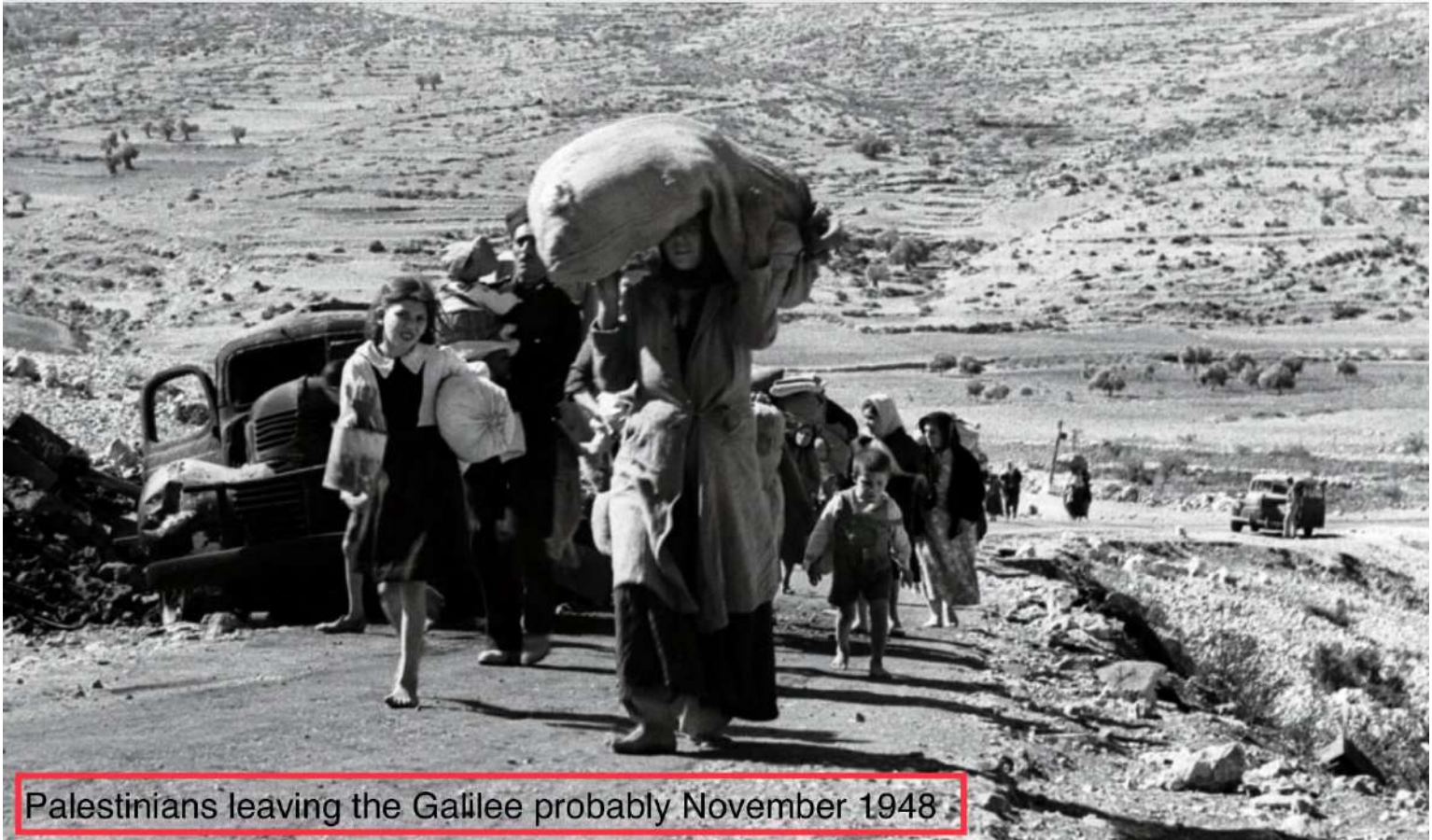


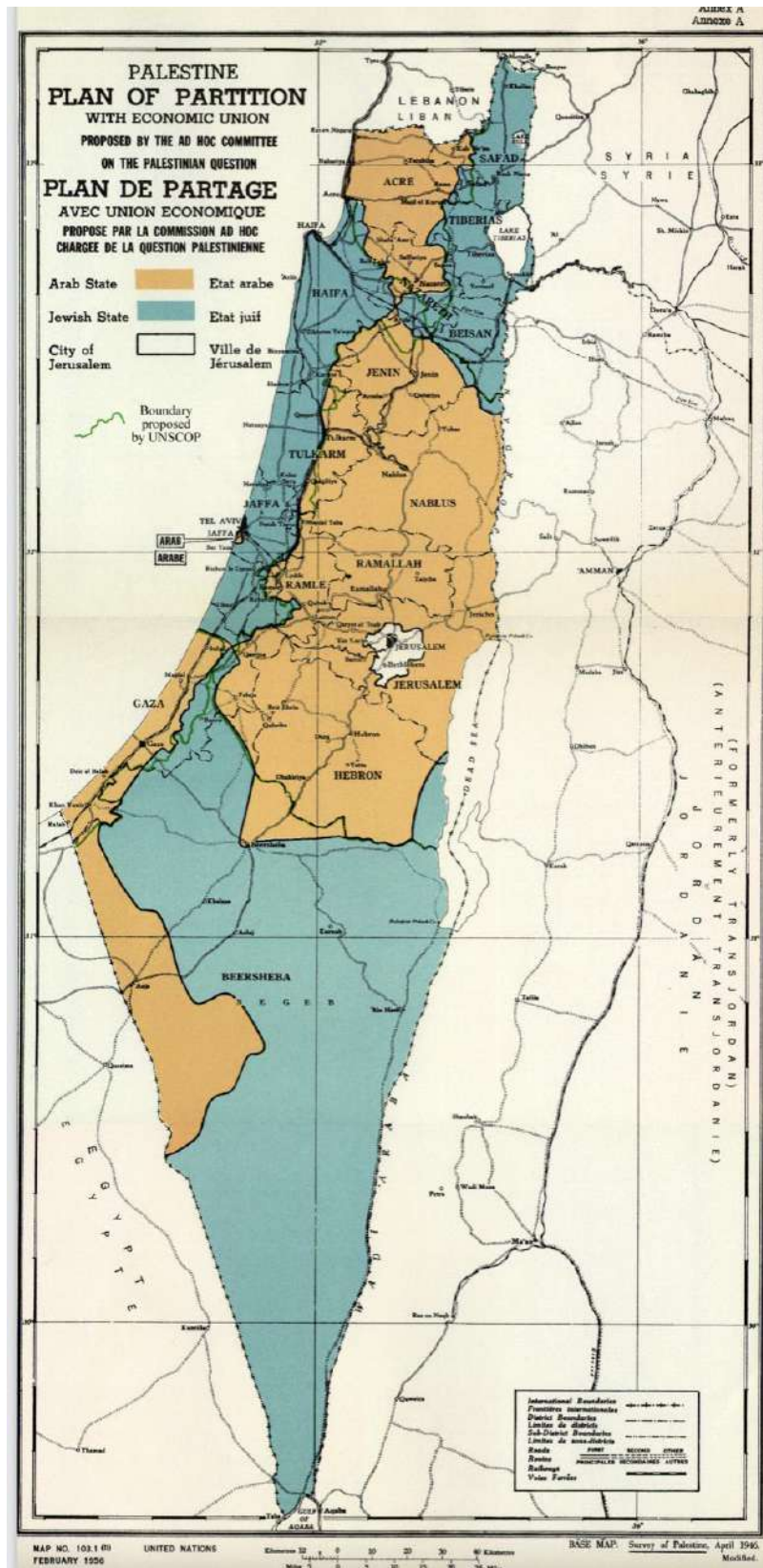
Should Jewish armed forces be blamed for the forced dispossession of half the Arab population from their homes in Palestine in 1948?

Yes

1. The forced dispossession of half the Arab population from their homes was the culmination of long held Zionist ambitions to found a Jewish state in Palestine. Zionist leaders knew that their slogan about Palestine 'a land without a people for a people without a land' was false and they used a range of methods from land purchase, to terror attacks, to all out war, to push Arabs out of the land that would be Israel.
2. After 1945, the British were the only check on mass Jewish immigration which is why the Jews turned against them, forcing their withdrawal after a wave of bombings. The Jews were rewarded for their violence; the UN Partition Plan assumed there would be further immigration and therefore gave them over half the land. This of course led to the war in which half the Palestinian population became refugees.
3. The Jewish leadership had planned for war whereas the Palestinian leadership had not. The Jews had trained a shadow army ready to seize the land for a new state when the British withdrew. It was this army which defeated the Palestinian army in the Spring of 1948, leaving the Palestinians defenceless when the war broke out between Israel and the Arab states in May 1948.
4. In April 1948, the Jewish leadership launched Plan Dalet which sought to exploit the Palestinians' dispersed military capacities and which called for the forced expulsion of civilians who resisted the Jewish military control. This Plan gave the Jewish troops a free rein to decide who was resisting and so needed expelling.
5. At the end of the war, Israel refused to accept peace agreements with their neighbors because of their insistence that Palestinian refugees had a right of return to their homes. Millions of Palestinians are still trapped in Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan, as well as semi-permanent refugee camps in the West Bank seventy years later.



Palestinians leaving the Galilee probably November 1948



This is Plan of Partition of Palestine adopted by the UN General Assembly on 29th November, 1947.

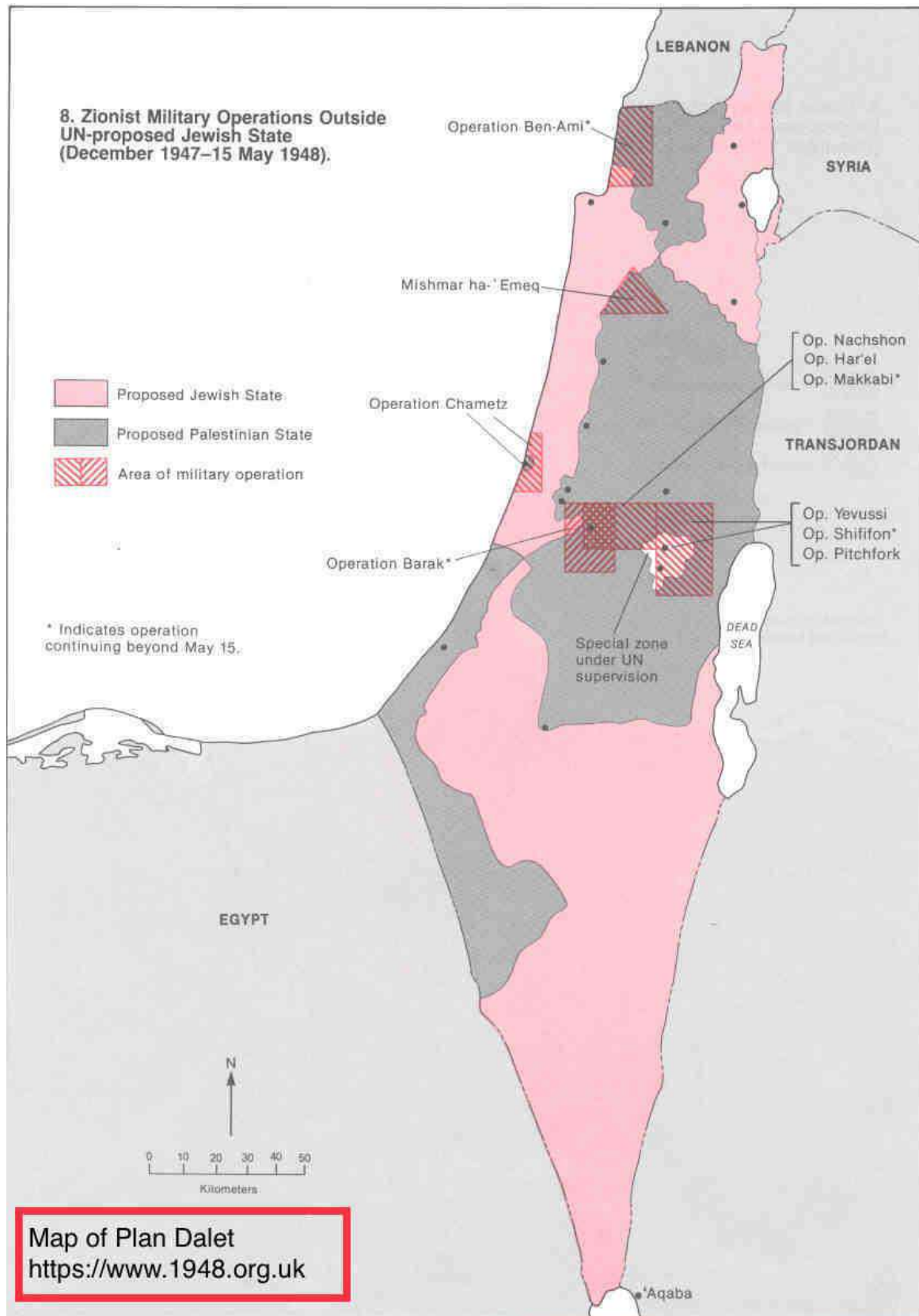
The Arabs rejected the plan because 62% of the land was allocated to a Jewish state despite the Palestinian Arab population numbering twice the Jewish population.

We have no wish to fight ordinary people who want to live in peace, but only the army and forces which are preparing to invade Palestine. Therefore . . . all people who do not want this war must leave together with their women and children in order to be safe. This is going to be a cruel war, with no mercy or compassion. There is no reason why you should endanger yourselves.³³

Translation from Arabic of a leaflet dropped from an aircraft on Arab villages in the Galilee on the orders of the Haganah Command (the Jewish armed force) in 1948. From Simha Flapan, 'The Palestinian Exodus of 1948', *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 1987 vol 16 number 4.



Extract from a letter Dec. 2 1948, published in the New York Times from a group of leading Jews based in the US, including Albert Einstein, complaining about a massacre of Arab villagers at Deir Yassin and comparing a new political party, led by future Israeli PM, Menachim Begin, with the Nazis.



A British intelligence officer provided a description of the scene at the harbour entrance a few hours later:

During the morning [the Jews], were continually shooting down on all Arabs who moved both in Wadi Nisnas and the Old City. This included completely indiscriminate and revolting machinegun fire, mortar fire and sniping on women and children sheltering in churches and attempting to get out . . . through the gates into the docks. . . . The 40 RM. CDO. [i.e., Royal Marine Commando] who control the docks . . . sent the Arabs through in batches but there was considerable congestion outside the East Gate of hysterical and terrified Arab women and children and old people on whom the Jews opened up mercilessly with fire. Two [Royal Marine] officers were seriously wounded . . .²⁰¹

By late afternoon, 22 April, Carmeli Brigade was reporting:

The Arab HQ is empty. They do not answer the telephones . . . The Arab hospitals are full of dead and wounded. Corpses and wounded lie in the streets and are not collected for lack of organisation and sanitary means; panic in the Arab street is great . . .²⁰²

The Haganah command issued orders to the troops to treat places of worship with respect, especially mosques, and to refrain from looting.²⁰³

Throughout, the Haganah made effective use of Arabic language broadcasts and loudspeaker vans. Haganah Radio announced that 'the day of judgement had arrived' and called on the inhabitants to 'kick out the foreign criminals' and to 'move away from every house and street, from every neighbourhood, occupied by the foreign criminals'. The Haganah broadcasts called on the populace to 'evacuate the women, the children and the old immediately, and send them to a safe haven'.²⁰⁴ The vans announced that the Haganah had gained control of all approaches to the city and no reinforcements could reach the embattled militiamen, and called on the Arabs to lay down their arms, urging the irregulars 'from Syria, Transjordan and Iraq' to 'return to [their] families'.²⁰⁵

Description of Jewish intimidation and the use of radio broadcasts during the Battle of Haifa. From Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem Revisited* (2004) p. 191.

8. The Conference declares that the new world order that will follow victory cannot be established on foundations of peace, justice and equality, unless the problem of Jewish homelessness is finally solved. The Conference urges that the gates of Palestine be opened; that the Jewish Agency be vested with control of immigration into Palestine and with the necessary authority for upbuilding the country, including the development of its unoccupied and uncultivated lands; and that Palestine be established as a Jewish Commonwealth integrated in the structure of the new democratic world.

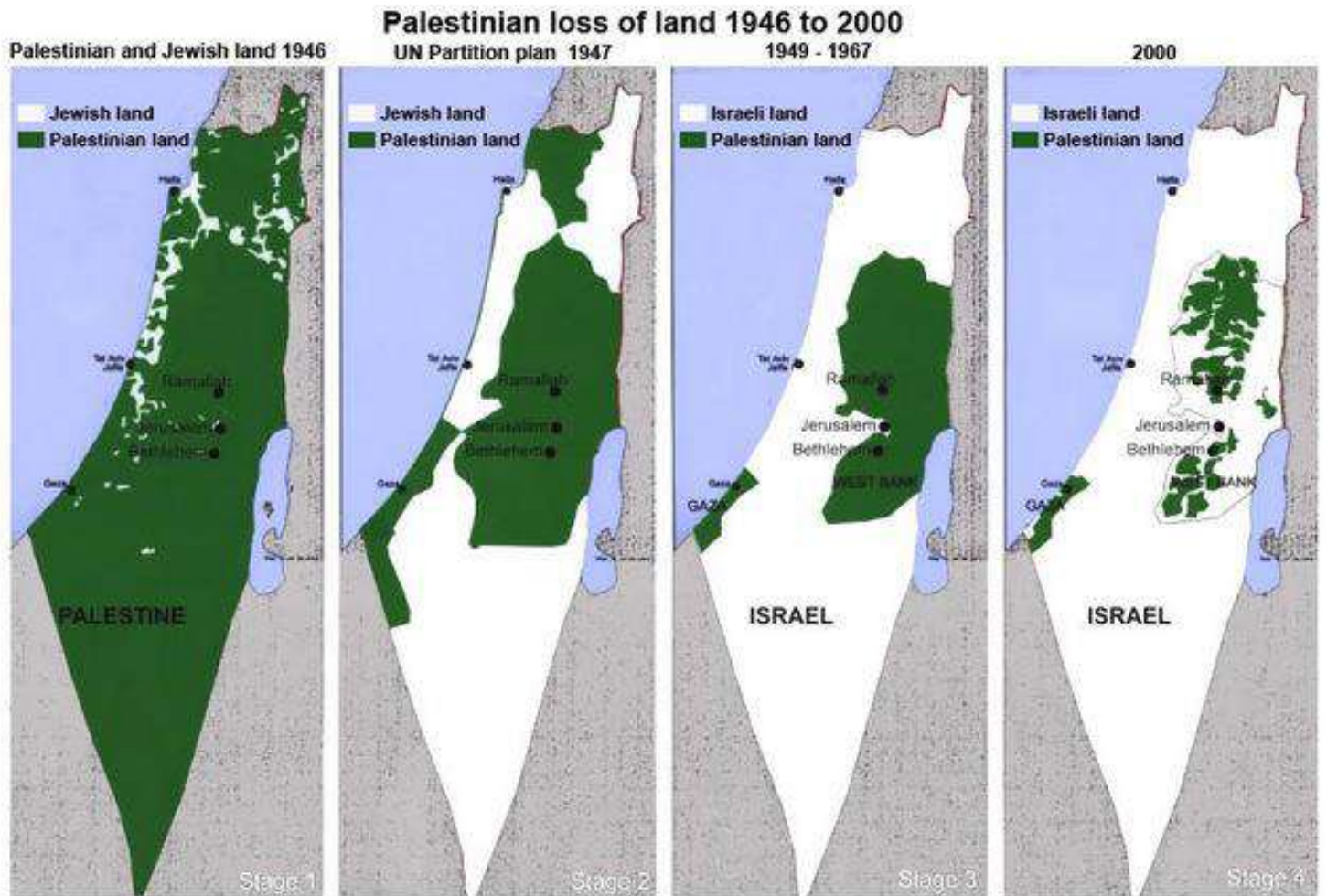
Then and only then will the age old wrong to the Jewish people be righted.

The Biltmore Conference called by the Extraordinary Zionist Conference was held from May 6 to May 11, 1942 in New York

Yet, even leaving the ideological mainsprings of the Zionist project aside, the massive immigration of Jews anticipated by the Zionist movement, too, presupposed the expulsion of the indigenous Arab population. As early as 20 December 1940, Weitz wrote in his diary:

it must be clear that there is no room in the country for both peoples. ... If the Arabs leave it, the country will become wide and spacious for us. ... The only solution is a Land of Israel ... without Arabs. There is no room here for compromises. ... There is no way but to transfer the Arabs from here to the neighboring countries, and to transfer all of them, save perhaps for [the Arabs of] Bethlehem, Nazareth and old Jerusalem. Not one village must be left, not one [bedouin] tribe. The transfer must be directed at Iraq, Syria and even Transjordan. For this goal funds will be found. ... And only after this transfer will the country be able to absorb millions of our brothers and the Jewish problem will cease to exist. There is no other solution. (*Birth*, p. 27)

Joseph Weitz was a director of the Jewish National Fund. This is an extract from Norman Finkelstein, *Image and Reality of the Israel-Palestine Conflict* (1995)



Poster created in 2013, Palestine Awareness Coalition (Canada)

In private, however, Ben-Gurion was not averse to making his real views clear. Thus, on 19 December 1947, he demanded that “we adopt the system of aggressive defense; with every Arab attack we must respond with a decisive blow: the destruction of the place or the expulsion of the residents along with the seizure of the place.”²³ He declared: “When in action we . . . must fight strongly and cruelly, letting nothing stop us.”²⁴ Even without direct orders, the goal and spirit of real policy were understood and accepted by the army.

Ben-Gurion’s war diaries, quoted in Flapan’s ‘The Palestinian Exodus of 1948’, *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 1987 vol 16 number 4.

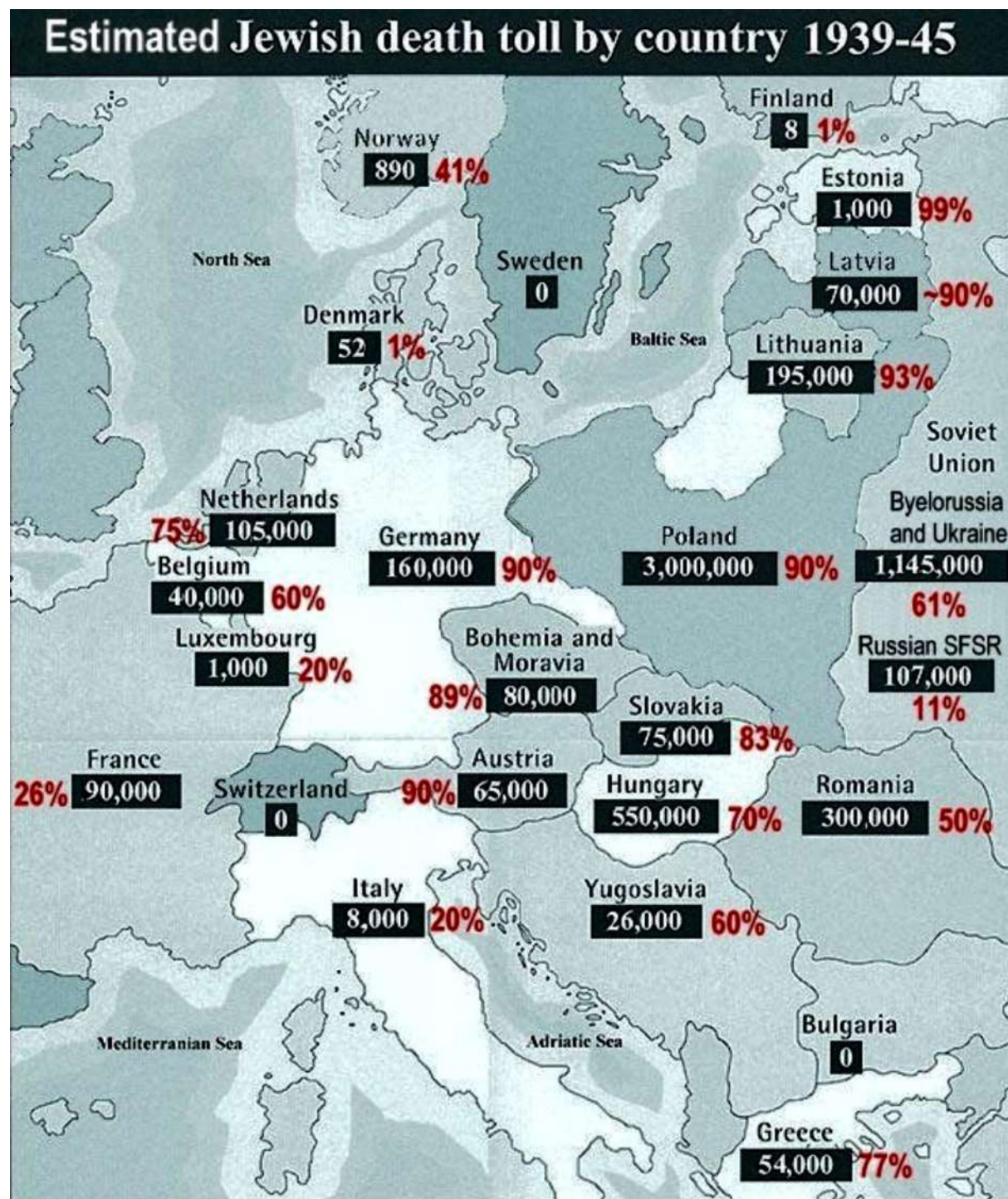


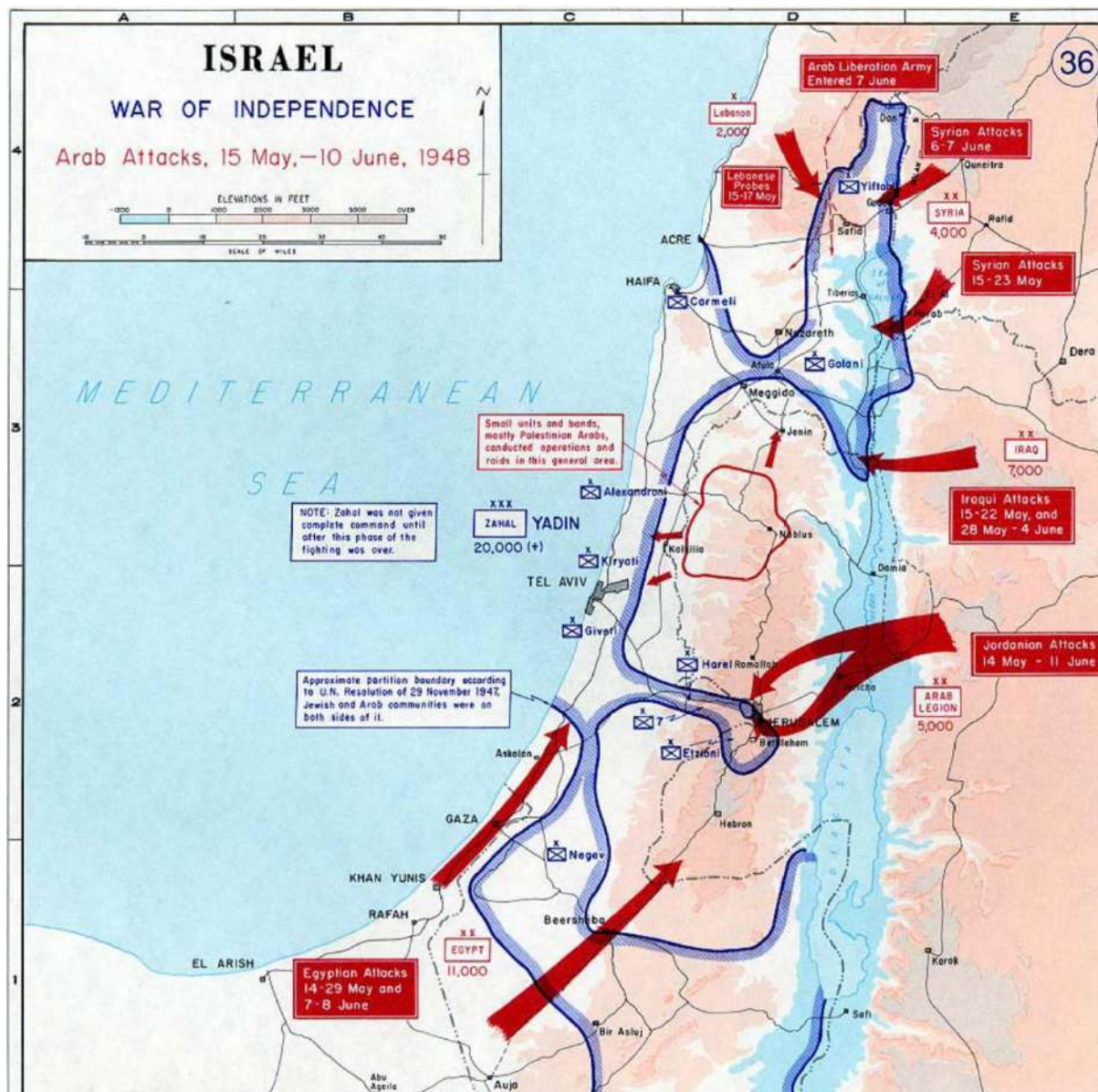
'Where to?' 1953 Ismail Shammout www.ismail-shammout.com

“Should Jewish armed forces be blamed for the forced dispossession of half the Arab population from their homes in Palestine in 1948?”

No

1. Palestinians were dispossessed only because there was a war - a war started by the Arab leaders who rejected the UN Partition Plan without any idea of how to resist it. The Jews had accepted the UN partition plan, but in the face of a three day strike, Arab attacks on Jewish properties, and a lack of any message from the Arab leaders that this was not a war, they were drawn into one, and they can't be blamed for winning it.
2. It was Arab leadership who urged Palestinians to leave their homes to clear the way for Arab troops to fight Israeli soldiers. So when the Arab armies were defeated, it was unrealistic to expect the state of Israel to open its new borders to Arabs who had left in the hope and expectation that the Jews would be driven out of Palestine.
3. All wars create refugees and in the context and shadow of World War Two which had created many many millions of 'displaced people' the consequences for Palestinians in 1948 do not look unusual. After the Jewish army had defeated the Palestinian army in May 1948, the Palestinians were then caught in the middle of a war between the Jewish army and the invading armies of the Arab states, and it is not surprising that many chose to leave.
4. The actions of some Jewish combat units almost certainly did contribute to Palestinians leaving their homes. But this was the exception, and is understandable given that survivors of the Holocaust who had swelled the ranks of the Haganah felt that they were fighting for the existence of Jews as a people because Arab leaders had promised to push the Jews into the sea. Also, in some cases, lives were saved by the Haganah's clearing of civilians from the scene of the battle.
5. It is true that Jewish political and military leadership did launch a major military strategy, Plan Dalet, in April 1948, which ordered Jewish troops to expel any Arab civilians who resisted, but this didn't apply to civilians who cooperated, not did it apply to Palestine beyond the areas allocated to Jews in the UN Partition. That's why there are 1.7 million Arab Israeli citizens today.





Arab attacks during the War of Independence, Department of History, U.S. Military Academy

No – Not blamed

PARALLEL HISTORIES



Polish Jews
captured by
German soldiers
during the Warsaw
ghetto rising May
1943



Adolf Hitler talking to Palestinian leader Grand Mufti Haj Amin al-Husseini Nov. 28, 1941

The New York Times

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1947

The Assembly has now made its choice, and its decision should command the acquiescence, the respect and the loyal support of all nations and all peoples. The award does not go so far, in territorial terms, as most Zionists had hoped. It will grievously disappoint the Arabs. But it is the decision of the United Nations; it is the best decision which that great agency of world opinion was able to discover, and we trust that it will have the willing compliance of the two peoples whose future it involves. Failing that, the Security Council must be courageous enough and resolute enough to supply the necessary means of enforcement.

NYT report on the decision in the General Assembly of the United Nations to partition Palestine.
This was accepted by the Jews and rejected by the Arabs.

British police report on the Arab
evacuation of Haifa

District Police Headquarters
(C.I.D.)
P.O.B. 700.
Haifa.
26th April, 1948.

S E C R E T
A/A.I.G., C.I.D.

Subject:- General Situation Haifa District.

Haifa remains quiet. Yesterday produced a noticeable change in the general atmosphere and businesses and shops in the lower town were open for the first time in many days. Traffic started to move normally around the town and people returning to the places of business filled the streets. In fact, Haifa presented a more normal appearance than it had done for a long while. Some Arabs were seen moving among the Jews in the lower town and German Colony area and these were allowed free and unmolested passage. An appeal has been made to the Arabs by the Jews to reopen their shops and businesses in order to relieve the difficulties of feeding the Arab population. Evacuation was still going on yesterday and several trips were made by 'Z' craft to Acre. Roads too, were crowded with people leaving Haifa with all their belongings. At a meeting yesterday afternoon Arab leaders reiterated their determination to evacuate the entire Arab population and they have been given the loan of ten 3-ton military trucks as from this morning to assist the evacuation.

Yesterday morning a Jew attempted to pass the drop barrier of Police H.Q. facing Palmers Gate wheeling a barrow. He was shot and killed by a Police sentry.

At 0640 hrs. yesterday Tireh village was again attacked with mortar fire. Casualties and damage not known.

A report has been received from Military to the effect that at 23.50 hrs. yesterday Jews attacked Acre from the direction of Ein Hamifratz and Tall al Pukhkhari. An advance Party succeeded in demolishing three houses in the Manshiya Quarter and then heavy mortar fire was directed at the town. Several mortar bombs landed in Acre Prison and all the inmates have escaped. The British Warden staff

are safe. Military proceeded to the scene and opened fire with artillery on Ein Hamifratz. The Jews thereupon withdrew and a convoy of 11 vehicles was seen proceeding in the direction of Haifa. Casualties to both sides are not known.

(A.J. Bidmead.)
for SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE

Copy:- District Commissioner, Haifa
Superintendent of Police, Haifa
File

In a letter to the Syrian representative at the UN, Jamal Husseini argued that “The regular [Arab] armies did not enable the inhabitants of the country to defend themselves, but merely facilitated their escape from Palestine.” The prominent Palestinian leader Emile Ghoury was even more forthright. In an interview with the London *Telegraph* in August 1948, Ghoury blamed the Arab states for the creation of the refugee problem; so did the organizers of protest demonstrations that took place in many West Bank towns on the first anniversary of Israel’s establishment.⁵ During a fact-finding mission to Gaza in June 1949, Sir John Troutbeck, head of the British Middle East office in Cairo and no friend to Israel or the Jews, was surprised to discover that while the refugees

express no bitterness against the Jews (or for that matter against the Americans or ourselves) they speak with the utmost bitterness of the Egyptians and other Arab states.

E. Karsh, *Arafat’s War: The Man and His Battle for Israeli Conquest* (2004), p. 33.

NEW WAR ON JEWS FORECAST BY ARAB

El Hussein Predicts Violence
Unless U. N. Refuses All
Zionists' Demands

1947

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

JERUSALEM, June 18 — Any United Nations decision denying the Arabs an independent state in Palestine would have instantaneous repercussions throughout the Arab world, according to Jamal el Hussein, acting chairman of the Palestine Arab Higher Committee.

In a private interview he predicted a repetition of the 1936-39 Arab-Jewish violence.


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SUNDAY, NOV. 30, 1947
JERUSALEM

THE PALESTINE POST

4.30 A.M.

PRICE: 20 MILS
VOL. XXII No. 6271

PARTITION APPROVED BY MOR 2/3: 33 VOTE YES, 13 NO, 10 AI

FLUSHING MEADOW, Saturday. — The plan for the partition of Palestine into separate Jewish and Arab States was at 5.30 (New York time) this afternoon adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations by 33 votes to 13, with 10 abstentions and one delegation absent. The voting came after a last ditch effort by the Arab States to prevent partition by proposing the establishment of a federated state based on the canton system, in which the Jews and Arabs would be separated as far as possible.

The Arab motion, which was attacked as a move to sabotage the U.N. Partition plan, was opposed by the rapporteur of the Ad Hoc Committee, Mr. Thors, and by the delegate of the United States, Mr. H. Johnson, who asked the Chairman, Dr. Aranha, to call for a vote on the Ad Hoc Committee's recommendation for Partition. Dr. Aranha ruled that the delegates would have to vote on the partition plan after hearing last minute appeals by Iran and Syria. Mr. Johnson, said: "There is nothing conciliatory in this," and he was supported by the Soviet Delegate.

After the result was announced, the Assembly appointed a five-nation Commission to carry out the plan and to supervise the transfer of the Government of Palestine to the provisional Jewish and Arab Councils: the nations appointed were: Bolivia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Panama and the Philippines. The sum of two million dollars was then voted by the Assembly for the work of the Commission.

2,000,000 DOLLAR BUDGET FOR IMPLEMENTATION

FLUSHING MEADOW, Saturday. — The U.N. Assembly met for its last session on Palestine.

attempts to bring about conciliation were doomed in advance.

How They Voted

legators' plan for a unitary state to three. Dr. Fakhil Jaoudi, the Iraqi Minister, submitted a

SONG AND DANCE GREET NEWS

There was unrestrained joy obvious in the merry-making in Tel Aviv and Haifa and even the usually deserted thoroughfares of Jerusalem burst into life as the news flashed through the city. People in their pyjamas joined in the dancing.

About a third of Tel Aviv's population were out in the streets, about 25,000 of them in Magen David Square where the strains of Hallelukah resounded as soon as the vote had been taken.

When a newspaper transmission of the Lake Success meeting had come to an end in Tel Aviv, a group of armed men forced their way into the "studio" and tried to get to the microphone. When the operators resisted the men withdrew.

Outside, the crowds clinging to the roofs and sides of

CAIRO. Sol of the Arab against Par the influent an editorial

STOP 1

LONDON, S. — Tonight's U.N. to go will be fully Mandatory resolution will "trade" on the withdrawal troops, and it

istrative pro- This was t ficial quarter night, where recent juggling Flushing Mes awaited with Though Bri pointed out t

MYTH

"The Jews created the refugee problem by expelling the Palestinians."

FACT

Had the Arabs accepted the 1947 UN resolution, not a single Palestinian would have become a refugee. An independent Arab state would now exist beside Israel. The responsibility for the refugee problem rests with the Arabs.

The beginning of the Arab exodus can be traced to the weeks immediately following the announcement of the UN partition resolution. The first to leave were roughly 30,000 wealthy Arabs who anticipated the upcoming war and fled to neighboring Arab countries to await its end. Less affluent Arabs from the mixed cities of Palestine moved to all-Arab towns to stay with relatives or friends.⁶ By the end of January 1948, the exodus was so alarming the Palestine Arab Higher Committee asked neighboring Arab countries to refuse visas to these refugees and to seal their borders against them.⁷

On January 30, 1948, the Jaffa newspaper, *Ash Sha'ab*, reported: "The first of our fifth-column consists of those who abandon their houses and businesses and go to live elsewhere....At the first signs of trouble they take to their heels to escape sharing the burden of struggle."⁸

Another Jaffa paper, *As Sarih* (March 30, 1948) excoriated Arab villagers near Tel Aviv for "bringing down disgrace on us all by 'abandoning the villages.'"⁹

Meanwhile, a leader of the Arab National Committee in Haifa, Hajj Nimer el-Khatib, said Arab soldiers in Jaffa were mistreating the residents. "They robbed individuals and homes. Life was of little value, and the honor of women was defiled. This state of affairs led many [Arab] residents to leave the city under the protection of British tanks."¹⁰

John Bagot Glubb, the commander of Jordan's Arab Legion, said: "Villages were frequently abandoned even before they were threatened by the progress of war."¹¹

Contemporary press reports of major battles in which large numbers of Arabs fled conspicuously fail to mention any forcible expulsion by the Jewish forces. The Arabs are usually described as "fleeing" or "evacuating" their homes. While Zionists are accused of "expelling and dispossessing" the Arab inhabitants of such towns as Tiberias and Haifa, the truth is much different. Both of those cities were within the boundaries of the Jewish State under the UN partition scheme and both were fought for by Jews and Arabs alike.

Jewish forces seized Tiberias on April 19, 1948, and the entire Arab population of 6,000 was evacuated under British military supervision. The Jewish Community Council issued a statement afterward: "We did not dispossess them; they themselves chose this course....Let no citizen touch their property."¹²

In early April, an estimated 25,000 Arabs left the Haifa area following an offensive by the irregular forces led by Fawzi al-Qawukji, and rumors that Arab air forces would soon bomb the Jewish areas around Mt. Carmel.¹³ On April 23, the Haganah captured Haifa. A British police report from Haifa, dated April 26, explained that "every effort is being made by the Jews to persuade the Arab populace to stay and carry on with their normal lives, to get their shops and businesses open and to be assured that their lives and interests will be safe."¹⁴ In fact, David Ben-Gurion had sent Golda Meir to Haifa to try to persuade the Arabs to stay, but she was unable to convince them because of their fear of being judged traitors to the Arab cause.¹⁵ By the end of the battle, more than 50,000 Palestinians had left.

"Tens of thousands of Arab men, women and children fled toward the eastern outskirts of the city in cars, trucks, carts, and afoot in a desperate attempt to reach Arab territory until the Jews captured Rushmiya Bridge toward Samaria and Northern Palestine and cut them off. Thousands rushed every available craft, even rowboats, along the waterfront, to escape by sea toward Acre."

Screenshot from Jewish Virtual Library 'Myths and Facts'

? *New York Times*, (April 23, 1948)



Buchenwald survivors arriving in Haifa 15th July 1945. Source: Wikimedia Commons