

The Dispossession of the Palestinians - Resource List

SELECTED BOOKS

1. Tanya Reinhart: *Israel/Palestine; How to End the War of 1948*.
2. Ilan Pappé (ed): *The Israel/Palestine Question*. Rewriting Histories series.
3. Edward Said: *Orientalism and the Question of Palestine and Peace and Its Discontents*.
4. Amira Hass: *Drinking the Sea at Gaza, Days and Nights in a Land Under Siege*.
5. Noam Chomsky: *Fateful Triangle*.
6. Tom Segev: *One Palestine Complete; Jews and Arabs Under the British Mandate*.
7. Eugene Rogan (ed): *The War for Palestine*.
8. Avi Shlaim: *The Iron Wall – Israel and the Arab World*.
9. Kathleen Christison: *Perceptions of Palestine*.
10. Kathleen Christison: *The Wound of Dispossession*.
11. Bernard Wasserstein: *Divided Jerusalem, The Struggle For The Holy City*.

SELECTED WEBSITES

<http://electronicIntifada.net> – Electronic Intifada

<http://www.Palestine-pmc.com> – Palestine Media Centre

<http://www.upmrc.org/> - Palestine Medical Relief Centre

<http://www.ajpp.Canberra.net.au> – Australians for Justice and Peace in Palestine (under construction)

<http://www.palsolidarity.org> – International Solidarity Movement

<http://phrconline.org> – Palestine Human Rights Committee (Australia)

<http://www.gush-shalom.org/english/>

<http://www.zmag.org> – Site with excellent articles on a range of topics.

<http://www.arij.org> – Applied Research Institute Jerusalem – maps, data.

<http://www.btselem.org> – Israeli human rights group.

www.netSPACE.net.au/~avigail/ - Avigail Abarbanel's website. Very interesting articles on Israeli cultural myths and the role of "destructive entitlement". (All cultures have some false myths.) Avigail is Jewish and a psychotherapist.

A free Middle East Information Service operates out of Melbourne. It provides information from the Israeli peace movement and the Israeli press, including some material not available in English anywhere else.

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“Of course we dream of peace. I want to be with my family in peace. I want my home. I want my passport. I want my national flag. I want to live like a human being...”
Abu Jihad, co-founder of Fatah

BACKGROUND TO THE PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI CONFLICT

- After the horrors of the holocaust, the UN proposed a partition of the British Palestine Mandate in 1947, which gave over 50% of the land to the Jewish population who were at that time only 35% of the population and held around 10 percent of the land.
- In late 1947, attacks on Arab villages and towns by Zionist terrorist groups, including several documented massacres, led to around 700,000 of the Palestinian population fleeing their homes. Those who fled thought it would only be a few weeks until the conflict died down and they could return. Reprisals by Palestinians against Jews also occurred. The Palestinian refugees and their descendents (3.8 million) have never been allowed to return. 33% of these still live in refugee camps in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza. Most of the rest live within 160km of Israel's border.
- The State of Israel was unilaterally declared on 14 May 1948. The war between the Arab states and Israel then began and continued until 1949.
- In the 1967 war, Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza and has remained military occupiers in those territories since that time.
- The West Bank and Gaza comprises only 22% of the former Palestine Mandate. Israel now exists on 78% of the former mandate territory, much more than it was granted in the UN partition plan. The Palestinian authority has agreed that a Palestinian state will exist on only the 22% - West Bank and Gaza. Palestinians have been making compromises for years in an attempt to attain peace.
- The first Intifada (popular uprising 1987-93) resulted in the deaths of 160 Israelis and 1162 Palestinians, according to the Israeli human rights organization BTselem.



Peace Issues Pamphlet No. 1

This pamphlet has been published by *Just Peace* in the interests of general discussion and inquiry. Views expressed do not necessarily represent those of individual members of *Just Peace*.

Background to the Conflict ...

- In 1988 the Palestinian National Council recognised the right of Israel to exist.
- The Oslo Accords were signed in 1993, when the Palestinians again declared the right of Israel to exist.
- Between the signing of the Oslo accords in 1993 until 2000, when there was relative calm, the number of Israeli colonists in the Palestinian Territories (West Bank and Gaza) doubled.
- These colonies are built on hilltops, on stolen Palestinian land and are accessible only to Israelis, who travel on Israeli-only roads (bypass roads). They serve also as bases for the Israeli military and the colonists in these colonies/settlements are heavily armed.



- After the continuing expansion of Israeli colonies in the Palestinian Territories and then opposition leader Sharon's provocative visit, accompanied by a thousand soldiers and police, to the Temple Mount/Haram al Sharif, one of the most sacred Muslim sites, the second Intifada began in late September 2000.

- Since that time, over 2,400 Palestinians and 720 Israelis have died in the conflict (as at June 2003).

- Professor Tanya Reinhart of Tel Aviv University, in her book, *Israel/Palestine: How to end the war of 1948*, documents the policy of deliberate injury perpetrated by the Israeli military against Palestinians. She says that, "Injuring Palestinians has remained a consistent Israeli policy (p.115) with the aim of reducing international condemnation which would occur if fatality numbers were too high.

- As it is, the number of Palestinians killed each month, in early 2003, was on a par with the total number of Australians killed in the Bali Bombing, and this is from a West Bank and Gaza population less than that of Sydney.

Settlers. Israeli colonists who move to the occupied territories, displacing Palestinians in the process. Many settlers represent fundamentalist religious positions.

- Professor Reinhart also debunks the myth of Barak's 'generous offer', stating that Barak's offer would have led to a Palestinian state on the

The Palestinians are confronted with the most powerful armed forces in the Middle East. The Israeli military uses rockets and bombs to assassinate targeted Palestinians, often killing or injuring bystanders.

Suicide bombing has been one response to Israeli occupation and state-sponsored terror, the systematic humiliation of Palestinians by Israeli governments, and the dispossession of the Palestinian people. The way to stop suicide bombings is not to increase the repression of the three million Palestinians in the Occupied Territories. It is to end the occupation and to start recognising the rights of the Palestinian people both in the Occupied Territories and within Israel's formal borders.

Many Israelis and Jewish people around the world support an end to the occupation and settlements.

More than 500 Israeli soldiers have refused to serve in the Occupied Territories. This is an indication that there is no moral basis to the continuing presence of Israeli forces in the West Bank and Gaza. Diverse Israeli groups have been actively pursuing peace initiatives for 20 or more years. In the USA and Europe, there



are many cross-cultural groups actively advocating the end to Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories.

This leaflet has been produced with the assistance of both Jews and Palestinians (most of whom are members of *Just Peace*), and also with the assistance of the *Australians for Justice and Peace in Palestine* organization (<http://www.ajpp.canberra.net.au/>). There have been many initiatives, from people of goodwill in both the Palestinian Diaspora and the Jewish Diaspora, resulting in ongoing dialogue between Jews and Palestinians. These initiatives are occurring in Australia and many other countries, and are giving tremendous encouragement to all those working towards a just peace in Israel/Palestine.

Closed Areas and Curfews

Palestinians in the West Bank and other towns are subject to random and long-term curfews. People cannot get to work or visit family in other areas of the West Bank. Much of the time they are not allowed out of their houses. Many Palestinians, including children, have been shot, just for being out when a curfew was imposed, even when those times were not clear to the population.

Bethlehem has been declared a closed military area and all movement into and out of the area is controlled. Almost continuous curfews are enforced; the civilian population is struggling to cope, to survive.

Poverty and malnutrition among Palestinians is increasing at an alarming rate, resulting from unemployment and lack of ability to get to workplaces, and by the restrictions on movement.

Human Rights Violations

According to the Israeli human rights group B'Tselem; torture of the many Palestinian prisoners is widespread. They also report that Israel takes 80% of the water from the West Bank. B'Tselem, Peace Now, Amnesty International and other human rights organisations have cited Israel for numerous violations of the Geneva Convention and UN Human Rights conventions. Israel has been cited for refusing people access to medical care, shooting civilians, imposing group punishments on Palestinians, especially the destruction of the houses and exiling family members.

What might be the terms of a "Just Settlement"?

1. There must be clear objectives for the negotiations. Israel's past strategy of endless negotiations must not be allowed to recur.
2. International observers must be present on the ground at all stages. Israel and the US have resisted this in the past.
3. Israel can and should immediately evacuate the entire West Bank and Gaza strip. Settlers wishing to leave the Occupied Territories should be compensated, by the Israeli government, for the property they leave behind. Settlers who wish to stay must be prepared to live under Palestinian control.
4. The Palestinian West Bank must be a contiguous whole and not divided. The same applies to Gaza. The Palestinian state must be viable and not just a "Bantustan" like in apartheid South Africa. Fair water rights and farmland must be part of the early negotiations.
5. Some sort of road corridor should exist between northern Gaza and the West Bank.
6. A meaningful sharing and governing of the Old City of Jerusalem would be needed. One proposal is to make it an international city.
7. The "right of return" of Palestinian refugees is a difficult issue, but not insoluble. It requires both symbolic and practical initiatives as part of reconciliation.
8. The "Roadmap for Peace" is an unsatisfactory document because it does not deal with the main issue: the occupation since 1967.

West Bank which was divided up into 4 separate areas, still containing armed colonies and the military, with no control of their borders or water resources. Palestine would then have only comprised around 50% of the West Bank land (not including most of Gaza).

- The Sharon government is working to destroy the current 'Road Map' peace plan. Sharon has said that he will not give up the colonies in the West Bank. His government is prepared to reject peace in order to attempt to expand Israel's borders to cover the whole of the West Bank and Gaza.

(This information was adapted from Australians for Justice and Peace in Palestine PO Box 619 Woden, ACT, 2606. See www.ajpp.canberra.net.au)

THE SITUATION IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

The conflict in Palestine/Israel is primarily the result of the dispossession of the Palestinian people from their land and their way of life. Israel continues to annex Palestinian land and to establish new settlements. This activity began after the 1967 military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza by Israel. The number of Israeli settlements and settlers on Palestinian land has doubled since 1993, forcing Palestinians into smaller and smaller areas.



Two-class system

Israel has also inflicted a two-class system on Palestinians. Palestinians cannot use the same roads as Israelis in the Occupied Territories. Most Palestinian roads have been ripped up, blocked by concrete, mounds of dirt, or by Israeli tanks and checkpoints. These checkpoints and razor wire fences prevent Palestinians from doing the ordinary things Israelis take for granted - access to education and medical care, even to shops for food and other necessities.

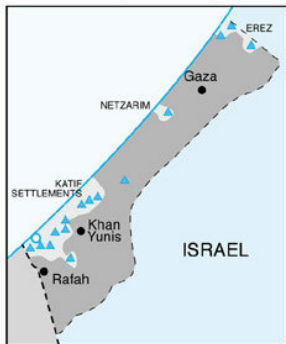
Palestinians must have permits to go from one town to another in the Occupied Territories. They have to wait years and pay around \$US38,000 for a permit to build a house, while Israelis pay nothing. Palestinians often cannot get to work through the checkpoints; many workplaces, factories, or shops have been damaged or destroyed. **(continued on Page 6 ...)**

Israeli Settlement Outposts - January 2002

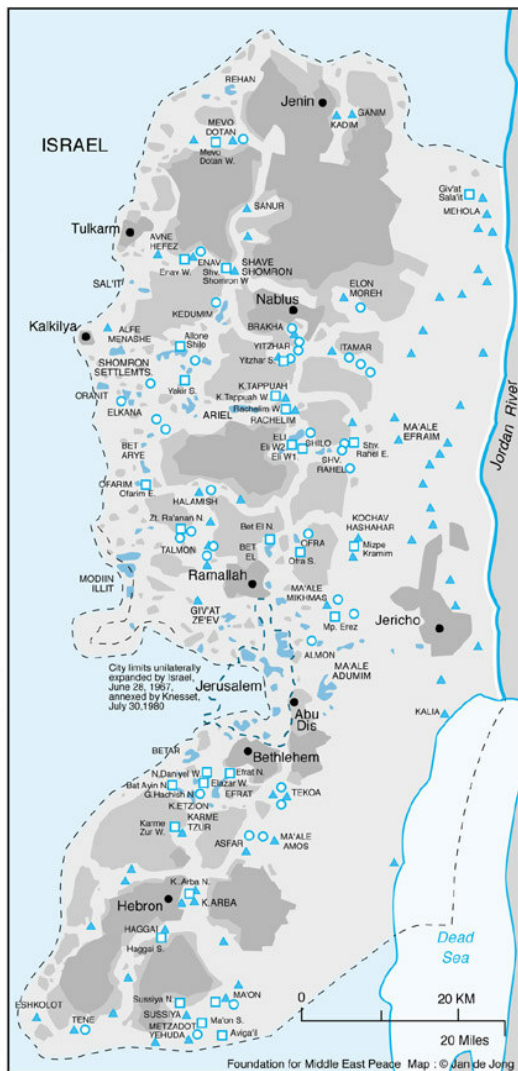
- Palestinian Autonomous Area (Area A, full civil and security control)
- Palestinian Autonomous Area (Area B, full civil control, joint Israeli-Palestinian security control)
- Israeli civil and security control (Area C)
- Israeli Settlement / Built-up Area
- Settlement Outposts established 1996 - February 2001
- Settlement Outposts established since February 2001

70% to 80% of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, are living below the poverty line, which means they live on less than \$2 a day.

A [recent] opinion poll showed that nearly four out of five Israelis are prepared to dismantle almost all of [the settlements in the occupied territories] as part of a peace deal with the Palestinians. #



Sources: Palestine Land Defense Committee, Peace Now, Ha'aretz, November 21, 2001



ISRAEL'S STRATEGY

- Successive Israeli governments have aimed to eliminate Palestinian cultural life and independent political structures in the Occupied Territories.
- The Israeli government has a pattern of provocation that it knows will lead to a Palestinian response, which the Israeli government then uses to rationalise the occupation. These provocations are planned (like Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount in September 2000), as part of a coordinated Israeli government strategy.
- An important part of Israeli policy is to eliminate Palestinian leaders by several methods; assassination, expulsion or the removal of meaningful employment leading to emigration. Forcing out a society's leaders is part of the process of ethnic cleansing.
- A second Israeli strategy is endless "negotiations". This begins with some sort of "summit" (Camp David, Oslo etc.) and "negotiations" begin. Israel continues to expand the settlements, Palestinians are forced into ever-smaller enclaves and (Israel hopes) eventually into exile.
- A third Israeli strategy is to turn these enclaves into a Palestinian "state", using the Bantustan model from apartheid South Africa, with no viable agriculture and little water. These Bantustans would be a device to imprison the Palestinian population. (The rapidly increasing Palestinian population, with its very high birth rate, threatens to swamp the Jewish population in Palestine-Israel.)
- While Israel uses these stratagems described above, US financial, diplomatic and military support has continued. In US diplomatic language this sham is called "the peace process".
- Only strong and articulate worldwide public opinion can change this desperate situation. We invite you to take part in this process of change. Remember the miracle of East Timor.

Anti-Semitism.
Hatred of Jews that is rooted in irrational sentiments and is not backed by rational argument. *Just Peace* deplores hatred of any religious, cultural or ethnic group, and works to eliminate this hatred.

International diplomacy is conducted on two levels. On the "public relations" level there are the speeches, briefings and press statements. On another level there are the actions of the players. Often the public statements are there only to deceive. There is abundant evidence of this deception with the weapons of mass destruction issue and the Iraq war. Only the actions give a true picture of the players' intent.