouds; Izz al-Din and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2020), 77-140; Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 13.
9. Pedhazur and Perliger, *Jewish Terrorism in Israel*, 10-13; Walid Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest: Readings in Zionism and the Palestine Problem Until 1948*,” vol. II, appendix IV, 846-849 and table 4-5, vol. I, 104, cited in Rashid Khalidi, “The Palestinians and 1948: The Underlying Causes of Failure,” in Eugene L. Rogan and Avi Shlaim, eds., *The War for Palestine: Rewriting the History of 1948* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 22-27, 35; Oren Kessler, *Palestine 1936: The Great Revolt and the Roots of the Middle East Conflict* (Lanham, MD and London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2023), 46-67; Simon Anglim, “Orde Wingate and the Special Night Squads: A Feasible Policy for Counter-terrorism?” in Tim Benbow and Rod Thornton, eds., *Dimensions of Counter-Insurgency: Applying Experience to Practice*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 22-35. Anglim questions whether Captain Wingate utilized torture and executions, but other scholars have confirmed the allegations. See Richard Call, “The Image of the ‘Black and Tans’ in late Mandate Palestine,”

- Jerusalem Quarterly*, no. 40 (Winter 2009), [https://www.palestine-studies.org/sites/default/files/jq-articles/40 Black and Tans 10 0.pdf](https://www.palestine-studies.org/sites/default/files/jq-articles/40%20Black%20and%20Tans%200.pdf); See Tom Segev, in his book *Days of the Anemones: Palestine During the Mandate Period* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1999), 348-49, 387; in Hebrew, quoted in Michael Oren, "Orde Wingate: Friend Under Fire," *Azureonline* (Winter, 2001): 33-39. Tom Segev calls Wingate "sadistic," "delusional and homicidal," "insane," and a "madman" who deployed "terror against terror" Interestingly, Michael Oren, an-American born Israeli, who served in the IDF as a paratrooper in the 1982 Lebanese invasion is also a former Israeli ambassador to the U.S. (2009-2013) and Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Office. He refers to Wingate as the "father of modern guerilla warfare" (or "dark side" counterinsurgency) and the "father of the IDF" (Oren, 33).
10. Pedhazur and Perliger, *Jewish Terrorism*, 15-16. On August 26, 1939, Palestine Police Force Criminal Investigation Department officer Ralph Carnes and his colleague Ronald Barker were killed at Carnes' home in Jerusalem, using mines and trip wires (16). On the Haganah Special Squads, see Tom Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 279. The Special Squads were composed of Irgun and some Haganah units under the direction of Haganah head Elyahu Golomb, who was operating somewhat independently of Ben Gurion and the Jewish Agency in 1939. In 1945-46, for less than a year, Ben Gurion approved of a coordinated strategy between Haganah/Palmach, Irgun and LEHI (Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 277-279); Anglim, *Orde Wingate*, 2008, 22-35. Anglim describes Wingate's killing of 81 Palestinian militants (or villagers) in July and October of 1938 (30), with the enthusiasm of an advocate for counterinsurgency. While he questions whether the Zionists under Wingate did engage in torture and executions, other scholars have confirmed the allegations. See Richard Call, "The Image of 'Black and Tans' in late Mandate Palestine", 2009.
  11. The Avalon Project, Yale Law School, *The British White Paper of 1939*, [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/brwh1939.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/brwh1939.asp). Ben Gurion's 1929 partition proposal is mentioned in Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 266; 268-69.
  12. The Avalon Project, Yale Law School, *The British White Paper of 1939*. Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 284.
  13. Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame*, 10-11; Pedhazur and Perliger, *Jewish Terrorism*, 13-15.
  14. Pedhazur and Perliger, *Jewish Terrorism*, 15-16; Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame*, 2011, Kindle version, location 391-407; Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 252-56. According to Segev, Ben Gurion wrote that he knew in April 1936, that the "Palestinian National Movement was organized, disciplined, with a national public acting with political maturity, dedication, idealism, and death-defying bravery" (254). In meetings soon after, with Cambridge-educated Palestinian Musa al-Alami, in Sharafat, in the West Bank, Ben Gurion concluded that "Never before in history has there been, nor



- I think, will there ever be in history, a case of a nation giving up its land of its own volition” (256). At this point in 1939, Ben Gurion had reached the same conclusion that Jabotinsky had reached in 1923, that a war with the Palestinian nation for control of Palestine was inevitable, despite anything the British intended to do there.
15. Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 2019, 293-297; Colin Shindler, *The Rise of the Israeli Right; From Odessa to Hebron*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 110-115.
  16. Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 2019, 293-297; Colin Shindler, “How David Ben Gurion stood with Britain in its darkest hour”, *The Jewish Chronicle*, Oct.3, 2019; <https://www.thejc.com/news/features/how-david-ben-gurion-stood-with-britain-in-its-darkest-hour-elsd9jzy>. It is quite a paradox that this article by Shindler, an emeritus professor of Israel Studies at SOAS, in London, praises Ben Gurion for “standing with Britain”, when just five years later Ben Gurion led a violent campaign of attacks and terror against British forces, including the bombing of the King David Hotel, in his campaign for the Jewish State. Professor Shindler fails to remind the reader of this startling contradiction, or of Ben Gurion’s direction of terrorist massacres and ethnic cleansing against Palestinians in the 1940s and 1950s.
  17. Meir Chazan, “The Patria Affair: Moderates vs. Activists in Mapai in the 1940s”, *The Journal of Israeli History*, Vol. 22, no. 2 (Autumn 2003), 61-95; <https://humanities1.tau.ac.il/segel/meirch/files/2012/06/The-Patria-Affair3.pdf>. According to Chazan, Moshe Sharett took responsibility for the decision to bomb the Patria, not intending to sink the ship. Chazan says that Golomb, Galili, and Katznelson, of the ‘Activist faction’ of the Mapai leadership, which included Ben Gurion (who was not in Palestine), were those who made the decision. The Irgun/IZL was also planning to attack the ship, despite their earlier decision to suspend armed actions against the British after the outbreak of World War II. According to Tom Segev, Ben Gurion defended the bombing of the Patria as a patriotic act and an “act of God” that facilitated the entry of some 1685 refugees into Palestine. 200 of them later chose to leave for the U.S. See Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 2019, 299-300.
  18. Bernard Wasserstein, “The Assassination of Lord Moyne”, *Transactions and Miscellanies (Jewish Historical Society of England)*, Vol. 27 (1978-80), 72-83; <https://www.jstor.org/stable/29778898>; Pedhazur and Periger, *Jewish Terrorism*, 2009, 18.
  19. On Menachem Begin’s role in the leadership of the Irgun, see Avi Shilon, *Menachem Begin; A Life*, trans. Danielle Zilberberg and Yoram Sharett, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2012), 50-113; Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame*, Kindle version, location 408-411. Irgun leader Mordechai Ranaan stated at a press conference on April 10th that 254 Palestinians had been killed in Dayr Yassin, a figure that seems to have been an exaggeration. Most agree that around 100 or

- perhaps as many as 120 Palestinians were killed. Arif al-Arif reported that 117 bodies were discovered after the attacks. See Daniel A. McGowan and Matthew C. Hogan, "The Saga of Deir Yassin; Massacre, Revision and Reality," *Deir Yassin Remembered*, Geneva, NY, 1999, <https://www.deiryassin.org/SAGA.html>.
20. Rabbi Rav Abraham Isaac Kook was a critical figure in advocating Zionist ideas among Haredi and Orthodox Jews in Palestine and in eastern Europe. He believed that the difference between a Jewish and a Gentile soul was greater than that of the difference between a Gentile and animal soul. In this and other ways he expressed Jewish supremacist values. On Chilevicius, see Grob-Fitzgibbons, *Imperial Endgame*, 5-6, and Kindle version, location 441-89. While Irgun and Lehi were waging their attacks on the British in Palestine in July of 1944, Indian nationalist Subhas Chandra Bose was rallying the Indian National Army (who had mutinied from the British Army in Singapore) in Burma to fight with the Japanese against British forces in Nagaland, India at Imphal and Kohima, a campaign that failed. Bose died a few weeks later flying to Japan from Singapore. Despite his alliances with the Nazis and with Japan, Bose is widely regarded by Indian nationalists as a hero of the Indian Independence Movement.
  21. Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame*, Kindle version, locations 552, 713, and 783-830.
  22. Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame*, Kindle version, locations 552-580.
  23. Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame*, Kindle version, locations 830-940; on the Qatsina Air Field attack by Irgun, see Shilon, *Menachem Begin*, 87.
  24. Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame*, locations 940-56; Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 376; 382-85.
  25. Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame*, Kindle version, locations 958-90.
  26. Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 380-83; 386; Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame*, Kindle version, location 992-1150; Thurston Clarke, *By Blood and Fire July 22, 1946: The Attack on Jerusalem's King David Hotel* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1981); Shilon, *Menachem Begin*, 85-93; Jeffrey Herf, *Israel's Moment: International Support for and Opposition to Establishing the Jewish State, 1945-1949* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022); Eetta Prince-Gibson, "Reflective Truth," *Jerusalem Post*, July 26, 2006, <https://www.jpost.com/Features/Reflective-truth>.
  27. Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame*, Kindle version, locations 552, 713, and 783-830.
  28. Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame*; Oliver Holmes, "Palestine: 1947 Escape from British Prison Exposed as Inside Job," *The Guardian*, August 30, 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/aug/30/palestine-1947-escape-from-british-prison-exposed-as-inside-job>. Architect Peres Etkes had given the architectural design of the prison to Irgun militants so that they could gain access to the Acre prison walls from a nearby *hamam* (an Ottoman/Arab bathhouse). He thought the escape was impossible without knowledge of the design of the former

- Crusader Castle. Etkes had also taken British rifles from the British armory in Jaffa and given them to Zionists in Tel Aviv during the unrest in Jaffa in 1921. He was later honored by Israelis for building a deep-water port in Haifa and building roads in Palestine. According to Holmes, Menachem Begin said the prison break was a critical event for “its disintegrating effect on British prestige” and was a “symbol of Britain’s loss of control over Mandatory Palestine.” On the Exodus 1947 incidents, see Herf, *Israel’s Moment*, 2022, 192-222.
29. Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2007), 1-19. Pappé says over 420 Palestinians were killed in Lydda. *Ha’aretz* writer and editorial board member Ari Shavit asserted that more than 200 were killed there in his book, *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel* (New York: Spiegel and Grau, 2013). On the campaigns that drove Palestinians into Gaza in 1948 see Jean-Pierre Filiu, *Gaza: A History* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 69-80. Israel allowed only 114 Palestinians to return to Majdal and Jaffa from Gaza, despite U.N. General Assembly Resolution 181 (Dec. 11, 1948), which called for their return to their homes and compensation for their loss of property. Human Rights Watch, “HRW Policy on the Right of Return,” <https://www.hrw.org/legacy/campaigns/israel/return/un194-rtr.htm>.
30. Adam Raz, “Murder by the Army,” *Ha’aretz*, Dec. 10, 2021, <https://www.akevot.org.il/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/2021-12-10-Haaretz-EN-cabinet-meetings48.pdf>; Adam Raz, “Classified Docs Reveal Massacres of Palestinians in ’48 and What Israeli Leaders Knew,” *Ha’aretz*, Dec. 9, 2021, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2021-12-09/ty-article-magazine/.highlight/classified-docs-reveal-deir-yassin-massacre-wasnt-the-only-one-perpetrated-by-isra/0000017f-e496-d7b2-a77f-e79772340000>; Ofer Aderet, “Israeli Who Commanded Massacre of Dozens of Arab Captives in 1948 Dies at 93,” *Ha’aretz*, March 15, 2019, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2019-03-15/ty-article/.premium/israeli-who-commanded-massacre-of-dozens-of-arab-captives-in-1948-dies-at-93/0000017f-e53c-dc7e-adff-f5bd6f8b0000>; Tom Segev, *1949: The First Israelis* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2018), 2.
31. The Akevot Institute for Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Research and the *Ha’aretz* newspaper continue to pursue the declassification of documents regarding these events.
32. Amitzur Ilan, *Bernadotte in Palestine, 1948*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989), 1-6, 73-144, and 193-256. The Lehi militants who carried out the assassination were reportedly Yehoshua Cohen, Yitzhak Ben Moshe (Markovitz), Avraham Steinberg, and Meshulam Makover. Cohen fired the shots in the assassination effort, and he also killed French peacekeeper and officer Col. Andre Serot, whose wife was saved from a Nazi concentration camp by Bernadotte’s efforts in Germany. The operatives took refuge in a Haredi community in Shaarei Pina before fleeing to Tel Aviv. Cohen

later served as Ben Gurion's personal bodyguard. After his death, Zettler and Makover confessed to the assassinations. John Kifner, "2 Recount '48 Killing in Israel,"

*The New York Times*, Sept. 12, 1988,

<https://www.nytimes.com/1988/09/12/world/2-recount-48-killing-in-israel.html?n=Top%2FReference%2FTimes+Topics%2FOrganizations%2FU%2FUnited+Nation>; Donald Macintyre, "Israel's Forgotten Hero: The Assassination of Count Bernadotte and the Death of Peace," *The Independent*, Sept. 8, 2008, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/israel-s-forgotten-hero-the-assassination-of-count-bernadotte-and-the-death-of-peace-934094.htm>.

From June 1 through June 23, 1948—in this same time period of the ceasefire in the 1948 War, the result of Bernadotte's efforts at negotiating an end to the war, and a few months before his assassination—a crisis of trust between the IDF and its Irgun units developed over the transport of French weapons and ammunition from France onboard the ship, *The Altalena* (named after the penname of Ze'ev Jabotinsky); the shipment had been organized and commanded by Irgun veterans, including among others Hillel Kook (aka Peter Bergson) and Menachem Begin. Orders from the IDF to sink the ship while in transit were refused. The arrival of the ship prompted the Israelis to finally agree to the first ceasefire of the war to avoid international criticism for its import of weapons; most of the crew and passengers disembarked and the weapons were unloaded at Kvar Vitkin, near Natanya, to avoid observation; but shelling and a gunfight between the IDF onshore (led by Moshe Dayan) and some Irgun personnel on the ship killed one Irgun soldier and wounded several more. The Irgun decided to return the *Altalena* to Tel Aviv, where a large crowd of Irgun supporters had assembled. After the IDF ordered the ship to surrender, Begin was allowed to disembark and escape responsibility; but the Irgun refused to submit, and another violent battle erupted for hours in Tel Aviv. By its conclusion, 19 Irgun members and volunteers had been killed, ten of them in Tel Aviv and three IDF soldiers (affiliated with the Irgun). Yitzhak Rabin commanded the IDF force in Tel Aviv. Five Irgun leaders were jailed for two months, including Jacob Meridor (who commanded the ship) and Hillel Kook (Peter Bergson). The ship was sunk later in 1948. See Shilon, *Menachem Begin*, 121-31; Ehud Sprinzak, *Brother Against Brother; Violence and Extremism in Israeli Politics from Altalena to the Rabin Assassination* (New York: The Free Press, 1999), 17-32; Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 431-32; Michael Omer-Man, "This Week in History: The sinking of the *Altalena*," *The Jerusalem Post*, June 24, 2011, <https://www.jpost.com/Features/In-Thespotlight/This-Week-in-History-The-sinking-of-the-Altalena>.

- The tensions from that confrontation had serious political ramifications: Menachem Begin, himself a member of the Knesset, instigated a mass march and public attack by 10-15,000 Revisionist and Irgun/Herut supporters on the Mapai-dominated Knesset (in West Jerusalem, at the time) on January 7, 1952 and called for the overthrow of the Israeli government. The protestors overwhelmed the police (commanded by Amos Ben Gurion, the son of the Prime Minister), broke windows, and injured many Knesset members until an IDF deployment, which ultimately took no action, ended the confrontation (over Israel negotiations and eventual acceptance of German reparations). The attack on the Knesset was an Israeli forerunner of the Jan. 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol by Trump supporters. Eldad Beck, "Israel's Forgotten 'Capitol Riots': How the 1952 Reparations Agreement Traumatized the Nation," *Israel Yabom*, Jan. 21, 2023, <https://www.israelhayom.com/2023/01/31/before-capitol-riot-there-was-the-1952-knesset-insurrection/>; Colin Shindler, "The March on the Knesset 69 Years Ago," *The Jewish Chronicle*, <https://www.thejc.com/lets-talk/the-march-on-the-knesset-69-years-ago-lhqi1oft>.
33. Rahyan Udin, "Zionist Role in 1950s Attacks on Iraqi Jews 'Confirmed' by Operative and Police Report," *Middle East Eye*, June 23, 2023, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/iraq-jews-attacks-zionist-role-confirmed-operative-police-report>; Avi Shlaim, *Three Worlds: Memoirs of an Arab Jew* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2023).
  34. Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 514-18. On the Bureij attack, see Filii, *Gaza*, 84; Despite Moshe Sharett's denunciation of the Qibya massacre, he stated that the forcible expulsion of Palestinians from their land and homes "was the most spectacular event in the history of Palestine, in a sense, more spectacular than the creation of the Jewish state," (Segev, 518); Morris, *Righteous Victims*, 468-70.
  35. Filii, *Gaza*, 2014, 67.
  36. Filii, *Gaza*, 2014, 83-92, Egyptian Colonel Mustafa Hafiz Darwish was later assassinated by an IDF parcel bomb in Gaza. He was celebrated across Gaza for his organization of the *fedayin*. Nasser also praised him in his July 16, 1956 speech announcing the nationalizing of the Suez Canal. On the covert operations and bombings in Egypt and the ensuing scandal the "Lavon Affair," see Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 536-44 and on other matters in Gaza, etc. see 510-12; 544-65. The Lavon Affair burst into Israeli political life again in 1960, when former Defense Minister Pinhas Lavon blamed the covert operations on Moshe Dayan and Shimon Peres, which ultimately led to the eclipse of Mapai, Ben Gurion's resignation and retirement, and the rise of the right-wing Likud Party of Begin, Shamir, Sharon, and Netanyahu by 1977. See Shabtai Teveth, *Ben Gurions' Spy: The Story of the Political Scandal that Shaped Modern Israel* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 69-198.

37. Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 562-66; 596-98; Filii, *Gaza*, 61-70; 73-88. King Farouk of Egypt, Hasan al-Banna, the founder and leader of the Muslim Brothers, and the former Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amn al-Husayni all visited Gaza to encourage their respective forces in the 1948 War. Al-Husayni was elected leader of the short-lived All-Palestine Government of December, 1948, before being deported back to Egypt. The Muslim Brothers had a close relationship with King Farouk until December 8, of 1948, when Prime Minister Nuqrashi banned the M.B. and confiscated its assets and dismantled its fighting units in Gaza (Nasser and al-Sisi took similar actions later, leading to the deaths of hundreds of Muslim Brothers by Nasser and over 1000 killed by al-Sisi's forces in 2013). Nuqrashi was assassinated on December 28, 1948, which was followed shortly after by al-Banna's assassination on February 12, 1949. In October of 1954, as opposition to Egyptian rule increased in Gaza, an assassination attempt against Nasser was undertaken in Cairo and blamed on the Muslim Brothers. The Muslim Brothers' Supreme Guide was arrested in Cairo in October 1954 and the repression of the Muslim Brothers proceeded, including the execution of Sayyid Qutb in 1966. Col. Hafiz Darwish and his role in organizing Palestinian *fedayin* was part of Nasser's attempt to mollify Palestinians who opposed Egyptian rule in Gaza and the Israeli repression of the Palestinians. The full quote from Dayan is from Filii, *Gaza*, 92-3. Part of it is also quoted in Segev.
38. Regarding Menachem Begin and his leadership of the right-wing Herut Movement's revival in Israel between 1951 and 1955, the issue of German reparations was key. Israelis were overwhelmingly opposed to West German Chancellor Adenauer's offer and Begin led the infamous assault on the Knesset in protest on Jan. 7, 1952, in which the building was attacked and badly damaged, with hundreds injured. It was a precursor to the Trump attack on the U.S. Congress on Jan. 6, 2021. Yet just nine months later West Germany agreed to \$50 billion in reparations and Ben Gurion successfully negotiated its passage. Herut benefited from the controversy nonetheless, as well as the Lavon Affair (the covert terrorist bombings in Egypt in the summer of 1954), and Herut recovered from just eight mandates in the Knesset in the 1951 elections to fifteen in January 1955 elections. See Ian S. Lustick, "Negotiating Truth: The Holocaust, the *Lehavdil*, and the Nakba," *Journal of International Affairs*, 60, no. 1, (Fall/Winter 2006), 51-77 (64), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24358013>. In Lustick's title, *Lehavdil*, or "*l'bhavdil*" refers to the author's denial of intent for a comparison of the Holocaust to the Nakba. On Begin and Herut see Shilon, *Menachem Begin*, 114-20, 131-35, and 137-219; Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 568-69; Filii, *Gaza*, 91. On the role of the Lavon Affair in the rise of the Likud Party, the successor to Herut, see Teveth, *Ben Gurion's Spy*, 69-199.
39. Filii, *Gaza*, 92; Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 552-55.

40. Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 571-77; 596-98.
41. David Tal, *Introduction: A New Look at the 1956 Suez War*, in David Tal, ed., *The 1956 War; Collusion and Rivalry in the Middle East* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 1-15; Bertrand Verbeek, *Decision-Making in Great Britain During the Suez Crisis* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 1-24; David Charlwood, *Suez Crisis 1956: End of Empire and the Reshaping of the Middle East* (Barnsley, South Yorkshire, UK: Pen and Sword Military, 2019), 1-24.
42. See sources in previous note as well as Filii, *Gaza*, 2014, 95-96.
43. See sources in previous two notes.
44. Filii, *Gaza*, 96-105.
45. Tal, *Introduction: A New Look at the 1956 Suez War*, 10-15; Charlwood, *Suez Crisis 1956*, 15-24.
46. Tal, *Introduction: A New Look*, 15-24; Charlwood, *Suez Crisis 1956*, 15-24. On the Soviet threat to use nuclear weapons to force Britain and France to withdraw from the Suez Canal Zone, see Nikolas Sturchler, *The Threat of Force in International Law* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 42; Segev, *A State at Any Cost*, 583-84, Filii, *Gaza*, 117-18. Regarding Nasser's status among Gazan Palestinians and other Arabs, the withdrawal of Israeli forces was precipitated by international pressure (U.S., U.S.S.R., and the U.N.), not Egyptian military success in the Sinai or Gaza. Nasser established the United Arab Republic with Syria on February 1, 1958, which lasted only three and a half years until September of 1961. His intervention in Yemen was disastrous and his regime in Gaza became very unpopular as he attempted to control the PLO from 1964-1967. Iraq's revolutionary leader Abd al-Karim Qasim (r. July, 1958-1963) denounced Nasser's and King Hussein's competition (as well as Israel's colonial occupation) over control of Palestinians and Gaza as "gangsters dividing up Palestine." Nasser reciprocated in attacks on the Iraqi leader. The military superiority of Israel, the emergence of the Ba'ath Party in Syria and Iraq, and the Jordanian and Saudi alliances with the U.S. made Arab nationalism an impossible project, at least among Arab states. See Roby C. Barrett, *The Greater Middle East and the Cold War: U.S. Foreign Policy Under Eisenhower and Kennedy* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 109-24.
47. Nasser's brief stardom in Arab circles collapsed after the overwhelming defeat in the 1967 War. His imprisonment of Gazan Muslim Brothers leaders Hani Bseisso and Shaykh Ahmad Yassin in 1966, the same year that he had Sayyid Qutb executed in Cairo, made him an enemy of the Islamist forces ( Hamas and Jihad) that came to dominate Gaza twenty years later. Nasser's promotion of Ahmad Shuqayri's Popular Liberation Forces, at the expense of Arafat's Fatah/PLO from 1964-1967, whom he accused of affiliation with the Muslim Brothers, made him suspect to Palestinian revolutionary nationalists too.

- On the Israeli attack on the USS Liberty, see Miriam Pensack, “Fifty Years Later, NSA Keeps Details of Israel’s USS Liberty Attack Secret,” *The Intercept*, June 6, 2017, <https://theintercept.com/2017/06/06/fifty-years-later-nsa-keeps-details-of-israels-uss-liberty-attack-secret>.
48. Linda Malone, “The Kahan Report, Ariel Sharon and the Sabra and Shatila Massacres in Lebanon: Responsibility Under International Law for Massacres of Civilian Populations,” William and Mary Law School Scholarship Repository, 1985, <https://scholarship.law.wm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1606&context=facpubs&sei>; Al Jazeera Staff, “Sabra and Shatila massacre: What happened in Lebanon in 1982?” *Al Jazeera*, Sept. 16, 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/16/sabra-and-shatila-massacre-40-years-on-explainer>; Linda Malone, “2001 Palestine Center Symposium on Israel/Palestine-Remarks by Linda Malone,” *Palestine Center*, April 20, 2001, 30:46, [https://archive.org/details/PalestineCenter2001PalestineCenterSymposiumonIsrael\\_Palestine-RemarksbyLindaMalone](https://archive.org/details/PalestineCenter2001PalestineCenterSymposiumonIsrael_Palestine-RemarksbyLindaMalone).
49. Margalit Avishai, “The Violent Life of Yitzhak Shamir,” *New York Review of Books*, May 14, 1992, <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1992/05/14/the-violent-life-of-yitzhak-shamir/>; Sprinzak, *Brother Against Brother*, 37-47; B’tselem: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories, “Fatalities in the First Intifada, 2000,” accessed April 1, 2024, [https://www.btselem.org/statistics/first\\_intifada\\_tables](https://www.btselem.org/statistics/first_intifada_tables).
50. On the West Bank raids, see Peter Osborne and Angelo Calliano, “With All Eyes on Gaza, Israeli Settlers are Waging a Second Nakba in the West Bank,” *Middle East Eye*, Jan. 13, 2024, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/big-story/palestine-west-bank-israel-settlers-waging-second-nakba-as-war-on-gaza-rages>; Faylah Shalash, “Israeli Forces, Dressed as Medics Raid Hospital in Jenin Killing Three,” *Middle East Eye*, Jan. 30, 2024, <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/israel-jenin-hospital-forces-dressed-medics-raid>.

To distinguish the analytical and legal issues involved in defining political terrorism as distinct from criminal terrorism and state terror from terror practiced by non-state actors, see anti-colonial Israeli anthropologist Jeff Halper’s article “Belligerents or Criminals? Terrorism in a World Without Peaceful Redress,” *Counterpunch*, Jan. 24, 2024, <https://www.counterpunch.org/2024/01/24/belligerents-or-criminals-terrorism-in-a-world-without-peaceful-redress/>. Halper’s text, *War Against the People: Israel, the Palestinians and Global Pacification* (London: Pluto Press, 2015), is an important analysis of the Israelis’ ongoing assault on Palestinian life. The attack by Hamas on the IDF personnel, police, and Shin Bet (GSS) on October 7<sup>th</sup>, from my perspective, does not constitute terrorism, but rather justifiable warfare against a



violent and expansionist occupying power. The killing of over 700 civilians on that day does constitute political terrorism, even if the perpetrators are under siege and those civilians formerly served in the military. Of course, the political and ethical implications of the use of terrorism in the practice of colonial military occupation of others' lands, lives, and communities and the use of terrorism in defense of one's own people, land, and sovereignty are arguably very different.

Israeli terrorism is certainly not the only cause of the Palestinian catastrophe since 1947. The failure of Arab states to act effectively in solidarity with the Palestinians beginning with the Uprising of 1936-1939 through the early months of 2024 is another major cause of this political tragedy. The Palestinians' difficulty in forming an effective leadership during many phases of their national project and resistance, amid serious British, Israeli, and American efforts to undermine them, is yet another factor. Israeli terrorism against Palestinians is the simply the most overlooked cause of the political destruction of Palestinian sovereignty and society, perhaps because Israel's organizational and technical military superiority since 1947 has been so obvious that a resort to terrorism hardly appeared strategically necessary. One has to look elsewhere for an explanation for Israeli terror since 1948. The ongoing genocide in Gaza since October 2023 should make this reality all the clearer. On the West Bank raids, see Peter Osborne and Angelo Calliano, "With All Eyes on Gaza, Israeli Settlers are Waging a Second Nakba in the West Bank", Middle East Eye, Jan. 13, 2024 <https://www.middleeasteye.net/big-story/palestine-west-bank-israel-settlers-waging-second-nakba-as-war-on-gaza-rages> and Faylah Shalash, "Israeli Forces, Dressed as Medics," 2024.

Richard Wood is the retired Chair of the Sociology Department of DeAnza College in Cupertino, CA and a solidarity activist for the Palestinians since 1984. He spent many months in Palestine on five occasions from 1988-2002. He is currently writing a history of Muslim resistance to western imperialism. He can be reached at 58richwood@gmail.com.