

Alger Hiss and Russia-gate

Jeremy Kuzmarov argues the Cold War case has enduring relevance to American political culture and provides clues to the motives and machinations underlying the new Russophobia.

By **Jeremy Kuzmarov**



In January 1950, Alger Hiss, a former State Department employee and director of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, was convicted of perjury and sentenced to five years in a federal penitentiary. The sentence, of which Hiss served 44 months, culminated a frenzied political trial that catapulted Richard Nixon to fame, undergirded the advent of McCarthyism and heated up the Cold War.

Today, it is worth looking back at the Hiss case because it offers important clues to the motives and machinations underlying the similarly politicized Russia-gate investigations. In both cases, powerful political players appear to have attempted to deflect acts of malfeasance by falsely accusing political adversaries of treasonous behavior while igniting anti-Russia hysteria and paranoid fears of subversion that threatened war between the major nuclear powers.

Hiss was the embodiment of the liberal, New Deal establishment, which had promoted a major expansion of domestic social welfare programs. Educated at Harvard Law School, Hiss clerked for Supreme Court Justices Felix Frankfurter and Oliver Wendell Holmes, and worked for the

State Department before moving on to head the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Supportive of President Franklin Roosevelt's policy of accommodation towards the Soviets, Hiss had been present at the 1945 Yalta conference, which resulted in a spheres of influence agreement.

Hiss had also worked as a legal assistant for the Nye Committee in the 1930s, a congressional investigation into war profiteering led by Gerald Nye, a Republican senator from North Dakota. The investigation exposed high-level corruption and connections between American companies and the growth of the Nazi war machine.

For instance, it revealed how United Aircraft sold commercial airplane engines to Germany for use in Luftwaffe fighter planes. It showed how Nazi troops were armed with American guns, and how Union Banking Corporation had engaged in a cartel agreement with the German chemical conglomerate, I.G. Farben, soon to be gas maker for Holocaust gas chambers.

Because of his work on the committee, Hiss made many powerful enemies. The Republican Party at the time was looking to revive its fortunes through red-baiting tactics that would deflect attention from their anti-labor program. The Justice Department also had begun to investigate alleged treasonous activities by GOP power brokers.

Among them was Thomas McKittrick, a former agent of the Office of Strategic Services (predecessor of the CIA) who was the wartime president of the Bank for International Settlements in Basel, Switzerland. He was also an executive

with Chase Manhattan Bank and a **Marshall Plan administrator** who allegedly conspired with his friend, the future CIA Director Allen Dulles, to move looted Nazi gold to Argentina.

Another official under DOJ investigation was Sen. Prescott Bush, a managing director of the Union Banking Corporation, which helped provide financing to Nazi industrialists in violation of the Trading with the Enemy Act during World War II. Bush was the father of President George H.W. Bush and grandfather of President George W. Bush.

The Dulles' Diversion'

The origins of McCarthyism predate McCarthy. In order to bury the war profiteering investigation and undermine a wartime plan adopted by FDR's Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau to deindustrialize Germany and break the power of its banking cartel, Dulles and his associates began accusing New Deal Democrats of being spies.

The first was Harry Dexter White, liberal postwar director of the International Monetary Fund, who had pushed the German deindustrialization plan, and then came Hiss.

The GOP's accusations of treason were part of a political counter-offensive designed to protect the real traitors while bolstering the party's political fortune. Hiss' alleged treason provided the "proof" that the Roosevelt and Truman administrations were "dyed pink in Moscow." Hiss' trial was in turn politicized as much as the Soviet show trials.

John Foster Dulles, President Dwight Eisenhower's secretary of state, and his brother Allen had worked as attorneys for Sullivan & Cromwell, which according to journalist Stephen Kinzer, "thrived on its cartels and ties to the Nazi regime," and kept its business with its clients all the way through the war.

After supporting Nixon's campaign in California's 12th Congressional district against Democrat Jerry Voorhis in 1946, the Dulles brothers began to accuse their enemies of communist subversion in order to bury investigation into their nefarious war-time activities and to undermine Morgenthau's plan to deindustrialize Germany and break the power of its banking cartel.

The first target of their accusations was Harry Dexter White, liberal postwar executive director of the IMF and an assistant to Morgenthau who championed the German deindustrialization plan. President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill adopted the plan at the second Quebec Conference in September 1944. Truman replaced it in 1947 with the Marshall Plan, a robust program of economic aid that benefited U.S. business.

Hiss was the second major target to fall victim to Dulles' plot. Like Russia-gate, which has deflected attention from the Democratic Party failings, Hiss' case became a media sensation that derailed critical scrutiny into treasonous wartime activity by plutocratic interests and provided "proof" for GOP voters that the Roosevelt and Truman administrations were "dyed pink in Moscow"—much as Donald Trump is portrayed as a Moscow puppet.

Like the allegations against Trump, Hiss' actual connection to Soviet espionage remains unproven. He never left any traces of even being a socialist. The documents Hiss is alleged to have smuggled were mundane and would have done nothing to harm national security. They included blank and illegible microfilms along with synopses about economic conditions in Manchuria, German trade policy in Brazil, unclassified manuals for operating naval rafts, parachutes and fire extinguishers; information that could have been found in the New York public library.

The Hiss case was marred by prosecutorial misconduct and illegalities. Hiss was entrapped by prosecutors who benefited from FBI surveillance of his witnesses and the sharing of that information with the prosecution's leading witness, Whittaker Chambers, a *Time* magazine editor who said he had known Hiss in the mid-1930s. Allegations of biased FBI misconduct against Trump are similarly rife.

Like proponents of Russia-gate, Chambers had questionable credibility. His credibility was undermined by contradictory statements, dubious claims about the spy-craft trade and false testimony. William A. Reuben, who spent four decades researching the Hiss case, found that "the first thing to note about Whittaker Chambers' confessions of communist underground work is that it has never been corroborated, either by documentary evidence or by the word of any other human being."

KGB: Hiss Never an Asset

Years after the case, Oleg Kalugin, a former KGB general and longtime chief of Russia's foreign intelligence operations,

stated that "Russian intelligence service has no documents proving that Alger Hiss cooperated with our service somewhere or anywhere," while retired KGB Maj. Gen. Julius Kobyakov said Hiss "never had any relationship with Soviet intelligence."

Hede Massing, an Austrian actress and confessed former Soviet spy inside the U.S., was another key witness for the prosecution who was threatened with deportation if she did not testify against Hiss. The government claimed that Hiss was part of an underground spy cell called the "Ware Group."

However, Lee Pressman, a labor attorney who was a law school classmate of Hiss and a member of the group, testified that this was a Marxist study group in the 1930s and that Hiss was not a member. Pressman was later accused of being a Russian spy.

It was claimed that Chambers and Hiss had been introduced by Josef Peters, alleged brain of the entire communist underground. But there is no record of this, and Peters was mysteriously deported to Hungary on the eve of the trial, so he could not testify and said he never met Chambers, except possibly once in the 1930s.

Hiss' wife, Priscilla, allegedly typed some of the smuggled State Department documents on a typewriter that was traced back to the Hiss family. However, later it was found that the FBI had suppressed a lab report showing she could not have typed the documents. The Woodcock typewriter, serving as key government evidence, was also possibly reproduced by the CIA or U.S. military intelligence, echoing the way the CIA has been alleged to be behind Guccifer 2 in the alleged

Russian hack of the DNC computers.

Nixon alluded to this when he told aide Charles Colson, as recorded in White House tapes: "The typewriters are always key. We built one in the Hiss case."

Hiss' opponents believed they had their smoking gun years after the trial when encrypted Soviet cables, released following the opening of the Soviet archives in 1991 (known as the Venona files), exposed a State Department spy code-named Ales, whom they believed to mean Alger.

However, a 2007 American Scholar article by Kai Bird and Svetlana Chervonnaya argued that a more likely candidate was Hiss' colleague, Wilder Foote, because a KGB operative placed Ales in Mexico City when Hiss was known to be in the U.S and the information came from someone inside the Office of the Lend- Lease Administration, where Hiss never worked.

The Soviets showed little interest in the political information Hiss could provide, since the Cambridge Five (famed British spies) leaked the major secret documents related to Yalta. Ales hence does not appear to have violated the Espionage Act, which requires specific injury to U.S. national interest.

More Parallels With 2016

The Hiss case exemplifies the abuse of the judicial system and manipulation of public opinion by opportunists such as Richard Nixon and elements of the Deep State during the Cold War. One can see parallels with Russia-gate here too, with opportunists such as Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA) and his uncorroborated leaks coming from intelligence sources.

These resemblances to current events are unfortunately salient. The Deep State always has wanted Russia as an enemy so huge military-defense budgets can be maintained, and so Russia does not control **Central Asia's oil and gas wealth**. The main target of its political machinations today, farcically, is a Republican president who is an arch-imperialist and embodiment of the American dream in its valorization of wealth accumulation.

During the 2016 election, the party of Roosevelt ran a divisive candidate in Hillary Clinton who **undermined the progressive insurgent**, Bernie Sanders, through **undemocratic methods**. Instead of **looking in the mirror**, party power-brokers sought to **blame Russia** for its embarrassing defeat and divert the public's attention. They spread rumors of Russian electoral manipulation, which, as in the Hiss case, **have never been corroborated** and probably never could be.

The Russia-gate investigation so far has many of the footprints of a politicized disinformation campaign, an amateur one at that, given that the **January 2017 "assessment"** by only three intelligence agencies—released to try to prove the charge of election hacking—was **bereft of any evidence** and focused mainly on attacking English-language Russian television as an alleged propaganda outlet.

Gross inconsistencies also have been apparent; in the refusal by Democratic National Committee to allow the FBI to examine its computer server where the alleged hack took place and in Special Counsel Robert Mueller's refusal to interview WikiLeaks publisher Julian Assange or witnesses such as British diplomat **Craig Murray** who **met with the alleged leaker**. Mueller also refuses to engage with a study

carried out by the Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity, or VIPS, that determined the DNC data was leaked, not hacked, and that the data copying was performed on the East Coast of the United States and exceeded internet capability for a remote hack.

Liberals as Rightists

The timing of the indictment of 12 Russian spies by Mueller on the eve of a summit between Vladimir Putin and Donald Trump was also suspicious, along with the indictment being presented as proof when it is unlikely the case would ever be prosecuted.

Businessmen with ties to the Democratic Party, such as William F. Browder, meanwhile have replaced the old Wall Street Republicans in pushing the anti-Russia hysteria. They too aim to deflect attention from their commission of white-collar crime. In Browder's case it was tax evasion, for which Putin prosecuted him. The methods of the New Cold Warriors are generally reminiscent of the old GOP in the levying of baseless accusations and adoption of methods of clandestine surveillance and attempted entrapment to discredit or prosecute Americans suspected of collusion with Russia, as had been the case with Hiss.

The Democrats and liberal media pundits on CNN and MSNBC and in journals like *The New Yorker* appear to be oddly in sync with the extremist John Birch society, which accused Eisenhower in the 1950s of leading a communist sleeper cell.

As Establishment Democrats and their fellow travelers drive much of the Russophobic hysteria in an effort to undermine Trump, it has been important for them to promote a useable

past and distort the original history of the Cold War. As a case in point, [Seth Ackerman wrote a piece](#) in the supposedly left *Jacobin* magazine denouncing Roosevelt's vice president, Henry Wallace, who had advocated for détente with the Russians, as a communist dupe.

Ackerman then asserted in a [July essay](#), which was at least somewhat critical of the Democrats' current Russophobia, that "Hiss was a Soviet spy" who was "reportedly awarded secret Soviet decorations in honor of his service to Moscow." However, even serious scholarship of an anti-Hiss bent has acknowledged that Hiss' guilt remains speculative, and the opening of the Soviet archives has not revealed any smoking-gun evidence apart from the Venona files whose meaning is contested.

Joan Brady, in an [important recent study](#) of Hiss, "America's Dreyfuss," notes that the "red scare whipped up around the case became for America what antisemitism had been to Germany [in the 1930s], a force to unify the people and deflect attention from an economic re-arrangement that could not function freely without chipping away at their rights."

Decades after the case against Hiss, he remains a "bogeyman" who continues to serve as the embodiment what happens when we let our guard down.

These words resonate in our political climate where the Russian threat is again being invoked as a force to unify the people against false enemies and to steer attention from pernicious economic arrangements and criminal malfeasance by political donors.

Spooked by insurgencies on both the right and the left in

the 2016, the Establishment is worried about growing social unrest, both of which have been smeared as being influenced by Russia. New bogeymen are again being created to sustain a dangerous confrontationist policy toward Russia whose consequences may be even worse than the first Cold War.

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The Battle for Palestine – Part Two

Special Report: After the Holocaust, Europe acquiesced to the Zionist settlement of Palestine and turned a blind eye to the ethnic cleansing that cleared Arabs from the land, as ex-U.S. diplomat William R. Polk describes in the second of a three-part series.

By William R. Polk

The British Foreign Secretary told Parliament on Feb. 18, 1947, that “there is no prospect of resolving this conflict by any settlement negotiated between the parties.” Further, he said, according to the League of Nations mandate, the legal basis for Britain’s rule over Palestine, Britain did not have the authority to partition the country as everyone thought would be necessary.

Thus, the British government had decided to turn the problem over to the United Nations. The Foreign Secretary did not mention, but it was obviously a significant factor, that Britain could no longer afford to keep nearly 100,000 troops employed in an increasingly vain effort to keep the peace in what was in comparison to India a relatively unimportant area.

In response to Britain's request, the UN Secretary General on April 2, 1947, asked that the General Assembly (UNGA) take up the question of what should be done about Palestine. Five of the member states thought they already knew what to do: Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia proposed "The termination of the Mandate over Palestine and the declaration of its independence." Their motion was rejected by the UNGA which instead, voted to establish a "Special Committee for Palestine" (UNSCOP) to recommend a different solution.

It should have been sobering to the members of this, the last in the long line of inquiries, to hear the British delegate say, "We have tried for years to solve the problem of Palestine. Having failed so far, we now bring it to the United Nations, in the hope that it can succeed where we have not. If the United Nations can find a just solution which will be accepted by both parties, [we would] welcome such a solution [but] we should not have the sole responsibility for enforcing a solution which is not accepted by both parties and which we cannot reconcile with our conscience."

UNSCOP was to be composed of a diverse group, representatives of Australia, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, India, Iran, Netherlands, Peru, Sweden, Uruguay and Yugoslavia. As diverse as the committee was, its members shared one characteristic: none of them knew anything about Palestine. And they could not expect that they would get a "balanced" view since the representative of one party, the Palestinians, decided to abstain from collaboration with UNSCOP.

In the absence of a Palestinian voice combined with the general ignorance of the members of the Committee and sporadic demonstrations in Palestine against its inquiry the Jewish Agency dominated the proceedings.

Seeking Balance

Despite these problems, UNSCOP set out, or at least signed, a generally fair and informative appreciation of "the Elements of the Conflict" in its *Report to The General Assembly*. In summary, it portrayed two populations, one European, technologically advanced, united and determined, numbering about 600,000, and the other, numbering 1,200,000, Asian, divided both religiously and geographically into about 1,200 self-reliant, self-governing communities as well as "native quarters" of the few cities, suffering from all of the inherited problems of colonialism.

This population lived in one small (26,000 square kilometer/10,000 square mile) area of which "about half ... is uninhabitable desert" with seasonal and limited rainfall and access to ground water only from fragile and (what ultimately have proven to be) endangered aquifers. Palestine was almost totally without minerals other than the potassium and sodium salts of the Dead Sea. The delegates must

have thought there was little to divide.

UNSCOP accepted as given, probably on legal advice, that it should work within the intent and functioning of the League of Nations mandate. In retrospect curiously, UNSCOP did not apparently consider the utility of negotiating with and between the Palestinians and the Zionists. Nor, as in various contemporary and subsequent instances of decolonization did it regard the majority community as the presumed legal heir to the colonial government. Only the Arab states thought of turning the "case" over to the International Court.

Viewing the mandate document as tantamount to a constitution for Palestine, UNSCOP emphasized that the Mandatory Power (Britain) had been obliged to "secure the establishment of the Jewish National Home," to "facilitate Jewish immigration under suitable conditions" and to "encourage, in co-operation with the Jewish Agency ... close settlement by Jews on the land" while it "speaks in general terms only of safeguarding or not prejudicing the 'civil and religious rights' and the 'rights and position' of the Arab community in Palestine."

In attempting to balance these unequal obligations, the Committee observed, the "Mandatory Power has attempted, within the limits of its interpretation of the 'dual obligation' of the mandate, to provide some satisfaction of Arab political desires," but such moves "were generally rejected by the Palestinians and vigorously opposed by the Zionists."

UNSCOP was told that the Zionists demanded the right of "return" for European Jews in numbers defined only by the "economic absorptive capacity of the state." The Zionist representatives declared, however, that "The immigrant Jews [would] displace no Arabs, but rather [would] develop areas which otherwise would remain undeveloped."

Promises of Peace

In an earlier communication (March 19, 1899) to an official of the Ottoman Empire, Theodore Herzl had written that the Zionist movement was "completely peaceful and very content if they are left in peace. Therefore, there is absolutely nothing to fear from their immigration. ... Your Excellency sees another difficulty, in the existence of the non-Jewish population in Palestine. But who would think of sending them away? It is their well-being, their individual wealth which we will increase by bringing in our own."

The basis of the Zionist claim to Palestine was, as from the beginning of the movement in Theodore Herzl's words, "Palestine is our ever-memorable historic home."

In a separate opinion, the Representative of India held that the Jewish

contention that they were the “original” natives was both historically questionable and, if held to be the basis of a legal claim, would be a recipe for chaos since virtually all modern states would be open to similar claims based on ancient history.

As he wrote, “To found their claim on their dispersion from Palestine after a period of approximately 2,000 years, whatever religious sentiment may be attached by them to the land occupied by their Prophets, appears to me to be as groundless as anything can be. A multitude of nations conquered various countries at various times and were eventually defeated and turned out of them. Can their connexion, however long, with the land which they had once conquered provide them with any basis after the lapse of even one century?”

“If this were so, Moslems might claim Spain, which they governed for a much longer period than the Jews had governed part of Palestine ... [moreover] this claim cannot be made by those who were subsequently converted to Judaism. Khazars of Eastern Europe, Turco-Finn by race, were converted to Judaism as a nation about 690 A.D. Can their descendants possibly claim any rights simply because the ancestors of their co-religionists had once settled in Palestine.”

There is no indication that UNSCOP as a whole reacted to the Indian delegate’s demarche. But it was, in part, foreshadowed by the Palestinian Arab Higher Committee which “postulate[d] the ‘natural’ right of the Arab majority to remain in undisputed possession of the country, since they are and have been for many centuries in possession...”

The Arab Higher Committee also made two further arguments: first, that “the term ‘Arab’ is to be interpreted as connoting not only the invaders from the Arabian Peninsula in the seventh century, but also the indigenous population which intermarried with the invaders and acquired their speech, customs and modes of thought in becoming permanently Arabized.”

It is the descendants of this mixed group, they said, who the current Palestinian “natives.” And, second, they claimed “acquired” rights, which derived from the various British promises during and immediately after the First World War. Thus, the Palestinians “have persistently adhered to the position that the Mandate for Palestine, which incorporated the Balfour Declaration, is illegal.”

Disputing Arab Claims

UNSCOP found the Arab claims weak. It held that the Palestinian claim to “natural” rights is flawed by the fact that “they have not been in possession of it [Palestine] as a sovereign nation ... [and] Palestinian nationalism, as

distinct from Arab nationalism, is itself a relatively new phenomenon.”

Moreover, Great Britain “has consistently denied that Palestine was among the territories to which independence was pledged.” Finally, the Committee noted that the 1936 Royal Commission had pointed out that “there was a time when Arab statesmen were willing to consider giving Palestine to the Jews, provided that the rest of Arab Asia was free. That condition was not fulfilled then, but it is on the eve of fulfilment [sic] now.”

UNSCOP admitted that “the Jews would displace Arabs from the land if restrictions were not imposed ... [And found that since this] would seem inevitable ... continued development of the Jewish National Home ... envisages the possibility of a violent struggle with the Arabs.” It concluded by quoting Lord Balfour saying that “The general lines of [the Balfour Declaration] policy stand and must stand.”

So, UNSCOP recommended that following the British withdrawal, there should be a short interval during which time Palestine and the incipient Jewish state would be held under some sort of trusteeship while Palestine would be prepared to be partitioned into two states that would continue to be unified economically.

Meanwhile, the living circumstances of 250,000 or so displaced European Jews would be alleviated. The Committee ducked the question of whether or not that meant that the Displaced Persons would be allowed to enter Palestine. Finally, it noted that violence, carried out until recently “almost exclusively” by “underground Jewish organizations” would “render increasingly difficult the execution of the solution to be agreed upon by the United Nations.” But it offered no means to lessen the violence or to avoid the likelihood of war.

After reviewing the reports, listening to emotional appeals by various delegates, individuals and groups and following orders transmitted by their home governments, the delegates to the UN General Assembly voted (Resolution 181) on Nov. 29, 1947, 33 to 13 with 10 abstentions, despite strong opposition by Arab member states, to recommend partition of Palestine. The key feature was that it awarded the incipient Jewish state, whose citizens-to-be owned or controlled less than 6 percent of the land, 55 percent of the Mandate.

On the Ground in Palestine

The General Assembly had issued its verdict but it left open the question of how to actually carry out the resolution when no UN-controlled military or police forces were available. As the British delegate warned the General Assembly, Britain’s “84,000 troops were leaving. And they had proved insufficient to maintain law and order, in the face of a campaign of terrorism waged by highly

organised Jewish forces equipped with all the weapons of the modern infantryman.”

To appreciate the full meaning of the UN General Assembly decision, I consider it in the context of in four interacting categories:

First, the British military force began to disengage not only overall but selectively from cities, towns and camps. As it did, it opened areas that became essentially free-fire zones. The British commander reasonably took the position that his priority was to keep his soldiers out of harm’s way. They should be evacuated as quickly and as safely as possible.

What happened after they had left, or even what happened during the process of their leaving, was not their responsibility. Thus, as they vacated their former positions, one at a time, they necessarily if inadvertently favored one side or the other. Where they could, they tried to protect the residents; thus, for example in the city of Tiberias, they evacuated the nearly half of the residents who were Palestinians. Thus, they acted to protect the Palestinians but effectively turned the city over to the Jews. Overall, their actions necessarily favored the Zionists.

Second, the Arab states loudly and repeatedly proclaimed the responsibility to protect the Palestinians. However, until after the legal end to the Palestine mandate, they could not intervene. Doing so would have constituted an act of war against Britain, and the British would not allow them to move. So in the months between the beginning of the British withdrawal and May 15, 1948, they were effectively immobilized.

Legality was not the only reason. There were two other reasons for the inactivity of the Arab states. The first reason for their inactivity was that they were weak. Egypt and Iraq were effectively under British military occupation since their abortive revolts against the British (Iraq in 1941 and Egypt in 1942), and their armed forces were kept small, disorganized and ill-equipped. Corruption sapped their logistics while purges of officers suspected of political ambition or nationalist ardor weakened their command structures.

When the Iraqi army was sent to Palestine, many of its soldiers were not adequately armed, and some were without uniforms or even suitable footwear. The Egyptian army was the butt of British jokes it was said to be the largest army in the world, judged by the girth of the officers. They were scorned as inferior colonials. The army had only cast-off British equipment. Morale was naturally low.

The only reasonably effective Arab military force was the Jordanian Legion which

had been designed to patrol the desert and to provide income for Bedouin tribesmen who were its recruits. It was composed of only four battalions and one (as yet untrained) artillery unit. It had no transport and little ammunition. Moreover, it was not a "national" force: it was under the command of British officers.

No Effective Leaders

None of the Arab governments was an effective leader in its own country. King Farouk was generally despised by educated Egyptians; the mass of Egyptians lived on the edge of starvation; Egypt was already a "country of crowds" with roughly 1,000 people on each square kilometer of inhabitable land; disease was common and life expectancy was short.

Like the Egyptians, the Iraqis had troubles of their own. And they thought their governments were a big part of their troubles. The King of Iraq was a little boy who was under the control of a much hated regent who was regarded as a puppet of the British. Only Trans-Jordan's Amir Abdullah seemed popular among his mainly Bedouin subjects.

The second inhibition was that the leaders of the Arab states were divided by personal ambitions. Each pursued his own goals. King Farouk's Egypt wanted to take over at least Gaza to anchor the Sinai Peninsula while Abdullah had secretly worked with the Zionists for years to get their support for his incorporation of "Arab Palestine." Neither he nor Farouk were interested in the Palestinians.

Farouk confiscated military equipment destined for Abdullah. Each ruler espoused a different Palestinian faction. In short, jealousies, ambitions and personal quarrels were of much more importance to them than their declared protection of the Palestinians. Thus, the Arab states had no unified strategy and did not seek, even separately, to work with such forces as the Palestinians mustered.

Realizing their incapacity, the Arab states got the Arab League to offer on March 21, 1948, two months before the Mandate was due to lapse, a compromise peace. They offered to take in the thousands of Jewish "illegals," whom the British were holding on Cyprus, as citizens of their countries and urged that, rather than being divided as the UN had voted, the whole Mandate area be put once again under a trusteeship.

That proposal was briefly considered by the U.S. government which realized that a dangerous and destructive war, which was likely to harm American interests, was inevitable if the UN decision were implemented. The American "retreat" infuriated American Zionists who mounted a political attack on the Truman

Administration, with articles in *The New York Times* castigating officials for “duplicity,” “shoddy and underhand turnabout” and “a shocking reversal.”

The Truman Administration quickly backed down. What the Administration did was a replay of the Feb. 14, 1931 British Government disavowal of its White Paper, based on the Hope-Simpson Report, that would have limited Jewish immigration.

A Weak Military

Third, the Palestinian cause attracted volunteer fighters – a category of combatants we see in Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq – who began to infiltrate the Mandate before the British left. Some of them were displaced Palestinians who had been in exile since they had fought against the British in the 1936-1938 “revolt.” Most were from other Arab countries. They are believed to have numbered about a thousand by the end of 1947 and rose to perhaps 3,000 in the next year.

How effective these volunteers were is in doubt. Some carried out terrorist acts, particularly against Zionist targets in the area the UN had designated as the Arab Palestinian state, but the record shows that while they were brave, they were not decisive. In the village structure of Palestine, they were alien. In some villages which still sought to remain neutral, they were unwelcome.

Overall, the Palestinians had little military capacity. The intelligence agents of the Jewish Agency had been monitoring the Palestinians for years and reported in detail on their arms, organizations and sources of supply: they reported that the Palestinians had no arms production capability except in primitive bombs, few and mostly antiquarian rifles, usually with only 20-50 bullets a gun, practically no heavier weapons, no mortars, no machineguns, no artillery, no armored vehicles and no aircraft – their only potential source of supply, Britain, embargoed arms sales to them.

Perhaps even more important, they had no cadres of trained troops, no staff, no planning and no command-and-control organization. Perhaps most important, they had no intelligence sources in the Jewish community. Their only significant military leader was killed on April 8, 1948.

Villages operated independently and so, as the Israeli military intelligence reports confirm, “Villages in 1948 often fought – and fell – alone, the Haganah was able to pick them off one at a time in many districts. In many areas there was not even defensive co-operation between neighbouring villages, since relations between them, as often as not, were clouded by clan and family feuds.”

In short, the Palestinians had no significant military capacity. They were a typical colonial society. Already before May 1948, they had suffered at least

5,000 casualties. While the Israelis talked of the threat of an Arab-inflicted holocaust, "They were fully aware that the Arab war rhetoric was in no way matched by any serious preparation on the ground."

Hidden Realities

Fourth, in every category, the Zionists had overwhelming superiority. Since much of the information in this section was sternly denied for years I have checked what I have collected against the two major and more recent Israeli accounts, both of which were derived from Israeli military and political archives.

For years honest discussion of the Palestinian refugee issue was virtually impossible in print – being almost certain either or both to get the historian labeled as an anti-Semite or to cause his books to be effectively banned in book stores. (Both happened to me.)

It came as a "bomb shell" in 1987 when the Israeli journalist, Benny Morris, published *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947-1949*. He had been given access to the Israeli archives – the first time ever – and used them to document, at least partially, the Israeli expulsion of the Palestinians.

In 2004, in a second edition of his book, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited*, he took a less neutral position on the issues he had discussed. Morris had set out his contention that "The Palestine refugee problem was born of war, not by design, Jewish or Arab. It was largely a by-product of Arab and Jewish fears and of the protracted, bitter fighting that characterised the first Israeli-Arab war."

Other Israeli scholars, notably Ilan Pappé in his 2006 book, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, expanded, corrected and developed the research of Morris. Pappé shows conclusively that what Morris saw as more or less accidental – the exodus of the Palestinian people – was a strategy inherent in Zionism from the beginning and implemented deliberately, brutally and effectively according to what in the Israeli archives is known as "Plan D" (*Tochnit Dalet*).

I have drawn extensively on both books for this part of my essay because, drawn as they are on Israeli government and army sources, they are incontrovertible. I have, of course, drawn also on a variety of other, including British official, sources.

A Longstanding Plan

From Ottoman times, the Jewish community, the *Yishuv*, had thought of itself as a

proto-government and from the establishment of the League of Nations Mandate “all institutions were built with an eye to conversions into institutions of state.”

The British government dealt with and recognized the “Jewish Agency” as a *de facto* government which is how the *Yishuv* regarded it. Thus, it was able to make decisions that would be carried out. It had departments headed by ministers under a leader, David Ben-Gurion, who was virtually a head of state.

The *Yishuv* was literate, highly motivated, relatively wealthy and able also to draw upon European and American financial, political and personnel support. In short, it was a modern Western society and one with a multi-state capability.

The *Yishuv* had long had an agreed strategy: from the late Nineteenth Century, the Zionist leaders worked toward making Palestine into a *Judenstaat*. While in public, they disguised their long-term objective, using the subterfuge homeland (*heimstättte*), among themselves their aim was never in doubt. There was never, in private communications, serious consideration of either a bi-national state in which Arabs would also live or a smaller state in a partitioned Palestine.

At the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, the Zionists claimed the southern part of what became Lebanon and most of the agricultural area of what became Trans-Jordan as well as the major sources of water for the Mandate area. Trans-Jordan was divided from the Mandate of Palestine in 1922 to resolve the dilemma created by the French when they invaded Syria and overthrew its newly proclaimed independence.

The brother of the deposed ruler of Syria, Amir Abdullah, had marched into what became Trans-Jordan intending to fight the French. To stop him, the British in effect bought him off by establishing him in Amman. The British also asserted that this action would honor the commitments made to the Arabs to recognize their independence. Jordan was not to be subject to the Balfour Declaration and Jews were forbidden to buy land there.

Ben-Gurion's Strategy

The basic element of Zionist strategy was spelled out by the Zionist leader, David Ben-Gurion just after the publication of the Royal Commission Report in 1937 when he wrote privately to his son, “We must expel [the Palestinian] Arabs and take their places ... and if we have to use force – not to dispossess the Arabs of the Negev and Transjordan, but to guarantee our own right to settle in those places – then we have force at our disposal.”

The force at the disposal of the *Yushiv* began to be established in 1920 when the collectives (Hebrew: *kibbutzim*) set up semi-formal and part-time security

guards units (Hebrew: *HaShomer*). In 1936, in response to the Arab nationalist revolt, the British enrolled some 5,000 Jews into what became the paramilitary wing of the Jewish community. This evolved into the Haganah that would evolve into the Israel Defense Force.

Under a British military expert, the soldiers were trained in guerrilla and counterinsurgency warfare. In what may have been the first punitive mission against a Palestinian village – a kind of tactic the British had long used in India and along the Northwest Frontier to suppress nationalist revolts – a joint British-Haganah expedition in June 1938 attacked a Palestinian village on the Lebanese border.

During the early part of the Second World War, when a German break-through appeared likely, the British enrolled, trained and equipped Jewish military formations and incorporated individual Jews into its Middle East intelligence organization. By about 1942, some 15,000 men were serving in the British army in some capacity. In addition, fearing what might happen if the British were unable to hold off Erwin Romel's *Deutsches Afrikakorps*, the Jewish Agency in 1941 formed a "special forces" corps or shock troops known as Palmach (Hebrew: *p'lugot mahatz*).

But the Jewish leadership never forgot that its long-term enemy was Britain. Ben-Gurion and others soft-pedaled the long term and emphasized self-restraint (Hebrew: *havlagah*). This policy provoked a revolt within the Haganah by a group that came to be known as the *Irgun Zva'i Leumi*.

Deniability of Terrorism

The Irgun was inspired by Ben-Gurion's rival, Vladimir Jabotinsky, who set out what was then the extreme right-wing of the Zionist movement (and later became today's Likud Party). It favored an all-out war on both the Palestinians and the British. (The Irgun, in turn, would be split when Abraham Stern led about 200 of its members to form an even more radical and violent group called the *Lohamei Herut Yisraeli* or "Stern Gang.")

These radical, terrorist groups, although differing somewhat in their philosophy, remained under the control of the Haganah High Command. While the Zionists publicly denied it, the British published (Cmd. 6873) intercepted Jewish Agency telegrams proving that it was using Irgun and the Stern Gang to carry out actions it wished to disavow.

As one telegram put it: "We have come to a working arrangement with the dissident organisations, according to which we shall assign certain tasks to them under our command. They will act only according to our plan."

Perhaps the most remarkable element of the growing power of the *Yishuv* was in the field of intelligence. Already in 1933, a rudimentary organization had been created. A professor at the Hebrew University proposed that the Jewish National Fund make an inventory of Palestinian villages. His idea called for a dynamic, constantly updated, "map" of Palestinian society. It was a mammoth task.

As Jews from Iraq and other Arabic-speaking countries began to arrive, they were often assigned to this organization; then in 1944 a training school was established at Shefeya to train Hebrew-speaking operatives in Arabic and Palestinian culture and who were sent into every Palestinian village to identify potential enemies, map entry routes, inventory weapons, etc. In short, the agents produced an "appreciation" comparable to the CIA's National Intelligence Studies but were much more detailed. They shaped the 1946-1949 campaign and determined the outcome.

International Volunteers

The Jewish Agency and overseas Zionist organizations also recruited European and American volunteers. These men and women were much more numerous than the Arab volunteers. More important, they included highly trained people, some of whom had flown for the RAF or the USAF, commanded ships of war in the Royal Navy or the U.S. Navy or worked in high technology intelligence (such as code-breaking and wireless interception).

By May 1948, the Haganah numbered 35,700 standing troops of whom 2,200 were the Special Forces of Palmach. That is, as Benny Morris pointed out, the *Yishuv* army numbered some 5,500 *more* soldiers than the combined strength of the regular Arab armies and paramilitary Palestinian forces. In addition, Haganah could draw on 9,500 members of the paramilitary youth corps.

By July 1948, when the Haganah was renamed the Israel Defense Force, it had 63,000 men under arms. Perhaps more important than numbers, it had a command-and-control capability that allowed it to conduct division-size or multiple-brigade, operations. No Arab force even remotely approached its power.

The size and organization of manpower was matched by weaponry. While the British embargoed arms sales to both sides, their actions particularly affected the Arabs.

The *Yishuv* got around the British embargo in four ways: first, it worked with the local Communist Party to effect an arms purchase deal with Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union; second, it used some of the money it received from Jewish organizations in Europe and America to buy arms; third, it raided British army depots in Palestine and Europe; and, fourth, it had already begun producing in

its own workshops such weapons as mortars, sub-machineguns, heavy machineguns, and the particularly devastating and terrifying flame throwers.

These activities gave the *Yishuv* an overwhelming advantage. Finally, it achieved "aerial superiority" when, on March 27, 1948, it employed its first airplanes, some provided by South Africa and others stolen from the RAF.

As the Jewish army chief of staff Yigael Yadin proudly told Israeli officers in the last weeks of March 1948, "Today we have all the arms we need; they are already aboard ships, and the British are leaving and then we bring in the weapons, and the whole situation at the fronts will change."

Expulsion of the Palestinians and War

Expulsion of the Palestinians began before large-scale fighting between the Jewish forces and Palestinian paramilitaries and at least three months before the withdrawal of the British forces and the arrival of Egyptian, Iraqi and Trans-Jordanian army units. From late 1947 until 1949, it was expulsion that set the terms of combat.

Beginning in October 1947, *Yishuv* leader (and later Prime Minister) David Ben-Gurion established a sort of *politburo* that came to be known as "the Consultancy" to guide the armed forces into action to establish the *Judenstaat*. (A detailed account of the "Consultancy" with the plans and the actions it called for is far too long to be included here. It is laid out with citations in Ilan Pappé's *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, pages 27-28, 39-126. The existence of all of these plans and what they called for was vigorously denied for half a century.)

The Consultancy inherited a plan of action to take over the Mandate that had been drawn up already in 1937. This was known as Plan A. In 1946, Ben-Gurion ordered the intelligence unit of the Haganah to revise the plan. Various changes and refinements were made in Plan B and what became known as Plan C (Hebrew: *Tachnit Gimel*) emerged.

Plan C laid out the strategy of the various military forces of the *Yishuv* "against rural and urban Palestine the moment the British were gone." The envisaged offensive called for "killing the Palestinian political leadership, killing Palestinian 'inciters' and financial supporters, killing those Palestinians acting against the Jews, killing senior Palestinian officers and officials in the Mandate regime, damaging Palestinian transportation, damaging sources of Palestine economy (water wells, mills), attacking Palestinian villages and clubs, coffee house, meeting places, etc.," according to the intelligence studies that were already drawn up.

A refined version, Plan D, was approved on March 10, 1948. As Ilan Pappé wrote, it “sealed the fate of the Palestinians within the territory the Zionist Leaders had set their eyes on for their future Jewish state ... [it] called for their systematic and total expulsion from their homeland. ... Each brigade commander received a list [based on the intelligence ‘map’] of the villages or neighbourhoods that had to be occupied, destroyed and their inhabitants expelled, with exact dates.

“These operations can be carried out in the following manner: either by destroying villages (by setting fire to them, by blowing them up, and by planting mines in the rubble) [to prevent the villagers from returning] ... in case of resistance, the armed forces must be wiped out and the population expelled outside the borders of the state.”

Systematic Cleansing

Beginning in April 1948, as the British troops were withdrawn, area by area, attacks on villages were increased. Ben-Gurion put aside the UN partition plan and ordered his troops to carry out as much as possible the ethnic cleansing of all of Palestine.

Pappé wrote: “Every brigade assigned to the operation was asked to prepare to move into *Mazev Dalet*, State D, that is, to ready themselves to implement the orders of Plan D: ‘You will move to State Dalet, for an operative implementation of Plan Dalet,’ was the opening sentence to each. And then the villages which you will capture, cleanse [Hebrew: *tihur*] or destroy will be decided according to consultation with our advisors on Arab affairs and the intelligence officers.

“Judging by the end result of this state, namely April-May 1948, this advice was not to spare a single village ... the operational orders did not except any village for any reason. With this the blueprint was converted into military order to begin destroying villages.”

Eventually, of the roughly 700 Palestinian villages in what became Israel, 531 were to be destroyed in addition to 30 which had already been destroyed. (About 600 villages remained in “Arab Palestine,” that is, on the West Bank – which was held by the Jordan Legion – and in Gaza – which was held by Egyptian forces.) Before the British withdrawal had been effected, about 250,000 villagers had already been uprooted.

The Palmach commander Yigal Allon’s words were transcribed in the diary of David Ben-Gurion: “There is a need now for strong and brutal reaction. We need to be accurate about timing, place and those we hit. If we accuse a family – we need to harm them without mercy, women and children included. Otherwise, this is not

an effective reaction. During the operation there is no need to distinguish between guilty and not guilty.”

The Deir Yasin Massacre

The best-known attack was by the Irgun and the Stern Gang, operating under the orders of (and in conjunction with) the Haganah, on the Palestinian village of Deir Yasin on April 9, 1948. The attack replayed the Nazi destruction of Lidice.

Already before the destruction of Deir Yasin, a member of the Defense Committee (Yosef Sepir) had warned his colleagues that the non-Jewish world might see the destruction of villages as an echo of the German destruction of the little Czech farming village of Lidice on June 10, 1942, in retaliation for the murder of SS Obergruppenführer Reinhard Heydrich.

At Lidice, all the adult males and most of women were then murdered and the site was plowed under to be “forever blotted from memory.” The comparison of the two may be odious but it is hard to avoid.

Ilan Pappé summarized: “As they burst into the village the Jewish soldiers sprayed the houses with machine-gun fire, killing many of the inhabitants. The remaining villagers were then gathered in one place and murdered in cold blood, their bodies abused while a number of the women were raped and then killed... [One survivor, then a boy of 12 later] recalled, ‘They took us out one after the other, shot an old man and when one of his daughters cried, she was shot too. Then they called my brother Muhammad, and shot him in front [of] us, and when my mother yelled, bending over him – carrying my little sister Hudra in her hands, still breastfeeding her – they shot her too.’”

Terror is of little use if it is not known; so the Irgun called a press conference to announce the slaughter at Deir Yasin. What happened in Deir Yasin was repeated time after time and became a part of the “whispering campaign” that was employed by the Haganah intelligence agency to stimulate Palestinian flight. The villagers were, of course, terrified and so exactly carried into effect what the campaign sought.

As General Yigal Allon of Palmach said, “The tactic reached its goal completely ... wide areas were cleaned.”

Disinforming Americans

Following Deir Yasin, Ben-Gurion telegraphed Amir Abdullah of Trans-Jordan to disclaim responsibility. More important, a “disinformation” campaign in America sought to blame the Arab states for the expulsion of the Palestinians.

One, fairly typical, demarche was a pamphlet submitted to the UN General Assembly and widely quoted in the American press in December 1951. Its author and publisher were not named, but some pages of the pamphlet were signed by a number of notable Americans including Reinhold Niebuhr, Archibald MacLeish, Paul Porter (who had headed the Palestine Conciliation Commission), former President Roosevelt's principal foreign affairs adviser, Sumner Welles, together with various senior churchmen and academicians.

Attached to their message was backup material. The pamphlet's key charge was that "The record shows that it was an evacuation planned by the Arab war leaders and the Arab Higher Committee for the three-fold purpose of: 1. Clearing the roads of the villages for an advance of the Arab regular armies; 2. Demonstrating the inability of Jews and Arabs to live side by side. [and] 3. Disrupting services following the end of the mandate."

Those who questioned the account given in this and similar materials published in the campaign were charged as anti-Semites.

As the enormity of the human tragedy of Palestine began to be realized, if not by the public at least by governments, the UN Security Council decided to appoint a negotiator to try to stop the fighting.

It turned to Swedish Count Folke Bernadotte whose record included saving some 31,000 people, including 1,615 Jews, from German concentration camps during the Second World War. He was unanimously appointed (UNSC Resolution 186) on May 14, 1948, to mediate the war, and the outstanding Afro-American scholar and official Ralph Bunche was assigned as his deputy.

Working from Cyprus, Bernadotte negotiated two truces and outlined plans both for settlement of the war and for the creation of a United Nations agency to care for the refugees. As they evolved, the "Bernadotte Plans" called for a two-state solution – a Jewish state and an Arab state – with economic union.

Bernadotte also proposed readjusting frontiers according to population – that is, the Jewish state would have to give up substantial areas (including the Negev) which were overwhelmingly settled by Arabs – and he called for Jerusalem to be given a special status as a multi-faith world heritage site. (The UNGA voted in December 1949 to internationalize the city in Resolution 194.)

Killing the Messenger

On the issue of the Palestinian refugees, Bernadotte was even more outspoken. To the fury of the Jewish leaders, he reported to the UN on Sept. 16, 1948, that "It would be an offence against the principles of elemental justice if these innocent victims of the conflict were denied the right to return to their homes

while Jewish immigrants flow into Palestine, and, indeed, at least offer the threat of permanent replacement of the Arab refugees who have been rooted in the land for centuries.”

Folke Bernadotte was murdered the next day by a hit squad of the Stern Gang, allegedly on orders of its leader and later Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir.

Bernadotte’s task was taken up by his deputy, Ralph Bunche.

Bunche wisely recognized the two realities of the Arab side of the Palestine war: the first was that the Palestinian people, now scattered over virtually the whole of Western Asia had no ability to negotiate on their own behalf, and the second was that the Arab states, their self-proclaimed protectors, were incapable of working together.

So during the spring and summer of 1949, Bunche worked separately with Israel and each of the four Arab states – Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Trans-Jordan, which from April 1949 was known as Jordan. Iraq had withdrawn from the war and did not take part in the negotiations to bring about an end to the fighting. For his work, he was awarded the 1950 Nobel Peace Prize.

Bernadotte’s and Bunche’s lasting legacy was the creation of a UN organization to care for the refugees. Relief efforts were begun in the summer of 1948 and in April 1950 a new organization, UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) was created. It began its long life with 896,690 Palestinians on its rolls.

While the intent was to create opportunities for at least some of them to start new lives, the grim reality was that they could only be kept alive. They each received assistance of less than \$27 yearly for food, medicine, clothing and shelter.

First-Hand Accounts

In 1950, I spent two weeks in one of the camps in Lebanon talking with the refugees and wrote articles on what I learned. In one of the articles I described an encounter with a young man who had been paralyzed. Lying in his cot, he entertained and was waited on by a group of children. He built for them a model airplane and arranged that it dropped pebbles on his bed.

As he told it and as I described it, the children played as though being killed by the bombs, something they had observed in real life. But the editors at *The Christian Science Monitor*, echoing the prevalent American view of the war had the children only “seeking shelter from the bombs.”

UN relief provided an average of 1,600 calories of food/day. But, if the physical diet was meager, the emotional diet was noxious. It consisted of a blend of exaggerated memories and unrealistic hopes.

Few refugees could find jobs. Idleness was a dry rot in adults. And a new generation was born that knew little beyond camp life. Within a few years over half the refugees were less than 15 years of age. They were becoming the modern version of Moses's followers' time in the Wilderness.

Trying to Leave the Wilderness

The Palestinian and Arab states' "Time in the Wilderness" lasted many years. The Palestinians emerged from their expulsion a beaten, humiliated, divided people. The miserable refugee camps recreated the divisions of villages. Each *watan* remained just a piece of the little "nations" (Arabic: *awtan* the plural of *watan*).

Those who sought to deal with "the Palestine problem" had to deal not with the Palestinians but with the Arab states. But the Arab states were themselves, in the Biblical phrase, broken reeds "whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it."

As the Palestinian nationalist leader and a founder of the League of Arab States, Musa Alami wrote, "In the face of the enemy the Arabs were not a state, but petty states; groups, not a nation; each fearing and anxiously watching the other and intriguing against it. What concerned them most and guided their policy was not to win the war and save Palestine ... but to prevent their neighbors from being predominant, even though nothing remained except the offal and bones."

Such public opinion as there was (and such press as was free to express it) turned bitterly against the rulers of the states. Demonstrations broke out, government officials including the prime minister and chief of police of Egypt were assassinated while riots, attempted bombings and threats were almost daily occurrences.

In Syria, the government was overthrown in an army coup d'État in 1949, and its leader was quickly ousted by another group. In Jordan in July 1951, the newly proclaimed king was murdered by a Palestinian. Then, on Jan. 26, 1952, "Black Friday," mobs raced through Cairo, burning, pillaging and killing. It became obvious that no Arab government could cope.

Recognition that more was wrong with Arab society than government was spreading. Explicit was the conviction that corruption, poverty and backwardness were both the inheritance of decades of imperialism and also that they were the results of

structural defects in Arab society. These defects were not caused by events in Palestine, but they were highlighted by the shock of the Arab defeat there.

Arabs everywhere agitated for change. Each state cracked down on its critics but, ironically, the divisions of the "Arab World" into states – one of the sources of weakness – made criticism of neighbors attractive to rival governments.

"A new wind blows," wrote a long-time English colonial administrator. "Poverty and ignorance can lie down more or less happily together, but not poverty and education. That nowadays is likely to be an explosive mixture."

An Egyptian Revolt

The explosive mixture was first set off in Egypt. On July 23, 1952, the "Free Officers," under the leadership of Gamal Abdul Nasser, who as a young officer had experienced humiliation in Egypt's campaign in Gaza, ousted the King.

Nasser was not an uncritical supporter of the Palestinians. He was, however, a dedicated believer in Arab nationalism. For him the Palestinian and Egyptian emphasis on the village "nation," the *watan*, was a part of the Arab problem; what was needed, he thought, was to move beyond that narrow concept toward "pan-Arabism" (Arabic: *qawmiyah*).

Only if the Arabs could rise above parochialism, as the Jews had done with their national ideology, Zionism, could the Arabs play a significant role in world affairs, achieve a minimum degree of security or even overcome the humiliation of Palestine. [Regarding the impact of Zionism, see Shlomo Sand's groundbreaking *The Invention of the Jewish People* (London: Verso, 2009)]

So, while Nasser dealt, or tried to deal, with a variety of domestic Egyptian and Arab World issues during his lifetime as well as with stormy relations with Britain, France and the United States, Palestine was never far from his mind.

Indeed, it could not be. If he or other Arab leaders forgot, Israel and the Western states reminded them sharply. When U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles visited the Middle East in 1953, seeking to enlist the Arab states' kings, dictators and presidents in his anti-Soviet crusade, he found them turning always from what he saw as the threat of the USSR to what they thought of as the threat of Israel.

Despite the armistice of 1949, the borders of Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt were constantly being breached by raids and counter-raids, intelligence probes, commando attacks and "massive retaliations." They numbered in the thousands. All along the frontiers of Israel was a "no man's land."

The UN established a "Mixed Armistice Commission" to assess blame and to try to stop acts of aggression, but it was not effective. So some in America thought that a new approach must be found. And some thought that it had to be sought in Egypt.

The Israeli military intelligence organization was worried that Secretary Dulles's obsession with the Soviet threat might lead him to promote some sort of rapprochement with Egypt. To head this off, the Israelis, with the help of members of the Egyptian Jewish community, decided to undertake a "spoiling" operation in the spring and summer of 1954.

Code-named "Operation Susannah" and popularly known as the "Lavon Affair," the operation carried out a number of bombings and other acts of terrorism in Egypt. Included among them was the bombing of the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) building in Alexandria, Egypt. The plan was to blame the attack on the Muslim Brotherhood; its aim was to turn Americans against Egypt by demonstrating that the Egyptians were dangerous terrorists.

The attack was botched and the agents were caught. Israel denied the episode, information on it was suppressed, but the Israeli government resigned. It implicitly admitted its involvement when in 2005, it decorated the attackers.

The Suez Crisis

Raids and counterattacks continued. One seminal Israeli raid was in February 1955 when the Israeli army attacked the Egyptian military headquarters in Gaza and killed more than 60 Egyptian soldiers. Apparently that raid so alarmed the Egyptians that they realized that they needed more and better military equipment.

Since the Western powers were supplying Israel, Egypt turned to the Soviet Union, just as the Zionists had done eight years before. That move, in turn, alarmed the Eisenhower administration.

Briefly put, it set in motion a sequence of events in which the U.S. (on July 20, 1956) withdrew its offer to help finance the major Egyptian development project, the High Dam; in riposte (on July 26) Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal; after a fruitless series of talks, Israel, joined by Britain and France, attacked Egypt (on Oct. 29). That was the Suez Crisis.

Both the shape of the British-French-Israeli "collusion" and the results of their action were then obscure, but President Eisenhower memorably spoke of the existence of "one law" under which all nations must live. To the annoyance of Secretary Dulles, he forced the three states to withdraw.

[Recounting the sequence of events in these years would lead me far afield and excessively lengthen this account so I refer the reader to my book, *The Arab World Today* which is the 5th edition of my book, *The United States and the Arab World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991).]

America's brief turn against Israel resulted in the UN proclaimed ceasefire of Nov. 7, 1956, and the creation of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) to act as a buffer between Israel and Egypt.

Those who ultimately paid for the attack were the Jewish minority communities of the Arab countries. Then suspect as active or potential traitors in the increasingly nationalistic Arab societies, long-time resident Jewish communities came under pressure. Many Jews, with Israeli help and encouragement, left. Some went to Israel.

On the other side, the Suez war made Egyptian President Gamal Abdul Nasser the Arab hero. This suggested to Dulles that Nasser might be turned into the leader of a move toward peace. To find out, Dulles sent one of Eisenhower's close friends, Robert Anderson (who later would become Secretary of the Treasury), to discuss terms with Nasser.

The initiative was a disaster: neither Anderson nor Nasser understood what the other was saying. So the meetings were short, the understandings limited and the decisions evasive. The "Anderson Mission" was diplomacy at its worst. But, since both sides realized that disclosure of the talks could be politically ruinous, they agreed to keep them secret.

Still treated as "Top Secret" and tightly restricted, the CIA account of the talks was one of the first batches of papers I read when I joined the U.S. government in 1961. The price of super secrecy was evident in them: no one had time or scope to figure out what the other was saying, as Nasser admitted to the CIA's Kermit Roosevelt. It was evident in the papers that Anderson did not understand what Nasser was saying. As a colleague of mine quipped, "if I had been part of that mission, I would want it to be kept secret too!"

Failure of the talks was followed by a new round of coups, revolts and regional wars. The late 1950s was a time of Arab political upsets (particularly the Iraqi coup d'État of 1958, which was predicted by Richard Nolte, a later U.S. ambassador to Egypt, and me in a widely read article in *Foreign Affairs*, "Toward a Policy for the Middle East," which appeared two weeks before the coup.)

The late 1950s was also a time of American lethargy as Mr. Dulles's anti-Soviet pacts fell apart. Only the Israelis seemed to know what they wanted and how to get it.

Yet, it appeared to the incoming Kennedy Administration in 1961 that at least in one respect John Foster Dulles had been right: only President Nasser was capable of making peace. So President John Kennedy put an ambassador who was known and liked by the Egyptians into Cairo, sent the most "liberal" man in his entourage (Gov. Chester Bowles) and me to talk openly with Nasser and instructed me to prepare a draft Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. (It was the first of three I was to draft in years to come.)

At the time, most observers and certainly the American officials regarded the Palestinians as mere bystanders. They were not thought of as having any serious capacity to make either war or peace.

Israel Moves Further Ahead

Israel's first major task was to create a unified Jewish society from a deeply divided population. The Oriental Jews, as the Israeli-American scholar Nadav Safran wrote, "differed sharply in relevant historical background, culture, education, motivation, and even physical appearance from the European Jews." Perhaps even more significant was their historical memory. Whereas European Jews had long suffered from anti-Semitism, the Oriental Jews lived as self-governing "nations" (Turkish: *milleyet*) in protected environments.

As Safran rather ponderously wrote, they "lived within a surrounding society that was itself organized for the most part on a regional and communal basis. Even where the host society's traditional structure had begun to crumble under the impact of nationalism and modernization, the bulk of the Jews had not yet been called upon to make the kind of drastic adjustments to that society that gave rise to the sort of dilemmas European Jews faced." That is, the cause of Zionism, anti-Semitism, was a Western, not a Middle Eastern, phenomenon. [See *Israel: The Embattled Ally* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978) 91-92.]

And, of course, Oriental Jews had not experienced the Holocaust. So, one aspect of the "nation building" of Israel was to transfer to them the European Jewish experience. As several observers have commented, this involved the creation of a "Holocaust Industry."

In addition to the constant and powerful emphasis on the Holocaust as a unifying historical memory, the Hebrew language was made into a powerful nationalizing force. To prosper in Israel, one had to speak, read and write Hebrew. Not unlike America, where immigrants dropped their former languages, dress and habits to become "American," so in Israel arriving Jews rushed to become Israelis.

Education was the seedbed of the new nationalism and new nationhood.

Education had always been among the most laudable features of the Jewish

experience.

The Western Jewish society was virtually completely literate, and from the beginning, it had more engineers, physicists, chemists, doctors and technicians than all of the Arab states and the Palestinian society combined. But among the Oriental Jews, more than half of the women and a quarter of the men were illiterate and by 1973 only one in each person in each 50 had graduated from university.

The founding of world-class universities and research institutions was the crown jewel of Israel. There was also a powerful military-industrial complex which enabled Israel to become one of the world's major suppliers of weapons. It began in the Mandate and was fed by universities and research centers. From the 1950s, it also was subsidized by the United States which purchased equipment from it and shared technology with it.

Getting Secrets

And, where the sharing was not complete enough, Israeli agents penetrated American security as in the case of the Israeli spy, Jonathan Pollard as well as other nations to obtain advanced and particularly dangerous weapons. The nuclear weapons technology of both America and France were successfully targeted. From at least 1961, Israel had acquired nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

In the field of foreign affairs, Israel used its arms industry and intelligence expertise to build relationships in both black African countries and white (Boer) ruled South Africa. Its main concern, however, was with the United States where it developed powerful alliances with lobbying groups.

This activity was the subject of a series of hearings conducted in 1963 by the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs under the chairmanship of Sen. William Fulbright on Israeli established and sponsored lobby groups that were considered to be foreign agents.

Another Israeli advantage was the *Yishuv*, its military command or its intelligence forces, which had a modernizing effect that was already evident in 1947 and became more so in the wars fought between the Arabs and Israel in 1956, 1967 and 1973. In each encounter, the Arabs were defeated decisively as Israel displayed military capacities of a different order.

Not only did Israel have sophisticated command and control techniques, including ground control for aircraft, but, given its social cohesion, it could increase its army from a standing force of no more than 50,000 to 300,000 in about 48 hours. I once was taken by the Israeli government to visit a tank brigade south of Tel Aviv that was maintained by only 200-300 men but could be put into action

with 3,000 men in a few hours.

Wiping Out Arab Villages

Yet, from the Israeli perspective, perhaps the most important change in its national development was the wiping out of Palestine. Hundreds of villages were plowed under; the farm lands of many were converted into parks; old buildings, mosques and churches were bulldozed; roadways were changed; new maps were produced that no longer showed the old landmarks.

In a lecture, reported in *Haaretz* on April 3, 1969, Moshe Dayan acknowledged this policy, saying that “Jewish villages were built in the place of Arab villages. You do not even know the names of these Arab villages, and I don’t blame you, since these [old] geography books no longer exist. Not only the books do not exist – the Arab villages are not there either.”

Foreign journalists who tried to find the old villages, like *Observer* correspondent Sarah Helm and BBC and *Guardian* correspondent Michael Adams, were attacked as anti-Semites and had trouble even publishing their accounts. [See Christopher Mayhew and Michael Adams’ *Publish It Not* (London: Longman, 1975).]

Some Israelis even denied the existence of the Palestinians. Prime Minister Golda Meir was quoted in the London *Sunday Times* (June 15, 1969) as saying that “There was no such thing as Palestinians. ... They did not exist.”

Palestinian Seek the Initiative

Much has been written about the ugliness, drama and diversity of the events of the 1950s and 1960s and of the brutality, audaciousness and variety of the actors. There is a vast literature on this topic, but much of the intelligence information is “tactical,” dealing with how to apprehend or kill the various actors.

So complete is the focus on the dramatic aspects of these years that the underlying themes are often obscured. Yet, while the era’s events are only of transient interest, the themes have had an enduring impact.

As I have written, the Palestinians could be likened to Moses’ followers, former slaves whom he sought to turn into a warlike people by keeping them for two generations in the wilderness. Like all analogies, the comparison is not exact, but it is suggestive: the Palestinians had not been slaves but were a colonial people who had not yet received the stimulus of nationalism, and, while the camps in which they had been gathered were not exactly a “wilderness,” they were as isolated and as destitute as Moses had intended for his people. Moses thought his people needed 40 years to be transformed; by roughly 1967, the Palestinians

had suffered 20 years.

In those years, three themes become evident. The first theme is that during those first 20 years the Palestinians recreated the diversity and mutual incompatibility of the Palestinian village society and also were shaped by the diversity and regional differences of the camps.

Moses was right: 20 years was not long enough for a new and unified society to emerge. After 20 years, the Palestinians were still unable to work together. Their Israeli enemies profited from and encouraged their mutual hostilities, but the Palestinians lent themselves, almost eagerly, to the Israeli objective.

The second theme is the effect of the brutality of the conflict. From at least 1950, warfare along the frontiers had been endemic. It had also been as ugly as the Seventeenth Century's European Thirty Years War. Not only abduction, torture, rape and murder of men, women and children, but also mutilation filled the reports of the UN Mixed Armistice Commission.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of these events in shaping the attitudes toward one another of the Palestinians and the Israelis. Starkly put, the Israelis regarded the Palestinians as *untermenschen* while the Palestinians regarded the Israelis as monsters. Wounds were constantly opened and rubbed raw by thousands of incidents year after year.

Squeezing the Palestinians

The third theme is that during those years, few of the Palestinians had found "space" in which they could be peacefully active. Some actually prospered, at least financially, by moving to the oil-rich countries of the Gulf but at the cost of withdrawing from their people. Even the most successful realized that they had no future in their diaspora. They had acquired only what the Jews called a *nachtsyl* and the Arabs knew as a *mahal* – a temporary resting place.

And, as they competed with natives for jobs, contracts and wealth, the Palestinians found themselves the objects of local hostilities similar to those the Jews had suffered in Europe. While foreign propagandists insisted that the Arab states "absorb" the Palestinians, the natives regarded the Palestinians not only as foreigners but also as reminders of the Arab disgrace (Arabic: *nakbah*) in the 1948-1949 war.

Since there was no forum in which the Palestinians could be constructively active, those Palestinians whose names we remember turned to the weapon of the weak, terrorism. Middle Easterners would be hypocritical to claim the high ground of morality on terrorism. On terrorism, the Jews had led the way, and the Palestinians eagerly followed in their footsteps.

Terrorism is undoubtedly an ugly policy, but when other means of action are not available it has been adopted by people of every race, creed and ideology. [I offer proof of this in my book *Violent Politics* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007).]

Some of the former Israeli terrorists, having emerged victorious in their fighting against the British and the Palestinians, became leaders inside the Israeli government, just as former Algerian terrorists merged into the Algerian government. In a way, both were to become role models for at least some Palestinians.

By the 1960s, however, it was evident to the Palestinians that the small and ephemeral rival groups of anti-Israeli paramilitaries (Arabic: *fedayeen*) were not effective either politically or militarily. The reason why is simple. France could afford to leave Algeria – indeed it could not afford to stay – but the Israelis had nowhere to go and were determined to stay.

Fruitless Violence

So the dozens of Palestinian groups engaged in fruitless bouts of violence. The best known were the September 1970 “Hijack war” by the “Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine,” the “Black September” attack of September 1972 on the Israeli Olympic team in Munich in revenge for the destruction of two Palestinian villages, the flamboyant murders of the Venezuelan “Carlos the Jackal” and other incidences.

That these actions were pointless and drew opprobrium upon all the Arabs had become evident to the Arab states by September 1963, so the Arab states collectively agreed to form the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). It is noteworthy that it was the Arab states (from above) rather than the Palestinians (from within) that took this step.

But, a group of some 400 Palestinians under the auspices of King Husain of Jordan met in Jerusalem where they took the step of actually setting up the organization. The objectives of the PLO were set in terms that the Palestinians generally approved – elimination of Zionism, destruction of Israel, self-determination for the Palestinians, and the right of return to the Palestinian homeland.

The PLO “constitution” did not proclaim statehood. It would be a decade before it demanded that status. Initially, indeed, the PLO was only a confederation of different, even opposing, Palestinian groups and could operate only on the sufferance of non-Palestinians.

The closest they came to having a territorial state was that they were

recognized as having a notional claim to territory under Israeli occupation; Jordan did not recognize their authority on the West Bank nor did Egypt recognize their authority in Gaza. In effect, the PLO was relegated to a sort of observer status on the issue of Palestine.

The PLO's largest component – eventually reaching about 80 percent of the membership – was FATAH (the reverse acronym of the Arabic: *Harakat at-Tahrir al-Falastini*).

Arafat's Emergence

While its origins and early activities are necessarily obscure, we know that it grew out of meetings of a group of Palestinian refugees in Gaza led by Yasir Arafat, who had been born in Gaza and, although he spent his early life in poverty, trained as an engineer.

Arafat could have secured a job in the oil-rich Arab states, but he set his sight on Palestine. Having studied in Egypt, he probably joined the Muslim Brotherhood. Then forced to leave in 1954, he spent the next ten years moving through the refugee camps, recruiting followers and broadcasting his message “that the Palestinians had to take their destiny into their own hands and start harassing Israel.” [See Yahosifat Harkabi, *Fedayeen Action and Arab Strategy*, (London: Institute for Strategic Studies, 1968). General Harkabi, head of Israeli military intelligence and a professor at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, was probably the best outside observer of FATAH.]

As Arafat's group coalesced, the members set about indoctrinating the Palestinian community with a series of pamphlets. Their fundamental thesis was that the only feasible action of the Palestinians was guerrilla warfare.

In this, Arafat and most Arabs drew on the lesson of the Algerian war of national liberation. Thus, they argued that the role of the conventional Arab states' armies was largely irrelevant, just as the so-called External Army of the Algerians (which had sat out the war in Tunisia and Morocco) had been; what counted in Algeria and would count in the Palestine conflict, they believed, was the informal or guerrilla forces that were known in Algeria as the for “neighborhood” or “popular” (Arabic: *wilaya*) forces.

Beginning in 1966, the paramilitary forces of, FATAH carried out raids on Israel from bases in Syria. The Israeli government repeatedly warned Syria that it risked a massive Israeli retaliation.

In the first days of May 1967, Soviet intelligence passed to the Egyptian government information that Israel was preparing to attack, and this estimate seemed confirmed by a speech on May 12 by the Israeli prime minister.

Old enmities between the Arab states, no matter how bitter, were brushed aside as the crisis expanded. Even Kuwait, usually a cautious observer rather than an active participant, put its tiny armed forces at the disposal of the Egyptian general staff, and at an Arab League meeting all the members declared their support. The Middle East rushed toward war.

Toward the 1967 War

Here I must turn back from FATAH to the Arab states and particularly to Egypt. During the years following the 1952 Israeli-French-British attack on Egypt at Suez, Egypt had built a much larger and more competent army and with Soviet help had equipped it.

But, it seemed to me at the time, that it had two fatal weaknesses: first, it was obsolescent. It was essentially a Second World War army whereas Israel had an ultra-modern force, and, second, it was divided.

Most of the best units of the army were then in Yemen fighting the royalist guerrillas. But Nasser had accepted the assurance of his principal military adviser that the army was so strong that the Israelis would not dare attack it. He was wrong and should have known better.

That assessment led Nasser to play the dangerous game of brinkmanship which he was not equipped to play. He was partly pushed beyond reason by the Syrian and Jordanian governments and to a lesser extent by the Palestinians. They taunted him for cowardly hiding behind the UN force (UNEF) that patrolled the Sinai Peninsula.

Partly in an emotional personal reaction, Nasser decided to replace UNEF with Egyptian troops. The flashpoint was at the Straits of Tiran which was legally Egyptian – the ship channel, Enterprise Passage, is just 500 meters off the Egyptian mainland, – but it was of crucial importance to Israel as the only access to its port at Elath. Foolishly, Nasser “miscalculated.”

He announced that “Under no circumstances will we allow the Israeli flag to pass through the Gulf of Aqaba. The Jews threaten war. We tell them you are welcome. We are ready for war, but under no circumstances will we abandon any of our rights. This water is ours.”

All of the angers, frustrations and humiliations of the Arabs for the previous 20 years showed in that emotional statement. For Israel, it was tantamount to a declaration of war. But for the strenuous urging of the U.S. government, Israel would have immediately attacked.

Remarkably, the governments of the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet

Union each tried to pressure Nasser into backing down. At the time, I warned that he would not or perhaps even could not. He was less able to do so when the normally cautious King of Jordan embraced him and Egypt's policy. Meanwhile, President Lyndon Johnson told the Israeli government that he was prepared to break the blockade with American naval power.

In the flurry of diplomatic activity, the U.S. government believed as late as the evening of Saturday, June 3, that the crisis had passed.

War Comes

Walt Rostow, who was then head of the National Security Council, arranged a briefing for me with senior State Department officers, all of whom asserted that the danger of war had passed. I thought this was nonsense and wrote a memorandum explaining why.

Rostow promised to give my analysis to the President and secretaries of State and Defense. In it, I predicted Israel would attack within 72 hours. I was wrong. War began in 36 hours.

Two hours after dawn on Monday, June 5, fighter bombers of the Israeli Air Force caught the Egyptian Air Force on the ground and largely destroyed it. With mastery of the air, the Israeli army crushed the Egyptian forces in Sinai; then it turned on Jordan and threw the Jordanian army back across the Jordan River; and in a furious assault it destroyed the bulk of the Syrian army and reached the suburbs of Damascus.

Incidental to the attack against the Arabs was an Israeli attack on America. On June 8, 1967, Israel attempted to sink the U.S. Navy ship, the "Liberty" – the first time since Pearl Harbor that an American naval ship was attacked in peacetime. The attack showed both that the Israelis were prepared to "bite the hand that fed them" and that the U.S. government was willing to be bitten without even saying "ouch."

The why behind the Israeli attack on the USS Liberty has long been debated. But Israel had secrets that it didn't want the world to know. Among them, Israelis were executing bound Egyptian prisoners of war (which the Liberty overheard the Israelis discussing on the radio) and they had attacked a UN convoy. Johnson called back aircraft that were going to the aid of the Americans because he didn't want to stop the Israelis.

While the Israelis, lamely, said the attack was an accident, they knew the ship was part of the U.S. Navy; they inspected it for eight hours and then Israeli jets and ships fired into it with machineguns, cannon and rockets and set it afire with napalm and launched torpedoes at it.

Clearly, they were attempting to sink it and the fact that they particularly targeted the life rafts suggests that they hoped there would be no survivors. They killed 34 U.S. service men and wounded 171. The surviving crew members were threatened with courts-martial if they discussed what had happened and the key intelligence materials including intercept tapes were kept secret for the next 35 years.

Other than the drama and the pain, what was the long-term import of this incident? If I were an Israeli policy planner, as I have been an American policy planner, I would discount all future American protests and warnings.

After all, if the U.S. government did not react strongly to an attack on one of its ships with the killing of uniformed sailors, would it react forcefully to lesser provocations? Apparently, that message was not lost on Prime Ministers Ariel Sharon and Benjamin Netanyahu.

The Second Arab Disaster

The war was a disaster for the Arabs and particularly for the Palestinians: In these encounters, the Arab states armies suffered the loss of about 25,000 men which, given their populations was proportionally equivalent to the loss of about 5 million Americans. About 175,000 Palestinian refugees were forced to flee once again and 350,000 additional people were turned into refugees. The humiliating defeats infected the "Arab street," as journalists like to call the general public, with a sullen and tenacious hatred.

As a result of my accurate prediction of the war and because of my relationship with McGeorge Bundy to whom Johnson turned over the Middle East problem, I was called to the White House on June 5, 1967, to write a plan for a ceasefire and a subsequent peace treaty.

Johnson made both tasks impossible by deciding not to allow negotiations with the Egyptians. That was to be one of the several opportunities to bring the long war to an end. For better or for worse, it was missed and the fighting spread.

I had resigned from the Policy Planning Council in 1965 and was then Professor of History at the University of Chicago and President of the Adlai Stevenson Institute of International Affairs.

An amusing personal note: I had purposely not kept up my security clearance because I wanted to be free to write completely independently. So when I arrived at the White House, I had to be escorted to the office that was assigned to me. It had been Lyndon Johnson's office when he was Vice President. But all the furniture was taken out so I spent the first few hours sitting on the floor.

I took this as proof that unlike the 1956 Suez crisis, there was no “collusion” on the 1967 war. I was given, I believe, access to all the materials the President and Bundy were receiving. But my stay lasted only a day. When Johnson decided not to negotiate, I returned to Chicago.

A New Direction

Arafat saw the defeat of the Arab states and particularly of Jordan in the war as an opportunity. Once more, he thought, the Palestinians must take the lead: rather than being led (and unified) by the states; it would be the historical role of the Palestinians to lead (and unify) the Arab governments.

Nasser appeared to be a spent force; Assad in Syria had proven weak and vacillating; King Husain’s covert deals with Israel had not saved him; and Lebanon seemed irrelevant. Arafat’s FATAH took control of the PLO.

After the 1967 war, the second disaster for the Palestinian people, the refugee community grew to some 1,375,915. And, from the bitter defeats of the armies of Syria, Jordan and Egypt, the Palestinians drew the lesson that they were on their own.

But Israel’s victory appeared, paradoxically, to create a new vulnerability: having battled for a strategically secure frontier, Israel had acquired a strategically insecure population. Arafat saw this in the context of what was then exciting to the Palestinians, the Algerian defeat of the French.

In that battle less than 13,000 Algerians defeated 485,000 French soldiers. By using guerrilla tactics, they wore down the French and got them to leave. Arafat thought the Palestinians might be able to do the same.

The confrontation with Israel had to be, Arafat maintained, a war of attrition. It was bitterly fought at first, but the cost was too high for Jordan to bear. Fearing that the PLO would use the conflict to take over Jordan and turn it into a Palestinian state (rather than, as he was prepared to allow, the Palestinians being or becoming Jordanians) King Husain rounded on the PLO with his largely Bedouin army.

Black September

To the Bedouin, the Palestinian cause was irrelevant while loyalty to the king was obligatory. On June 9, 1970, there was an attempt to assassinate King Husain, attacks were carried out on the royal palace and the national radio station and at least 60 foreigners were taken hostage.

Next the PLO demanded that the King dismiss his uncle as commander of the armed

forces. The King complied. The final act in the drama was the hijacking of four commercial jets whose passengers were held hostage in the second week of September 1970.

It was a hijack too far. The king had to respond or abdicate. He responded. The Jordanian army rampaged through the refugee camps in what came to be called "Black September." Casualty figures are only estimates but between 5,000 and 10,000 seems a reasonable guess.

In two weeks, the PLO had been crushed. But, wisely, Husain gave the PLO an out: he flew to Cairo to sign a deal with Arafat. Driven from Jordan, the PLO moved its operations to Lebanon where some 300,000 Palestinians lived in refugee camps under the UNRWA flag.

Though the Israelis were glad to get the PLO out of Jordan, they were not disposed to allow it free rein in Lebanon. They attacked the Beirut airport in December 1968 and began a series of further operations in the following months designed to force the Lebanese government to suppress Arafat's followers.

Suez Ceasefire

Meanwhile, along the Suez Canal what amounted to "low intensity" war continued. The two armies were just a "stone's throw" apart along the narrow waterway. Neither could move forward, but neither would retreat. Casualties were mounting steadily without any discernable result for either side. Sniping, augmented by commando raids, was backed up by artillery barrages.

The Israelis realized that nothing was being gained and they wanted to achieve a ceasefire; so Prime Minister Meir asked me to be the mediator with President Nasser. I did and the ceasefire was achieved shortly before his death. The Egyptian leader who once dreamt of Arab unity died on Sept. 28, 1970.

In this middle period of the Zionist experience marked by the creation of the Israeli state and its successful wars against the Palestinians and neighboring Arab states the land of Israel underwent an almost total transformation from what had been the British mandate. The transformation involved the arrival of about 1.5 million Jewish immigrants, with nine out of ten coming from Eastern Europe.

Israel's transformation also benefitted from enormous infusions of American money. In the years from 1947-1973, that money amounted in various forms to over \$100 billion or roughly \$33,000 for each man, woman and child.

Finding Israeli intelligence very effective, the CIA also underwrote those activities with probably about \$100 million a year to gain at least some access

to Israeli findings and in return shared with the Israelis the CIA's own "take."

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