

LETTER FOR FAVOUR OF PUBLICATION

Despite Israel's many violations against peace and human rights, its apologists continue to defend the indefensible. The Zionist project always had a black heart with David Ben-Gurion (Israel's first prime minister) in 1948, advocating that we must "*.strike mercilessly, women and children included,*" adding "*there is no need to distinguish between guilty and innocent.*"

This policy manifested itself in the confiscation of Palestinian land and the expulsion or massacre of its people. In his book "The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine" Israeli historian Ilan Pappé cited three villages in which "males between the ages of 10 and 50" were executed in order to intimidate and terrorise the village population and those living in the nearby towns.

Today this continues with the demolition of Palestinian homes to make way for illegal Jewish settlements, the annexation of Jerusalem, the creation of an apartheid wall which steals over 9% more land from the Palestinians and the imposition of a siege on Gaza now in its 5th year.

The Barrier has been condemned by the International Court of Justice and the UN has just issued an update report stating that "UN member states should recognize the illegal situation created by the Barrier and should ensure Israel's compliance with international law." Likewise its "massive assault" on Gaza in Operation Cast Lead and its attacks on the flotillas are equally damnable.

So your correspondent Tom Fox is right, Israel certainly does need holding to account for its crimes.

Frank M Stone

NOTES

Some quotes from David Ben-Gurion

Erect a Jewish State at once, even if it is not in the whole land. The rest will come in the course of time. It must come" 5/10/37 (Shlaim)

"The Palestinians inside the Jewish State, could become a fifth column, and if so "they can either be mass arrested or expelled; it is better to expel them."2/11/47 (Pappé)

"There are 40% non-Jews in the areas allocated to the Jewish state. This composition is not a solid basis for a Jewish state. And we have to face this new reality with all its severity and distinctness. Such a demographic balance questions our ability to maintain Jewish sovereignty... Only a state with at least 80% Jews is a viable and stable state." 3/12/47 (Pappé)

“What is necessary is cruel and strong reactions. We need precision in time and place, and casualties. If we know the family (we must) strike mercilessly, women and children included. Otherwise, the reaction is inefficient. At the place of action, there is no need to distinguish between guilty and innocent.” DBG 1948 (Cook)

Operation Cast Lead,

The Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, Richard Falk.

Israel’s action”is not a matter of mistakes and fallibility, but rather a massive assault on a densely populated urbanized setting where the defining reality could not but subject the entire civilian population to an inhumane form of warfare that kills, maims, and inflicts mental harm that is likely to have long-term effects, especially on children that make up more than 50% of the Gazan population..

BOOKS referred to above are by

Ilan Pappé, an Israeli academic now at Exeter University previously at an Israeli university

Avi Schläim, author of *The Iron Wall Israel and the Arab World*, was born in Baghdad in 1946, grew up in Israel and is now a professor at St Antony’s College, Oxford.

Jonathan Cook is the only Western Journalist based in Nazareth. He was previously a staff journalist on the *Guardian* and *Observer* newspapers. He is the author of several books – *Blood and Religion*, *Israel and the Clash of Civilisations* and *Disappearing Palestine, Israel’s Experiments in Human Despair*.