

Israel Without Tears

Dean Jabara

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Today, after twenty years of Israel's existence and three wars between Arab and Israeli, the Arab-Israeli conflict remains one of total deadlock. Arab acceptance of Israel's existence after the June, 1967 blitzkrieg must remain the wishful thinking of the Sunday NEW YORK TIMES.

So many millions of words have been written about the Palestine problem and yet the basic issues remain uncomprehended by so many people. Recent statements by Black Power advocates in the U.S. condemning the "Zionist imperialist war of Israel" show that some radicals in the country are, however, very much aware of why Arab opposition to Israel has not abated.

Zionism found its genesis among European Jewish intellectuals in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Its basic tenet was the founding of a national state in Palestine for the ingathering of world Jewry. This desire was based partly on the feeling that gentiles are incurably anti-Semitic and partly on religio-mystical grounds. The British government, interested in gaining the financial and political support of European Jewry in World War I, issued the Balfour Declaration in 1914 supporting the Zionist aim.

Under its Mandate of Palestine after World War II, Britain was to hold Palestine "in trust for the Jews," without majority self-rule by the Arabs and suppressing any rebellion by Arabs until Zionist immigration was sufficient to proclaim a Zionist state.

A small trickle of Zionists immigrated to Palestine prior to the rise of Nazism, but the Zionist colonization of Palestine receives its greatest thrust from Nazi persecution of Jews in Europe. The argument used by the Zionists among Western liberals to justify this colonization of Palestine was the debt of shame owed by the West to world Jewry for Western persecution of Jews. Whatever the moral justice retrospect that embraced landlord domination in Egypt or colon-domination in North Africa.

It would be most desirable to achieve the de-zionifications held by Zionists, and pressed on Westerners by them, in terms of Palestine and its overwhelming indigenous Arab majority, Zionism was a race-supremist settler movement. During the Mandate, all lands bought by the Jewish National Fund in Palestine became legally, racially "Jewish" and could never be repurchased by a non-Jew.

Arab tenant-farmers and laborers were evicted or driven away by the Zionist racial boycott of Arab labor. After Israel was proclaimed as a state, the "Law of Return" was promulgated which allowed for the immigration of all Jews in "exile" to Israel, the logical consequence of which would mean and has meant Israeli expansionism.

No one who is familiar with what took place in Algeria, Angola, Rhodesia or South Africa can possibly ignore the parallel with Israel. The responses by other indigenous majorities to all other statist settler minority groups employing practices such as were employed by the Zionists was identical to the response of the Arabs.

Moreover, the Arabs saw the creation of Israel, in the very heart of what was otherwise a culturally and linguistically homogenous area, as part and parcel of colonialist manipulation with their land, just as they had experienced the division of the area into various countries by the British and French after World War I.

The other dimension which has emerged out of the past twenty years is Israel's relationship vis-a-vis the Arab countries and the anti-imperialist struggle. The identification between Israel and Western imperialism was, at

Israel's birth, complete. The dependence by Israel upon the largess of European, North American and South African Jews compelled this identification as well as the fact that Israel envisions itself as a producer country utilizing the markets of the less-developed nations in the Afro-Asian world.

As a beach-head community in the Afro-Asian world, Israel has neither the intention nor the capacity to align itself with the anti-imperialist forces of the area. Some leftists in the U.S. have been so naive as to suppose that Israel's identification with imperialism is merely because Israel is surrounded by bitter and hostile neighbors. This argument belies the intricate economic enmeshment of Israel with the West. When Abba Eban recently proposed the Middle Eastern Common Market of Jordan, Lebanon and Israel, the mold of Israeli ambitions had already been set. Some years earlier Eban had written in his book, VOICE OF ISRAEL: "What we aspire to is not the relationship which exists between Lebanon and Syria; it is far more akin to the relationship between the United States and the Latin American continent, relations of good neighborliness, of regional cooperation, of economic interaction, but across a frankly confessed gulf of historic, cultural and linguistic differences."

When Israel's Defense Minister Moshe Dayan was on Face the Nation on June 11, after Israel's blitzkrieg, an exchange took place between the correspondent for the New York Times and the Defense Minister:

SYDNEY GRUSON: Is there any possible way that Israel could absorb the huge number of Arabs whose territory it has gained control of now?

GEN. DAYAN: Economically we can; but I think that is not in accord with our aims in- the future. It would turn Israel into either a bi-national or poly-Arab-Jewish state instead of the Jewish state, and we want to have a Jewish state. We can absorb them, but then it won't be the same country.

It must surely have been the same desire to have a "Jewish State" that led to the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Arabs in 1948 and 1967.

Ever since its creation, Israel has had very close commercial and political ties with the Union of South Africa, from which Israel's foreign minister, Abba Eban, comes. Nor was it merely the fact that Algeria is Arab that led Israel to support the French in the Algerian struggle for independence. These imperialist relationships are part of the very fabric of the Zionist state, just as the Arabs regard Israel as part of one comprehensive of Israel and its integration into the political and economic framework of the Middle East as a step toward making Israel's existence more acceptable to the Arabs. The idea, however, given the financial and political symbiosis which exists between Israel and Western Jewry, is impossible of attainment. The Israeli attitude, the attitude of a race supremacist beachhead community, is reflected in the speech Eban gave at the "Stars of Israel" rally in New York after the June war:

"We feel that we have fought and won this battle not for ourselves in Israel alone but for Jewry everywhere, and in some small measure, perhaps for the vindication and reassertion of Western democracy."

Undoubtedly it is felt by many of Israel's supporters that the Israeli victory was "the vindication and reassertion" of that vaunted Western democracy they have so assiduously committed themselves to throughout the world. In fact, the war and its aftermath can only serve to heighten the anti-imperialist consciousness in the Middle East.

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