

The Israel-Palestine Conflict – From its Origin to Imminent Peace

Cover Letter

Israel, now a financial and military superpower in the Middle East, is very close to realizing its long-term goal: total control of Palestine. It can confidently rely now on its wealth and military strength to survive in a hostile environment.

From its position now of unassailable strength, and with the unconditional support of the U.S., Israel has a wide range of choices. It can choose: 1. to continue its domination and oppression of Palestine, and ignore negative world opinion and the loss of world esteem. It may be content now with a “peace” based on power and control (as the “Pax Romana”). OR Israel can choose: 2. to move toward justice, morality, and lasting peace by means of a Semitic peace ceremony described in the following, “A Plan for Imminent Peace in Palestine/Israel.”

Both the Palestinians and the Israelis are Semitic peoples. The peace plan presented here is rooted in Semitic tradition and experience, and includes the heretofore missing, but absolutely essential, element: a significant move toward JUSTICE! If Palestine and Israel would accept and fulfill such a plan (see pp. 3–4 following), Hamas would immediately end its rocket fire, Israel would end its occupation, the Palestinians could have a decent life, and Israel’s hopes of being accepted as a good neighbor by the Middle East family of nations could be realized.

This proposal could move Palestine and Israel toward a just peace, and result in a violence-free period of many years. Without the stresses and pain that come with violence, the antagonists could see each other in a different light. With a new attitude of respect and cooperation, they could find a way for Israel and Palestine to live in security and contentment. Their relationship could be transformed into one of mutual coexistence and active cooperation.

Please read the following Plan.



Del Reynolds

P.S. Peace in the Middle East may depend on the untold millions of Israelis who long to deal honorably with the documented reality of their injustices to the Palestinians.

We need to find the best way to help the millions of Middle East antagonists realize that in a Semitic peace ceremony as described here, a **lasting peace** could soon be established.

PREFACE - Palestine-Israel

Origin of the Palestine-Israel Conflict: “The Palestinians have a real grievance: their homeland for over a thousand years was taken, without their consent and mostly by force, during the creation of the state of Israel. And all subsequent crimes—on both sides—inevitably follow from this original injustice.” – *Jews for Justice in the Middle East*

[The writers of “Jews for Justice” pointed out that] “...the Zionist movement, from the beginning, looked forward to a practically complete dispossession of the indigenous Arab population so that Israel could be a wholly Jewish state.” “The Arabs’ opposition to Zionism was...based...on a totally reasonable fear of a dispossession of their people.”

U.S. COMPLICITY

At its origin in 1948, the state of Israel acquired (by force, from the Palestinians) land, businesses, and residential housing. Although U.N. Resolution 194 states that “... compensation should be paid for loss or damage to property...,” Israel has paid nothing (shielded from U.N. Resolutions by many U.S. vetoes in the U.N. America is “driving the getaway car” in Israel’s theft!). U.S. support for Israel has been a huge factor in Israel’s amazing leap forward in statehood to become a wealthy and powerful country (ranked 16th in wealth and 5th in military power!). A Palestinian Arab in Ramallah (near Jerusalem) said to me with blunt conviction, “The U.S. is the thumb which pushed the thorn (Israel) into the side of the Middle East and keeps it there.”

The Writer’s Background: My wife and I arrived in Ramallah, Palestine, in October 1951, soon after the U.N. Partition of Palestine. For five years (1951–1956) we taught in the Friends Schools in Ramallah (near Jerusalem). At that time, Willard and Christina Jones were the directors of the Ramallah Friends Boys School. In October, 1953, Willard was seconded to the Near East Christian Committee for Refugee Relief as Executive Secretary. Subsequently, I became principal of the Boys School.

An Important Source Book

Christina’s book, “The Untempered Wind” (published in 1975), based largely on the diary she kept during her 40 years in Palestine (1922–1963), provides exceptionally valuable and important insights into the Palestine-Israel conflict. Christina provides a Quaker eye-witness report of the chaotic events at the time of the Partition—1947 and after. (see pp. 5,6)

A PLAN FOR IMMINENT PEACE IN ISRAEL-PALESTINE: A NEW APPROACH

The quote below is a description of a traditional Semitic peace-making ceremony which Christina Jones, of the Friends Boys School in Ramallah (near Jerusalem), was invited to attend. Perhaps this traditional pattern will help in working toward a resolution of the Palestine-Israel conflict.

Christina Jones Diary, September 13, 1947 (p. 68):

“...ten years ago, during the Arab rebellion against the British (Mandate) policies, a Greek priest (from Jifna)...betrayed a Ramallah man to the (British Mandate Government) police. The Ramallah man was arrested and hanged by the British. (It was a terrible shock to the people of both Jifna and Ramallah, and there were bitter feelings for many years.)

(After more than a decade of bitter and violent quarreling), “the people of both villages thought the time had come to settle the quarrel. An important delegation came from Jifna to Ramallah (to the home of the man who had been executed). The elders took charge, making speeches saying that bad feelings (and violence) should end and all be forgiven.”

“The Jifna family had come prepared with “blood money” with which to recompense the family for the death of its member. The head of the (Ramallah) family accepted £333.33 (a very large sum for a small village!) from the head of the Jifna family, with much formality (making a pile of the pound notes on a table). Then, taking £150 from the pile of pound notes, he returned the rest to the man from Jifna. The money he kept (£150), he said was to help educate the sons of the man who had been betrayed.”

“Everyone applauded the gesture, and all seemed glad to have happy relations restored. **The dead man could not be helped, but his children could be.** In addition, an intolerable relationship with another village was ended with dignity and peace.” [Both villages resumed their “good neighbor” relationship.]

In the outlines below we may be able to perceive how a traditional Semitic peace-making effort could help. **Acknowledgment** is a key factor.

Jifna-Ramallah (ACTUAL)

1. Original crime: Jifna man’s betrayal causes death of Ramallah man (“murder”).
2. Jifna people **acknowledge** the cause of death.
3. In a traditional ceremony, Jifna people pay “blood money” to Ramallah family.
4. FORGIVENESS, PEACE

Israel-Palestine (PROPOSED)

1. Original crime: Seizure and occupation of Palestinian lands, terrorist acts, e.g., the killing of hundreds of Palestinians (as at Deir Yasin). (see p. 6.)
2. Israel **acknowledges** that it brought about the dispossession of the Palestinians, and committed terrorist murders at Deir Yasin.

3. **Israel—by agreeing to a redirection of its subsidy from the U.S.—pays “blood money” (\$3 billion yearly for at least 5 years, and hopefully matched by the U.S. to make a total of \$30 billion) to the dispossessed Palestinian refugees.** Depending upon how the numbers (people and money) work out, the five-year period may need to be extended.
4. RESOLUTION, PEACE

The plan proposed above is a way to bypass a strict interpretation of the ancient Semitic code of justice: “an eye for an eye” (even for murder and theft). In a peace ceremony, an acknowledgment of the documented injustices Israel has committed against the Palestinians and the payment of “blood money,” as amends, would open the way to a lasting peace.

To show that a significant movement toward justice is being made, perhaps the total amount of the “blood money” for amends should match the amount already received from the U.S. by Israel (\$144 billion from 1967 to 2015).

Palestine may have the most difficult role in a Semitic peace-making ceremony. The Palestinians would need to find forgiveness for Israel’s acts of aggression and oppression. **Israel’s role is to acknowledge the facts of history:** seizure of land, cruel occupation... **Then should follow: Israel’s request that its foreign aid from the U.S. (at least \$3 billion yearly) be transferred to a neutral third party (the U.N.?) for payment of “blood money” (amends) to individual Palestinians who have suffered loss. Israel can afford now to give up its U.S. foreign aid to effect a lasting peace.**

COMPLICATING FACTORS IN THE SEARCH FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE

Israel apparently assumes that the U.S. unconditional support and enabling protection in the U.N. gives them some kind of special dispensation to behave like Hitler without any consequences. Israel has never acknowledged the documented injustices (Naqba!) inflicted on the Palestinians. Although the Israeli foot is still on the Palestinian neck, Israel continues to act as though their past injustices to Palestine never happened!

Israel’s continuous fierce determination (for 7 decades) to seize all of Palestine (see map p. 5)

During the Six-Days War in 1967, Israeli troops seized control of the entire West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem, with the tacit approval of the U.S.. Hundreds of illegal settler-only communities were established in the West Bank, connected by a web of Jewish-only, multi-lane highways. East Jerusalem, the supposed future Palestinian capital, was ringed with Jewish settlements. Oppressive and humiliating controls on the Palestinians were enforced. Freedom of movement and commerce were throttled. 80% of the water in the huge aquifers under the West Bank was siphoned off to Israel.

Without American backing it would not have been possible for Israel to displace the Palestinians and impose a cruel and humiliating 40-year occupation on the West Bank. America's continual and unconditional support of Israel has proved costly in world esteem. Now, much of the world regards the U.S. and Israel with a mixture of hatred and contempt.

MAP SHOWING PALESTINIAN LOSS OF LAND 1946 TO 2011



In the following quotes from “The Untempered Wind” by Christina Jones, words in parenthesis () are my contractions or adjustments of her words for the sake of brevity and clarity of meaning. Bracketed [] comments are mine. Underlinings and changes in size of type are mine.

Christina Jones Diary, July 22, 1946, pp. 56-57:

“...Willard came in with the news of the (Israeli terrorist) bombing of the Secretariat (headquarters for the British Mandate Government) in the King David Hotel. The entire wing in which the Secretariat was housed was destroyed...rescuers cannot get to the bodies...the death toll is high.

Christina Jones Diary, December 12, 1947:

“Mr. Miller...of the YMCA, came out from Jerusalem today (December 12). (He) had heard the report of the Palestinian Broadcasting Station reporter who had been at Lake Success during the Partition debate. He said Zionist pressures had created delays during which they had worked on delegates from various countries... **The U.S.A. used**

its influence to grant or withhold aid to smaller countries to get them to vote for partition, which was finally achieved in an atmosphere charged with emotion and political manipulation that was, in the reporter's word, "fantastic." Some delegates to the UN confessed that they cast their "yes" votes under pressure."

Christina Jones Diary, April 10, 1948:

"...the Stern and Irgun (Jewish terrorist groups) went into the village of Deir Yasin yesterday afternoon...and massacred 250 old men, women, and children, and threw their bodies into the village well. Young men of the village were at work in their fields, distant from the village...**The story is confirmed by International Red Cross delegates**...The fact that it happened while the Mandate Government is still here indicates the attitude of the Zionists toward it and Great Britain, and sadly underlines Zionist confidence in the support of the U.S.A. ...This has created panic in surrounding villages."

Christina Jones, "The Untempered Wind," Sept. 17, 1948, pp. 119-120

"The country is in a state of shock at the newest outrage by the (Israeli) Stern Gang. Count Bernadotte was assassinated this afternoon in front of the YMCA building in the occupied zone in Jerusalem."

Christina Jones, "The Untempered Wind," Sept. 18, 1948, p. 120

"The Stern Gang are boasting of yesterday's deed (assassination), carried out 'according to plan.' ...Apparently the report which Count Bernadotte was ready to present to the United Nations had leaked out and was not acceptable to the Zionists."

URGENT AND DIFFICULT DECISIONS

ISRAEL

1) To acknowledge its unjust and immoral acts against Palestine and offer "blood money" to make amends. The offer of "amends" is a new element—with respect and kindness in it. It could open the way for the transformation of the antagonists' contentious relationship to one of active cooperation in an effort to meet the needs and wishes of BOTH SIDES. 2) To end the occupation without delay—another kindness. (Someone has said, "Whatever is great that comes into the world, rests on the shoulders of kindness.")

PALESTINE

1) To stop rocket fire on Israeli citizens. 2) To accept Israel's acknowledgement of unjust and immoral acts against Palestine. Acceptance would mean that Israel's offer: "blood money" to individuals and families who have suffered loss, would help to move the antagonists toward an attitude of respect and willingness to compromise in seeking the best possible solution for BOTH SIDES.

Keys to success of this “New Plan”:

1. Israel’s acknowledgement of its documented injustices to Palestine.
2. Congressional support: Hopefully, Congress would grant Israel’s request that its foreign aid subsidy from the U.S. (\$3 billion annually) be placed under the control of a neutral 3rd party to function as “blood money” in a peace ceremony with Palestine.
3. Congress should recognize the unparalleled opportunity to support the “New Plan” and match the amount of Israel’s contribution. **To use foreign aid money to achieve a lasting peace in the Middle East would be one of America’s greatest investments ever—comparable to the Marshall Plan after WW II.**

PARADOX

The same funds (U.S. foreign aid to Israel) that enabled the dispossession and oppression of the Palestinians (Naqba) could be used to restore an essential measure of justice in the Palestine-Israel conflict.

The years that monthly payments would be made to Palestinian individuals (as “amends”) would be violence-free years! Without the stresses and pain of violence, the antagonists may be able to accomplish a peaceful resolution of the conflict and a mutually satisfactory way to share the land of Palestine.

For Palestinians in the Occupied Territories to have an end to the occupation, and to begin receiving regular monthly stipends from the “amends” fund would be like a prolonged gentle rain after an earth-scorching drought. Wonderful things could blossom: hope, peace, shalom-salaam, friendship...

Most of the Palestinians who were dispossessed at the time of the Partition are dead now, and cannot be helped. But their children can be. We have seen Israel’s new power and wealth...now, for the sake of peace and a better life for everyone in the Middle East, let us see if the Israelis can be humane and just.

Shalom-Salaam,

Del Reynolds

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