

The Nakba Myth

FICTION vs. FACT Israel & its Arab Neighbors

FICTION: In 1948, Jews carried out ethnic cleansing against Palestinians by forcibly expelling them from their homes and villages in order to establish the State of Israel.

FACT: Palestinians refer to the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948 as the "Nakba," which means "catastrophe." The Nakba myth contradicts the historical record and fuels anti-Israel propaganda through false accusations of ethnic cleansing and forced displacement of Palestinians.

In 1948, the Jews were engaged in a war for survival against overwhelming odds as local Arab militias and the armies of five Arab nations attacked the tiny Jewish State.¹



From the very beginning, Israel called on Arab inhabitants to be full citizens of Israel. Israel's Proclamation of Independence, issued May 14, 1948, states:

*In the midst of wanton aggression, we yet call upon the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve the ways of peace and play their part in the development of the State, on the basis of **full and equal citizenship** and due representation in all its bodies and institutions....We extend our hand in peace and neighborliness to all the neighboring states and their peoples, and invite them to cooperate with the independent Jewish nation for the common good of all.*²

FACT: Israel had no need or intent to expel Arabs. Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, stated repeatedly:³

- "We do not wish and do not need to expel Arabs and take their places. All our aspiration is built on the assumption – proven throughout all our activity ... that there is enough room in the country for ourselves and the Arabs."
- "In our state there will be non-Jews as well – and all of them will be **equal citizens** ... The attitude of the Jewish state to its Arab citizens will be an important factor ... in building good neighborly relations with the Arab states."

The only expulsion of Arabs was from the twin towns of Lydda and Ramle because after accepting a ceasefire and promising to disarm, residents staged a violent uprising, forcing the IDF to conquer the towns.⁴



The Daily News, May 1948

FACT: Arabs left their homes because their leaders told them to!⁵

Before the war began, wealthy Arabs had already fled.

Statements from regional leaders confirm Arab encouragement of Arab flight from Israel:⁶

- Historian Benny Morris
- Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Said
- Secretary of the Arab League Office in London Edward Atiyah
- Syrian Prime Minister Haled al Azm
- Greek Orthodox Catholic Bishop of Galilee Monsignor George Hakim

When the war with Israel began, Arab leaders told their people to leave and promised a quick return after the Jews were destroyed. Contemporary news agencies report Arab initiation of Arab displacement: ⁷

- *The Economist*
- *Time Magazine*
- Near East Broadcasting Station (Cyprus)
- *Filastin* and *Ad Difa'a*, Jordanian newspapers
- *Al Hoda*, a New York Lebanese paper

FACT: The ongoing "Arab refugee crisis" is the result of actions taken by past and present Arab Palestinian leaders.

Amin al-Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, was an Arab nationalist who opposed Zionism and collaborated with Nazi Germany during World War II.⁸ He refused to accept the 1947 UN partition resolution calling for the establishment of an Arab state alongside the Jewish State of Israel.⁹

All member nations of the Arab League refused the partition plan that would have given Arabs a state in the land of Israel.¹⁰

Palestinian Arab leaders continued to decline offers of a Palestinian state as recently as 2008.¹¹



Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, Amin al-Husseini, with Adolf Hitler November 28, 1941

FACT: In his memoirs, Jordan's King Abdullah blames Palestinian [Arab] leaders for the refugee problem:¹²

The tragedy of the Palestinians was that most of their leaders had paralyzed them with false and unsubstantiated promises that they were not alone; that 80 million Arabs and 400 million Muslims would instantly and miraculously come to their rescue.

FACT: Future Palestinian Authority Prime Minister, Mahmud Abbas, identified the true source of Arab displacement when he said:¹³

The Arab armies entered Palestine to protect the Palestinians from the Zionist tyranny but, instead, they abandoned them, forced them to emigrate and to leave their homeland, and threw them into prisons similar to the ghettos in which the Jews used to live.

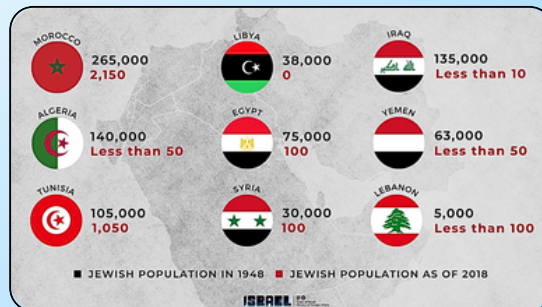
FACT: The Nakba myth is another case of revisionist history. Here are the facts:

- May 15, 1948 - the date commemorated as the Nakba - is the anniversary of the withdrawal of British troops from the British Mandate of Palestine.
- May 15, 1948, is the date on which local Arabs and the armies of five Arab nations attacked the nascent State of Israel.
- A Palestinian state was not destroyed because no Palestinian state existed.
- The 700,000 Arabs who left their homes in Israel did so under direction of Arab leaders.

The New York Times, May 16, 1948



The fact is the Jewish people have experienced ethnic cleansing and displacement from Arab and Muslim nations. Soon after the State of Israel was established, over 850,000 Jews were violently expelled from North Africa, the Gulf States, and Iran.¹⁴



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Sources used for this FACT Sheet:

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