

Ethnic cleansing is designated as a crime against humanity in international treaties, such as that which created the International Criminal Court (ICC), and whether 'alleged' or fully recognised, it is subject to adjudication under international law. ...

This book is written with the deep conviction that the ethnic cleansing of Palestine must become rooted in our memory and consciousness as a crime against humanity and that it should be excluded from the list of *alleged* crimes. The perpetrators here are not obscure – they are a very specific group of people: the heroes of the Jewish war of independence, whose names will be quite familiar to most readers. The list begins with the indisputable leader of the Zionist movement, David Ben Gurion, in whose private home all early and later chapters in the ethnic cleansing story were discussed and finalised. He was aided by a small group of people I refer to in this book as the 'Consultancy', an ad-hoc cabal assembled solely for the purpose of plotting and designing the dispossession of the Palestinians. In one of the rare documents that records the meeting of the Consultancy, it is referred to as the Consultant Committee – *Haveadah Hamyeazet*. In another document the eleven names of the committee members appear, although they are all erased by the censor (nonetheless, as will transpire, I have managed to reconstruct all the names).

[PJ COMMENT: the website below shows that Ben Gurion foresaw the expulsion of the Palestinians <http://www.richardsilverstein.com/2013/12/28/ben-gurion-foresaw-palestinian-expulsion-in-1937/>]

This caucus prepared the plans for the ethnic cleansing and supervised its execution until the job of uprooting half of Palestine's native population had been completed. It included first and foremost the top-ranking officers of the future Jewish State's army, such as the legendary Yigael Yadin and Moshe Dayan. They were joined by figures unknown outside Israel but well grounded in the local ethos, ...

Both the officers and the experts were assisted by regional commander, such as Moshe Kalman, who cleansed the Safad area, and Moshe Carmel, who uprooted most of the Galilee. Yitzhak Rabin operated both in Lydd and Ramla as well as in the Greater Jerusalem area. ... but begin to think of them not just as Israeli war heroes. They did take part in founding a state for Jews, and many of their actions are understandably revered by their own people for helping to save them from outside attacks, seeing them through crises, and above all offering them a safe haven from religious persecution in different parts of the world. But history will judge how these achievements will ultimately weigh in the balance when the opposite scale holds the crimes they committed against the indigenous people of Palestine. Other regional commanders ... Shimon Avidon, the command of the Givati Brigade, cleansed his front from tens of villages and towns'. He was assisted by Yitzhak Pundak, who told Ha'aretz in 2005,

'There were two hundred villages [in the front] and these are gone. We had to destroy them, otherwise we would have had Arabs here [namely in the southern part of Palestine] as we have in Galilee. We would have had another million Palestinians'.

... for peace to have a chance in Palestine we ought to apply – a rule of obsolescence in this case, but on one condition: the the one political solution normally regarded as essential for reconciliation by both the United States and the United Nations is enforced here too, namely the

unconditional return of the refugees to their homes. The US supported such a UN decision for Palestine, that of 11 December 1948 (Resolution 194), for a short – all too short – while. By the spring of 1949 American policy had already been reoriented onto a conspicuously pro-Israeli track, turning Washington's mediators into the opposite of honest brokers as they largely ignored the Palestinian point of view in general, and disregarded in particular the Palestinian refugees' right of return.

[on Zionism] ... Nur Masalha's *Expulsion of the Palestinians*, .. shows clearly how deeply rooted the concept of transfer was, and is, in Zionist political thought. ... From the founder of the Zionist movement, Theodore Herzl, to the main leaders of the Zionist enterprise in Palestine, cleansing the land was a valid option. As one of the movement's most liberal thinkers, Leo Motzkin, put it in 1917:

“Our thought is that the colonization of Palestine has to go in two directions: Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel and the resettlement of the Arabs of Eretz Israel in areas outside the country. The transfer of so many Arabs may seem at first unacceptable economically, but is nonetheless practical. It does not require too much money to resettle a Palestinian village on another land.”

The fact that the expellers were newcomers to the country, and part of a colonization project, relates the case of Palestine to the colonialist history of ethnic cleansing in North and South America, Africa and Australia, where white settlers routinely committed such crimes. ... but once the idea of an exclusive Jewish economy became a central part of the vision, there was no room for Arab workers or peasants. Walid Khalidi and Samih Farsoun connected the centrality of the transfer ideology more closely to the end of the mandate, and they ask why the UN entrusted the fate of so many Palestinians to a movement that had clearly included transfer in its ideology.

I will seek ... to highlight the systematic planning with which they turned an ethnically mixed area into a pure ethnic space. ... ethnic cleansing by Israel of the Palestinians that started in 1948 but continues, in a variety of means, to today.

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... Half of the indigenous people living in Palestine were driven out, half of their villages and towns were destroyed, and only very few among them ever managed to return.

... And yet, there is no denying that the ethnic cleansing of 1948 has been eradicated almost totally from the collective global memory and erased from the world's conscience. Imagine that not so long ago, ... half of the entire population had been forcibly expelled within a year, half of its villages and towns wiped out, leaving behind only rubble and stones. Imagine now the possibility that somehow this act will never make it into the history books and that all diplomatic efforts to solve the conflict that erupted in that country will totally sideline, if not ignore, this catastrophic event. ... There are other, earlier, cases that have fared similarly, such as the ethnic cleansing of the non-Hungarians at the end of the nineteenth century, the genocide of the Armenians, and the holocaust perpetrated by the Nazi occupation against travelling people (the Roma, also known as Sinti) in the 1940s. I hope in the future that Palestine will no longer be included in this list.

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chap 2: The Drive for an Exclusively Jewish State

chap 3:

p 31 the UN's partition plan

chap 4: Finalising the Master Plan

p-52 The changing mood in the Consultancy: from retaliation to intimidation

[Yigal] Allon wanted to experience at attack on at least one village and decided to assault Khisas.

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... a small village with a few hundred Muslims and one hundred Christians, who lived peacefully together ... Jewish troops attacked the village on 18 December 1947, and randomly started blowing up houses at the dead of night while the occupants were still fast asleep. Fifteen villagers including five children were killed in the attack. The incident shocked The New York Times correspondent, who closely followed the unfolding events. He went and demanded an explanation from the Hagan, which at first denied the operation. When the inquisitive reporter did not let go, they eventually admitted it. Ben-Gurion issued a dramatic public apology, claiming the action had been unauthorised but, a few months later, in April, he included it in a list of successful operations.

[PJ comment: In 2005, Israelis voted him the 65th-greatest Israeli of all time, in a poll by the Israeli news website [Ynet](http://ynet.com) to determine whom the general public considered the 200 Greatest Israelis.[12] http://en.metapedia.org/wiki/Yigal_Allon]

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... Eager to test ... British vigilance in the face of their actions, the Hagana's High Command decided to ransack a whole village and massacre a large number of its inhabitants. At the time the British authorities were still responsible for maintaining law and order and were very much present in Palestine. ... the High Command selected was Balad al-Shaykh, the burial place of ... His grave is one of the few remains of this village, about ten kilometres east of Haifa, still extant today. ... The attack took place on 31 December [1947] ... It left over sixty Palestinians dead, not all of them men. ... in their next meeting, the Consultancy decided that such a separation [sparing women and children] was an unnecessary complication for future operations.

... Hagana units in Haifa ... went into one of the city's Arab neighbourhoods, Wadi Rushmiyya, expelled its people and blew up its houses. This act could be regarded as the official beginning of the ethnic cleansing operation in urban Palestine. The British looked the other way while these atrocities were being committed.

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Deir Yassin

The systematic nature of Plan Dalet is manifested in Deir Yassin, a pastoral and cordial village that had reached a non-aggression pact with the Hagana in Jerusalem, but was doomed to be wiped out because it was within the areas designated in Plan Dalet to be cleansed. Because of the prior agreement they had signed with the village, the Hagana decided to send the Irgun and Stern Gang troops, so as to absolve themselves from any official accountability. In the subsequent cleansing of 'friendly' villages even this ploy would no longer be deemed necessary.

...

As they 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.

Fayhim Zaydan, who was twelve years old at the time, recalled how he saw his family murdered in front of his eyes:

'They took us out one after the other; shot an old man and when one of his daughters cried, she was shot too. Then they called my brother Muhammad, and shot him in front of us, and when my mother yelled, bending over him – my little sister Hudra in her hands, still breastfeeding her – they shot her too.'

Zaydan himself was shot, too, while standing in a row of children the Jewish soldiers had lined up against a wall, which they had then sprayed with bullets, 'just for the fun of it', before they left. He was lucky to survive his wounds.

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... the accepted number of people massacred at Deir Yassin ... [is] ninety-three. ... thirty babies were among the slaughtered at Deir Yassin ... At the Jewish leadership proudly announced a high number of victims so as to make Deir Yassin the epicentre of the catastrophe – a warning to all Palestinians that a similar fate awaited them if they refused to abandon their homes and take flight.

Four nearby villages were next – Qalunya, Saris, Beit Surik and Biddu. ... the Hagana units blew up the houses and expelled the people.

The Urbicide of Palestine

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The confidence the Jewish command in early April had in their capacity not only to take over, but also to cleanse the areas the UN had granted to the Jewish state, can be gauged from the way, immediately after operation Nachson, they turned their attention to the major urban centres of Palestine. These were systematically attacked throughout the rest of the month, as UN agents and British officials stood by and watched indifferently.

The offensive against the urban centres began with Tiberias. As soon as news of Deir Yassin and the massacre three days later (12 April) in the nearby village of Khirbat Nasr al-Din reached the large Palestinian population in the city, many fled. The people were also petrified by the daily heavy bombardments of the Jewish forces situated in the hills overlooking this historic, ancient capital on the Sea of Galilee, where 6000 Jews and 5000 Arabs and their forbears had for centuries co-existed peacefully. ... These [30 Arab volunteers] were no match for the Hagana forces, who rolled barrel bombs down from the hills and used loudspeakers to broadcast terrifying noises to frighten the population –

The De-Arabisation of Haifa

... operations in Haifa were retroactively approved and welcomed by the Consultancy, ... Haifa, like Tiberias, had been allocated in the UN plan to the Jewish state: leaving the only major port in the country in Jewish control was yet another manifestation of the unfair deal the Palestinians were offered in the UN peace proposal. The Jews wanted the port city but without the 75,000 Palestinians who lived there, and in April 1948, they achieved their objective.

... The Jewish campaign of terrorization, ... included heavy shelling, sniper fire, rivers of ignited oil and fuel sent down the mountain side, and detonated barrels of explosives, and went on for the first months of 1948, but it intensified in early April.

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... But it was Mordechai Maklef, the operation officer of the Carmeli Brigade, ... orchestrated the cleansing campaign, and the orders he issued to his troops were plain and simple: 'Kill any Arab you encounter; torch all inflammable objects and force doors open with explosives.' (He later became the Israeli army Chief of Staff.)

...

When Golda Meir, one of the senior Zionist leader, visited Haifa a few days later, she at first found it hard to suppress a feeling of horror when she entered homes where cooked food still stood on the tables, children had left toys and books on the floor, ...

Meir had come to Palestine ... her family had fled in the wake of pogroms in Russia, and the sights she witnessed that day reminded her of the worst stories her family had told her about the Russian brutality

against Jews decades earlier. But this apparently left no lasting mark on her ... determination to continue with the ethnic cleansing of Palestine.

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The Carmeli Brigades's war book, ... officers ... ordered their men to station three-inch mortars on the mountain slopes overlooking the market and the port – where the Rothschild Hospital stands today – and to bombard the gathering crowds below. The plan was to make sure people would have no second thoughts, and to guarantee that the flight would be in one direction only. Once the Palestinians were gathered in the marketplace – an architectural gem that dated back to the Ottoman period, covered with white arched canopies, but destroyed beyond recognition after the creation of the State of Israel - they were an easy target for the Jewish marksmen.

...

The scenes were so horrendous that when reports reached London, they spurred the British government into action as some officials, ... began to realize the enormity of the disaster their inaction was creating in Palestine.

Safad is Next

...

In Safad there were 9500 Arabs and 2400 Jews. Most of the Jews were Ultra-Orthodox and had no interest at all in Zionism, let alone in fighting their Arab neighbors. ... 1000 well-trained Palmach troops confronting 400 Arab volunteers, one of many local imbalances that show the falsity of the myth of a Jewish David facing an Arab Goliath in 1948.

The Palmach troops drove most of the people out, only allowing 100 old people to stay on, though not for long. On 5 June, Ben-Gurion noted dryly in his diary: 'Abraham Hanuki, from [Kibbutz] Ayelet Hashahar, told me that since there were only 100 old people left in Safad they were expelled to Lebanon.

The Phantom City of Jerusalem

The urbicide did not skip Jerusalem, which quickly changed ... into a 'Phantom City'. Jewish troops shelled, attacked and occupied the western Arab neighbourhoods in April 1948. Some of the richer Palestinian inhabitants of these more affluent sections had left town a few weeks before. The rest were expelled from homes ...

...

The instruction to the Jewish forces was very clear in April 1948. 'Occupy the neighbourhood and destroy all its houses. The cleansing attack began on 24 April 1948 but was halted by the British before it could be fully implemented. ...

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British inaction was the rule, however, as regards ...

But worse was to come. ... with the help of the same three-inch mortar bombs used in Haifa, Palestinian Northern and Western Jerusalem were hammered by endless shelling. ... All in all, eight Palestinian neighbourhoods and thirty-nine villages were ethnically cleansed in the Greater Jerusalem area, their population transferred to the eastern part of the city. The villages are all gone today, but some of Jerusalem's most beautiful houses are still standing, now inhabited by Jewish families who took them over immediately after their eviction – silent reminders of the tragic fate of the people who used to own them.