

# The Balfour Declaration: 100 Years of Deceit, Devastation and Genocide

By William A. Cook

Since 1948 the state of Israel has celebrated annually its independence as a nation, though it is not clear from what or whom it has declared independence. The UN had portioned Palestine in November of 1947 and the British Mandate had made clear that its last day in Palestine would be May 15, of 1948. The Zionists determined that they would declare their independence on May 14 and so notified Britain and the United States of that intention; yet neither had opposed the declaration. Perhaps the celebration should be for the existence of the state of Israel. But that lacks the ring of the glory that attends a state that fought the good fight against a determined enemy and vanquished them. In fact, the Zionists had from 1939 to 1948 fought an enemy in Palestine, the very Mandated authority placed there by the League of Nations and later by the United Nations and the British Government. The Zionists were committed to destroy that Mandate despite its efforts to establish “a home for the Jewish people” from 1922.

And so began the ruthless modern Terrorism that plagues the mid-east and beyond. It began in deception and continues to the present day. Indeed on February 8, 2017 the world had a rather unique look at how this state came into existence through an interview with Lord Jacob Rothschild about, what he declared to be, “a miracle.” “It was the most incredible piece of *“opportunism.”* (emphasis mine) made more so by Dr. Chaim Weizmann’s “seduction” of Lord Balfour, as Lord Rothschild fondly recalls (“Lord Rothschild discusses cousin’s crucial role in ‘miracle’ Balfour Declaration.” *The Jewish News*,

February 8, 2017).

Curious word “opportunism” when it refers to an official British document declared such on November 2, 1917 before Britain had mandated authority to govern Palestine, before Britain consulted with the people that lived in Palestine, before WW II and the suffering inmates of Nazi Germany’s camps gave sympathy for the Jewish people, and before the Mandate government could act on behalf of the Jews being brought to Palestine in fulfillment of the Balfour Declaration. The result, a British government forced to interact with an agency they had designed to help care for the Jews entering Palestine. That Agency declared war against the British authorities as they established a clandestine government in Palestine and acquiesced in silence to the terrorism mentioned above.

There remains but one more word to add to “miracle, opportunism, and seduction” as the good Lord describes the events that made possible the existence of the Jewish state. Cousin Dorothy de Rothschild, a teenager at the time, “was crucially important” because she connected Weizmann to the British establishment, “told him how to integrate, how to *insert* himself into British establishment life.” Curious indeed that a handful of people could arrange for a miracle that would displace 800,000 Palestinians who had lived on and owned the land of Palestine for thousands of years without so much as a mention of their existence, condemning them to wander to refugee camps in foreign lands, bereft of homes, jobs, citizenship and a life of humiliation and destitution.

But more curious still is the fate of the Palestinian people when the World Zionist Organization realized that its dependence on Britain to ensure “a homeland for the Jewish people” was in jeopardy with the issuance of the White Paper by the Mandate Commissioner to limit the flow of immigrants from Europe, and, “opportunistically” turned both to terrorism and “seduction” of the United States to ensure its conquest of

Palestine. Hence their attention to President Truman's campaign to defeat Dewey by contributions and advertisements to recognize the "new" state.

And thus did Israel become a state, a state like no other, a state given its land by a Government that had no right to it but a 67 word note written to Walter Rothschild, the gentleman who penned the note. A miracle indeed! Let Avi Shlaim compress the consequences of the Balfour Declaration into its devastation of the Palestinian people.

"Britain's failure in Palestine can be at least partly attributed to the Balfour Declaration for that was the original sin. In Arabic there is a saying that something that starts crooked, remains crooked. The Balfour Declaration was not just crooked; it was a contradiction in terms. The national home it promised to the Jews was never clearly defined and there was no precedent for it in international law. On the other hand, it was arrogant, dismissive, and even racist, to refer to 90 per cent of the population as "the non-Jewish communities in Palestine." And it was the worst kind of imperial double standard, implying that there was one law for the Jews, and one law for everybody else.

"By the end of the mandate, there was no gratitude and no goodwill left towards Britain on either side of the Arab-Jewish divide. I can only agree with Sir John Chancellor that the Balfour Declaration was a colossal blunder-it has proved to be a catastrophe for the Palestinians and it gave rise to one of the most intense, bitter, and protracted conflicts of modern times." – (Avi Shlaim, in Wm. Roger Louis, ed., *Yet More Adventures with Britannia: Personalities, Politics and Culture in Britain*, London, I. B. Tauris, 2005, pp. 251-270.)

Today, February 6 of 2017 to be exact, the fulfillment of the Zionist intent to confiscate all of Palestine (see *The Plight of the Palestinians*, "Introduction." Macmillan, 2010) passed the Israeli Knesset by a vote of 60 for and 57 against, a vote

that forces the Israeli court to accept legitimization of all land in "Judea and Samaria," the land still owned by Palestinians in anticipation of recognition by the communities of the world as the Palestinians' state. Once again, a handful of "opportunistic" people who have "inserted" themselves into the Israeli government to "seduce" their own people of their right to this land because of beliefs proffered centuries ago destroys the rights of the Palestinian people despite the Charters of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights because the United States Congress has become the means to make the Israeli state immune to international law by vetoing the implementation of Justice.

Three developments have merged at this time as Israel celebrates the "miracle" of the Balfour Declaration: the abstention by the United States in the UNSC that allowed a unanimous vote to censure the Israeli state for crimes against humanity; the United Nations International Conference in support of Israeli-Palestinian Peace; and the vote in the Knesset to annex the West Bank preventing the possibility of a Palestinian state. The Knesset vote (60-57), driven by religious zealots cancels out the first two; "the debate is over. Annexation it is," (*Rogel Alpher. Haaretz, Feb. 19, 2017*).

B'Tselem condemned the bill's passage, saying it "proves yet again that Israel has no intention of ending its control over the Palestinians or its theft of their land. Lending a semblance of legality to this ongoing act of plunder is a disgrace or (sic) the state and its legislature. Passing the bill mere weeks after UN Security Council Resolution 2334 is a slap in the face of the international community. While enshrining the dispossession in law is a new development, in practice it is another facet of the massive land grab carried out openly for decades by declaring 'state land'" (*Haaretz 2/7/2017, Jonathan Lis*).

The first and second of these come 69 years after the Zionists

declared their “independence,” their declared right to seize the land of the Palestinians regardless of international laws and moral rights declared by the United Nations. For the first time in all those years the Security Council can bring the State of Israel before the Human Rights Council for crimes against Humanity and refer the violations they have enunciated to the International Court of Justice. Equally important is the action that the UN International Peace Conference can take by its recognition of the Palestinian State assuring that the Palestinians have equal status with the Zionist state to negotiate their future relative to rights of return, rights of compensation, rights of land with boundaries that constitute a state, and rights of a free people able to secure stability and safety for its people. But even as this possibility arises, after 69 years of ever expanding occupation, land seizure, eradication of human rights, invasion and destruction by land, sea and air, the possibility of achieving these ends is declared by the Knesset in its action that effectively erases the existence of Palestine caused by a handful of “opportunists” that have ensured that fear exists in the hearts and minds of Israelis.

As the Jewish state celebrates its “miracle,” the people of the world have overwhelmingly declared that the occupation and oppression by Israel of the people of Palestine must stop. It’s time for resolution: does the world community stand indifferent to the plight of the Palestinians or does rule by international law determine that moral rights, engraved in the conventions of the UN charter, determine human rights. We are faced with determined fanatics that are in control of the Knesset, a situation not unlike what the US faced under the rule of President George W. Bush when a similar force of far right Evangelical fanatics controlled the government. Both groups impose their beliefs on the governing administrations, the Neo Cons of the Bush administration bolstered by the evangelicals when they determined it was God’s truth the US must bring to the world as expressed in the book of

Revelation, and the Settlers and their party in the Knesset under Netanyahu crying that the land was a gift to them as recorded in their book of Genesis. Both groups, the extremists and fanatics, are the products of pathological minds indifferent to all others who must suffer the consequences of their dementia.

## **Survival of the Beast, Not Fittest**

*[A brief review from the past will help illuminate both the Nakba and the Day of Independence. This review is drawn from the past, as far back as 2005 when I examined the destruction caused by the Zionist Zealots of the Christian right and saw in them the superstitious ideology that drives their madness as it does the Zionist mind.]*

What fuels slavery, ethnic cleansing, land theft, and genocide? What enables a mind to justify imprisoning another without cause, without trial, without rights of due process and assumption of innocence until proven guilty? What enables a soul to accept dominance over another, to degrade and humiliate other humans, to participate in or acquiesce to genocide?

I'll posit two trends of thought, two of many perhaps, that seem to reside at the root of Western culture, trends that swirl like infected eddies beneath the surface of our ideals allowing for slavery, ethnic erasure of populations, land theft and genocide. The first blossoms when men, driven by a commitment to an ideology they accept as absolute, as those who zealously and fanatically proclaim they alone know God's word, rise to power and force their beliefs on others, knowing in their hearts that they are chosen to lead because of their innate superiority, men like Ferdinand, the King of Spain, Columbus and the Pope who guide their legions of friars and conquistadors to impose their divinely ordained right on others. The second follows from the first, when men, who accept unquestioningly their superiority over others deemed by

them to be sub-human or inferior in intellect or will, move to positions of power not driven by an ideology, but willingly use those so possessed, to impose their covetous desire to acquire land, natural resources, or labor regardless of the consequences.

Condoleezza Rice noted in her Paris speech "...history does not just happen, it is made. History is made by men and women of conviction, of commitment and of courage, who will not let their dreams be denied." Once again the past of Christian, civilized Europe is on the march; its dreams of God's mission to bring His gift of "freedom" to all the peoples of the world will be executed whether or not they are the dreams of all the peoples who will accept them or die. What mind decides, "We are on the right side of freedom's divide"? What mind declares it will impose its righteousness on all the peoples of the earth? What soul will succumb to the will of its leaders to slay the infidels who deny the "right" as determined by an elite group of fanatics driven by a self-determined superiority and a zeal to impose their beliefs on all?

Let us note that the Secretary of State did not say history is made by those seeking oil to ensure its military dominance, nor did she say that history is made by the nation that supports America's and Israel's interests in the mid-East; she said, most emphatically, what the Zionists of the Christian right claim to be "right," that God gave this land to a Christian nation, to be a "City on a Hill," a beacon to all the world that they might see what God expected His creatures to do on His behalf, and in that covenant, the responsibility to bring that gift to all the world.

Imbedded in that belief resides the spirit of superiority of God's chosen, an awareness that they alone possess the truth, and, consequently, are the most civilized creatures on the planet. Indeed, refusal by a people to accept conversion to Christianity became a mark of irrationality and subhuman

status. Now, this most Christian of nations brings God's gift to the nations of the world judging them fit to join the "advanced, civilized, and developed" nations of the West if they adopt willingly or by force America's form of Democracy, a form dominated by Corporate power and control, where "advanced and developed" means in reality new markets for Capitalism and new resources to fuel its continued growth. Strange how the "bread of heaven" has metamorphosed into a euphemistic "freedom" for all if they become cooperative consumers for extended Christian Capitalism. Both trends that give rise to genocide swirl beneath the rhetoric of "freedom and liberty," a virtual whirlpool of Zionist Christian fanaticism and neo-con covetousness for land and resources, and will erupt in a tsunami of devastation for those who oppose the will of this administration.

Genocides and holocausts arise out of unchecked zeal, unquestioned duty, and silent acquiescence. They are fueled by blind belief, personal fear, and a sense of superiority that gives license to slaughter. Both the United States under Bush and its clone under Sharon and his successors exemplify the presence of racism resulting in genocidal devastation as they impose their respective wills on Iraqis and Palestinians. The facts alone demonstrate the rampant racism running unchecked as Israel shackles the Palestinian people in chains as grotesque as any imposed by America's plantation owners on their property in the old south; and the United States, not to be outdone, occupies and oppresses the Iraqi people in methods learned from their Israeli tutors who teach them how to subdue, intimidate, humiliate, torture, and eradicate a people considered inferior to their oppressors.

Let Lt. Gen. James Mattis "tell it like it is" as he instructs our soldiers in the grace of war: "It's a lot of fun to fight. You know, it's a hell of a hoot ... You go into Afghanistan, you got guys who slap women around for five years because they didn't wear a veil. You know, guys like that don't got no



manhood left anyway. So it's a hell of a lot of fun to shoot them." Imbedded in that statement resides America's superiority over the Afghanistan people: a superiority in moral values based on the wearing of a veil, a veil not unlike those used in years past by Catholic nuns to show their modesty before God and their awareness of the frailty of men who "lust in their hearts," to borrow a phrase from a former President of the United States, caring not to be the source of that lust; a superiority in judgment since this general can determine that his indictment justifies killing every male that has reached the age of marriage; and a superiority in legal rights because he can, as we learned from our Israeli brethren, predetermine who is guilty of breaking our laws, and, without leveling a charge, without representation by jury, without trial before peers, execute all of the male gender in Afghanistan. That is genocidal thinking, base, irrational, and savage.

Let's be clear. The actions in the Knesset a month ago propel a mentality on all that characterized the spirit of the enlightened age of the industrial revolution, a spirit of survival of the fittest, only today we must not confuse that propagandist euphemism with what it really is, survival of the beast.

After sixty years, we celebrate not the rebirth of Judaism in Palestine but the aborted triumph of an amoral Nation that, in its Zionist arrogance, from its conception through its infancy to the present day defies not just the secular codes of International conduct agreed upon by the member states of the United Nations but the very principles, morals and values of Judaism. That is the conundrum the Diaspora Jew must face: to embrace those who rule in Israel by imposing on Jews everywhere defiance of International Law – illegal and inhumane acts of collective punishment, eradication through extrajudicial executions of the principles of a state founded on equality before the law, occupation and theft of another

people's land and natural resources, the imposition of daily humiliation of an oppressed people by economic deprivation, harassment, and visible identification based on Arab lineage as Palestinians, acceptance of torture that in effect denies the humanity of its victims, forced imprisonment without charge or due rights, approval of and complicity in a slow but insidious genocide of the Palestinian people by imprisonment behind an inhumane, illegal Wall, and constant military attacks of a disproportionate kind against a virtually defenseless people – or to embrace the moral fiber that nourished the Jews century after century sustaining their humanity as they came selflessly to the aid of others faced with discrimination and racism that often resulted in death for those they protected and themselves.

Let's be blunt: the anniversary of the Day of Independence in Israel is a day of death not of birth. Any state conceived in terror, nourished with the blood of massacred civilians in the Nakba, and delivered of a land made empty and barren by forced expulsion of its inhabitants is not and cannot be a child born to the community of nations that seeks the rights, the respect and integrity of all its brothers and sisters. It is rather a deformity, an abnormality, in the words of Jeremiah, –"Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth!" (15:10).

How conceived in terror? –When the Zionist movement started its ethnic cleansing operations in Palestine, in early December 1947 ...; so begins Chapter 3 of Dr. Ilan Pappé's book *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, 2006, only to offer a passage from –Plan D of that movement's operations in Chapter 4. "... From the very beginning, the Zionist movement that effectively controlled by forceful means the total Jewish community of over half a million in 1948 regardless of their desires, had determined that the UN partition plan was moot; the Jewish state had no borders other than what it could take by force (Mss. Medit. 20. Criminal Investigation Department

Headquarters, the Palestine Police, Jerusalem, 31st July, 1947, p. 4, 7, Top Secret, Rhodes Library, Oxford). Despite protestations to the contrary from that day to this – the myth of the Jews as victims of annihilation by superior forces – the reality is that the Jews faced Arab forces of less than 50,000 troops, ill trained and equipped as a result of the British devastation of their forces in 1936, while Jewish forces numbered over 80,000 well trained troops. (As noted by Pappe from Jewish documents and the investigative reports and evidence of the British Mandate government in the Rhodes Library).

What form did the terror take? Ironically, it mirrored the terror that the current Israeli government protests when undertaken by Palestinians. Virtually nothing the Palestinians have done by way of terror was not done by the Jews to the British Mandate government. The first leg of their terror necessitated ridding Palestine of the British Mandate forces since it was its policies concerning immigration that made the Zionists turn to terror against the very nation that had made possible a large Jewish presence in Palestine through the Balfour Declaration. That Declaration had imposed on the British government responsibility for both the indigenous Arab population and the new Jewish immigrants proportionate to their relative size. In keeping with that responsibility, the Palestine Government issued a White Paper in 1939 that limited Jewish immigration to 10,000 per year for five years and an additional 25,000 refugees. That limitation infuriated the Zionists who would tolerate no limits on immigration. Terrorism followed.

From conception to nourishment in the womb of Nakba, how the blood flowed. I should begin here with the massacre at Deir Yassin because it was beneath a tree in the field outside the mental hospital now placed there that I heard about the atrocities committed in this town and felt the anguish that hung like a pall over the land. Deir Yassin had an agreement

with Hagana, a non-aggression pact, but unknown to its residence it lay in a pre-determined path of destruction and ethnic cleansing that sealed its doom. On April 9, 1948, a little more than a month to the UN date that removed Britain from its Mandate responsibilities in Palestine and the date that gave Israel its right to its segment of Palestine, the 55% allotted to the Jews, their forces – ... 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. Pappe continues his recital of this massacre with this comment: “–One only has to be told that thirty babies were among the slaughtered in Deir Yassin to understand why the whole –quantitative exercise – which the Israelis repeated as recently as April 2003 (that the number killed cannot be considered a massacre) – is insignificant. Indeed, at the time the Jewish forces greedily accepted a much larger number of dead as a “–warning to all Palestinians that a similar fate awaited them if they refused to abandon their homes and take flight” (Pappe 90-91).

But the Jewish forces in their eagerness to grab as much land as they could before the legally established date for the Israeli nation, found time of the essence and efficiency a necessity if they were to enlarge the land holdings far beyond what the UN resolution had provided to them. Realizing that the remaining British troops could do nothing during the “–lame duck months between the acceptance of the resolution and its date of implementation, the months between March and May of 1948, the Hagana forces moved with great speed to erase as many villages and towns as they could from the landscape of Palestine.” Walid Khalidi’s research tome, *All That Remains*, accounts for 418 such sites leveled by the Jewish forces, with their populations killed or expelled from the borders of Israel.

The State archives of Israel contain documents that provide a perspective into the mentality of those driving the Zionist Consultancy, as Pappe labels it. In a section made available through Palestine Remembered, a newly established Internet site, labeled "Plunder of abandoned Arab property, looting, possession without permit, robbery" numerous personal comments are stored by former Israeli forces remembering years later what they had endured. One stands out in my mind as pertinent and telling: it foreshadows the issues facing the Diaspora Jew now.

"—If I thought that the State of Israel would be capable of Deir Yassin, I would not only not wish to be an Arab here — I wouldn't want to be a Jew here" (Zalman Aran, MAPAI). This reflection comes years after the Zionist terrorism, years after the true Jew had time to consider "what have I done," and in whose name have I done it, only to grasp the reality that all honest Jews must ask, "what have I become."

"—The voice of your brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground," cries the Lord, and so the act must be judged and justice done. All humankind will don the robes of justice to condemn the fratricide; all 12 tribes of Israel will sit in judgment on their own; and God Almighty will cast the ultimate curse — the very ground Cain tilled, the land he stole from his brother, will no longer yield fruit and, as a consequence, he will be a fugitive once more and a wanderer on the earth. Thus will Cain's intent — satiating his selfishness, appeasing his jealousy, releasing his aggression — reveal the disconnect between his inherent evil and his higher nature. In time these are the birth gifts Israel will inherit from a world that is witness to its wanton killing of its brother, the Semitic people of Palestine, who die daily one by one in the scorching heat of the noon day sun, forgotten and alone. No candles light the darkness now, no songs are sung, no ribbons adorn the gifts, no laughter greets the guests, for the Nakba is not a day of celebration, it is a mark of catastrophic wickedness

that tolls the death knell of the Jewish soul even as it blares to the world the power of indifference to one's brother, the ultimate birthright that severs the very blood of the family. And so will the words of Isaiah ring on this day: "—Ah, sinful nation, people laden with iniquity, offspring who do evil, children who deal corruptly, who have forgotten the Lord." May all of us who hear that cry not forget, that evil may be purged from the earth.

Thus do we return to Arthur Koestler's admonition to the Jews in the Diaspora, the dilemma they must face that will become more acute with time: choose between the Zionist controlled, amoral state that acts in your name casting lies like seeds before the multitudes and justifying brutal acts of vengeance and racism as necessary for the security of a state that stands alone in the mid-east as a bastion of technological and nuclear power or choose the truth of the Torah, as those Jews from across the world who remain compassionate, giving and loving people who seek peace in Palestine for both Jews and Palestinians. (*Promise and Fulfillment*, Epilogue, 335).

— *William A. Cook has been writing about the Palestine/Israel crisis for over 15 years. This past year two of his works have been published, the first a new paperback edition of The Plight of the Palestinians and edited work focusing on the genocide taking place in Palestine, the 2nd, a literary work that satirically and polemically damns the United States and its support of the Neo-Cons that have destroyed the American democracy, Age of Fools. He contributed this article to PalestineChronicle.com.*