

THE NAKBA - IN MEMORIAM

At-Tira, 12 December 1947: Members of the Irgun forces raided the village south of Haifa, killing 13 and wounding 10 villagers.

“Nakba Day” is commemorated annually on 15 May. The Nakba dates back to 1948 and in the eyes of the Palestinians was not a one-time occurrence, which is still going on today. Since that first wave of dispossession and displacement entire generations of Palestinians have been born scattered around the world and lived without justice and freedom. The conflict still endures and the events of the past are still shaping present-day Palestinian life, upholding the refugee problem, disintegrated an entire society, thwarting economic development, and keeping a nation broadly dependent upon international aid for survival.

Jerusalem, Damascus Gate, 12 December 1947: A bomb attack by Irgun at Damascus Gate outside the Old City of Jerusalem, leaving 20 killed and 5 wounded.

In 1915, the British government commissioned Sir Henry MacMahon to correspond with the Hashemite leader Sharif Hussein Ibn Ali of Mecca (known as Hussein-Sir Henry McMahon correspondence) to encourage him to ally with Britain against the Ottomans. In return MacMahon offered British official support for Arab independence and a unified Arab kingdom under Hashemite leadership. This assurance contributed to the outbreak of the Arab Revolt for independence from Ottoman rule of June 1916.

Yehiday, 13 December 1947: Jewish forces disguised as a British army patrol entered the Arab village of Yehiday (near Petah Tikva), stopped in front of the coffee house and began shooting at the crowd gathered in the café, placed bombs next to homes, and tossed grenades at villagers, killing 7 and wounding many more, before being stopped by real British troops arriving and avoiding more deaths to occur.

In 1916, the French and British reached a secret agreement (named the **Sykes-Picot Agreement** after its negotiators, the British orientalist Sir Mark Sykes and the former French Consul General in Beirut Charles Georges Picot) dividing the territory of the Ottoman Empire under their control after the war. Russia would get Constantinople, the Bosphorus Strait, and most of the provinces close to the Caucasus, France would receive Syria (including Lebanon), while Britain would acquire Iraq and Jordan. Palestine was to be divided with France controlling the North and Britain the Haifa-Akko area, the rest (excluding the Negev) to be placed under international administration.

Yazur, 18 December 1947: Zionist troops disguised as British soldiers drove into the Jaffa-area village and threw several bombs at the coffeehouse, which was located on the main road, killing six villagers.

The British held talks with Zionist leaders and promised their support for “the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine”, which was formalized in the **Balfour Declaration** - a letter sent on 2 November 1917 by British Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour to Baron Lionel Walter de Rothschild. The Balfour Declaration was henceforth referred to as an official British statement and was later included word for word in the British Mandate document ratified by the League of Nations in 1922. It also stated that “nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine.”

Khisas, 18 December 1947: Haganah forces drove through the village of Khisas on the Lebanese-Syrian border firing machine guns and throwing grenades, killing 12 Palestinian civilians.

During World War I; Amir Faisal, son of Sharif Hussein Ibn Ali, led the Arab Revolt forces alongside Allied troops into Damascus on 3 October 1917 and on 11 December 1917, General Allenby entered Jerusalem, **ending 400 years of Ottoman rule**. The British then established the Occupied Enemy Territory Administration (OETA) which controlled the area from 1918-1920.

Qazaza, 19 December 1947: Irgun forces blew up the houses in the village located south of Ramle, including that of the Mukhtar, killing 5 Arab children.

In January 1919, the **first Palestinian National Congress** met in Jerusalem and sent two memoranda to the post-war Paris peace conference, rejecting Balfour Declaration and demanding independence. In March 1919, the peace conference decided to send international commission of inquiry [King-Crane] to ascertain aspirations of Near East peoples.

Jerusalem, 29 December 1947: Irgun forces threw a barrel full of explosives at a Café near Damascus Gate in Jerusalem which resulted in the death of 14 Palestinians and the wounding of 27 others.

In June-July 1919, a commission, led by the Americans Henry King and Charles Crane (**King-Crane Commission**), examined the situation in Palestine. Their report, which was kept secret for three years and remained unpublished until 1947, warned against the effects of unrestricted Jewish immigration and Zionist plans regarding Palestinian Arabs, recommending that “the project for making Palestine distinctly a Jewish commonwealth should be given up,” stating “To subject a people so minded to unlimited Jewish immigration, and to steady financial and social pressure to surrender the land, would be a gross violation of the principle just quoted, and of the peoples’ rights though it kept within the forms of law...”.

Balad Ash-Sheikh, 31 December 1947-1 January 1948: The Palmach, an arm of the Haganah forces, attacked the Palestinian village near Haifa at night, killing at least 60 of them and destroying several houses. The attack came in retaliation for the killing of Jews during the Haifa Oil Refinery massacre the day before.

(1918-1919): Britain encouraged their allies – the Arab national movement under Amir Faisal, and the Zionist movement under **Chaim Weizmann** – to formulate an early agreement on Arab-Jewish relations, realizing that the three British pledges (the Sir Henry McMahon-Hussein Correspondence of 1915; the SykesPicot Agreement of 1916; and the Balfour Declaration of 1917) were contradictory. Faisal knew no English and Weizmann no Arabic so the British intermediaries, including T.E. Lawrence, drafted the documents according to their interpretation of what was agreed. Faisal added his own handwritten conditions in Arabic to the English document. In January 1919, Faisal and Weizmann signed an agreement on close collaboration between their respective national movements (Jewish immigration to Palestine and the establishment of a unified, independent Arab state), though the “agreement” remained unpublished until 1936.

Jaffa, 4 January 1948: The Zionist Stern Gang threw a bomb in a crowded plaza in Jaffa, destroying the Arab National Committee headquarters, killing 15 people and wounding 80 others.

* In April 1920, the post-World War I **San Remo Conference** awarded the mandate for Syria and Lebanon to France and that of Palestine, Transjordan and Mesopotamia (Iraq) to Britain, the new League of Nations gave Britain mandated control of Palestine. That same year Amir Faisal was proclaimed King of Syria and Chaim Weizmann was elected president of the World Zionist Organization.

* Tensions in Arab-Jewish relations rose over the implications of Zionist immigration and peaked in the anti-Zionist uprising in and around Jerusalem that erupted in early April 1920 during the Muslim festival of Nabi Musa, an annual pilgrimage from Jerusalem to Jericho and the place of the Mosque of Prophet Musa (Nabi Musa Uprising).

Semiramis Hotel, 5 January 1948: The Haganah forces bombed the Semiramis Hotel located in the Katamon neighborhood in Jerusalem, killing 19 and wounding over 20.

As Palestinians increased their resistance to the British Mandate and to Jewish immigration, the British established by a commission of inquiry into recent violence and on how to calm the tense atmosphere, which was headed by the Chief Justice of Palestine, Sir Thomas Haycraft (**Haycraft Commission**). The Commission’s report, entitled “Palestine: Disturbances in May 1921”, was published in October 1921, attributing disturbances to Arab fears about increasing Jewish immigration into Palestine, and led to the publication of the **Churchill White Paper** of June 1922 (named after the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Winston Churchill).

Jerusalem: Jaffa Gate, 7 January 1948: Irgun forces, threw a bomb at the Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem, killing 18 civilians and wounding 40 others.

The **Churchill White Paper** of 1922, noted that Arab hostility against Jews stemmed from Jewish immigration and Zionist policy and reasserted British support for the idea of a Jewish national home in Palestine, for which “it is necessary that the Jewish community in Palestine should be able to increase its

numbers by immigration.” However, it stated that the British government did not wish to see Palestine become “as Jewish as England is English”, but rather see the establishment of “a center in which Jewish people as a whole may take, on grounds of religion and race, an interest and a pride.” Further, the memorandum iterated that Jewish immigration should not exceed the economic absorptive capacity of the country.

Al-Saraya Al-Arabeya , 8 January 1948: Zionist forces used a car bomb to kill 70 Palestinian civilians and wound dozens.

Without the consent of the Palestinians, the League of Nations Council formally approved the **British Mandate for Palestine** on 24 July 1922, officially coming into effect on 29 September 1923 (when the Treaty of Lausanne with Turkey came into force). Sir Herbert Samuel was appointed first High Commissioner. **Arab-Jewish tensions** rose again in September 1928 when British authorities removed a screen placed by Jews at the Western Wall (Al-Burak Wall) to separate male and female worshippers, a move Muslims denounced as a change in the site’s status quo. The violation of the status quo led to violence on 23-29 August 1929 when Palestinians and Jews attacked each other in a number of cities, leaving over 116 Palestinians and 133 Jews dead.

Mansurat Al-Khayt, 18 January 1948: Haganah forces attack on the village (in the Safad subdistrict) with the order to eliminate anyone who resisted. Palestinian homes were burnt.

In 1930, Britain dispatched a Commission, led by Sir Walter Shaw (**Shaw Commission**), to investigate the violence and re-examine the immigration policy. The commission’s report, published in March 1930, concluded that Palestinian violence was a result of their fear of Zionist immigration and land purchases and recommended limitations on both as well as the setting up of a committee to investigate the questions of immigration, settlement, and development. That inquiry was conducted by Sir John Hope Simpson (**Hope-Simpson Commission of Inquiry**), who focused on the economic absorptive capacity of Palestine and recommended that Jewish immigration and land purchase be restricted because it was causing a growing population of landless Arabs and threatened Palestinian agricultural development.

Abu Kabir, 12-13 February 1948: In an assault on this Jaffa suburb, Jewish forces killed 13 Palestinians, including the mukhtar, and wounded 22 others.

The recommendations of both the Shaw and the Hope-Simpson Commissions - limiting Jewish immigration - were adopted by the **Passfield White Paper** (after British Colonial Secretary Lord Sidney Webb Passfield) in October 1930, which referred to a 1922 statement on immigration as follows: “This immigration cannot be so great in volume as to exceed whatever may be the economic capacity of the country at the time to absorb new arrivals. It is essential to ensure that the immigrants should not be a burden upon the people of Palestine as a whole, and that they should not deprive any section of the present population of their employment.” However, after strong Zionists protests, British Prime Minister

Ramsay MacDonald sent a 'Black Letter' to Chaim Weizmann largely nullifying the document's immigration clauses.

* **1 April 1948:** Jewish military forces launched "Operation Nachshon" to open the road to Jerusalem: First, Palestinian leader Hassan Salameh's headquarters in Ramleh was blown up. Next was the battle for Kastle in which Abdel Qader al-Husseini was killed on April 9th. He was the most charismatic commander and his death led to the fall of Al-Kastel.

* **Sa'sa', 15 February 1948:** The Palmach forces killed at least 15 people in this village (Safad district), including 5 children, and destroyed 15 houses.

In October 1933, the **Arab Executive Committee** called for a **general strike** to protest ongoing British pro-Zionist policies, especially Jewish mass immigration. Disturbances broke out in main towns and were violently suppressed by British police. Tensions remained high and in November 1935, leaders of Palestinian political parties submitted a joint memorandum to the British High Commissioner requesting cessation of Zionist mass immigration and land acquisition, as well as the establishment of a government on basis of proportional representation both of which was rejected in the British House of Commons.

Qisarya, 15 February 1948: Palmach forces entered Qisarya (Caesarea), killing all those who did not escape the village.

In April 1936, the Palestinian **Great Revolt** began: a widespread national uprising against the British administration of the Palestine Mandate, demanding Arab independence and the end of Jewish immigration. National Committees as well as the **Arab Higher Committee**, chaired by Haj Amin al-Husseini, were established and led a **general strike** (April-October 1936) calling for an end to Zionist immigration and land purchases as well as the establishment of an Arab national government, until the fulfillment of which a policy of 'no taxation without representation' was adopted.

Ramle, 18 February 1948: A Zionist, disguised as an Arab, planted a bomb in one of the city's markets, which killed seven civilians and injured 45 others, many of them women and children.

In response to the 1936 riots, the British Government appointed another commission, led by Lord Earl Peel, to investigate the situation in Palestine and report on the circumstances of the Arab revolt. In July 1937, the **Peel Commission** report concluded that the Mandate was unworkable, that both sides could not live in peace together in one state, and that Palestine should be partitioned into two states, one Jewish and one Arab, while maintaining a British-controlled corridor from Jerusalem to the coast at Jaffa. The plan, which was rejected by the Arabs, with the exception of Prince Abdullah of Transjordan, and split the Zionist movement, triggered a second phase of the Great Revolt (1937-39).

Jerusalem, 20 February 1948: Stern forces stole a British army vehicle, filled it with explosives, and placed it in front of the As-Salam building in Jerusalem. The explosion killed 14 Arabs and wounded 26. (Aref el Aref, The Nakbah; Ibid)

* With the failure of the Peel Commission's proposals the revolt resumed during the autumn of 1937. In October 1937, the British government **dissolved** the Arab Higher Committee and all National Committees, arrested numerous of their members, **deporting** some of them to Seychelles Islands, and officially stripped Haj Amin AlHusseini of his positions as Chairman of the Waqf and President of the Supreme Muslim Council. In November 1937, the Jewish paramilitary Irgun embarked on a series of indiscriminate attacks against Arab civilians and Palestinians began organizing as guerrilla fighters.

* Meanwhile at the 1937 Arab conference in Bludan, Syria, participants rejected the Peel Commission Partition Plan and confirmed Palestine's place as part of the Arab World.

Haifa, 28 February 1948: Palmach forces blew up two Palestinian houses and a garage and fired into the Arab neighborhoods, killing at least 30 people, including women and children.

In April 1938, Britain sent a technical commission of inquiry, chaired by Sir John Woodhead, to study the practicability of partition as recommended by the Peel Commission. However, its hearings, which were boycotted by Palestinian leaders, concluded that partition was not practicable. Since the members of the commission could not agree on a single proposal, the **Woodhead Commission** (officially: Palestine Partition Commission) report issued three in November 1938: Plans A, B, and C, all of which were called by the Zionists because of the limited scope of the proposed Jewish state. The British subsequently call for a general conference on Palestine to be held in London (St. James Conference, 1939) and attended by Arab, Palestinian, and Zionist representatives.

Abu Kabir, 13 March 1948: Paramilitaries from Haganah forces carried out an armed attack on Abu Kabir suburb of Jaffa, destroying homes and killing fleeing Palestinian citizens.

The **St. James Roundtable Conference** with British, Jewish, and Palestinian participants as well as representatives from Arab states took place from 7 February-17 March 1939 at St. James's Palace in London to discuss Jewish immigration into Palestine and illegal land sales. After the conference failed to produce an agreement, the British government announced it would implement its own policy, which was laid down in the **MacDonald White Paper** (named after Colonial Secretary Malcolm MacDonald) on 17 May 1939, disclaiming an intention to create a Jewish state, placing restrictions on Jewish immigration and land purchase, and envisaging an independent state in Palestine with a two-thirds Arab majority within 10 years. The White Paper of 1939, marked the end of British commitment to the Jews under the Balfour Declaration and was rejected by the Zionist movement (as well as by the Arab Higher Committee for not going far enough), but remained British policy until 1947.

Husayniyya, 13 and 16-17 March 1948: Haganah forces raided the Safad-area village of Al-Husayniyya, destroying homes with explosives and killing at least 15 people, including women and children, and wounding 20 others. Three days later, over 30 people were killed in another attack on the village by Palmach forces, which led the rest of the villagers to flee.

In response to the MacDonald White Paper, (1939) the Zionists launched a **bloody anti-British and anti-Palestinian campaign** with the aim of driving both out of Palestine and paving the way for the establishment of the Zionist state. Meanwhile, **World War II** broke out on 1 September 1939. Due to both of these events, key provisions of the MacDonald White Paper were ultimately never implemented. The head of the Jewish Agency for Palestine, David Ben-Gurion, declared: “We will fight the White Paper as if there is no war, and fight the war as if there is no White Paper.”

Cairo-Haifa Train, 31 March 1948: Jewish military forces planted bombs on a Cairo-Haifa train which killed 40 people and wound 60 others on explosion.

In the early 1940s David Ben-Gurion mobilized American Jewry and in 1942, the **Biltmore Conference** of American Zionists formulated the idea of a ‘Jewish Commonwealth’ in Palestine and creation of a Jewish army, which is endorsed by the US Congress and House of Representatives in 1944 and 1945 respectively. Meanwhile in Palestine, Jewish aggression against British and Palestinian targets escalated.

Deir Yassin, 9-10 April 1948: Haganah, Irgun and Stern military forces surrounded this Jerusalem village, killing around 250 Palestinians, men, women and children, and looting and destroying houses. News of the massacre prompted the mass flight of Palestinians from other locations.

During and after World War II, the Zionists in Palestine increased their military campaign against British rule and renewed their call for a state on the basis of the promises made by European leaders, especially in wake of the Holocaust. A joint **Anglo-American Committee** of Inquiry, proposed by British Prime Minister Attlee in response to US President Truman’s pleas to admit more displaced Jews to Palestine, was appointed in November 1945 to associate the USA with responsibility for the Palestine Question and to examine continued Jewish immigration into Palestine. The committee’s final report in May 1946 recommended increased Jewish immigration, the cessation of the 1940 Land Transfer Regulations, and adoption of a (UN) trusteeship for Palestine. The British government as well as the Arab League rejected the proposal leading to a search for a solution on the basis of Federalization or Cantonization.

Qaluniya, 11 April 1948: Haganah forces entered this Jerusalem district village as part of “Operation Nachshon” and blew up 50 houses, killing at least 14 villagers.

Following the rejection of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry's recommendations to increase Jewish immigration, British Deputy Prime Minister Herbert Morrison and US Ambassador Henry Grady proposed in July 1946 a federal solution for Palestine (**Morrison-Grady Plan**), which intended to convert the British Mandate into a trusteeship and to divide the country into Jewish and Arab provinces, as well as two districts (Jerusalem and Negev). In September 1946, the **Palestine Roundtable Conference in London** rejected the plan with Arab delegates proposing a unitary state of Palestine, in which Jews would have full civil rights. The conference reconvened in February 1947 to again consider the British proposals, however both the Arab Higher Committee and the Zionist movement rejected them.

Nasser Al-Din, 13-14 April 1948: Lehi and Irgun military forces entered this village (near Tiberias) dressed as Arab fighters and when villagers went out to greet them, they shot them, killing all but 40 people and raising all houses to the ground.

The **Arab League** adopted a resolution at a meeting in **Bludan**, Syria, on 11-12 June 1946, denouncing the findings of the 1945-46 Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry, warning Britain and the US that their continued disregard of Arab rights in Palestine will adversely affect their oil and other commercial interests in the Arab world. The meeting also discussed ways in which Arab states could assist the Palestinians, including reconstituting the Arab Higher Committee and dispatching forces from various Arab armies into Palestine in the case of war.

Al-Lajjun, 14 April 1948: Haganah forces killed 12 Palestinians and wounded 15 others during an attack on the village (Jenin district), also blowing up houses to drive the inhabitants out.

Following a continuous deterioration of the situation on the ground, including increasing terrorist attacks against British targets by the Irgun and Lehi underground groups (such as the **bombing of the King David Hotel** in Jerusalem), the British government announced in February 1947 that it would cease its Mandate and turn over responsibility for Palestine to the newly-created United Nations. On 28 April, the UN General Assembly opened a special session on the Palestine problem and on 15 May a UN special session appointed a **Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP)** to investigate the situation on the ground and propose solutions to the problem. The UNSCOP report was published on 3 September with the majority of the members recommending partition and an international status for Jerusalem, and a minority recommending a federal solution. The Jewish Agency accepted the partition plan, the Arab Higher Committee rejected it.

Safad, 16 April 1948: The Haganah Gang threw a mortar bomb into the city's Arab area, killing 13 Palestinians, most of them children, and causing a panic among the population.

On 29 November 1947, after Zionist organizations and their supporters had led intense lobbying campaigns, the **UNSCOP majority report** was placed before the UN General Assembly, which adopted it as UNGA **Resolution 181** with a vote of 33 to 13, with 10 abstentions and 1 absent. The resolution called for the **partition of Palestine** in a Jewish and an Arab state, allocating 55% of the territory to the former

(which accounted for no more than one third of the population and possessed only 7% of the privately owned land in Palestine) and only 42% to the latter. Owing to its special status due to its many holy places and its association with three world religions, Jerusalem was to be placed under a *corpus separatum*, also including Bethlehem, to be administered by the UN Trusteeship Council.

Tiberias, 19 April 1948: Zionist gangs attacked the Old City of Tiberias, shooting and blowing up houses, killing 14 people and causing panic among the inhabitants.

The **UN Partition Resolution** of 1947 was welcomed by most Zionists at that time as an achievement (=international legal recognition for a Jewish state in Palestine) and, as Ben-Gurion said, “will be determined by force and not by the partition resolution” (Ben-Gurion Memoirs). Palestinians and other Arabs rejected it outright, considering it unacceptable that Palestinians should give up more than half their country to newly arrived foreign immigrants. With the news about the passing of the Partition Plan, a new round of violence broke out between Arabs and Jews, setting off the large-scale dispossession of Palestinians.

13 April 1948: Fawzi al-Qawuqi, Commander of the Arab forces withdrew from Mishmar Ha’emek; Haganah forces attacked and occupied neighboring villages of Naghnaghiya, Mansi and Lajjun,

* After some 75,000 Palestinians had already been displaced by Zionist attacks by the end of 1947, members of the **Arab Liberation Army** - volunteers from neighboring Arab countries - came to help the Palestinians in early January 1948. However, as they were equally disorganized, poorly equipped and trained as the Palestinian fighters, defeat over the much larger and stronger armed Jewish forces was only a matter of time: while the Zionist side consisted of the 30,000-strong Haganah, Lehi and Etzel (or Irgun) militias, in addition to 20,000 Zionist auxiliary forces from various settlements (Ilan Pappé, *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine*, Oxford: Oneworld Publications Limited, 2006 p. 44).

* There were 2,000-3,000 Palestinian-led guerrillas and 2,000-4,000 mainly Syrian and Iraqi volunteers of the Arab Liberation Army on the Arab side (Salman Abu Sitta, *Atlas of Palestine 1948*, London: Palestine Land Society, 2004; Simha Flapan, *The Birth of Israel*, New York: Pantheon Books, 1987). By 10 January 1948, the violence had left 1,974 people dead, most of them Palestinians (Walid Khalidi,

Before Their Diaspora, Washington D.C., 1984).

12 July 1948: Israeli military forces occupied Lydda and Ramla, two important Palestinian towns and expelled a large number of their inhabitants.

On 10 March 1948, Ben-Gurion’s Zionist leadership approved **Plan Dalet**, detailing operations against “enemy” population centers, including expulsion of their inhabitants and destruction of villages. In April, Jewish forces began systematic attacks under Plan Dalet, including one on the Jerusalem-area village of

Deir Yassin on 9 April, in which members of the Irgun and Stern Gang killed over 100 men, women, and

children and expelled the remaining villagers. News of the massacre prompted the mass flight of Palestinians from other locations. Many of the attacks in the period before Israel's declaration of independence occurred in areas outside of the borders of the Jewish state proposed in the UN Partition Plan.

Ein Al-Zaytoun, 3 May 1948: Around 70 prisoners were killed by Palmach forces in this village (Safad district) and all Palestinian houses were burnt.

When on 14 May 1948 the Jewish Agency formed a provisional government and proclaimed the **State of**

Israel, the Arab Higher Committee called on Arab states to save Palestine. In the course of the subsequent **War of 1948**, Jewish forces, which were three to over five times as many as the Arab troops, took over half the territory allocated to a Palestinian state as proposed by the UN partition plan, expanding the new state of Israel to 78% of historic Palestine, while Jordan took control of the West Bank and Egypt of the Gaza Strip. The Palestinians found themselves divided: an Arab minority within the Israeli state; citizens of Jordan on the West Bank; residents of Gaza under Egyptian administration; and stateless refugees in the neighboring Arab countries. Nevertheless, on 1 October 1948 the Higher Arab Committee declared at Palestinian National Conference in Gaza Palestine to be independent and established an All-Palestine Government in Gaza.

Beit Daras, 11 May 1948: Military assault by Jewish military forces on the Gaza-district village, massacring women, elderly and children fleeing the fighting. The village suffered some 50 casualties, and many houses were then blown up, and wells and granaries sabotaged.

On 11 December 1948, the UN General Assembly passed **Resolution 194**, which called for the establishment of a UN Conciliation Commission to facilitate peace between Israel and Arab states defined principles for returning Palestine refugees to their homes. Article 11 stipulated that "refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible."

Burayr, 12 May 1948: Palmach, Jewish military forces, attacked Burayr, northeast of Gaza, killing a large number of villagers (Arif el Arif, *The Nakba of Jerusalem and the Lost Paradise*. 1947-1949. Institute of Palestine Studies, Beirut. pp 370).

The official **end of the 1948 War** is dated on 10 March 1949, the day when Israeli forces secured the southern Negev until the southernmost part of Palestine on the shores of the Red Sea, Umm Rashrash (where later the city of Eilat was built). In 1949, Israel signed separate **armistice agreements** with Egypt (24 February), Lebanon (23 March), Jordan (3 April), and Syria (20 July), according to which the territory

under Israeli control henceforth encompassed approximately about one-third more than what was allocated to the Jewish State under the UN Partition Plan.

Abu Shusha, 14 May 1948: Units of the Zionist Giv'ati Brigade assaulted Abu Shusha village (Ramle district), killing and executing villagers with guns and axes, including those who tried to flee. Some 60-70 residents were murdered.

The UN Conciliation Commission estimated that by the end of the 1948 War, **726,000 Palestinians** (75% of the Arab population of Palestine) had fled, or were expelled, from what became Israel, while 25,000 others had become so-called “border-line cases”: They still lived at home, but without any means of income because they were separated from their lands by the armistice lines (*UN, First Interim Report of the United Nations Economic Survey Mission for the Middle East, 16 Nov. 1949*). Two-thirds of the total found refuge in the 22.8% of historical Palestine that was controlled by Arab forces after the war (the West Bank and Gaza), while the remainder (some figures state 300,000) found themselves in the neighboring Arab countries.

* **Acre, 18 May 1948:** Israeli troops killed at least 100 Palestinian civilians, mostly residents of the West Jerusalem who refused to move into the portion of the East Jerusalem that was being used as an Arab neighborhood.

* **18 August 1948:** Yigal Yadin, IDF OC, Operation Hiram: “We are not interested in Arab inhabitants [in Israel] and their return [to Israel] must be prevented at all costs.” (*100 Years of Palestinian History: A 20th Century Chronology*, Passia Publication, 2001).

At least 150,000 additional Palestinians remained inside what became Israel - 77.2% of historical Palestine- some 30,000-40,000 of which were expelled from their villages (“**internally displaced**”). They were granted Israeli citizenship but placed under military rule (until 1966) and many of them were stripped of their land. Today, Palestinian citizens of Israel number 1.6 million, including an estimated 400,000 internally displaced (incl. their descendants), whom Israel still does not recognize (*Badil, Bethlehem*).

Tantura, 22-23 May 1948: The Israeli army’s Alexandroni Brigade attacked the village of Tantura, south of Haifa, murdering some 200- 250 residents and forced the village and its 1,728 inhabitants to flee.

The Israeli government passed two laws to ensure that the newly created state retains a Jewish majority: the **Law of Return** (1950), which grants Jews from anywhere in the world the right to settle in

Israel as an Oleh (new immigrant) and become a citizen, and the **Entry into Israel Law** (1952) which governs the entry into Israel of non-citizens of the state. It grants preferential treatment to Oleh and affords them status to enter as though they were citizens of the state. The Law was also designed to prevent the return of Palestinian refugees.

Lydda, 12 July 1948: Israeli military forces attacked the city, shooting at anyone and throwing grenades into houses, killing 250 people.

It is estimated that Israel **expropriated** some 4,244,776 acres of Palestinian land and **depopulated** at least 418 Palestinian towns and villages, many of which were subsequently demolished, during and immediately following its creation in 1948 (Walid Khalidi *All That Remains - The Palestinian Villages Occupied and Depopulated by Israel in 1948*, Institute for Palestine Studies, 2nd ed. 2006). Only about 81 Palestinian villages emerged intact within Israel (*Salman Abu Sitta, Atlas of Palestine 1948, London: Palestine Land Society, 2004*) and formerly mixed towns (e.g., Jaffa, Haifa, and Tiberias) became largely Jewish with small Palestinian minorities. Israel adopted new land laws to facilitate the **expropriation** of refugee property and its transfer to the state and the Jewish National Fund.

At-Tira, 16 July 1948: When this Haifa-area village was occupied, Israeli soldiers killed 25 to 30 of the Palestinian village defenders.

* A study on **losses** conducted from 1953-62 by the UN Conciliation Commission for Palestine (UNCCP) identified 6,057,032 dunums of individually-owned land abandoned by refugees, worth at least \$824,780,808 (in 1948 dollars) at the time, not including collectively-owned village land, grazing land, lands for public uses, etc. In addition, there were losses worth between \$70,122,000 and \$169,538,070 in moveable property such as cash and jewelry, farm animals and tools, household furnishings and factory inventories, automobiles, etc. (Michael R. Fischbach, *Records of Dispossession: Palestinian Refugee Property and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, New York: 2003).

* A later study by Yusif Sayigh placed the amount of lost refugee property much higher, estimating the abandoned 6,611,250 dunums of land and real estate worth \$1,625,702,000 (in 1948 dollars), as well as 173,000 buildings, worth \$954,304,000, and \$453,375,000 in moveable property (*Ibid.*). Finally, Sami Hadawi and Atif Kubursi calculated that the refugees lost 19,031,012 dunums of land worth \$2,131,467,000 (in 1948 dollars) (Sami Hadawi, *Palestinian Rights & Losses in 1948. A Comprehensive Study. Part V: An Economic Assessment of Total Palestinian Losses*, London: Saqi Books, 1988, 113, 187).

Illut, 16 and 21 July and 3 August 1948: In the first incident, Zionist forces entered the Nazareth-area village of Illut and selected 20 young men to be executed in front of the villagers. In the second, Israeli forces rounded up returning villagers, stealing jewelry of the women and fired at 24 men, killing 22 of them. On 3 August, 14 Palestinian prisoners were murdered in the olive grove near 'Illut in the presence of the villagers.

In 1950, Israel passed the **Absentees' Property Law**, which granted the government "custodianship" over lands and property belonging to Palestinian refugees, with no compensation for the owners. An "absentee" was defined as any Palestinian who left his or her home after November 1947, even if he or she remained within what became Israel's borders. Between 1947-49, an estimated 17,178,000 dunums of land were expropriated from Palestinians. Between 1950-1966, 700,000 dunums were expropriated from Palestinians who remained within the territory of the new state (Badil, *Survey of Palestinian Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (2010-2012)*, Vol. VII, 2012).

Arab Suqir, 29 August 1948: In Ashdod's dunes, at least 10 Palestinian farmers were killed.

* The Arab-Israeli War of 1948 ended in various truces (Armistice Agreements) signed in the early 1950s. In the following years the Palestine Question was primarily addressed as the serious refugee problem the Nakba had caused. UN General Assembly Resolution 302 (IV), of 8 December 1949 established the

United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestinian refugees in the Near East and set up temporary camps. In 1950, 914,221 refugees were registered with UNRWA.

* In 1952, the Israeli government effectively **denationalized** the Palestinians who had fled or were expelled by adopting the Israeli Nationality Law. Their property was seized and ultimately transferred to the State of Israel.

Al-Dawayima, 29 October 1948: Israeli forces (89th Battalion) killed at least 80-100 Palestinian men, women and children (other media sources counted 200 and the village Mukhtar listed 455) and blew up of several homes in this village northwest of Hebron (part of "Operation Yoav"). (Arif eel Arif, *The Nakba*, Ibid)

The **refugees' right to return** to their homes or receive compensation was main part in **UNGA Resolution 194** of 11 December 1948, stating, "The refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible."

Safsaf, 29 October 1948: Israeli forces captured the Galilee village, killing 52-64 Palestinian inhabitants.

* Today, the total **Palestinian refugee population** is estimated at over 7.9 million (66% of the entire, worldwide Palestinian population, estimated at 12.1 million) (Badil, *Survey of Palestinian Refugees and IDPs 2013-15 (Vol. VIII)*), including over 5.8 million registered with UNRWA, constituting approx. 45% of the total Palestinian population worldwide.

* In the Palestinian occupied territory, they account for some 42.8% of the total population (WB: 27.3%, GS: 68%) (PCBS, *Special Statistical Bulletin on the 68th Anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba*, May 2016).

Around half of the Palestinian refugees are stateless. About 41.4% of the UNRWA registered refugees live in the West Bank and Gaza, the remainder in neighboring countries.

Majd Al-Krum, 29-30 October 1948: Israeli forces picked 12 Palestinian men from the Akko-area village at random and killed them in front of the other villagers.

After the end of 1948 war, Israel continued to **confiscate land**, often declaring it “**state land**”, so that by 1962, 93% of the land inside Israel was controlled by Israel Land Administration, while Palestinian citizens only owned 4% of the total (Philip Mattar, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Palestinians*, revised ed., New York, 2005).

Eilaboun, 30 October 1948: During “Operation Hiram”, Israeli soldiers executed 14 Palestinian men in this Palestinian Christian village near Tiberias, after the village had surrendered.

During the 1967 War, Israel conquered and occupied the remaining 22% of historic Palestine that had been outside its expanded post-1948 borders, i.e., the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem (along with the Syrian Golan Heights, and Egyptian Sinai Peninsula). About 300,000 Palestinians were displaced from the West Bank and Gaza Strip (**‘1967 displaced persons’**), including some 175,000 UNRWA-registered refugees who became refugees for a second time. In violation of international law, Palestinians in the occupied territories were denied political or civil rights, while their lands were relentlessly confiscated and replaced with Jewish only settlements.

* **Saliha, 30 October 1948:** Either Israeli troops entered the village (Safad district), blew up a structure, possibly a mosque, killing the 60-94 Palestinian people who had taken refuge inside, or they had first murdered the villagers, then piled their corpses up in the building and blew it up.

* **Sa’sa’, 30 October 1948:** Israeli forces, as part of “Operation Hiram”, captured the village (Safad district), killing several of the Palestinian inhabitants and expelling the remaining ones.

The Nakba of 1948 continues in the memories of Palestinians and the shock of loss and defeat. Today, the State of Israel controls over **85% of the land of historic Palestine** (compared to 6.2% during the British Mandate) (PCBS, *Special Statistical Bulletin on the 68th Anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba*, May 2016). Since the beginning of the occupation in 1967, Palestinians have lost access to over **60% of West Bank** land and two thirds of its grazing land, while over 2.5 million **productive trees** have been **uprooted**. In Gaza half of the cultivable area has been lost (UNCTAD, *Report on UNCTAD’s Assistance to the Palestinian People*, Sept. 2016).

Hula, 31 October 1948: Jewish military forces, led by Menachem Begin, sealed off the entrances of the Lebanese border village of Hula, rounded up at least 70 Palestinian inhabitants, dividing them among

three houses where they then gunned them down before blowing up the three houses with the bodies inside.

Since 1967, Israel has **destroyed** over **27,000** Palestinian **homes** and structures (ICAHN), established 131 illegal **settlements** and over 100 outposts on Palestinian soil, transferred over 600,000 Israeli citizens to settle in Palestinian territories (Peace Now), and **stripped** over 100,000 residents of Gaza, some 140,000 residents of the West Bank, and over 14,500 Palestinian Jerusalemites of their **residency rights** ("Israel admits it revoked residency rights of quarter million Palestinians since 1967," *Haaretz*, 12 June 2012; Hamoked).

Wa'ra As-Sawda, 2 November 1948: Jewish military forces captured an encampment of Arab Al-Mawasi Bedouins at Khirbat Al-Wa'ra As- Sawda' in the eastern Galilee, destroying their dwellings and killing 14 men.

Seven decades after the Nakba, Palestinians are still fighting for freedom, justice and self-determination, and for an end to the destruction and confiscation of their homes and resources, to discrimination and lack of rights, to displacement, military assaults and arbitrary arrests, and to restrictions on their movement and development. 70 years after their mass expulsions, Palestinians remain steadfast in their quest for statehood and for historical justice.

Haifa, 28 December 1948: Zionist paramilitaries from the Al-Hadar neighborhood, located at the top of Al-Abbas Street in Haifa, rolled down a barrel filled with explosives destroying homes and killing 20 Arab citizens, as well as wounding 50 others.

"Let us not ignore the truth among ourselves .. politically we are the aggressors and they defend themselves...The country is theirs, because they inhabit it, whereas we want to come here and settle down, and in their view we want to take away from them their country. ... Behind the terrorism [by the Arabs] is a movement, which though primitive is not devoid of idealism and self sacrifice."... "If I were an Arab leader I would never make terms with Israel. That is natural, we have taken their country."

David Ben-Gurion, 1938, quoted in Simha Flapan, *Zionism and the Palestinians*, 1979.

Deir Al-Balah & Khan Younis, January 1949: Israel bombed by air the refugees' food distribution centers in Khan Younis and Deir al- Balah at peak time, killing over 200 Palestinian refugees.

"No settlement can be just and complete if recognition is not accorded to the right of the Arab refugee to return to the home from which he was dislodged by the hazards and strategy of the armed conflict between Arabs and Jews in Palestine... It would be an offence against the principles of elemental justice

if these innocent victims of the conflict were denied the right to return to their homes while Jewish immigrants flow into Palestine, and, indeed, at least offer the threat of permanent replacement of the Arab refugees who have been rooted in the land for centuries.”

From a report by UN Special Mediator to Palestine Count Folke Bernadotte, September 16, 1948, GAOR, 3rd. Sess., Supp. No.11, at 14, UN Doc. A/648 (1948).

* **Al-Bureij Refugee Camp, 28-29 August 1953:** attack on Bureij Camp carried out by the unit 11 led by Ariel Sharon, bombing and shooting their way through the camp, killing 43 men, including 7 women and wounding 22.

* “The UN Partition Resolution of November 29, 1947 had recommended the creation of a “Jewish state” on 56% of Palestine; an Arab state on 42% and an international zone of Jerusalem and Environs on the remaining 2%.” (As quoted from the UN Resolution)

“I am rather disgusted with the manner in which the Jews are approaching the refugee problem. I told the President of Israel in the presence of his Ambassador just exactly what I thought about it. It may have some effect, I hope so. [...] [If the Israeli government is not more forthcoming on the refugee issue] the US Govt. will regretfully be forced to the conclusion that a revision of its attitude toward Israel has become unavoidable.” Harry S. Truman, in a letter to his representative on the Conciliation Commission Mark Etheridge, April 1949.

Qibya, 14 October 1953: Israeli military forces attacks at the climax of a number of border clashes against the northern West Bank village of Qibya, carried out by an Israeli paratroop company and Unit 101 under the command of Ariel Sharon with the order to achieve maximum civilian casualties. At least 69 Palestinians civilians, many of them women and children, were killed and at least 45 houses were demolished, as were its mosque, school, and water reservoir.

“The story which Jewish publicity at first persuaded the world to accept – that the Arab refugees left voluntarily – is not true. Voluntary emigrants do not leave their homes with only the clothes they stand up in. People who have decided to move house do not do so in such a hurry that they lose other members of their family – husband losing sight of his wife or parents of their children. The fact is that the majority left in panic flight to escape massacre.” British army commander Sir John Bagot (Pasha) Glubb, *A Soldier with the Arabs*, 1957, p 251.

Kafr Qassem, 29 October 1956: In the small town of Kufr Qassem in the triangle region of northern Israel, Israeli Border Police (Magav) opened fire at Palestinian villagers returning from work during a curfew, imposed earlier in the day on the eve of the Sinai War, of which they were unaware, killing 49 Palestinians, including 6 women, 23 minors.

“The rights of the refugees to their homes and homeland are not related to, or in any way dependent upon, the consent or refusal of Israel. These rights are natural, inherent and self-existing. They are not bestowed even by the United Nations, let alone Israel. They cannot be denied even by the United Nations, let alone Israel. They are vested in the refugees; they reside with the refugees. Thus, consent or no consent, these rights are their imprescriptible, irresistible and indivisible.” Ahmed Shukairy, Speech on the Palestinian Refugee Problem, UN, 1958.

The Arab Higher Committee was composed of: The Grand Mufti Haj Amin Hussein (President), Awni Abdul Hadi (General Secretary), Ahmad Hilmi Abd al-Baqi (Treasurer), and the members: Raghieb Nashashibi, Jamal Hussein, Dr. Hussein Khalidi, Abdel Latif Salah, Yaqoub al-Ghusayni, Yaqoub Faraj, and Alfred Rock.

“... The reason why the State of Israel exists today and why today 1,500,000 Palestinian Arabs are refugees is that, for 30 years, Jewish immigration was imposed on the Palestinian Arabs by British military power until the immigrants were sufficiently numerous and sufficiently well-armed to be able to fend for themselves with tanks and planes of their own. The tragedy in Palestine is not just a local one; it is a tragedy for the world, because it is an injustice that is a menace to the world’s peace. Britain’s guilt is not diminished by the humiliating fact that she is now impotent to redress the wrong that she has done.” British Historian Arnold J. Toynbee, 1 June 1968 (part of his Foreword to *The Palestine Diary 1914- 1945*, a detailed two volume work by Robert John and Sami Hadawi that was published in 1970).

Rafah, 12 November 1956: Israeli assault on the Gaza Strip town during its occupation of the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Protectorate following the Suez Crisis, which left 111 Palestinians of Rafah and the nearby refugee camp dead.

“The tragedy of the people of Palestine is that their country was ‘given’ by a foreign power to another people for the creation of a new state. The result was that many hundreds of thousands of innocent people were made permanently homeless. With every new conflict their numbers increased. How much longer is the world willing to endure this spectacle of wanton cruelty? It is abundantly clear that the refugees have every right to the homeland from which they were driven, and the denial of this right is at the heart of the continuing conflict.”

Bertrand Russell, *New York Times*, 23 February 1970.

Sabra and Shatila, 16-18 September 1982: Atrocity that occurred within the framework of Israel’s June 1982 invasion of Lebanon and siege on West Beirut, which aimed to destroy the PLO’s infrastructure. Then the Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon and Israeli army chief of staff Rafael Eitan allowed the Israeli-supported Christian Phalange militia to enter the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila, where they killed 800 (Israeli figures) to 2,700 (ICRC numbers) Palestinians, mainly women, children, and old men.