

NAKBA

The Process of Palestinian Dispossession



INTRODUCTION

May 2008

May 2008 marks 60 years since the Palestinian Nakba – the catastrophic expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homes and homeland, which was carried out in accordance with operational plans drawn up by the Haganah and in compliance with orders issued from the highest echelons of the Zionist leadership. Although frequently represented as crimes committed by individuals, the massacres, looting and destruction that characterized the depopulation of Palestine were components of a carefully designed military strategy developed and implemented by the leaders of the emerging State of Israel.

As Palestinians commemorate their painful loss, Israelis embark upon a lavish celebration of the 60 years since their declaration of statehood; at this time, it is important for the world to notice that the Palestinians are not retiring into their grief, nor shutting their ears to the sounds of the Israeli revelry. They will continue to present the history that led to the Nakba in order to open the eyes of the outside world, which has been blind to the truth of the Palestinian tragedy.

Although the PLO leadership has for over 15 years officially recognized, acknowledged and accepted Israel as a state along the borders of 1967, Palestinians are still denied self-determination and statehood. They continue to live the Nakba: the Palestinian territories are under occupation and continue to be fractured and expropriated by Israeli land grabs, millions of refugees are still in exile, and those Palestinians who remained within the borders of Israel live as second-class citizens in their homeland.

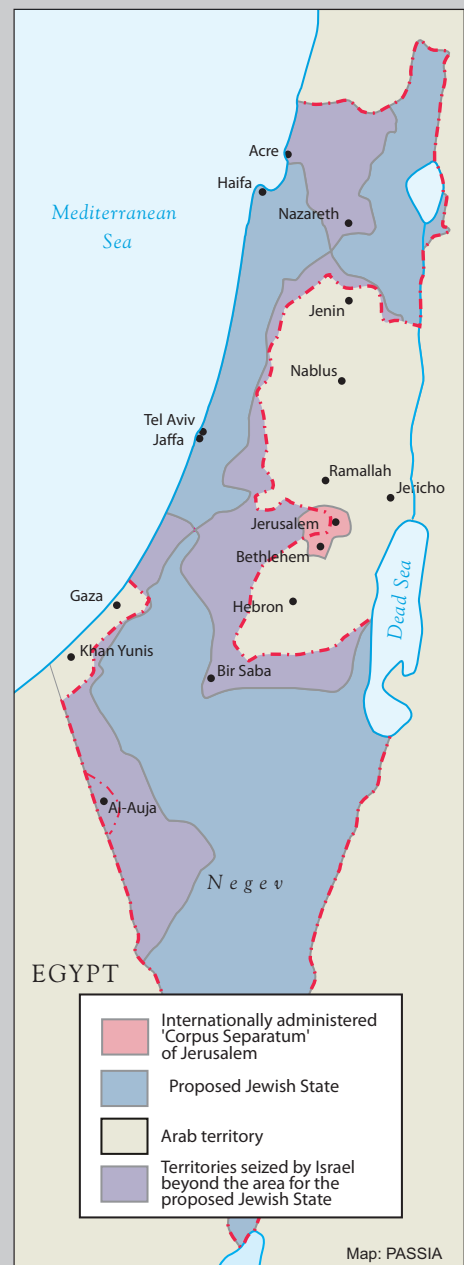
This bulletin intends to present a Palestinian record of the Nakba – a calamity which has been reduced in the minds of many to a few months of violent conflict and labeled “The 1948 War”. It is in fact a continuous process of colonialism that began with the first Zionist settlements and the idea of an organized Zionist movement at the end of the 19th century. After gathering momentum with the establishment of the Jewish National Fund - whose express purpose was the acquisition of Arab land in Palestine, Syria and the Sinai - in 1901, the process of the Nakba continues to this day through the discriminatory and expansionist practices of the Israeli establishment, facilitated by the support or soft criticism of the international community that has been an integral part of Israeli strategy for the past 60 years.



My feet are torn,
and homelessness has worn me out.
Park seats have left their marks on my ribs.
Policemen followed me
with their suspicious looks.
I dragged myself from place to place,
destitute except for
day-long memories of a home
that yesterday, only yesterday,
was mine,
and except for evening dreams
of my dwelling there again.

Tawfiq Sayigh (1932-71).

UNGA Partition Plan of 1947 and Armistice Lines of 1949



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