

IN DEFENCE OF ISRAEL

Key facts about the Arab-Israeli conflict

The Jews' unbroken connection with the land of Israel

Contrary to what many people believe, the Jews did *not* return to Palestine in the 20th century, and dispossess its Arab inhabitants, after a total absence from the land of two thousand years. In reality, they maintained their presence in their historic homeland for 3,700 years, despite all attempts to exterminate them or drive them into exile. A minority of Jews continued to dwell in Palestine even *after* the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D. In fact, large Jewish communities had been re-established in Jerusalem and Tiberias by the 9th century. In the 11th century, Jewish communities grew in Rafah, Gaza, Ashkelon, Jaffa and Ceasarea. **By 1844, long before the birth of the official Zionist movement in 1897, Jews were already the single largest ethnic group in Jerusalem, and by 1880, they formed a majority of the population there.**

Between the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D. and the rebirth of Israel in 1948, the ancient land of Israel (renamed 'Palestine' by the Romans) *never* became an independent Palestinian Arab State, but remained a provincial backwater, with an ethnically mixed population (including Jews), belonging to a succession of foreign imperial conquerors – Roman, Byzantine, Arab, Crusader, Mameluke and Ottoman Turk. **By the nineteenth century, Palestine under Ottoman Turkish (not Arab) rule had become a backward, neglected, and underpopulated country, according to the testimony of numerous contemporary historians, diplomats, geographers and travellers.** Though Arabs formed the majority of the population, they were few in numbers compared to today, and many were relatively recent immigrants.

In 1867, for instance, the American writer, Mark Twain, visited Palestine and described it famously as a "hopeless, dreary, heartbroken land."¹ Ten years previously, in 1857, the British consul in Jerusalem had similarly reported that "*the country is in a considerable degree empty of inhabitants...*"²

Finally, let me quote from an exhaustively documented modern demographic study by Arieh Avneri, *The Claim of Dispossession: Jewish Land-Settlement and the Arabs, 1878 – 1948* (Transaction Books, 1984): "*The few Arabs who lived in Palestine a hundred years ago [1880], when [European] Jewish settlement began, were a tiny remnant of a volatile population, which had been in constant flux, as a result of unending conflicts between local tribes and local despots. Malaria and disease had taken a heavy toll of the inhabitants.*" (page 11).

The Jews did not dispossess the Palestinian Arabs

Analyses of land purchases from 1880 to 1948 show that 73% of Jewish plots were purchased from large, rich Arab landowners, not poor Arab peasants.³ Those few Arab tenant-farmers displaced by the sale of their land to Jews, were given a year's notice and fully compensated in cash or other land. What is particularly ironic, given their stated hostility to Zionism, is that these large Arab landowners who freely sold land to Jewish immigrants, usually at exorbitant prices, **included the mayors of Gaza, Jerusalem and**

Jaffa, and many leaders of the Arab nationalist movement, including members of the Muslim Supreme Council.⁴ Most of the land sold to the Jews, moreover, had not previously been cultivated because of its poor quality. In fact, far from dispossessing the Arabs, Jewish immigration and development brought a rapid *increase* in the Arab population as the Jews created jobs, drained malarial swamps, and brought improved sanitation and health care to the region. Indeed, according to official statistics, the **Arab population of Palestine more than doubled between 1922 and 1947, with Arab migrants flooding into Palestine from the neighbouring Arab states in order to take advantage of the higher standard of living the Jews had made possible. As the Peel [Royal] Commission Report concluded in 1937:** *“the increase in Arab population is most marked in areas affected by Jewish development...the large import of Jewish capital into Palestine has had a general fructifying effect on the economic life of the whole country...The expansion of Arab industry and citriculture has been largely financed by the capital thus obtained...Jewish example has done much to improve Arab cultivation.”*

The beneficial impact of Zionism on the Palestinian Arab population, so vividly described in the 1937 Peel Commission Report, fulfilled the prophecy of that great friend and champion of Arab nationalism, **T.E. Lawrence (‘Lawrence of Arabia’), who declared in 1920 that the success of Zionist settlement in Palestine** *“will involve inevitably the raising of the present Arab population to their own material level, only a little after themselves in point of time, and the consequences might be of the highest importance for the future of the Arab world.”*⁵ **Similarly prophetic pro-Zionist views were expressed at that time by Britain’s greatest 20th century statesman, Winston Churchill, who declared:** *“It is manifestly right that the scattered Jews should have a national centre and a national home and be reunited, and where else but in Palestine with which for 3,000 years they have been intimately and profoundly associated? We think it will be good for the Jews, good for the British Empire, but also good for the Arabs who dwell in Palestine...They shall share in the benefits and progress of Zionism.”*⁶

Arab sympathy for Zionism in its early days

It may seem hard to believe in 2015, but during the second decade of the last century, even prominent Arabs originally welcomed the return of the Jews to the land of Israel – a land which, as we have seen, a Jewish remnant had never left. To quote, for instance, **Dawood Barakat, editor of the prominent Egyptian newspaper, *Al-Ahram*:** *“It is absolutely necessary that an entente be made between the Zionists and Arabs, because the war of words can only do evil. The Zionists are necessary for the country. The money which they will bring, their knowledge and intelligence, and the industriousness which characterizes them will contribute without doubt to the regeneration of the country.”*⁷ **It is an even more important, rarely mentioned, but particularly significant fact that the original and famous leader of the Arab nationalist movement, Prince Feisal, did not regard the Zionist goal of re-establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine as an obstacle to Arab aspirations in the Middle East. As he put it in a letter to Felix Frankfurter, a leading member of the American Zionist delegation to the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, dated 3 March 1919:** *“We Arabs, especially the educated among us, look with the deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement...We will wish the Jews a hearty welcome home...We are working together for a reformed and revived Near East, and our*

*two movements complete one another. The Jewish movement is nationalist and not imperialist. And there is room in Syria [which included Lebanon and Palestine under the Ottomans] for us both.”*⁸

Sadly, the possibility of peaceful co-existence between Jews and Arabs was subsequently destroyed by Arab terrorists during the British Palestine Mandate period (1922 - 1948), not only through multiple unprovoked attacks on Jews, but more seriously, by the ruthless elimination of any Arabs prepared to co-operate with their Jewish neighbours. As British historian, Paul Johnson, put it in his *History of The Modern World*, first published in 1983, **the pro-Nazi Arab terrorist leader, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem (Haj Amin el Hussein):** “*..outrivalled Hitler in his hatred for Jews. But he did something even more destructive than killing Jewish settlers. He organized the systematic destruction of Arab moderates.*” (p.481).

According to **Hillel Cohen’s** widely acclaimed scholarly study, *Army of Shadows: Palestinian Collaboration with Zionism, 1917 – 1948, University of California Press, 2008*, the Grand Mufti and his clan murdered 1,000 Arab moderates during the 1930s, driving many local Palestinian Arabs to side with and even fight along side the Zionists, a significant but little known fact about this historic conflict. (See:http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Army_of_Shadows:_Palestinian_Collaboration_with_Zionism,_1917-1948&oldid=551355562)

A Palestinian Arab State (Transjordan) created in 1922

The destructive impact of Arab terrorism on Jewish-Arab relations after 1920, was particularly tragic, since, as Prince Feisal’s words had made clear in 1919, and as subsequent events proved, there certainly *was* plenty of room to satisfy the right to self-determination of both Palestinian Jews and Arabs within the area Faisal called “Syria” – which included Lebanon and Palestine. Thus in 1922, in fulfilment of Britain’s wartime promises to the Arabs, Churchill, as Colonial Secretary, made Feisal (who had been expelled from Syria by the French), King of Iraq, and created another Arab State, Transjordan, to be ruled over by Feisal’s brother, Abdullah.

Since the creation of the Palestinian Arab State of Transjordan swallowed up three quarters of the territory originally set aside by the 1922 League of Nations Palestinian Mandate for “reconstituting” [significant language] a “Jewish National Home,” the Zionists had every right – in terms of both morality and international law – to set up a Jewish State within the remaining 25% of the land of Palestine.

That, at anyrate, was certainly the view of Winston Churchill. In a speech to the House of Commons in **May 1939**, defending the 1922 settlement, **Churchill reminded his audience that:** “*Over vast regions inhabited by the Arabs, independent Arab kingdoms and principalities have come into being such as had never been known in Arab history before...But we also showed ourselves continually resolved to close no door upon the ultimate development of a Jewish National Home, fed by a continued Jewish immigration into Palestine.*”

If you also consider the fact that the Arab world today consists of 22 sovereign countries (members of the Arab League) with a total land area of over 5 million square miles, the continued denial by most Arab and Muslim states of Jewish self-determination in a tiny corner of the Middle East, is, in this context, racism of the worst kind. To quote America’s greatest civil-rights leader, **Martin**

Luther King, responding to a student who attacked Zionism: “*When people criticize Zionists, they mean Jews. You’re talking anti-semitism.*”⁹

Palestinian Arab leader’s support for Hitler

To return to the subject of Arab terrorism in pre-World War 2 Palestine, the above-mentioned **Grand Mufti, Haj Amin el Husseini, told the German consul in Jerusalem shortly after Hitler came to power in 1933, that** “*the Muslims inside and outside Palestine welcome the new regime of Germany and hope for the extension of the fascist anti-democratic, governmental system to other countries.*”¹⁰ Subsequently, Husseini’s campaign of terrorist violence against the Jews in Palestine was actively supported by both Nazi Germany and the Italian Fascists, who sent him millions of dollars in financial assistance. To round all this off, the **Grand Mufti spent the war years in Berlin, visited Auschwitz with Himmler, and was personally responsible for sending thousands of Hungarian Jewish children to the death camps.** As he wrote in his memoirs: “*Our fundamental condition for co-operating with Germany was a free hand to eradicate every last Jew from Palestine and the Arab world. I asked Hitler for an explicit undertaking to allow us to solve the Jewish problem in a manner befitting our national and racial aspirations and according to the scientific methods innovated by Germany in the handling of its Jews. The answer I got was: ‘the Jews are yours’.*”¹¹

What is particularly significant and disturbing is that according to his biographer, Zvi Elpeleg, “*Haj Amin’s popularity among the Palestinian Arabs and within the Arab states actually increased more than ever during his period with the Nazis,*” because “*large parts of the Arab world shared this sympathy with Nazi Germany during the Second World War.*”¹² Worse still, the Grand Mufti has remained a popular figure with many Palestinians to this very day. **The late PLO leader and first Chairman of the Palestinian Authority, Yasser Arafat, actually referred to Haj Amin as “our hero”** in a 2002 interview reprinted in the Palestinian daily *Al-Quds* on 2 August 2002, and boasted of having been “*one of his troops,*” even though he knew he was “*considered an ally of the Nazis.*”¹³

Arabs refused to compromise, unlike the Zionists

The Mufti’s terrorists having done their work, the 1937 Peel Commission concluded that what was left of Palestine after the creation of Transjordan, would have to be partitioned into separate Jewish and Arab States. **Whilst the Zionists agreed to negotiate with the British authorities and accepted the principle of partition, the Arabs refused to consider any compromises. The same story was repeated at the time of the U.N. partition of Palestine in November 1947.** Having, as we have seen, already accepted the loss of 75% of the original land of Palestine set aside by the League of Nations for the establishment of a “Jewish National Home,” the Zionists accepted the U.N. plan to partition the remaining 25% of Palestine into two States – Arab and Jewish – despite the fact that the frontiers of the new Jewish State were virtually indefensible and 60% of its territory was in the Negev desert. The Arabs, by contrast, rejected the U.N. decision, and the armies of five Arab countries (Egypt, Syria, Transjordan, Lebanon and Iraq) invaded Israel immediately after its birth on 14 May 1948. Their war aim? **Genocide.** To quote the then **Secretary-General of the Arab League, Azzam Pasha:** “*This will be a war of*

extermination and a momentous massacre which will be spoken of like the Mongolian massacres and the Crusades.” (BBC, 15 May 1948).

Arab responsibility for the Palestinian refugee problem

Against this background, it can be clearly seen that the ‘Palestinian refugee problem’ is the *result*, not the cause of the Arab-Israeli conflict, which, in reality, stems from Arab unwillingness to accept a Jewish State anywhere in the Middle East. **Had Arab governments not gone to war in 1948 to block the U.N. partition plan, a Palestinian State in the West Bank, Galilee and the Negev would have celebrated the 66th anniversary of its independence last May 2014.** Unfortunately, however, as British historian, **Paul Johnson** records, while “*the Zionists showed they were willing to abide by the arbitration of international law, the Arabs chose force.*”¹⁴ As a result, it was the **Arabs** who, in pursuit of their war aims, provoked the flight of the Palestinian refugees against the initial **opposition** of the Jews, as the following evidence from **non-Israeli** sources makes abundantly clear.

(1) The fact that there are these refugees is the direct consequence of the action of the Arab states in opposing partition and the Jewish State.” (Emil Ghoury, Secretary of the Arab Higher Committee, Beirut Daily Telegraph, 6 September 1948).

(2) The Arab National Committee in Jerusalem, following the instructions issued by the Arab Higher Committee on 8 March 1948, ordered women, children and the elderly in various parts of Jerusalem to leave their homes: “Any opposition to this order...is an obstacle to the holy war...and will hamper the operations of the fighters in these districts.” (Benny Morris, ‘Operation Dani and the Palestinian Exodus From Lydda and Ramle in 1948’, Middle Eastern Studies, January 1986).

(3) In contrast to the Arab leaders, the Israeli authorities did their utmost to persuade their Arab neighbours to remain in the land of Israel as full and equal citizens of the new Jewish State. Israel’s Proclamation of Independence of 14 May 1948 declared: “In the midst of wanton [Arab] aggression, we yet call upon the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to return to the ways of peace and to play their part in the development of the State, with full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its bodies and institutions...” To quote, in addition, an official report by A.J. Bridmead, British Chief of Police in Haifa, dated 26 April 1948: “Every effort is being made by the Jews to persuade the Arab populace to stay and carry on with their normal lives...”

(4) In February 1962, Salim Joubran, an Arab citizen of Israel, speaking to an American audience, testified: “The Arab High Command asked us to leave the country for two weeks to make the battle easier for them. They told us: ‘A cannon cannot differentiate between a Jew and an Arab. Leave the country for two weeks and you will come back victorious...’ I heard the Haganah [Israel’s citizen army] microphone asking the Arabs to remain and live peacefully with their Jewish brethren. The late Jewish Mayor of Haifa also asked us to go back to our homes. The Histadrut [Israel Federation of Labour], our trade union, was distributing leaflets asking the Arabs to come back. I still have that leaflet.”¹⁵

(5) Note, finally, the revealing words of **Haled al Azm, Syria's Prime Minister in 1948 - 1949**, deploring, in his 1973 memoirs, the creation and subsequent exploitation by the Arabs of the Palestinian refugee problem: *"Since 1948 it is we who demanded the return of the refugees...while it is we who made them leave...We have rendered them dispossessed...We have accustomed them to begging...We have participated in lowering their moral and social level...Then we exploited them in executing crimes of murder, arson, and throwing bombs upon...men, women and children – all this in the service of political purposes..."*¹⁶

Not only were the Arab states responsible for creating the Palestinian refugee problem in 1948; they also expelled over 800,000 Jews from their own countries during the 1950s. But whereas Israel, with only a fraction of Arab land and wealth, had absorbed all her refugees by 1960, *"the Arab states" to quote Paul Johnson again, "preferred to keep the refugees in the camps, where they and their descendants remained, as human title deeds to a Palestinian reconquest, and the justification for further wars in 1956, 1967 and 1973."*¹⁷

Israel's real problem: Islamic hostility to Jews

Although Israel is a free and democratic society whose Arab citizens enjoy the same legal and political rights as Jews and are represented in the Israeli parliament (the Knesset), the existence of a Jewish State in the Middle East is an offence to Islam in the eyes of many Muslims. The **Koran**, for instance, describes Jews as unbelievers who spread evil (**Sura** [meaning 'chapter'] **5:64**) and are enemies of Allah, His Prophet [Mohammed], and the angels (**Sura 2:97-8**). As a result, there has, with some notable exceptions, been a long tradition of Arab hostility to Judaism, often expressed in language reminiscent of past Christian anti-semitism. **To offer only three examples of this:**

(1) On **23 November 1937**, **King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia** told British Colonel **H.R.P. Dickson**: *'Our hatred for the Jews dates from God's condemnation of them for their persecution and rejection of Isa [Jesus] and their subsequent rejection of His chosen Prophet [Mohammed]...for a Muslim to kill a Jew, or for him to be killed by a Jew, ensures him an immediate entry into Heaven and into the august presence of God Almighty.'*¹⁸

(2) **After the Six-Day War in 1967**, the Israelis found that school textbooks used to educate Arab children in the West Bank, were full of racist and negative portrayals of Jews. For instance: *"The Jews are scattered to the ends of the earth, where they live exiled and despised, since by their nature they are vile, greedy and enemies of mankind..."* (**The Religious Ordinances Reader, Syrian Ministry of Education, 1963-4, p.138**).

(3) On **13 October 2000**, the day after the barbaric lynching of those two Israeli soldiers whose murder was caught on camera by the world's media, **Ahmad Abu Halabiya, former Acting Rector of the Islamic University in Gaza**, declared in a televised sermon on the official Palestinian Authority T.V. channel: *"Have no mercy on the Jews, no*

matter where they are, in any country. Fight them, wherever you are. Wherever you meet them, kill them. Wherever you are, kill those Jews and those Americans who are like them and those who stand by them.”

Goal of ‘Palestinian nationalism’: destruction of Israel

Having failed to defeat and destroy Israel in the three major conventional wars that took place between the Jewish State and its Arab neighbours in 1948, 1967, and 1973, **Israel’s enemies in the Arab and Islamic world adopted a new and increasingly effective strategy: to demonise and wear down Israel internationally, particularly in the eyes of Western liberal opinion, by rebranding the Arab-Israeli conflict as a heroic struggle for Palestinian freedom and self-determination against an oppressive ‘occupying’ power.** In reality, the real purpose behind the creation of a Palestinian State in the West Bank and Gaza, is to provide a base and a launch pad for an eventual ‘second phase’ war of extermination against an Israel weakened psychologically by decades of terrorism, economic sanctions, and diplomatic isolation. **Here below is just some of the evidence for this proposition:**

(1) Hatred for Jews and violence against Israel is constantly expressed and encouraged in the Palestinian and Arab media. Anyone who doubts this should visit the website of the **Middle East Media Research Institute**, <http://www.memri.org>, which monitors the Arab and wider Islamic media, providing video clips and English translations of material (speeches, sermons, interviews, etc) originally appearing in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, and other languages common in the Islamic world. Another valuable research institute, **Palestinian Media Watch (PMW)**, has a more limited but relevant focus since it specifically monitors the output of the Palestinian media. Visitors to **PMW’s** website, <http://www.palwatch.org>, can see for themselves the extent to which the Palestinian Authority and its media deliberately stir up hatred for Jews by demonizing them - **recycling, in this process, classic anti-Jewish conspiracy theories, and employing the same kind of abusive language and anti-Jewish stereotypes that the Nazis used to justify the Holocaust.**

(2) As part of their continual campaign to delegitimise Israel, Palestinian Arab ‘scholars’ and official spokesmen deny or downplay the historic links that exist between the Jews and their ancient Biblical homeland. For instance, **Dr Jamal Amar, a lecturer at Bir-Zeit University**, states that in the Holy Land, after “*60 years of digging...they’ve found nothing at all, not a water jug, not a coin, not an earthen vessel...absolutely nothing of this [Jewish] myth, because it is a myth and a lie*” - this, despite the discovery of tens of thousands of Hebrew coins, texts, pots, buildings and seals carrying Biblical references. Similarly, despite definitive archaeological findings from the Temple Mount in Jerusalem and exhaustive scholarly confirmation of two Jewish Temples, the **Palestinian Authority categorically denies the existence of any previous Jewish Temple.** (Source: ‘Do the Jews Have the Right to a State in the Holy Land?’, Flame (Facts and Logic About the Middle East) advertisement, <http://www.factsandlogic.org>). To quote, for example, **Palestinian leader, Mahmoud Abbas:** “ [The Jews] *claim that 2,000 years ago they had a temple. I challenge the claim that this is so.*” What is particularly ironic about this barefaced denial of historical truth is that it flies in the face of statements made by

previous Palestinian Arab leaders in the 1920s. **To quote a 1924 English-language guide- book for visitors to the Temple Mount area, published by the Supreme Muslim Council, headed by the notorious previously mentioned Grand Mufti of Jerusalem:** *“the [Temple Mount] site is one of the oldest in the world. Its sanctity dates from the earliest (perhaps from pre-historic) times. Its identity with the site of Solomon’s Temple is beyond dispute.”*¹⁹

(3) The Palestinian Authority’s official logo brazenly shows a map of a future Palestinian State stretching from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean – i.e. a Palestine not alongside Israel, but *instead* of it. In other words, the real strategy being followed by the Palestinian leadership is the one described below by **Abu Iyad, the late Yasser Arafat’s No.2 in the PLO until his death in 1991:** *“There should be no illusion as to the solution, whether through the United States or through an international conference. According to the phased plan, we will establish a Palestinian State on any part of Palestine the enemy will retreat from. The Palestinian State will be a stage in our prolonged struggle for the liberation of Palestine... We cannot achieve the strategic goal of a Palestinian State in all of Palestine without first establishing a Palestinian State on part of its territory.”*²⁰

(4) As previous Palestinian Arab leaders have admitted, ‘Palestinian nationhood’ is a historical fiction whose sole real purpose is to delegitimise Israel in the eyes of the world. Not only has a Palestinian Arab State never existed, but more importantly, back in 1937, **a prominent Palestinian Arab leader, Auni Bey Abdul-Hadi, told the Peel Commission:** *“There is no such country [as Palestine]... Palestine is a term the Zionists invented... Our country was for centuries part of Syria.”*²¹ Similarly, in a **31 March 1977 interview with the Dutch newspaper, Trouw, another Palestinian Arab leader, Zahir Muhsein, a member of the PLO Executive Committee, declared:** *“The Palestinian people does not exist. The creation of a Palestinian State is only a means for continuing our struggle against the State of Israel... In reality today there is no difference between Jordanians, Palestinians, Syrians and Lebanese. Only for political and tactical reasons do we speak today about the existence of a Palestinian people, since Arab national interests demand that we posit the existence of a distinct ‘Palestinian people’ to oppose Zionism.”*

The truth about Hamas and the conflict in Gaza

The single most important fact about the conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza is that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] is a fanatical Islamic terrorist organization **explicitly committed to the destruction of Jews in general, and Israel in particular, and to the establishment of an Islamic emirate over every inch of ‘Palestine’.** In pursuit of that goal, Hamas has not only launched, since 2005 (and before), constant unprovoked rocket and other attacks from Gaza on Israeli civilians and population centres. It has also pursued **a deliberate policy of using the Arab civilian population of Gaza as ‘human shields’ for its fighters and military operations,** in an all too successful bid to persuade world public opinion that Israel is responsible for the civilian casualties resulting from its defensive military response to Hamas’s unrelenting war against the Jewish State. **Here below is the evidence for these propositions.**

(1) Hamas's founding Charter (or Covenant) of April 1988 is explicit in its anti-semitism. It declares: *"The Islamic Resistance Movement is one link in the chain of jihad confronting the Zionist invasion...the Islamic Resistance Movement aspires to realise the promise of Allah, no matter how long it takes. The Prophet, Allah's prayer and peace be upon him, says: 'The hour of Judgement shall not come until the Muslims fight the Jews and kill them, so that the Jews hide behind trees and stones, and each tree and stone will say: 'Oh Muslim, Oh servant of Allah, there is a Jew behind me, come and kill him, except for the Gharkad tree, for it is the tree of the Jews.'" (Recorded in the Hadith collections of Bukhari and Muslim).*

(2) Hamas's Charter is equally explicit on the subject of Israel. It declares: *"Israel will exist and will continue to exist until Islam will obliterate it, just as it obliterated others before it."*

(3) A recent comprehensive American study of Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood, of which Hamas is the Palestinian branch, reveals that: *"...twenty-five years of Hamas suicide bombings, rockets, missiles, and mayhem against the Jewish state have led, according to an estimate by the [American] Council on Foreign Relations, to over 500 deaths in more than 350 separate attacks since 1993 alone."* **(Erick Stakelbeck, The Brotherhood, Regnery Books, 2013).** This same study also mentions another scholarly (and higher) estimate of the human cost of Hamas's long reign of terror: *"In his comprehensive book, Hamas: Politics, Charity, and Terrorism in the Service of Jihad, terrorism expert Matthew Levitt – a former high-ranking analyst at both the [U.S.] Department of the Treasury and the FBI – [calculates that] "Between February 1989 and March 2000 Hamas carried out at least 27 attacks, including 12 suicide bombings and 3 failed bombings. These attacks caused approximately 185 deaths and left over 1,200 people wounded. With the onset of the second Intifada in September 2000, the pace of Hamas attacks increased dramatically. From September 29, 2000, through March 24, 2004...Hamas conducted 425 terrorist attacks during this period, killing 377 people, and wounding 2,076."*

(4) The problem Israel faces in dealing with Hamas is that the latter's unrelenting war of terror against her is fuelled by a culture of religious and racist hatred of Jews reminiscent of Nazi Germany. To quote, again, Erick Stakelbeck's study: *"Hamas's culture of death is driven by indoctrination that extends virtually from womb to tomb. From earliest childhood, Hamas teaches its adherents the Koran-mandated necessity of destroying Israel; the inferiority and inherent evil of the Jewish people in particular and non-Muslims generally; the glories of martyrdom and suicide attacks and the abundant rewards in the afterlife for those who sacrifice their lives for Allah. **If you live in Gaza, these points are bombarded into your brain all day, every day on Hamas television (including in cartoons and children's programming), in schools, in mosques, in billboards, in murals and posters that adorn neighbourhoods, and in parades honouring each new suicide bomber or 'martyr.'** The ceaseless calls to genocide are inescapable. Hamas even holds summer camps in Gaza where boys under the age of fourteen engage in paramilitary training."*

(5) Hamas's deliberate policy of using the Arab civilian population of Gaza as 'human shields' for its fighters and military operations against Israel has been confirmed by independent observers and journalists, local Gazan residents, and its own admissions.

To quote one American foreign policy expert and former high-ranking Pentagon official, Steven Bucci, writing in July 2014: *"Hamas sets up rocket launchers – as well as supply dumps and command-and-control sites – in the midst of apartment buildings, mosques and schools. From these sites, its fighters launch dozens of rockets in salvos, targeting population centres with no discrimination at all. They have been firing almost continuously of late. **But normally they fire when Israeli school children move from their homes, which have safe shelters, to their schools, which also have shelters. They do this deliberately to try and catch the kids in the open. They don't seek to minimize collateral damage – they seek to maximise it. Israel, on the other hand, fires only at specific, intelligence-derived military targets. Since these targets are deliberately intermixed with the civilian population by Hamas, Israel must take steps to minimize the collateral casualties. Before the Israelis strike a building, every home in it gets a call on its landline phone, as do all the cell phones associated with the inhabitants of the building – the cells additionally get text messages – telling them that in a few minutes the building will be targeted. Finally, to make sure everyone gets the message, Israel drops a dud bomb - one containing no explosives – onto the roof of the structure. Minutes later, the building is destroyed. There is no instance in modern military history where a force has taken greater measures to give the innocents as much chance to get out of the way."***

To quote another source, a local Gazan resident and former supporter of Hamas, called Ali: *"Hamas boasts about its strength and that it is the great defender of the Palestinians. But when Israel rolled in, I saw their real motivation. **To avoid unnecessary casualties, Israel Defence Forces took precautions when they prepared to bomb a building. They sent text messages to civilian Paletinians warning them, 'Please get out immediately for your own safety. We are not here to hurt you. We are only after Hamas.'** But Hamas took advantage of the Israelis' care. They actually trapped people inside so 'bystanders' would be killed. They knew reports of the battle would make Israel look bad if civilians died, so our Hamas 'protector' turned their guns on innocent people and threatened to kill them if they tried to get out...All my life I had heard horror stories about 'Israel, the little Satan.' But the truth was 180 degrees different. Their soldiers were trying to **protect** Palestinians while Hamas wanted us dead...Not only did Hamas leaders try to get people killed during the battle, most of them were cowering in basements and bunkers instead of fighting. It disgusted me."*

A recent unguarded statement by a Hamas spokesman in October 2014 confirmed the truth about its deliberate use of Gazan civilians as 'human shields': *"As <http://www.memri.org> reports," wrote American journalist, Jonathan S. Tobin, "speaking on Tuesday on Hamas's Al Asqua – TV in Gaza, the group's spokesperson **Sami Abu Zuhri** urged the population of the [Gaza] strip to refuse to heed warnings and to use their bodies to shield Hamas facilities: '**This attests to the character of our noble, Jihad-fighting people, who defend their rights and their homes with their bare chests and their blood. The policy of people confronting the Israeli warplanes with their bare chests in order to protect their homes has proven effective against the occupation...We***

in Hamas call upon our people to adopt this policy, in order to protect the Palestinian homes.’”

(6) The record shows that whilst Israel has worked for peace in Gaza, **Hamas is only interested in using Gaza as a base from which to wage war against the Jewish State. To quote journalist, Charles Krauthammer, writing in the *Washington Post*, 17 July 2014:** *“Apologists for Hamas attribute the blood lust to the Israeli occupation and blockade. Does no one remember anything? It was less than 10 years ago that worldwide television showed the Israeli army pulling die-hard settlers off synagogue roofs in Gaza as Israel uprooted its settlements, expelled its citizens, withdrew its military and turned every inch of Gaza over to the Palestinians. There was not a soldier, not a settler, not a single Israeli left in Gaza. And there was no blockade. On the contrary. Israel wanted this new Palestinian state to succeed. To help the Gaza economy, Israel gave the Palestinians its 3,000 greenhouses that had produced fruit and flowers for export. It opened border crossings and encouraged commerce. The whole idea was to establish the model for two states living peacefully and productively side by side. No one seems to remember that, simultaneous with the Gaza withdrawal, Israel dismantled four smaller settlements in the northern West Bank as a clear signal of Israel’s desire to leave the West Bank as well and thus achieve an amicable two-state solution. This is not ancient history. This was nine years ago. And how did the Gaza Palestinians react to being granted by the Israelis what no previous ruler, neither Egyptian, nor British, nor Turkish, had ever given them – an independent territory? First, they demolished the greenhouses. Then they elected Hamas. Then, instead of building a state with its attendant political and economic institutions, they spent the better part of a decade turning Gaza into a massive military base, brimming with terror weapons, to make ceaseless war on Israel. Where are the roads and rail, the industry and infrastructure of the new Palestinian state? Nowhere. Instead, they built mile upon mile of underground tunnels to hide their weapons and, when the going gets tough, their military commanders. They spent millions importing and producing rockets, launchers, mortars, small arms, even drones. They deliberately placed them in schools, hospitals, mosques and private homes to better expose their own civilians...”*

Extent of and reasons for media bias against Israel

Mainstream media coverage of the Arab-Israeli conflict is typically biased against Israel in its failure to tell the historical truth about that conflict, its uncritical acceptance of the narrative of Palestinian ‘victimhood,’ its failure to report and analyse the failings of Palestinian Arab leaders and institutions, and **its failure to reveal the degree to which truthful reporting of Hamas activity in Gaza, for example, has been hampered or prevented by Hamas’s intimidation of journalists.** This general media bias against Israel also reveals itself in the disproportionate coverage of Israel’s shortcomings, real or imagined, compared with the relative lack of media scrutiny of the mass carnage and tyranny which prevails in so many other parts of the world – especially the Arab-Islamic world. **Here below, once again, is the evidence for these assertions:**

(1) **In his online article for the *Tablet*, 26 August 2014, ‘*An Insider’s Guide to the Most Important Story on Earth*,’ Matti Friedman, a former Associated Press (AP)**

correspondent, ‘explains how and why reporters get Israel so wrong, and why it matters.’ To begin with, Friedman points out: “Staffing is the best measure of the importance of a story to a particular news organization. When I was a correspondent at the AP, the agency had more than 40 staffers covering Israel and the Palestinian territories. That was significantly more news staff than the AP had in China, Russia, or India, or in all of the 50 countries of sub-Saharan Africa combined. It was higher than the total number of news-gathering employees in all the countries where the uprisings of the ‘Arab Spring’ eventually erupted...The volume of press coverage that results, even when little is going on, gives this [Arab-Israeli] conflict a prominence compared to which its actual human toll is absurdly small. In all of 2013, for example, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict claimed 42 lives – that is, roughly the monthly homicide rate in the city of Chicago...In contrast, in three years the Syrian conflict has claimed an estimated 190,000 lives, or about 70,000 more than the number of people who have ever died in the Arab-Israeli conflict since it began a century ago. News organizations have nonetheless decided that this [Arab-Israeli] conflict is more important than, for example, the more than 1,600 women murdered in Pakistan last year (271 after being raped and 193 of them burned alive), the ongoing erasure of Tibet by the Chinese Communist Party, the carnage in Congo (more than 5 million dead as of 2012) or the Central African Republic, and the drug wars in Mexico (death toll between 2006 and 2012: 60,000)...

In addition to this failure of proportionality, writes Matti Friedman, “A reporter working in the international press corps here [in Israel] understands quickly that what is important in the Israeli-Palestinian story is Israel. If you follow mainstream coverage, you will find nearly no real analysis of Palestinian society or ideologies, profiles of armed Palestinian groups, or investigation of Palestinian government. Palestinians are not taken seriously as agents of their own fate...The story mandates that they exist as passive victims of the party that matters [Israel]. **Corruption, for example, is a pressing concern for many Palestinians under the rule of the Palestinian Authority, but when I and another reporter suggested an article on the subject, we were informed by the bureau chief that Palestinian corruption was ‘not the story.’ (Israeli corruption was, and we covered it at length).**

“Israeli actions are analysed and criticised, and every flaw in Israeli society is aggressively reported. In one seven-week period, from Nov.8 to Dec.16 2011, I decided to count the stories coming out of our bureau on the various moral failings of Israeli society...I counted 27 separate articles, an average of a story every two days. In a very conservative estimate, this seven-week tally was higher than the total number of significantly critical stories about Palestinian government and society, including the totalitarian Islamists of Hamas, that our bureau had published in the preceding three years.

“The Hamas charter, for example, calls not just for Israel’s destruction but for the murder of Jews and blames Jews for engineering the French and Russian revolutions and both world wars; the charter was never mentioned in print when I was at the AP, though Hamas won a Palestinian national election and had become one of the region’s most important players. To draw the link with this summer’s events [the 2014 war in Gaza]: An observer might think Hamas’ decision in recent years to construct a military infrastructure beneath Gaza’s civilian infrastructure would be deemed newsworthy, if only because of what it meant about the way the next conflict would be

fought and the cost to innocent people. But that is not the case. The Hamas emplacements were not important in themselves, and were therefore ignored. What was important was the Israeli decision to attack them.”

(2) On the subject of Hamas intimidation of journalists, Matti Friedman writes:

*“Any veteran of the press corps here [in Israel] knows the intimidation is real, and I saw it in action myself as an editor on the AP news desk. **During the 2008-2009 Gaza fighting I personally erased a key detail – that Hamas fighters were dressed as civilians and being counted as civilians in the death toll – because of a threat to our reporter in Gaza.** (The policy was then, and remains, not to inform readers that the story is censored unless the censorship is Israeli. Earlier this month [August 2014], the AP’s Jerusalem news editor reported and submitted a story on Hamas intimidation; the story was shunted into deep freeze by his superiors and has not been published)...*

Even when reporters are not themselves the target of intimidation, and sincerely believe that their only job is to document violence directed by Israel at Palestinian civilians, “reporters are under deadline and often at risk,” writes Friedman, “and many don’t speak the language and have only the most tenuous grip on what is going on. They are dependent on Palestinian colleagues and fixers who either fear Hamas, support Hamas, or both...It is not coincidence that the few journalists who have documented Hamas fighters and rocket launches in civilian areas this summer were generally not, as you might expect, from the large news organizations with big and permanent Gaza operations. They were mostly scrappy, peripheral, and newly arrived players – a Finn, an Indian crew, a few others. These poor souls didn’t get the memo.”

(3) Another media source, *Algemeiner.com*, an American internet news site, quotes other examples of Hamas intimidation of journalists during the 2014 Gaza conflict.

“...Hamas maintains a major military headquarters in a basement beneath the Shifa hospital in Gaza city. Yet during this conflict, we saw no footage of Hamas occupying the hospital. We also saw hardly any footage of Hamas terrorists firing rockets or operating in residential areas of Gaza...Why? Intimidation of journalists. Consider the following cases.

(a) “French-Palestinian journalist Radjaa Abu Dagga wrote that he was forcibly blocked from leaving Gaza, detained and then interrogated by members of Hamas at a room in Shifa hospital next to the emergency room. He wrote an account of his treatment in the French newspaper *Liberation* – before asking the paper to take it down.

(b) “Italian reporter Gabriel Barbati disclosed that Israel was telling the truth and Hamas was lying when he confirmed that the deaths of 10 people at the Al-Shati refugee camp on July 28 [2014] was not the result of Israeli fire, as had been widely reported, (and, in the case of NBC, never corrected), but of a misfired Hamas missile. But when did Barbati disclose this? – Only when he was out of Gaza, beyond the reach of Hamas retaliation.

(c) “Israeli filmmaker Michael Grynszpan recounted on Facebook the reply of a Spanish journalist who had just left Gaza to his question regarding the absence of

footage of Hamas in action: 'It's very simple. We did see Hamas people there, launching rockets. They were close to our hotel, but if ever we dared pointing our camera on them, they would simply shoot at us and kill us.'

(d) *"After Australian Channel Nine News reporter Peter Stefanovic tweeted that he had seen rockets fired into Israel from near his hotel, a pro-Hamas tweeter issued a scarcely veiled threat: 'In WWII, spies got shot.'*

Not surprisingly, truth has been the first casualty of Hamas intimidation and manipulation of the international press. To quote *Algemeiner.com*: *"All too often, the reports we have seen or heard of Israeli strikes on schools or of killing large numbers of Palestinian civilians have been fabricated by Hamas. Thus on Aug.3 [2014], media reports claimed that Israel had targeted and hit a UN school in Rafah, resulting in 10 deaths. Israel was widely condemned. Yet, only a few publications, such as the **Wall Street Journal**, disclosed that the Israelis had in fact targeted three Islamic Jihad terrorists on a motorbike **outside** the UN facility, which is where the missile struck, as the Israelis said all along. In fact, of three UN schools that Israel was reported to have hit in the last two weeks [29 July-12 August 2014] – and for which it received strong international condemnation – **the evidence now shows that the civilian deaths in one case was probably the result of a misfired Hamas rocket, a second was hit by Israeli fire while Palestinian terrorists were firing from within it and a third was simply never struck directly by Israel at all.***

*"The media also shows a propensity to accept Hamas casualty figures and report them as coming from something seemingly respectable, like 'the Palestinian Ministry of Health' or the United Nations. **The trouble is that the Palestinian Ministry of Health is part of Hamas, which is not only an internationally recognised terrorist organization but has a vested interest in inflating Palestinian casualty figures. It also turns out that the UN normally has made no precise estimates of its own. It generally repeats the figures Hamas gives it, which are then often reported as being 'UN figures.'***

Positive and revealing Arab comments about Israel

Another significant truth the mainstream media fail to report about the Arab-Israeli conflict is that many Palestinian Arabs and other Muslims prefer Israeli rule to that of Hamas or the Palestinian Authority, and acknowledge that Israel, for all its faults, offers them more freedom and opportunity than can be found in most other parts of the Middle East. **To quote only a few but typical examples of this interesting phenomenon:**

(1) Opinion surveys and plentiful anecdotal evidence gathered between 2000 and 2007, reveal that a large proportion of Palestinian Arabs living in East Jerusalem and other parts of Israel, like the 'Galilee Triangle,' have opposed periodic Israeli suggestions that they should be placed under the rule of the Palestinian Authority. Palestinian Arabs living in Gaza have similarly expressed their preference for Israel over Hamas. **(For full details and sources, see: *Daniel Pipes, 'The Hell of Israel Is Better than the Paradise of Arafat,'* originally published in the *Middle East Quarterly*, Spring 2005, and now available at the *Middle East Quarterly* website <http://www.meforum.org/article/702>.**

See also: *Daniel Pipes, ' Hamas is Worse than Israel, Worse than Sharon,' April 13, 2005, updated September 26, 2014, and available at: <http://www.danielpipes.org/blog/2005/04/hamas-is-worse-than-israel-worse-than-sharon>.*

To quote just some of this above-mentioned evidence presented by Daniel Pipes:

(a) “**Dec. 26, 2007 update:** A poll taken by *Keevoon Research, Strategy & Communications* asked this question of a **representative sample of 514 Israeli Arabs over 18 years old** by telephone during the period **December 3-5 [2007]**...

There has been a lot of talk lately about the formation of a new Palestinian State. It has been suggested by some that Israeli Arabs could continue to live in Israel, but change their citizenship to the new Palestinian State. Given the choice, and continuing to live where you presently live today, would you prefer to be a citizen of Israel or of a new Palestinian State?

The replies: Remain Israeli citizens: **62 percent.**
Join a future Palestinian State: **14 percent.**
No opinion/refused to answer: **24 percent.**

(b) “**December 27, 2007 update:** Coincidentally, more polling on this issue, just a day later. The Arabic-language newspaper *As-Sennara* asked, in a telephone poll of **450 adult Arabs living in the Galilee Triangle, and Negev (all in Israel):**

Do you support transferring the [Galilee] Triangle to the Palestinian Authority?

The replies: Favour: **18 percent.**
Oppose: **78 percent.**

(c) “**In mid-2000,** when it appeared that some Arab-majority parts of Jerusalem would be transferred to Palestinian Authority control, Muslim Jerusalemites expressed less than delight at the prospect... *Abd ar-Razzak 'Abid of Jerusalem's Silwan neighbourhood pointed dubiously to 'what's happening in Ramallah, Hebron, and the Gaza Strip' and asked if the residents there were well-off. A doctor applying for Israeli papers explained: 'The whole world seems to be talking about the future of the Arabs of Jerusalem, but no one has bothered asking us. The international community and the Israeli Left seem to take it for granted that we want to live under [the late] Mr Arafat's control. We don't. Most of us despise Mr Arafat and the cronies around him, and we want to stay in Israel. At least here I can speak my mind freely without being dumped in prison, as well as having a chance to earn an honest day's wage.'*

(d) “In the view of **Fadal Tahabub, a member of the Palestinian National Council,** an estimated **70 percent** of the **200,000 Arab residents of Jerusalem** preferred to remain under Israeli sovereignty. **A social worker living in Ras al 'Amud, one of the areas [of Jerusalem] possibly falling under Palestinian Authority [PA] control,** said: *'If a*

secret poll was conducted, I am sure an overwhelming majority of Jerusalem Arabs would say they would prefer to stay in Israel. '...Indeed, precisely when Palestinian rule seemed most likely in 2000, the Israeli Interior Ministry reported a **substantial increase in citizenship applications from Arabs in eastern Jerusalem...** So many Jerusalem Arabs considered taking out Israeli papers in 2000, that **the ranking Islamic official in Jerusalem issued an edict prohibiting his flock from holding Israeli citizenship...** **Faysal al-Husayni, the Palestine Liberation Organization's man in charge of Jerusalem affairs,** went further: *'Taking Israeli citizenship is something that can only be defined as treason,'* and he threatened such people... **announcing that Jerusalem Arabs who take Israeli citizenship would have their homes confiscated. The PA's radio station confirmed this, calling such persons 'traitors' and threatening that they would be 'tracked down.'** **Many Palestinians were duly intimidated, fearing the Authority's security forces.**

(e) "When [Israeli] Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's government released a trial balloon in **February 2004 about giving the Palestinian Authority control over the Galilee Triangle,** a predominantly Arab part of Israel, the response came strong and hard. **As Mahmoud Mahajnah, 25, told Agence France-Presse:** *'[The late] Yasir Arafat runs a dictatorship, not a democracy. No one here would accept to live under that regime.'* ...One resident quoted what he called a local saying, that 'the evil' of Israel is better than the 'heaven' of the [PA controlled] West Bank. **Shu'a Sa'd, 22, explained why:** *'Here you can say whatever you like and do whatever you want – so long as you don't touch the security of Israel. Over there, if you talk about Arafat, they can arrest you and beat you up.'* Another young man, **Isam Abu'Alu, 29,** put it differently: *'Mr Sharon seems to want us to join an unknown state that doesn't have a parliament, or a democracy, or even decent universities. We have close family ties in the West Bank, but we prefer to demand our full rights inside Israel.'*

The entrance to **Umm al-Fahm, the largest Muslim town in Israel,** sports the green flag of the Islamic Movement Party that rules the town, along with a billboard denouncing Israel's rule over Jerusalem. That said, **Hashim Abd ar-Rahman, mayor and local leader of the Islamic Movement,** has no time for Sharon's suggestion: *'Despite the discrimination and injustice faced by Arab citizens, the democracy and justice in Israel is better than the democracy and justice in Arab and Islamic countries.'* Nor does **Ahmed Tibi, an Israeli Arab member of [Israel's] parliament and adviser to [the late Yasir] Arafat,** care for the idea of PA control, which he calls *'a dangerous, anti-democratic suggestion.'*

(f) "**June 23, 2008 update:** As part of the 'Allophilia Project,' **Todd L. Pittinski, Jennifer J. Ratcliff, and Laura A. Maruskin of the Harvard Kennedy School** [of Harvard University], conducted an opinion survey, **Coexistence in Israel: a National Study,** that confirms how much the Arabs of Israel wish to remain part of that country. Conducted in Hebrew and Arabic, including 448 adult Arab citizens of Israel, it found that **76.9 percent of the Arab citizens answered positively the question, 'I would prefer to live in the State of Israel than in any other country in the world.'** Of this number, 48.8 percent agreed and 28.1 percent tended to agree.

(g) “**August 12, 2008 update:** *In one town, Gazans yearn for previous Israeli presence* reads the title of an article by **Rafael D. Frankel** in the ***Christian Science Monitor***, referring to the **town of Mawassi, a mixed Palestinian and Bedouin town** that was within **Gush Katif before 2005, isolated from the rest of Gaza. As Frankel describes the scene:** *‘Three years ago, before Israel withdrew, Mawassi was a town of fertile corn crops and greenhouses, which – like the ones in the Jewish settlements – grew cherry tomatoes, sweet peppers, and strawberries. Now, in the ethnic Palestinian section of town, nearly half the land lies barren. Only shells remain of many of the greenhouses that were stripped of valuable materials. A city that fed itself with its produce and the money its men made from working with the [Jewish] settlers, Mawassi is now dependent on food handouts from the United Nations.’*

“**Riyad al-Laham, an unemployed father of eight who worked for Gush Katif for nearly 20 years, has strong opinions on the subject:** *‘I want [the Israelis] to come back. All the Mawassi people used to work in the settlements and made good money. Now there is nothing to do. Even our own agricultural land is barren.’* The Israelis, he says, *‘used to take responsibility for us as occupiers. Neither [Hamas nor Fatah] knocked on the doors to ask what we need. People are fed up... We have become beggars...’*

(h) “**March 16, 2010 update:** MEMRI [Middle East Research Institute – see page 7 of this paper] provides the partial text of **an article of February 21, 2010, by Mahdi Majid’Abdallah, a liberal Kurdish writer, *Israel’s Better for Us than Bin Laden*. As summarized by MEMRI, he explains that** *‘unlike the terror organizations, Israel is a democratic state, not an aggressive one, and is characterised by freedom of worship and speech and a culture of peace and enlightenment.’ An excerpt:* *‘Israel is a democratic state that does not use force except to protect itself from terrorists... We never hear that an Israeli has blown himself up, set up a terror organization, or used Torah texts to harm someone. In Israel, there are more mosques than there are in some Arab and Muslim countries. There is freedom of worship and expression – so much so that Arabs and Muslims living in Tel Aviv curse the Israeli president openly and publicly, without anyone hurting them or settling accounts with them. This doesn’t happen in the Islamic countries. And it goes without saying that there is a culture of love of peace and enlightenment, spread by Israeli universities, colleges, and centres throughout the world.’*

(i) “**June 29, 2010 update:** Rhonda Spivak provides anecdotal evidence in ***East Jerusalem Arabs Tell Me They Prefer Israel over the PA***. For example:
‘Although he sells a soccer jersey saying PALESTINE, Asem is in no rush to have East Jerusalem become the capital of a Palestinian State under PA President Abbas. When I ask him if he would prefer to live under Abbas in a State of Palestine, rather than under Israeli sovereignty, he gives me the opposite answer of what I expected. ‘No, I would rather live under Israelis than under Abbas. Abbas is a thief like Arafat was. But I would rather have Abbas than King Abdullah [of Jordan].’ When I ask him why he prefers to stay under Israeli rule than PA rule, he answers, ‘At least here I can say what I want. In Syria, if you say what you want, you can go missing forever. In Jordan too. And under Abbas, too. It is chaos there [under PA rule]. Abbas can stay in Ramallah, and stay out of Jerusalem.’

(j) “**October 6, 2010 update:** The Palestinian Centre for Policy and Survey Research published a **poll of Jerusalem Arabs asking about their political preferences. In its summary:** *‘a solid majority prefers Palestinian or international sovereignty over East Jerusalem. Yet, with high levels of satisfaction with Israeli basic services, and significant worry about losing Israeli medical services, free movement inside Israel, and loss of freedom of expression in the permanent settlement [putting them under PA rule], three quarters of East Jerusalemites prefer to see East and West Jerusalem as an open city and one quarter prefers to hold Israeli citizenship.’*”

(k) “**December 16, 2010 update:** A University of Maryland-Saban Center for Middle East Policy **poll of 600 Arab citizens of Israel** found, according to a **summary of the results, that:**

‘When asked if they would support the transfer of Arab towns in Israel to PA control in a land swap, 58% said no. Of those, 42% gave their reason for wishing to stay in Israel as ‘job and living standards are better in Israel,’ 22% said they do not want to be separated from other Arabs living in Israel, and 9% said Israel is more likely to be democratic than is a PA State. Another 9% said they feel ‘no affinity’ with PA Arabs, up from just 2% who said the same in 2009.’

(l) “**May 6, 2011 update:** In an article on the Hamas-Palestinian Authority accord, a **New York Times** article mentions in passing the **comparative prison experience of one Palestinian from Hebron:**

‘Louai Faisal, 27, a Palestinian resident of this West Bank city long considered a Hamas stronghold, has spent three periods in Israeli prisons, starting in 2003 when he was sentenced to two and a half years as a would-be suicide bomber for Hamas. More recently, he has spent three terms in Palestinian Authority prisons in the West Bank, arrested each time by a different security apparatus, he said, and interrogated because he was suspected of belonging to Hamas. The latest detention lasted six weeks and ended in March. Mr Faisal said he was never tortured in Israel, only in the Palestinian Authority prisons, where the treatment, he said, was ‘much worse.’”

Three Arab women speak out in defence of Israel

Western liberals who pride themselves on their support for human rights, especially ‘women’s rights,’ should take special note of the comments below – **the testimonies of three educated Arab women contrasting the freedoms and opportunities enjoyed by women in Israel, compared with the treatment of women and religious minorities in most Arab Islamic countries.** To read the **full version of the first two testimonies**, in the order that they are given below, see: (1) *‘Why do Arabs hate Israel? A brave Lebanese shares her experience...and her troubling conclusion,’ **Flame Hotline, June 30, 2010***, and (2) *‘An Israeli Arab woman explains to Arabs why she loves Israel (Let’s start with freedom),’ **Flame Hotline, October 23, 2012**.* ‘FLAME’ [Facts & Logic About the Middle East] is an independent American website which delivers “updates and analysis on current issues about Israel and the Middle East conflict.”

(1) In a speech at Duke University (USA) in 2004, Lebanese-born author and journalist, **Brigitte Gabriel**, declared: *“I’m proud and honoured to stand here today as a Lebanese speaking for Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East. As someone who was raised in an Arabic country, I want to give you a glimpse into the heart of the Arab world.*

I was raised in Lebanon where I was taught that the Jews are evil, Israel is the devil, and the only time we will have peace in the Middle East is when we kill all the Jews and drive them into the sea. When the Muslims and Palestinians declared jihad on the Christians in 1975, they started massacring the Christians in city after city. I ended up living in a bomb shelter underground from age 10 to 17, without electricity, eating grass to live, and crawling under sniper bullets to a spring to get water.

It was Israel who came to help the Christians in Lebanon. My mother was wounded by a Muslim shell and was taken into an Israeli hospital for treatment. When we entered the emergency room, I was shocked by what I saw. There were hundreds of people wounded, Muslims, Palestinians, Lebanese Christians, and Israeli soldiers lying on the floor. The doctors treated everyone according to their injury. They treated my mother before they treated the Israeli soldier lying next to her. They didn’t see religion, they didn’t see political affiliation; they saw people in need and they helped.

For the first time in my life, I experienced a human quality that I know my culture would not have shown to their enemy. I experienced the values of the Israelis, who were able to love their enemy in their most trying moments. I spent 22 days at that hospital; those days changed my life and the way I believe information, the way I listen to the radio or to television. I realised that I was sold a fabricated lie by my government about the Jews and Israel, which was so far from reality. I knew for a fact that if I were a Jew standing in an Arab hospital, I would be lynched and thrown to the ground as shouts of joy of ‘Allahu Akbar’ (God is great) echoed through the hospital and the surrounding streets...

The difference between the Arabic world and Israel is a difference in values and character. It’s barbarism versus civilisation. It’s democracy versus dictatorship...

Once upon a time there was a special place in the lowest depths of Hell for anyone who would intentionally murder a child. Now, the intentional murder of Israeli children is legitimised as ‘Palestinian armed struggle’...

They blame suicide bombings on the ‘desperation of occupation.’ Let me tell you the truth. The first major terror bombing committed by Arabs against the Jewish State occurred 10 weeks before Israel even became independent. On Sunday morning, February 22, 1948, in anticipation of Israel’s independence, a triple truck bomb was detonated by Arab terrorists on Ben Yehuda Street in what was then the Jewish section of Jerusalem. Fifty-four people were killed and hundreds were wounded. Thus, it is obvious that Arab terrorism is caused not by ‘desperation’ or ‘occupation,’ but by the very thought of a Jewish State.”

(2) In his article of **October 17, 2012**, *‘Explaining Israel as it really is – in Arabic,’* Philippe Assouline describes how **Boshra Khalaila, a young Israeli Arab woman from Galilee**, “leaves passionate critics of Israel open-mouthed simply by describing the rights and freedoms she routinely enjoys.” : *‘I am married and doing a master’s degree [in Tel Aviv]. I am a liberal, free woman, with all the rights that I could enjoy. I compare myself*

with other women my age in Jordan, the [Palestinian controlled] territories, Egypt, any Arab country. They don't have the rights that I have...They are forced into marriage at a young age, and religious head covering, despite their own convictions. With me it's the opposite; I have everything.

Philippe Assouline describes how **Boshra Khalaila** “was part of a team of five people, **including another Israeli Arab and a Druze**” who went to South Africa “during Israel Apartheid Week,” to counter “widespread ignorance about Israel, compounded by a campaign of demonisation waged by pro-Palestinian students.” As **Boshra Khalaila** put it: *‘You want to defend yourself from people that tell the world that [Jews and Arabs] travel on different buses and study at different schools and that there is segregation. That just isn't true: I study in the same educational institutions, ride the same buses, shop in the same supermarkets. Everything that they say is absolutely false. And I do feel that I belong to my country.’*

(3) **Nonie Darwish** is an Egyptian-born writer and human rights activist whose father was head of Egyptian Army Intelligence in Gaza between 1951 and 1956, when **Egypt ruled the Gaza Strip**. Brought up from infancy to hate Jews, **Nonie Darwish** originally blamed Israel for the targeted assassination of her father, killed in 1956 in retaliation for masterminding and launching terrorist *fedayeen* raids across Israel's southern border. Subsequently, as she grew to adulthood and completed her education at a British Catholic school and then the American University in Cairo, **Nonie Darwish abandoned her hostility to Jews and Israel, emigrated to America, and became Director of Former Muslims United and the founding President of Arabs for Israel**. (For fuller biographical details, see: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nonie_Darwish). Here below are some key extracts from a June 2009 interview in which **Nonie Darwish** explained her change of heart about Israel and warned of the dangers of radical Islam. (Full text available at: http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2009/06/nonie_darwish).

Interviewer: “*What were you taught in the Gaza public school?*”

Nonie Darwish: *I was taught hate...For instance, we used to play songs: ‘Arabs are our friends, Jews are our dogs...Jews were always presented as deceitful people, who want to kill Arabs, especially children and women. We heard incredible stories such as ‘Jews baked cookies with blood of Arab children.’ We were told: ‘Don't take candy from a stranger. He could be a Jew trying to poison you.’ We never saw a Jew.*

Interviewer: “*Were Christians hated too?*”

Nonie Darwish: *Islamic intolerance and discrimination were also towards Christians and even minority Muslims such as Shiites and Kurds...*

Interviewer: “*Were you questioning Islam?*”

Nonie Darwish: *Not early in my life, but I gradually felt that there was no freedom whatsoever under Islamic Law, especially for women. One day, I visited my best friend who was a Copt (Christian) and lived near a mosque. I heard the Friday sermon in that mosque one day while studying with my friend, and the preacher said: ‘May God destroy the Jews and the Infidels! They are all enemies of Allah, of Muslims!’ I saw fear on my*

friend's eyes. It was the first time in my life I thought something was wrong with my religion...

Interviewer: *“When did you change your mind towards Israel and terrorism?”*

Nonie Darwish: *I changed gradually and it was not easy after a long life of indoctrination into hate and anti-Semitism. As I started befriending Jewish people, I realised that many of them are very kind and just like everyone else. I started questioning why my culture was spreading lies and hate propaganda about Jews and the West...**I then read books about Jews and their history. I realised everything that Arab kids were taught about Jews were lies.** I also learned good things about Israeli people and government. About 14 – 15 years ago, my 43 year old brother was in Gaza. He collapsed after a stroke and was unconscious. All the Arabs around my brother agreed: ‘If you want him to live, take him to Hadassah Hospital in Israel.’ That means that in times of trouble, Arabs trust Israelis. The Israeli doctors and nurses did a miracle. My mother and his wife joined my brother in Jerusalem during his treatment and they told me: ‘The Jewish people are very good and kind.’ That is when I saw a different side of Israel. Acts of good will and decency by Israel are never mentioned in the media. I felt that this is not giving justice to Israel...*

Interviewer: *“9/11 was the event that changed you for ever...”*

Nonie Darwish: *In August of 2001, my husband, children and I went to visit Egypt. When I landed in Cairo, I was shocked to find that radical Islam had taken over. The majority of women chose to wear Islamic clothes. When I had left Egypt [in 1978] nobody wore them...I saw pollution and garbage in the Nile, high unemployment, and the usual poverty of Egypt. But Egyptian newspapers only focused on Israel and America bashing. Mosques did the usual cursing of America, the West and Israel. I returned to the USA on September 10, 2001, at night. The next day, when I saw live on TV the second plane crashing into the Twin Towers, I knew right away: ‘That’s the **jih**ad I left behind.’ **When I learned later that the leader of the 19 terrorists was Mohammed Atta, from a middle-class family from Cairo, I was devastated. I called many friends in Egypt. They all said: ‘Don’t you know this is a Jewish conspiracy?’ I could not believe the level of denial. For how long are we, the Arab people, going to continue to accuse the Jewish people of everything we do wrong?** The way my people treated the Jewish people was a tragedy and a disgrace. This must end. That was the day I decided to speak out and that was the day I totally changed towards Israel...*

Interviewer: *“What do you think of Islam?”*

Nonie Darwish: *The problem is **sharia** law which was written a hundred years after Mohammed died. All the ills of Muslim society are linked to **sharia** law which froze 7th century culture into a divine law from Allah that cannot be changed. **Sharia** law made it a crime punishable by death to promote change or reform in Islam...Mainstream **sharia** law books define **jih**ad as ‘**To war with non-Muslims to establish the religion**’ and in Al Azhar University [the Cairo-based theological centre of Sunni Islam] **jih**ad is defined as ‘**a permanent war institution against Jews, Christians and pagans.**’ It’s clearly violence, but after 9/11 many Muslims in the West claimed that **jih**ad is an inner struggle. That is misleading because, when the word **jih**ad is mentioned in the Koran, 97% of the*

time it refers to violence and war. Only 3% of the time it does not refer to violence but to 'inner jihad' about how a Muslim must struggle to surrender to Allah, to the Islamic faith, to shariah law...I want to stress that I am not against the good and peace loving Muslims. I am against sharia law and jihad...

Interviewer: *“How do you qualify the [Arab-Israeli] conflict in the Near-East?*

Nonie Darwish: *I think this is a religious holy war against a non-Muslim country. It is the Muslim world against Israel...The truth is that Arabs simply have no tolerance for any nation that is not Arab and Muslim in the region.*

Israel is not an anti-Arab ‘Apartheid State’

The so-called **BDS movement** (Boycott, Disinvestment, and Sanctions), modelled on the international anti-apartheid campaign against former white-ruled South Africa, accuses Israel of systematically discriminating against, and oppressing its Arab citizens. But again, there is little truth in these allegations. Their credibility is not only undermined by the positive Arab comments and opinion surveys about Israel already highlighted in this paper. They are also refuted by the annual and detailed country by country ***Freedom in the World reports*** produced by **Freedom House**, the prestigious and independent New York based human rights monitoring organisation founded by Eleanor Roosevelt and others in 1941.

For example, Freedom House’s ***Freedom in the World 2014*** survey, whilst critical of Israel, still classifies it as **the only ‘Free’ country in the Middle East**, characterised by **“free and fair” elections, “a diverse and competitive multiparty system,” “vibrant and independent media,”** and **“an active civil society,”** in which the **“Palestinian citizens of Israel enjoy equal political rights under the law”** [unlike black South Africans under apartheid] and **“The judiciary is independent and regularly rules against the government.”** By contrast, Hamas controlled Gaza and the Palestinian Authority controlled West Bank **are classified by Freedom House as “Not Free,”** and characterised by **official corruption, the repression of dissidents, torture, and systematic discrimination against women and religious minorities.**

If, therefore, the anti-Israel BDS movement is genuinely concerned about the human rights of Palestinians, why is it not campaigning against the oppressive rule of Hamas and the PA in Gaza and the West Bank?

However, leaving aside the issue of BDS double standards, **here below is further evidence of the untruthfulness of the charge that Israel deliberately oppresses and discriminates against its Arab citizens:**

(1) **CAMERA** (Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America), founded in 1982 to expose and combat anti-Israel media bias, has produced a number of detailed and scholarly reports analysing and refuting the charges commonly levelled against Israel by the BDS movement. ***Deconstructing ‘Israeli Apartheid’*** by **Alex Safian, PhD, March 1, 2012**, (available at http://www.camera.org/index.asp?x_context=7&x_issue=69&x), is one of these reports.

To quote from it: *“When examined in detail...the apartheid charges fall apart, since Israel is, in fact, a progressive and liberal democracy. Like other western democracies Israel is imperfect, but when mistakes and injustices occur they are usually,*

*in the end, rectified thanks to the country's extensive checks and balances. Unlike neighbouring Arab countries, Israel has free elections, a free press, full religious freedom, and full rights for women and minorities, including gays. In Israel there are Arab legislators in the Knesset [Israel's parliament], Arab diplomats in the Foreign Ministry, Arab generals in the Israel Defence Forces, and also Arab judges. In fact, it was an Arab District Court judge (**George Karra**) who recently sentenced **former Israeli President Moshe Katzav** to jail, and an Arab Supreme Court Justice (**Salim Joubran**) who upheld the sentence.*

*“As with many anti-Israel sites, the ones focusing on alleged Israeli apartheid often include embarrassing quotations attributed to Israeli leaders, to make them seem like racist, bloodthirsty killers of innocent Arab women and children. **Tracing these quotations to their sources shows that most are simply made up, while others are wrenched out of context.** [Follow above link to full report for examples]. And while it's true that Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank who lived under Israeli rule didn't have the same rights as Arabs or Jews in Israel, they also didn't experience anything at all comparable to apartheid. In fact, in many ways they had more rights under Israeli rule than they have today under Hamas rule in Gaza, or under PA rule in the West Bank, and more rights also than the citizens of any Arab country.”*

(2) Politically correct liberal critics of Israel should also check their facts by reading ***The Case for Israel*** by **Alan Dershowitz (USA: Wiley, 2003)** - a detailed and well documented refutation of 32 separate accusations commonly levelled against the Jewish State - written by a liberal Harvard Law Professor who is one of America's most distinguished defenders of civil liberties. Here are three relevant passages from **Dershowitz's** book:

(a) *“Israel is a tiny nation, with few natural resources and little natural wealth, that has had to devote an enormous percentage of its gross national product to defending itself against external and internal enemies. Yet it has not only created a good life for its Jewish citizens, it has helped its Arab citizens live better lives – as measured by income, health, longevity, and other accepted criteria – than the Arabs of any neighbouring countries. It should not be surprising that a poll of the Arab-Israeli residents of Umm el-Fahm conducted by the Arab-Israeli weekly paper **Kul Al-Arab** in 2000 showed a striking 83% opposed to including their city in a Palestinian state. The reason given by a majority of those opposed was that they wanted to remain under democratic rule and they enjoyed a good quality of life. Although there is much to be criticized, and progress to be made, in the economic inequality between Jews and Arabs living in Israel, the world should acknowledge the benefits that the democratic state of Israel brings to the Arabs living and working within its borders...*

(b) *“In the United States and Europe newspapers routinely cite the fact that Israeli Arabs have the lowest average family income of any ethnic group in Israel, as well as the highest infant mortality rate (as do minority groups in most countries, including our own). Few point out, however, that Arab families tend to be much larger **despite** the infant mortality rate, or that women are discouraged from working in the Arab community – facts that explain some of the discrepancies.”*

(c) **In response to the claim that the Palestinian Arab cause deserves support because it is supposedly that of the ‘underdog,’ Dershowitz points out that:**

*“Viewed from the global perspective, Israel, as the world’s only Jewish nation, is clearly the underdog. The Palestinians have the widespread support of a billion Muslims. Add to that the United Nations, the European Union, the Third World, the Vatican, many influential academics, the international left, the far right, and many Protestant churches. **The Palestinians have far more support than the Tibetans, the Kurds, the Armenians, the Chechens, and other real underdogs.** Moreover, the nations that are oppressing these other underdog groups – China, Turkey, and Russia – are far more powerful than tiny Israel with the population of approximately 5.37 million Jews and 1.26 million Arabs. **Yet these other ‘underdogs’ receive little support from those who champion the Palestinians.** Israel is the underdog in yet another, even more dangerous, way. It cannot afford to lose even a single war without exposing its population to genocide and its nationhood to politicide. **Wars waged against Israel are wars of extermination that target its cities and population centres. Its enemies are seeking its total destruction.**”*

Violence and tyranny in the Arab and Islamic world

Western liberals who constantly criticise Israel and say that ‘getting justice for the Palestinians’ is the key to peace and progress in the Middle East, are not only guilty of double standards. They also ignore the wider political and cultural realities of most of the Arab and Islamic world – a world almost universally hostile to human rights and liberal values, as many brave Muslim and former Muslim intellectuals testify. **Here, again, are some more relevant facts which challenge the lopsided and myopic perspective of Israel’s politically correct Western critics:**

(1) **Freedom House’s latest *Freedom in the World 2015* survey reveals the extent to which terrorism, intolerance and tyranny blights the Arab and Islamic world. To quote from the introduction by Arch Puddington, Vice President for Research: “...the problem [of Islamist terrorism] rapidly metastasized as a threat to human life and human freedom during 2014. In a wide swath of the globe stretching from West Africa through the Middle East to South Asia, radical jihadist forces plagued local governments and populations. Their impact on countries like Iraq, Syria, Pakistan, and Nigeria was devastating, as they massacred security forces and civilians alike, took foreigners hostage, and killed or enslaved religious minorities, including Muslims whom they did not recognize as such. Women were particular targets: Young women and teenage girls were seized as war prizes, schoolgirls were kidnapped and raped, women educators and health workers were assassinated, and women suffered disproportionately in refugee camps. As horror followed horror, the year ended with the slaughter of more than 130 schoolchildren by the Pakistani Taliban.”**

According to the ‘**Key Findings**’ commentary accompanying **Freedom House’s** interactive ***Freedom in the World 2015 map***: “[Freedom] Ratings for the [mainly Muslim] Middle East and North Africa region were the worst in the world...”

(2) In 2010, **Freedom House** published a book entitled ***Women’s Rights in the Middle East and North Africa: Progress Amid Resistance***, edited by **Sanja Kelly** and **Julia Breslin**. In her contributing chapter to this book, **Sanja Kelly** wrote: “The country

reports presented in this edition detail how women throughout the Middle East continue to face systematic discrimination in both laws and social customs. Deeply entrenched societal norms, combined with conservative interpretations of Sharia (Islamic law), continue to relegate women to a subordinate status...Perhaps most visibly, women face gender-based discrimination in personal-status laws, which regulate marriage, divorce, child guardianship, inheritance, and other aspects of family life...Gender-based violence also remains a significant problem.”

(3) Violence and tyranny is not a new characteristic of the Arab and Muslim world. According to one scholarly study, *The Dagger of Islam*, (Sphere Books, 1981, pp.158-159), by **John Laffin**, a leading authority on Islam, terrorism and the Middle East, violence, not peaceful debate, was the usual midwife of political change within most Arab and Islamic countries between 1948 and 1979. **In that period alone, for instance, 25 heads of state and prime ministers, and 20 former prime ministers and senior ministers of Islamic countries were assassinated.** Numerous unsuccessful murder attempts were also made on the lives of other political leaders, including 14 known attempts to kill the late King Hussein of Jordan. **In the same thirty-year period (1948 - 1979) there were 22 inter-Muslim wars and civil wars.**

A more recent **2007 study** by **Daniel Pipes** and **Professor Gunnar Heinsohn** of the **University of Bremen** (where he heads the **Raphael-Lemkin Institute for Comparative Genocide Research**), estimates that *“some 11,000,000 Muslims have been violently killed since 1948, of which 35,000, or 0.3%, died during the sixty years of fighting Israel, or just 1 out of every 315 Muslim fatalities. In contrast, over 90% of the 11 million who perished were killed by fellow Muslims.”* (For full details go to <http://www.danielpipes.org/4990/arab-israeli-fatalities-rank-49th>).

(4) Violence and tyranny in the Arab and Muslim world has not only resulted in bloodshed on an enormous scale; it has also, in recent years, created a **colossal refugee problem**. According to an **October 2014 article** by **David P. Goldman**, Senior Fellow at the **London Centre for Policy Research**: *“There are now nearly 18 million refugees and internally displaced persons in seven Muslim countries (Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Pakistan, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen), up from slightly over 7 million in 2011, according to the UN. That doesn’t count more than 2.5 million Afghani refugees from the continuing war in their country...There are millions of young men in the Muslim world sitting in refugee camps with nothing to do, nowhere to go back to, and nothing to look forward to...Israel has nothing whatever to do with any of this suffering. It is all the result of social and political disintegration in the Muslim world itself.”* (See full article: <http://www.meforum.org/4862/does-kerry-think-that-18-million-muslim-refugees>).

(5) It is not Israel that is guilty of ‘apartheid,’ but the Arab and Muslim Middle East, where **Kurds, Christians and Jews** have been savagely persecuted and discriminated against for decades, without provoking any significant protest from Western liberal opinion. **To quote from a 2011 educational advertisement on this subject: “Ethnic Apartheid against the Kurds. Few ethnic minorities in the Middle East have suffered as much repression as the Kurds. In Syria in 1962, hundreds of thousands of Kurds had their citizenship taken away or were denied citizenship. In 2008, the Syrian government**

issued Decree 49, which expelled Kurds from the country's so-called 'Arab Belt' and dispossessed them of rights to own land. The Kurdish Union Party called this an 'ethnic cleansing decree...aimed at ending national Kurdish existence.' In Iran, following the Islamic revolution, the Shiite majority denied the Kurds a role in defining the new constitution, and in 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini declared a holy war against Kurdish political organizations: Entire Kurdish villages and towns were destroyed, and thousands of Kurds executed without due process...

“Religious Apartheid against Christians and Jews. Persecution, discrimination and attacks against religious minorities, especially Christians and Jews, are rampant in the Middle East. **Pressure by radical Islamists has become so great that in the last 20 years some two million Christians have been driven out of their Middle East homelands.** Christians in the Palestinian territories have dropped from 15% of the population in 1950 to just 2% today...In Saudi Arabia, Christians and Jews may not be citizens at all. Some 700,000 Jews have been forced out of Arab nations...**(For further details, see: FLAME Hotline: ‘Apartheid in the Arab Middle East,’ 2011).**

It is particularly ironic, given the BDS campaign against 'Israeli apartheid,' that the Arab world also practices **“Ethnic Apartheid against Palestinian Arabs.** For some 40 years,” the **FLAME** advertisement notes, “Palestinians have been denied citizenship in Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Palestinians have been expelled from many Middle Eastern countries, including Kuwait, Jordan, Libya and Iraq. In Lebanon, Palestinians must live in designated areas, cannot own homes and are barred from 70 occupations.” (Ibid).

(6) It is little wonder, given all these facts, that even a recent U.N. Secretary-General has been moved to condemn the hypocrisy and double standards of Israel's critics. In his last speech on the Middle East to the **United Nations Security Council on 12 December 2006, Kofi Annan,** the outgoing **Secretary-General,** said that *“Palestinians and their supporters will never be truly effective if they focus solely on Israel's transgressions without conceding any justice or legitimacy to Israel's own concerns, and without being able to admit that Israel's opponents have themselves committed appalling and inexcusable crimes.”*

Protest from within: Islam's liberal Muslim critics

Despite the overwhelming evidence of violence, instability and tyranny in so much of the Arab and Muslim world, Israel's Western critics, and politically correct liberals in general, are reluctant to probe too deeply into the nature of Islam, partly from a desire to defend 'multiculturalism,' and partly to avoid accusations of 'Islamophobia.' **They should, however, take note of the fact that some of the most trenchant and thoroughgoing critics of Islam today are liberal Muslims** – believers and former believers - who have become deeply disillusioned with the faith and culture in which they were brought up. Without fundamental internal reform, they insist, Islam will remain a threat to freedom in general, as well as an obstacle to political and social progress in existing Islamic countries. **To quote some examples:**

(1) On 4 - 5 March 2007, a group of Muslim writers and intellectuals came together at a **‘Secular Muslim Summit’ in St. Petersburg, Florida, USA,** which ended with the issue

of a freedom manifesto, **The St. Petersburg Declaration, which declared, amongst other things, that:** *“We are secular Muslims, and secular persons of Muslim societies. We are believers, doubters, and unbelievers, brought together by a great struggle, not between the West and Islam, but between the free and the unfree... We find traditions of liberty, rationality, and tolerance in the rich histories of pre-Islamic and Islamic societies. These values do not belong to the West or the East; they are the common moral heritage of humankind. We see no colonialism, racism, or so-called ‘Islamaphobia’ in submitting Islamic practices to criticism or condemnation when they violate human reason or rights... We demand the release of Islam from its captivity to the totalitarian ambitions of power-hungry men and the rigid strictures of orthodoxy...”* (To read the full text of the **St. Petersburg Declaration** go to <http://www.centerforinquiry.net/isis>. For accompanying details, see: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secular_Islam_Summit).

(2) Supporters of the **St. Petersburg Declaration** include the **Institute for the Secularisation of Islamic Society (ISIS)**, whose **mission statement declares:** *“We believe that Islamic society has been held back by an unwillingness to subject its beliefs, laws and practices to critical examination, by a lack of respect for the rights of the individual, and by an unwillingness to tolerate alternative viewpoints or to engage in constructive dialogue. The Institute for the Secularisation of Islamic Society (ISIS) has been formed to promote the ideas of rationalism, secularism, democracy and human rights within Islamic society...”* (See <http://www.centerforinquiry.net/isis> for further details).

(3) **Azam Kamguian**, an associate of ISIS, is a **prominent Iranian writer and women’s rights activist**. A former medical student, born in 1958, she was imprisoned for political activities after the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, and was subjected to brutal treatment in prison, **including constant torture and solitary confinement**, before her release from prison in 1983. Today, she lives in exile in London, and is the founder and chairperson of the **Committee to Defend Women’s Rights in the Middle East**, as well as the author of numerous books on feminism, socialism, and religion. **Coming from a Muslim cultural background, though an unbeliever, Azam Kamguian’s passionate denunciation of the Iranian regime and political Islam is both poignant and powerful (based as it is on personal experience)**, and should, again, challenge Israel’s critics to abandon their double standards and focus their anger and activism on the real abusers of human rights in the Middle East. **Here, then, are some relevant extracts from Azam Kamguian’s powerful essay, ‘The Silent Holocaust: Why Humanity Must Achieve Victory over Islam,’:**

*“The final decades of the 20th century witnessed another Holocaust – an Islamic one...in which people have been slaughtered and displaced by Islamic states, political Islamic movements and Islamic terrorists in Iran, the Sudan, Afghanistan, Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Central Asia, and now in America [the Twin Towers on 9/11]. The robe, turban and Koran continue to victimize people. Any voice of dissent or freedom has been silenced on the spot...**In Iran, I lived through thousands of days when Islam shed blood. Since 1979, a hundred thousand men, women, and children have been executed in the name of Allah. I have lived through days when I, along with thousands of men and women throughout the country, looked for the names of our lovers, husbands, wives,***

friends, daughters, sons, colleagues and students in newspapers which daily announced the names of the executed. Days when the soldiers of Allah attacked bookstores and publishing houses and burned books. Days of armed attacks on universities, killing students all over the country. Weeks and months of bloody attacks on workers' strikes and demonstrations. Years of assassination of opponents inside and outside Iran. Years of suppression and brutal murder of atheists, freethinkers, socialists, trade union leaders and activists, Marxists, Bahais, women who resisted the misery of hijab and the rule of sexual apartheid, and many others who were none of these, who were arrested in the streets and then executed simply because of their innocent non-Islamic appearance...I, along with thousands of political prisoners, was tortured by order of the representative of Allah and Sharia; tortured, while the verses of the Koran about nonbelievers were played in the torture chambers. The voice reading the Koran was mixed with our cries of pain from lashes and other brutal forms of torture. They raped women political prisoners for the sake of Allah and in expectation of his reward. They prayed before raping them. Thousands were shot to death by execution squads while Koranic verses were recited. Prisoners were awakened every day at dawn to the sound of gunshots aimed at their friends and cellmates...The fathers and mothers, husbands and wives who received the bloody clothes of their loved ones had to pay for the bullets. They created an Islamic Auschwitz...The crimes committed by the Islamic Republic of Iran and political Islam in the region are comparable to the crimes committed by Fascism in the 1930s and early 1940s, and to the genocide in Rwanda and Indonesia.” (See, for the full text: http://www.centerforinquiry.net/isis/islamic_viewpoints/the_silent).

(4) The anger and pain expressed about Islam by **Azam Kamguian** is mirrored in the testimonies of other liberal Muslims and former Muslims, some of whose writings can be accessed at <http://www.islam-watch.org/about-us.html>. Unlike other liberal Muslims, those associated with this particular website despair of reforming Islam, because those who attempt to do so, they argue, “are targeted for annihilation.” As a result, they have felt obliged to abandon Islam, and their personal testimonies make interesting reading.

Past and present Muslim supporters of Israel

Despite the risks to their lives in doing so, many past and present Muslim groups and individuals have expressed their support for Zionism, Jewish self-determination, and the State of Israel. Those interested in a full and comprehensive account of this neglected subject (one, again, wholly ignored by the mainstream media and Israel's critics), should read the long, detailed, and meticulously documented **Wikipedia** article, '**Muslim supporters of Israel**' (20 pages). Here below are just a few key extracts (minus the source references) from this illuminating article:

*“Some Muslim clerics, such as **Sheikh Prof. Abdul Hadi Palazzi**, Director of the Cultural Institute of the Italian Islamic Community, and **Imam Dr Muhammad Al-Hussaini** believe that the return of the Jews to the Holy Land, and the establishment of Israel, are in accordance with the teachings of Islam...**Notable Muslims** who publicly support Zionism include former radical Islamist **Ed Husain**, **Dr Tawfik Hamid**, **Tashbih Sayyed**, a Pakistani-American scholar, journalist, and author, and the Bangladeshi journalist **Salah Choudhury**...*

*“According to British-based **Imam Muhammad Al-Hussaini**, traditional commentators from the 8th and 9th century onwards have uniformly interpreted the **Qur’an [Koran]** to say explicitly that the **Land of Israel has been given by God to the Jewish people as a perpetual covenant...***

*“**As’ad Shukeiri**, a Muslim scholar (‘alim) of the Acre area, and the **father of PLO founder Ahmad Shukeiri**, rejected the values of the Palestinian Arab national movement and was opposed to the anti-Zionist movement. **He met routinely with Zionist officials and had a part in every pro-Zionist Arab organization from the beginning of the British Mandate...***

*“**In the 1920s**, the Muslim National Associations was established by Muslim Arabs who were employed by the Palestine Zionist Executive. The president of the Muslim National Associations and the mayor of Haifa, **Hassan Bey Shukri**, founded the organization with **Sheikh Musa Hadeib** from the village of Dawaymeh near Hebron and head of the farmers’ party of Mt. Hebron. **In July 1921, Shukri sent a telegram to the British government, declaring support for the Balfour Declaration and Zionist immigration to British Mandate Palestine: ‘...We do not consider the Jewish people as an enemy whose wish is to crush us. On the contrary. We consider the Jews as a brotherly people sharing our joys and troubles and helping us in the construction of our common country.’...***

*“A number of Muslim groups that have histories of conflict with Arabs, including Kurds and Berbers, have also voiced support for Israel and Zionism. **Ramin H. Artin, of the Kurdish-American Education Society**, argues that the creation of Israel has been ‘a thorn in the eye of fascists who would rather eliminate the Jewish State.’ He concluded that an Israeli-Kurdish alliance is ‘natural,’ and that sincere mutual respect and recognition of each other’s rights can lead to peace and prosperity.*

*“**During the Israeli War of Independence of 1948**, many Bedouin switched sides to join the Zionist forces in opposing the invasion by the regular Arab armies...**Many Negev Bedouins serve in the Israel Defence Forces [IDF]. Each year, between 5-10% of the Bedouin of draft age volunteer for the IDF** (unlike Druze and Jewish Israelis, they are not required by law to do so)...**Bedouins had long standing ties with nearby Jewish communities. Bedouins of Tuba-Zangariyye helped defend these communities in the 1936-1939 Arab revolt in Palestine.** Formal co-operation between Jews and Bedouins began in 1946, when tribal leader **Sheikh Hussein Mohammed Ali Abu Yussef** of the al-Heib tribe sent more than 60 of his men to fight alongside Zionist forces, forming the Pal-Heib unit of the Haganah. During the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the Pal-Heib unit defended Jewish communities in the Upper Galilee against Syria. **Sheikh Abu Yussef was quoted in 1948 as saying, ‘Is it not written in the Koran that the ties of neighbours are as dear as those of relations? Our friendship with the Jews goes back many years. We felt we could trust them and they learned from us too.’...***

*“Ismail Khaldi is the first **Bedouin deputy consul** of Israel and the **highest ranking Muslim** in the Israeli foreign service. **Khaldi** is a strong advocate of Israel. While acknowledging that the state of the Israeli Bedouin minority is not ideal, he said **‘I am a proud Israeli – along with many other non-Jewish Israelis such as Druze, Bahai, Bedouin, Christians and Muslims, who live in one of the most culturally diversified societies and the only true democracy in the Middle East. Like America, Israeli society is far from perfect, but let us deal honestly. By any yardstick you choose – educational opportunity, economic development, women and gay’s rights, freedom of speech and assembly, legislative representation – Israel’s minorities fare far better than any other country in the Middle East.’***

*“In a 2004 survey conducted by **Professor Sammy Smooha** of the **University of Haifa Jewish-Arab Centre**, ‘Index of Jewish-Arab Relations in Israel – 2004,’ **84.9% of Israeli Arabs** stated that **Israel has a right to exist as an independent State**, and **70%** noted that **it has a right to exist as a democratic, Jewish State...***

The **Wikipedia** article goes on to describe the support for Israel of the **Circassians**, who are a **non-Arab** predominantly **Sunni Muslim Israeli minority**, and of the **Druze**, who consider themselves to be a **reformist Muslim sect**. Both minority Muslim communities play a proudly prominent role in Israel’s military and security forces. The **Wikipedia** article also reveals the outspoken support for Israel of a number of **non-Israeli Muslims** from **Bangladesh, Canada, Egypt, France, Indonesia, Italy, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Pakistan, the United Kingdom**, and the **USA**. Two final examples of this support are given below:

*“**Salah Uddin Shoaib Choudhury** [is] a **Bangladeshi journalist and publisher**, and a self-proclaimed Muslim Zionist...After release from 17 months imprisonment [for attempting to visit Israel], **Choudhury** wrote in an Israeli newspaper, ‘I also stand before you as a living contradiction: a Zionist, a defender of Israel, and a devout, practicing Muslim, living in a Muslim country.’ He said **‘I believe in the justice of the Zionist dream. I also acknowledge this historical reality: that the world has endeavoured to crush that dream, and, yes, even to destroy the viability of the Jewish people.’...***

*“**Imam Abdul Hadi Palazzi**, leader of the **Italian Muslim Assembly** and a co-founder and co-chairman of the **Islam-Israel Fellowship**, quotes the **Koran** to support **Judaism’s** special connection to the **Temple Mount**. According to Palazzi, **‘The most authoritative Islamic sources affirm the Temples.’** He adds that Jerusalem is sacred to Muslims because of its prior holiness to Jews and its standing as home to the biblical prophets and kings David and Solomon, all of whom he says are sacred figures also in Islam. He claims that the Koran **‘expressly recognises that Jerusalem plays the same role for Jews that Mecca has for Muslims.’** When asked what the Koran says about the State of Israel, Palazzi replied: **‘The Qur’an [Koran] cannot deal with the State of Israel as we know it today, since that State came into existence in 1948 only, i.e. many centuries after the Qur’an itself was revealed. However, the Qur’an specifies that the Land of Israel is the homeland of the Jewish people, that God Himself gave that Land to them as heritage and ordered them to live therein. It also announces that – before the end of time – the***

Jewish people will come from many different countries to retake possession of that heritage of theirs. Whoever denies this actually denies the Qur'an itself. If he is not a scholar, and in good faith believes what other people say about this issue, he is an ignorant Muslim. If, on the contrary, he is informed about what the Qur'an says and openly opposes it, he ceases to be a Muslim."

President John F. Kennedy's praise for Israel (1960)

Western liberal critics of Israel would do well, in conclusion, to remember these words spoken in 1960 about Israel by America's most eloquent and best loved post-war liberal President, John F. Kennedy. **Speaking to the Zionists of America Convention in August 1960, Kennedy declared:** *"I first saw Palestine in 1939. There the neglect and ruin left by centuries of Ottoman misrule were slowly being transformed by miracles of labour and sacrifice. But Palestine was still a land of promise in 1939, rather than a land of fulfillment. I returned in 1951 to see the grandeur of Israel...Even while fighting for its own survival, Israel had given new hope to the persecuted and new dignity to the pattern of Jewish life...Israel was not created in order to disappear – Israel will endure and flourish. It is the child of hope and the home of the brave. It can neither be broken by adversity nor demoralized by success. It carries the shield of democracy and it honours the sword of freedom..."*

Sources and recommended reading about Israel, etc.

Apart from the sources and references explicitly mentioned in the text of this paper, the information provided in the **first 9 pages** of this paper was derived from **five** well documented books and studies: (1) **Bard & Himmelfarb, *Myths And Facts: a concise record of the Arab-Israeli conflict***, (Near East Reports, USA, 1992) **pp. 1 - 29, pp.120 - 133, and pp. 295 - 316**; (2) **Alan Dershowitz, *The Case For Israel***, (Wiley, USA, 2003) **pp. 13-62**; (3) **Michael Comay, *Zionism, Israel, and the Palestinian Arabs*** (Keter Books, revised edition, Jerusalem, 1983) **pp. 9 - 41**; (4) **Dore Gold, *The Fight for Jerusalem***, (Regnery, USA, 2007) **pp.10 - 61**; and (5) **Leonard J. Davis, *Myths And Facts 1985***, (Near East Reports, USA, 1984) **pp. 1 – 13, p. 100**. The source for the **Ali** (local Gazan) **quote** about Hamas forcing Gazan residents to act as human shields, is a fascinating book about Muslim conversions to Christianity, by **Tom Doyle**, entitled: ***Dreams and Visions: Is Jesus Awakening the Muslim World?*** (Thomas Nelson, USA, 2012) **pp. 196 - 198**.

If you would like to study the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its details, all the above-mentioned books are worth reading from cover to cover, especially **Alan Dershowitz's *The Case For Israel***, and ***The Fight for Jerusalem*** by **Dore Gold**. Another recent, powerful, and well documented historical and political critique of the current worldwide demonisation of Israel, is ***Should Israel Exist?*** (Balfour Books, USA, 2012) by **Michael Curtis**, currently **Professor Emeritus of Political Science at Rutgers University, USA**, author of 30 books, and one of America's most highly respected academics in the fields of political theory, comparative government, European politics and the Middle East. **Jillian Becker's** landmark and scholarly study of Palestinian nationalism, ***The PLO***, (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1984), is equally illuminating about the period 1915–

1948, and also describes, in great detail, the appallingly destructive role of the PLO in Lebanon between 1968 and 1982.

Useful websites on Arab-Israeli conflict and Islam, etc

In view of the constant and unrelenting flow of anti-Israel reporting and propaganda from so much of the mainstream media, and so many universities, international organisations and charities, it is also advisable to keep checking the accuracy and ‘balance’ of such reports and allegations by visiting the websites already mentioned in this paper, especially the following: <http://www.danielpipes.org>

<http://www.honestreporting.com> <http://www.memri.org> <http://meforum.org>

<http://www.palwatch.org> <http://www.factsandlogic.org> <http://www.camera.org>

Source notes for some key quotes and facts on pp. 1 – 8

¹For more details about Mark Twain’s 1867 visit to Palestine, see his book, *The Innocents Abroad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp.349, 366, 375, 441 – 442.

² James Finn to the Earl of Clarendon, 15 September, 1857.

³ Mitchell G. Bard & Joel Himelfarb, *Myths and Facts: a concise record of the Arab-Israeli conflict*, (Near East Report, Washington D.C. 1992), p. 15, giving as the original source: Abraham Granott, *The Land System in Palestine*, (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1952), p. 278.

⁴ Bard & Himelfarb, *Op cit*, p. 15, giving as the original sources: (1) Arie Avneri, *The Claim of Dispossession*, (Tel Aviv: Hakelel Press, 1984), pp. 179 - 180, 224 - 225, 232 – 234, and (2) Yehoshua Porath, *The Palestinian Arab National Movement*, vol. 2, 1929 -1939, (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1977), pp. 72 – 73.

⁵ Leonard J. Davis, *Myths and Facts 1985: a concise record of the Arab-Israeli conflict*, (Near East Report, Washington D.C. 1984), pp. 5 – 6.

⁶ Alan Dershowitz, *The Case for Israel*, (New Jersey: Wiley, 2003), p. 35.

⁷ Bard & Himelfarb, *Op cit*, p. 11, giving as the original source: Neville Mandel, ‘Attempts at an Arab-Zionist Entente: 1913 – 1914’, *Middle Eastern Studies* (April 1965), p. 243.

⁸ Alan Dershowitz, *Op cit*, p. 38, giving as the original source: Walter Laqueur & Barry Rubin, *The Israel-Arab Reader*, 6th Edition, (New York: Penguin, 2001), p. 19.

⁹ Bard & Himelfarb, *Op cit*, p. 16, giving as the original source: Seymour Martin Lipset, ‘The Socialism of Fools – The Left, the Jews and Israel’, *Encounter* (December 1969), p. 24.

¹⁰ Dershowitz, *Op cit*, p. 54, giving as the original source: Benny Morris, *Righteous Victims*, (New York: Vintage Books, 2001), p. 125.

¹¹ Dershowitz, *Op cit*, p. 55, giving as the original source: Sarah Honig, ‘Fiendish Hypocrisy II: The Man from Klopstock St.’, *Jerusalem Post*, 6 April, 2001.

¹² Dershowitz, *Op cit*, p. 56, giving as the original source: Zvi Elpeleg, *The Grand Mufti*, (London: Frank Cass, 1993), p. 100.

¹³ Dershowitz, *Op cit*, p. 56, giving as the original source: Itamar Marcus, “Nazi Ally, Haj Amin al Hussein is Arafat’s ‘Hero’ ”, *Palestinian Media Watch*, www.pmw.org.il/new/bulletins-050802.html.

¹⁴ Paul Johnson, *A History of the Modern World from 1917 to the 1980s*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1984), p. 485.

¹⁵ Leonard J. Davis, *Op cit*, p. 100.

¹⁶ *The Memoirs of Haled al Azm*, (Beirut, 1973), Part 1, pp. 386 – 388.

¹⁷ Paul Johnson, *Op cit*, p. 487.

¹⁸ Bard & Himelfarb, *Op cit*, pp. 173 – 174, giving as the original source: Official British Document, Foreign Office File No. 371/20822 E 7201/22/31; Elie Kedourie, *Islam in the Modern World*, (London: Mansell, 1980), pp. 69 – 72.

¹⁹ Dore Gold, *The Fight for Jerusalem*, (Washington DC: Regnery, 2007), p. 18.

²⁰ Bard & Himelfarb, *Op cit*, p. 152, giving as the original source: Cited by Senator Warren Rudman at Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, 13 April 1989.

²¹ Dershowitz, *Op cit*, p. 7.

Philip Vander Elst, November 2015