

BAYLIS THOMAS

THE DARK SIDE OF ZIONISM

ISRAEL'S QUEST FOR
SECURITY THROUGH
DOMINANCE



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*Israel's Quest for Security
through Dominance*

Baylis Thomas



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Preface

This book arises out of the work of the “new historians,” those who have utilized unfolding Israeli archives pointing to facts previously unknown or ignored. I refer to Israeli historians such as Avi Shlaim, Simha Flapan, Benny Morris, Ilan Pappé, and the many other scholars who have gained international respect for their expertise about the Arab-Israeli conflict. My work relies on their investigations and underscores important implications of their studies. In addition, the reader will find discussion of topics related to the wider context of this history: colonialism, hegemony, weapons diplomacy, terrorism, nationalism, ancient religion, water wars, and Zionism.

I am led to the conclusion and show that, in order to establish a Jewish state, the Zionists intended from the very first to forcibly expel the indigenous Arabs, the majority population of Palestine. This was pursued largely through Jewish terrorism and by Israeli army under cover of war in 1948. In that war, Israel took by force 78 percent of Palestine, subverting the Palestinian-Arab state called for by the UN Partition Resolution. Israel subsequently sought additional wars with weak neighboring Arab states in order to demonstrate its insuperable military power, acquire territory in Arab states, and expel more Palestinians from their remaining land in the West Bank and Gaza (under Israeli control since 1967). None of this history would have been possible without the diplomatic or military support of Britain, France, and American with their various imperial, petrol, and cold war pre-occupations in the Middle East.

The Zionists' intended removal of the Palestinian-Arab population was contemplated even before the twentieth century. Still, it is emotionally understandable that the colonization of Palestine and the expulsion of Palestinian-Arabs have come to be seen by some Jews and others as a *defense* against the Holocaust. And the Palestinian-Arabs, rather than seen as secondary victims of the Holocaust, have, by their resistance to expulsion and loss of homeland, been seen by some of trying to perpetuate a second Holocaust. Transcending fixations on past victimization could lead to a recognition that Israel's continuing use of force to thwart Palestinian-Arab nation aspirations only impairs Israel's peace and security.



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Introduction

Zionism, as discussed in this book, was a political movement devoted to the creation of a state for Jews in Palestine. It was motivated by an understandable need for security from nineteenth century Russian pogroms, other anti-Semitic persecutions and, finally, the Holocaust. For the Zionists, a sovereign state seemed the way to gain permanent sanctuary for an abused and diffused people. And yet, from its very inception in the nineteenth century, the Zionist project was understood to require the forceful submission or removal of the Palestinian people in order to acquire their territory. After the establishment of the state in 1948, Israel, with the aid of European weapons, pursued expansionist goals in neighboring Arab states. Subsequently, Israel brought under military rule those Palestinians who still remained in Palestine and confiscated much of their land for Jewish settlements. Israel's use of force has resulted in stubborn Palestinian resistance, illustrating the limits to which military solutions can solve human and/or political problems.

To understand the reasons for and scope of the present conflict it is necessary to examine roots dating back more than a century, a half century *before* the Holocaust. It was a time when Jews and Arabs were both seeking national liberation from their respective historic oppressors, the Russian and Ottoman empires, respectively. But when early Zionist settlers began filtering into Palestine in search of liberation, they adopted the usual European-colonialist attitude of contempt and abusive behavior toward the native Palestinian population. The Palestinians, increasingly dispossessed from their land by Jewish immigration, became alarmed by Zionist intentions to

take control over all of Palestine. Already in 1895, Theodor Herzl, the father of political Zionism, understood that a Jewish state in Palestine would require a fight and dispossession of the Palestinian population.

This book describes the history of how Palestinian dispossession and subsequent territorial acquisition of Arab state territory was accomplished. It is briefly sketched below in order to provide a general picture of events that led to the Arab-Israeli crisis today.

Critical decisions were made during World War I (1914–1918). During that war, Britain pledged to support Arab independence throughout all Arab lands (including Palestine) in exchange for Arab help in defeat of Britain’s wartime enemy, the Ottoman Empire. And yet, Britain betrayed this pledge and supported a Jewish national home in Palestine (Balfour Declaration of 1917) on belief that the Jews, not the Arabs, could better serve Britain’s post-war imperialist designs on the Middle East. Following WWI, Britain gained League of Nations “mandate” authority over Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq while France gained authority over Syria. The Arab peoples rebelled against European control, but were brutally suppressed. In Palestine, for example, resistance to British authority was crushed in 1936 by the British army and Jewish terrorists.

Following World War II, the Jews demanded a state over most of Palestine. They, too, fought against British authority in Palestine and succeeded in driving out the war-weary British. The United Nations recommended the partition of Palestine into separate Jewish and Palestinian states. Ben-Gurion subverted this two-state proposal and acquired by force most of Palestine for the Jewish state. He did this through a secret agreement with Transjordan (the lead and only militarily competent Arab state) to divide Palestine between themselves. In 1948, the other weak Arab states fought in vain against both Israel and Transjordan to prevent this collusive takeover. Ben-Gurion subsequently betrayed Transjordan and, with superior forces, took half of Transjordan’s expected spoils. In this way, Israel gained the bulk of Palestine (present-day Israel). Largely through terrorism, Israel expelled the vast majority of Palestinians from all Israeli captured lands.

Israel consolidated its hegemony in the Middle East through conventional (later, nuclear) arms acquired from France, Germany, and later, the United States. In pursuit of further territorial expansion, Israel sought to prod the weak Arab states into wars they would lose. Opportunity arose in 1956 when Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, an act that offended the European imperial image. Israel, Britain, and France attacked Egypt (Suez War). While this aggression elicited U.S. and UN condemnation, the United States subsequently softened toward Israel when Egypt and Syria accepted weapons for