

The Nakbah: by Hiyam Noir

"From the moment Zionists entered Palestine more than a century ago, strife in the Middle East has only escalated. Violence has been done to God's law in heaven and earth. The Bible is clear: There is no peace for the wicked. There will be no peace in the Mideast for America either, as long as we continue to fight trillion-dollar wars to legitimize and protect a spiritually lawless, counterfeit, rogue state." Rev. Ted Pike

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Untold story of great courage, suffering, struggle and survival

Sitting in the courtyard to his home one gloomy day in Gaza Beach Camp, surrounded by members of his family, Mostafa Abed Al Monem Ghwazy, is holding the legacy of his life in his hands, reading for us the handwritten official documents. Worth more than gold and diamonds, is the contract of the Ghwazy family property in Jaffa, and the invoice which the family received from the British government. A testament of ownership and a prove of that the land and property his parents bought long time ago, is orderly and fully payed for.

Mr. Ghwazy is 87 years old now, he was born 1925, a young man of 23, when he 1948 together with his family was forced to leave the Arab Palestinian city of Jaffa, now a suburb to Tel Aviv. Tel Aviv was erected by Jewish settlers in 1909 on the outskirts of the ancient port city of Jaffa. Mr Ghwazy worked for a shipping company by the Jaffa sea shore, where he learned the English language and also Hebrew.

After the expulsion from Jaffa, Mr. Ghwazy and his family settled in the Gaza Beach Refugee Camp where he still lives - first wife is dead, he has 7 sons and 3 daughters, and many grand-children - a large family of 50 people.

He tells us, he is suffering in the refugee camp. He lost his home and his life. With a sad voice, Mr. Ghwazy said - "can you imagine you are forced to run away, leave your home and land, everything that you so dearly love." Mr Ghwazy, lost his home and his life he tells us. "The best of life I ever had - I remember when I was in Jaffa, those days were the best of days - my childhood and my youth".

Mr Ghwazy, this gentle old Palestinian man still nourishes a hope and dream of, that he one day soon, will be able to return to his home, God willing, to his house, his parents' farm and land in Jaffa. Mr Ghwazy said he often tells his children and grand-children, so they will remember, when he is not around anymore. About many bright and sunny memories - about his life in Jaffa, "Yafa-The Bride Of Palestine", where Mostafa, the child and young man, lived a happy life in freedom, before the Jewish came one day to bring sadness and destruction to Jaffa, to him and his family.

The time when the dispossession and the displacement began

On May 14 in the year of 1948 - the arch Zionist, David Ben Gurion declared the "independence" of "Israel", one day before the Mandate of the British government was due to expire in Palestine. This is the time when the dispossession, the displacement and the expulsion of over almost one million Palestinians began from their homeland Palestine, in what is now called "Israel".

However - while the (yawm al-Nakba) the first wave of forced expulsion of Palestinians from their land and possessions was carried out, a downward slope, a derivation from the historical origin, ancestor heritage began. Since the Israeli Zionists' entity carried out its out-layed plan, the campaign of ethnic cleansing and uprooting of the Palestinians has unabated continued, maintained in full force with no decrease until this very day.

On May 14, the Israelis celebrate the independence, (the date of the "Independence" moves from year to year according to the Hebrew calendar). The following day the 15th of May, the Palestinians commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Palestinian Al-Nakba', the disaster of May 14 1948. The Al-Nakba is considered to be the most disastrous catastrophe for the Palestinian people in modern history.

The immediate consequences of the Al-Nakba was the Israelis' occupation of more than three quarters of the historic Palestine, and the expulsion of more than 85% of the indigenous population. More than 1,000,000 Palestinians were displaced as a result of the Al-Nakba! The number of registered refugees has subsequently grown from 914,000 in 1950 - to more than 4.4 million in 2005, and continues to rise.

The history of the Palestinian expulsion is tied to the events of the war, which lasted from 1947 to 1949. Several factors played a role. The war began immediately after the termination of the British Mandate of Palestine on 15 May 1948, and was fought mostly on the Palestinian territory (the British Mandate) and for a few months also in Sinai, marking an expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Arabs from their homes.

The Jewish legacy - many massacres - some are told here

The Zionist leader, Ariel Sharon's legacy under the past six decades, has left nothing of good or noble, but acts of terror and destruction. In 1953, five years after the Al-Nakba, as the commander of the Israeli death squad - Unit 101, he and his terror gang directed a massacre in the West Bank village of Quiba. In the early morning, the 101 Unit, attached and planted explosives on the buildings in the village, while Palestinian residents were still sleeping inside their homes.

The Israelis plunged a wedge under the doors to the homes of the Palestinian residents before they released the explosives and blew up the buildings. The fatalities from this village massacre numbered 69 Palestinians. In a report to the International Security Council on October 27, 1953, General Von Pinika, chief UN observer at the time, he stated that the attack on Quiba, had been planned, and was carried out by "regular" Israeli forces.

Israeli government claimed that the massacre was committed by so-called "Israeli frontier settlers." It was only after members of the Unit 101, began bragging about the crimes they conducted in Quiba, these confessions became public and told that the Israelis had been carrying out horrifying terror raids all throughout the West Bank.

In 1955 the Israeli Commando Unit 101, seized six young Palestinian shepherds, methodically stabbing five of them to death. After the crime they released the terrified youngest of the boys, so he would return to the village to tell the others what a horrible crime he just had been forced to witness.

In Khan Younis, the Israeli Zionist army carried out another massacre against Palestinians, this time in the Khan Younis refugee camp in the southern Gaza Strip. The result of this massacre was the deaths of 250 Palestinians. Nine days after the first massacre (on November 12, 1956), Unit 101 carried out a massacre in which more than 275 civilians, were killed in the same camp. The very same day, the Israelis also killed more than hundred Palestinian residents in Rafah refugee camp.

Ariel Sharon's invasion of Lebanon

In the late summer of 1981 Sharon's invasion of Lebanon began. He had assured the Prime Minister Menachem Begin that he would stop the invasion, after seizing PLO positions on the Lebanese border. His army had moved few kilometres into Lebanon with no intention of following his stated plan, instead the Israelis headed towards Beirut. Sharon's plan was to batter the Lebanese into submission. The Israeli siege over Beirut went on day and night, then the Sharon's forces moved forward, to the total siege at the edge of the Sabra and Shatila Palestinian refugee camps.

Together with Lebanese Maronite militiamen, hiding in armed trucks these predators slaughtered Palestinian men, women and children and members of International Red Cross teams (one a

member of my family in assignment there). In the meantime the Israelis provided ammunition to the Maronite's so they would continue the killings.

When news media reached Lebanon, Beirut and the battered Sabra and Shatila, they found the bodies of the victims, bulldozed and covered up with sand and dirt. The corpses of slaughtered Palestinians, the victims of this Sharon lead massacre, are still buried in a mound, covered by a soccer-field. The International Red Cross counted that at least 2.500 Palestinians were killed in the Sabra - Shatila massacre.

Israeli terrorist gangs exploded bombs in crowded public places

While the war of 1948 was concluded with the 1949 armistice agreements, it was not the end of Palestinian suffering - it was the beginning of a Palestinian hard struggle for justice, against a bellicose newborn shallow state, named " Israel". In the first few months of the war in 1947-1949, the living conditions in the Mandate of Palestine began to vaporize. The period was marked by Arab initiatives and Jewish reprisals.

On the other hand, a pattern in which Jewish terrorist attacks by Irgun and Lehi, resulted in Arab retaliations, the Haganah joined with the terrorist group Irgun and Lehi in counter retaliations. In the Arab Palestinian villages where there were resistance, the Jewish reprisals were directed against the villages and its neighborhoods, from where the resistance against the Jews originated and was strong, Jewish gangs killed armed and unarmed men, destroyed Palestinian homes and fertile land to finalise the expulsion of the inhabitants.

The Zionist groups of Irgun and Lehi reverted to their old strategy (1937-1939). Bombs were set to explode in crowded public places, such as bus stops, shopping malls and markets. Zionist terrorist groups also attacked British forces. The economic situation became unstable, unemployment gradually increased. Some Palestinian Arab leaders send their families abroad. The Arab Liberation Army began a systematic evacuation of non-combatant civilians, from several frontier villages, in order to turn them into strategic strongholds.

The expulsion began

The expulsion of Arab Palestinians occurred mostly in villages vulnerable open to attacks close to Jewish settlements, in the neighbourhoods in Haifa, Jaffa and the Western parts of Al Quds (Jerusalem).

By the end of March 1948, thirty villages were almost emptied of its inhabitants and more than 100,000 Palestinian Arabs had fled to Arab parts of Palestine, such as Nazareth, Nablus and Bethlehem, or had left to Trans-Jordan or Egypt. Many of these people whom had to leave their homes, were Palestinian Arab leaders of the middle and upper-class, they were the Palestinian Arab families from the urban areas.

In the days around March 22, Arab governments agreed to that their consulates in Palestine would only issue visas to women and children and the old and the sick. On the days of 29-30 March 1948, the Haganah terrorist "Intelligence Service" (HIS) report that Palestine Arab Higher Committee

(AHC) no longer approved exit permits for fear of causing panic among the Arab Palestinian population.

In April 1953, the Jordanian daily "al-Urdun" quoted a refugee, Yunes Ahmed Assad, of Deir Yassin, as saying: "For the flight and the fall of the other villages, it is our leaders who are responsible, they instilled fear and terror into the hearts of the Arabs of Palestine until they fled, leaving their homes and property to the enemy." The Jordanian daily Falastin, wrote on February 19, 1949: "The Arab states ... encouraged the Palestinian Arabs to leave their homes temporarily, in order to be out of the way of the Arab invasion armies."

The prime minister of Syria 1948, Khaled al-Azem, listed in his memoirs, published in 1973, what he believed were the reasons for the Arab failure in 1948: " ..the fifth factor was the call by Arab governments to the Arab Palestinian inhabitants, to evacuate from their homes and villages temporarily, for Arab countries just across the border of Palestine.... We brought destruction upon a million Arab refugees, by calling on them and pleading with them to leave their homeland."

The inhabitants of these neighbourhoods generally stayed to resist, while others moved to other parts of these cities. The wealthy moved further away, most of them were expected to return back to their home and land, when the troubles were over.

If we presume that the Palestinian refugees were not forced by the Jews to leave their homes, but left of fear, based on their free will. The questions that many Palestinians ask: "Is it not the truth that most Palestinians were terrorized out of their homes, their farms, their work, their trade and their establishments? Is that a good reason to confiscate Palestinian homes and farms, their work, trade and establishment? Is that a good reason to hinder their return back to their homes and their possessions?"

If they choose to do so? Is that a good reason to erase their citizenship in the countries where they were born? Nobody has the right to usurp the legal rights of another citizen, regardless of circumstances. Since the inception of Zionism, its leaders have been planning the creation of a "Jewish State" based on a "Jewish majority", by the creation of a mass immigration of Jews to Palestine from East and West Europe and from North Africa.

Quote from Palestine Remembered;

"When a "Jewish majority" was impossible to achieve, based on Jewish immigration and natural growth, Zionist leaders (such as Ben Gurion, Moshe Sharett, Ze'ev Jabotinsky, and Chaim Weizmann) concluded that "population transfer" was the only solution to what they referred to as the "Arab Problem." Year after year, the plan to cleanse Palestine away from its indigenous people became known as the "transfer solution." David Ben-Gurion, the first Israeli Prime Minister, eloquently articulated the "transfer solution" .

Some figures (2005 - 2006)

- 7.2 million are refugees (BADIL, 2005)

- 4.4 million are UNRWA registered Palestinian refugees and descendants from the 1948 displacement and 33% of these refugees live in UNRWA's 59 refugee camps inside the Occupied Palestinian Territories and the neighbouring Arab countries (UNRWA, 2006)
- 1.7 million are not registered with UNRWA (BADIL, 2005)
- 834,000 are Palestinian refugees and their descendants from the 1967 displacement (BADIL, 2005)
- 355,000 Palestinians and their descendants are internally displaced inside Israel (BADIL, 2005)
- 57,000 Palestinians have become internally displaced in the occupied Palestinian West Bank as a result of home demolitions, revocation of residency rights and construction of illegal settlements on confiscated Palestinian-owned land. Of these, 15,000 have been displaced by Israel's Annexation/Apartheid Wall. (BADIL, 2005)
- 6,000 Palestinians have been deported from the Occupied Territories between 1967 and the early 1990s (BADIL, 2005)
- 100,000 have had their residency rights revoked by Israel (BADIL, 2005)

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