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A One Percent Chance: Jabotinsky, Bernadotte, and the Iron Wall Doctrine

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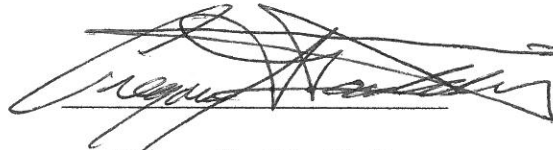
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ABSTRACT

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by Andrew Gregory Harman

This thesis is an examination of the long historical processes that have led to the Israel/Palestine conflict to the contemporary period, focusing mostly on the period before Israeli independence and the 1948 war that created the Jewish state. As Zionism emerged at the turn of the twentieth century to combat the antisemitism of Europe, practical and political facets of the movement sought immigration to Palestine, an area occupied by a large population of Arab natives. The answer to how the Zionists would achieve a Jewish state in that region, largely ignoring the indigenous population, fostered disagreements and a split in the Zionist ideology. The Revisionist Zionist organization was founded by Ze'ev Jabotinsky and favored a more militant orientation.   With an "Iron Wall" manifesto, and as time passed and international aid waned, the Revisionists evolved into an anticolonial movement that not only viewed Palestinians as an obstacle to the Jewish state but turned their anticolonial furor toward the British and United Nations threats. That evolution reached a crescendo in 1948 when the Revisionist paramilitary group Lehi assassinated the UN Mediator, Count Bernadotte. That act was a catalyst that began the end of the war and the solidification of a Palestinian refugee crisis that persists to the present. As the Iron Wall Doctrine evolved from the early teachings of Jabotinsky through anticolonial violence and the removal of native Arabs from the new state of Israel, future prime ministers who were former Revisionist terrorists maintained the prescribed perpetual state of war Jabotinsky predicted with the now landless Palestinians. This research concludes that both Jabotinsky and Bernadotte were crucial characters in the narrative that allowed for the Iron Wall Doctrine, and thus the Jewish state, to not

only exist but to carry on beyond the 1948 independence into the long standing conflict it

has become.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Off the more commonly trodden paths taken at Israel's national cemetery, atop Mount Herzl in Jerusalem, lies a gravesite that stands mostly alone. With only a name, inscribed in Hebrew, this particular granite slab lacks the quotes or dates, let alone fanfare, of some of the more visited sites overlooking the holy city. Throughout the rest of Israel, it is impossible to find even that small of a display memorializing another man, though their fates were so much intertwined. When one thinks of the most influential people to Zionism or to the state of Israel, there is a pantheon of names that come to mind. David Ben-Gurion, Menachem Begin, Yitzhak Shamir, and current four-term Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, have all left their marks on the Jewish state. While each will be discussed at length here, it is because they are inextricably linked to the two men alluded to above, Ze'ev Jabotinsky and Count Folke Bernadotte. From the turn of the century to the creation of the new state in 1948, they were two sides of a coin that has to this point determined the fate of Israel and its relationship to the Palestinian people.

Wars are not fought in a vacuum and states are not created overnight. The war for Israeli independence in 1948 was no exception. Zionist Jews took power over historic Palestine and established a Jewish state that has persisted under Zionist rule to this day. But as Michel Foucault suggested, "I don't believe that the question of 'who exercises power?' can be resolved unless that other question 'how does it happen?' is resolved at the same time."[1] Decades old political developments helped to define the war and the creation of the new state, while a unique set of circumstances and an evolving ideology defined how the war ended and the perpetual war through which Israel has conducted itself in the decades that followed.

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[1] Michel Foucalt, "On Power," (original interview with Pierre Boncenne, 1978), in Michel Foucault, *Politics, Philosophy, Culture. Interviews and Other Writings*, ed. Lawrence D. Kritzman, (New York: Routledge, 1988), 103.

Early Zionists, the progenitors of modern Israelis, joined in Jewish immigration to Palestine and sought a political means to establish a Jewish homeland there. Events occurring both globally and within Palestine caused some revisionists of political Zionism to believe in a more militaristic orientation underpinning their ideology.[2] This Revisionist movement, founded by Ze'ev Jabotinsky at the turn of the twentieth century, continued to redefine itself in the succeeding decades. Maximalist factions especially have been concerned, to varying degrees at different periods of time, with settling all of *Eretz Yisrael*, or the greater territory of biblical Israel. These factions, which manifested militarily as Lehi and the Irgun, developed a radical mentality directed toward meddlesome international bodies and sparked events largely responsible for establishing the future Jewish state as it has come to be known.

These splinter groups, with an anticolonial orientation, provided Revisionists the mechanism with which they could expel intrusion. As the United Nations intervened in 1948 to attempt to implement a long term peace proposal between Zionist groups and their Arab adversaries, their Mediator's actions were seen only as a manifestation of imperialism.[3] The Mediator, Count Folk Bernadotte of Sweden, despite his benevolence, did not understand the facts on the ground as they existed. In official diplomatic documents, language can be revealing. In UN documents the word Zionism is seldom found and never in reference to any understanding of ideological and cultural differences between the divergent Zionist groups. The term "Jew"

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[2] It is important to note here that though there were several distinctive factions of Zionism, the word "Zionist" refers to the political Zionists that built the Jewish population under the British Mandate and later Provisional governments in Palestine and Israel respectively. "Revisionist" will refer to the Revisionist organization, regardless of disagreements and splits within as the Revisionist Zionist movement was maintained with one leader, Ze'ev Jabotinsky, from its founding until his death in 1940, after which point off-shoots of Revisionism are mentioned by name.

[3] Throughout this paper the term "Mediator" will be capitalized as an official title as recognized by the United Nations Security Council in official documents.

was used to refer to all Jewish people in the region, missing the complexities of their cultures and ideologies, which precluded any comprehension of the splinter Revisionist factions. British historian E.P. Thompson has noted that "the very term 'culture,' with its cozy invocation of consensus, may serve to distract attention from social and cultural contradictions."[4] Placing a very complex group of people under an umbrella moniker proved to be a history altering mistake. A final act of defiance by the radical Revisionists shed light on these complexities and hastened the end of the war, and with it the domination of Israel's future by a Revisionist Zionist orientation. The Revisionists had completed their evolution and exerted their power over a movement of liberation from foreign rule. The state of Israel was engineered on the foundation of a radical Revisionist Zionism after its evolution into anticolonial terrorist groups.[5] Since then, the adoption of this radical doctrine of perpetual war against the native population has fueled the Israeli state and its control over territory and people. Helmed by some of the very people responsible for the Revisionist shift in Zionist ideology and its crystallizing act, the premiers of Israel have maintained a policy that reaches back to the ideals set out by Jabotinsky and which led to the assassination of Bernadotte. Contradictions in language and the consistent use of illegal factions have ensured that Israel continued to remain in power over the years and the Palestinian people remain stateless. As Ilan Pappé so aptly put it, "the current Israeli attitude towards and perception of the Palestinian refugee problem has to be analyzed against their conduct in the 1948 Palestine War."[6] Thus, the death of Bernadotte has become a pivotal point in the history of Israel, as a catalyst caught between Jabotinsky's Revisionism and a future

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[4] E.P. Thompson, *Customs in Common: Studies in Traditional Popular Culture*, (New York: New Press, 1993), 56.

[5] The Irgun Zvai Leumi (the Irgun) and Lehi (Fighters for the Freedom of Israel, or the British Moniker 'the Stern Gang') are the later radical military factions of the Revisionist movement.

[6] Ilan Pappé, "Israeli Perceptions of the Refugee Question," in *Palestinian Refugees: The Right of Return*, ed. by Naseer Aruri (London: Pluto Press, 2001), 71.

doctrine of Revisionist rule.

This is not a study of who is right or wrong, per se, or an examination of Israeli or Palestinian claims to land or any other entitlement. This is rather an analysis of how Zionism, an agreeably positive concept at its original core, became radical, violent, and contradictorily subjugating of a people innocent to the thousands of years long Jewish plight. The voice of the Palestinian people, or other combatant Arab nations, will be missing from this study to pay due focus to the ideology and developing policies of the Zionist and Revisionist Zionist organizations. [7] From an idea to a political movement, from a treatise of self-determination to a virulent call to action, Zionism evolved into a political doctrine that at first played a part in creating a problem, and then continued to perpetuate the cycle from a position of power, with a history of violence in the balance. How that power came to be and how that doctrine came to rule, through an examination of not only the structures, but of the agents that shaped the historical structures now commonplace, is important to understanding modern realities. This study argues that the figurative Iron Wall presented by the Revisionist founder evolved into a political doctrine that, largely because of the catalyzing assassination of the UN Mediator during the 1948 war, has persisted in suppressing the Palestinian people.

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[7] Note: It should be noticed that the Arab voice will largely be excluded from this study. That exclusion is intentional to maintain a focus on the evolution of Zionism, largely independent of the feelings of the Arab population, and on Bernadotte as the voice for the Palestinian refugees from this conflict. Though Palestinian actions, i.e. uprisings and political adversity, were a hindrance to the Zionist movement for decades, especially Revisionist overtures, the Arab individuals' sentiments were of no consequence to the movement. The Revisionist doctrine that began with Jabotinsky and evolved through the 1948 war and beyond, acknowledged Arab resistance and sought a Jewish state both in place of, and in spite of, Arab wishes.

Historian Eran Kaplan pointed out that the history of Israel was mostly written by the "victors;" namely the mainstream Zionists and more specifically the Labor Party (Mapai).[8] This has precluded a discussion of what the Palestinian people believed occurred over the early twentieth century, though the Revisionist influence abounds. Other recent historians have focused more intently on this Revisionist influence and the disagreements between them and the mainstream, as well as the more radical splinter groups. One such work is *The Stern Gang: Ideology, Politics and Terror 1940-1949*, written by Israeli historian Joseph Heller.[9] Heller studies the shift in Revisionist thinking that led away from early pro-British, and thus colonial, sentiments and towards a more radical vision for Palestine's future. He argues that "an understanding of [Lehi] requires an analysis of the political and ideological character of Revisionism, and in particular its internal struggles with regard to fascism and democracy."[10] He covers the evolution of radical Zionism through the infancy of Revisionism to the so often shared narrative of its manifestation during the independence war. He, however, places less emphasis on specific actions of the Stern Gang, such as the murder of the UN Mediator that made a difference in the tide of history, and stops short of trying to explain how this ideology manifested in future Israeli politics. He focuses his attention on the political background of the Revisionist movement in the 1930s. Heller's emphasis on the arguments within the Revisionist Zionist organization over a decade before the war for independence missed the fact that Lehi's assassination of Count Bernadotte is the culminating act in their transformation. Though he discusses the violence of Lehi and the ideology behind it, Heller gives less attention to the fact

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[8] Eran Kaplan, *The Jewish Radical Right: Revisionist Zionism and its Ideological Legacy*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), i-xix.

[9] See Joseph Heller, *The Stern Gang: Ideology, Politics and Terror 1940-1949*, (London: Frank Cass, 1995).

[10] Ibid., 1.

that their violence was a symptom of the systemic transformation toward anticolonial sentiments they had undergone amidst the tumultuous events surrounding the Zionist fight for Israel.

Only a few scholars have dealt with Bernadotte and his involvement in the 1948 war. In fact, Kati Marton and Amitzur Ilan are the only historians who have covered Bernadotte in any comprehensive way and address the involvement of the radical Zionists in his assassination. Marton argued that "Bernadotte's assassination is also the story of the near destruction of a fragile new state…from a fratricidal conflict within her own borders."[11] However, their work highlights the event of his death and the players involved while ignoring some of the lingering structures of radical Zionism's evolution to that point, while once again stopping short of delving into the longer historical consequences.[12] The so-called "new historians," Ilan Pappé, Benny Morris, and Avi Shlaim, offer histories of the overall Arab/Zionist conflict, the independence war, and the Iron Wall Doctrine, respectively. The "new historians" are so called because, as Israeli historians, they have provided a new narrative to the Palestine conflict that largely differs from that written by the Zionist elite. They have covered a great deal of a revisionist historical narrative that views the historical events that led to the creation of Israel from another angle. Pappé provides contextual background over the course of this history, presenting "some of the most recent developments in the conflict's and the country's historiography."[13] Morris describes the 1948 war in great detail, shedding light on the conduct of conflicting parties, giving chapters that sometimes cover only a two week period, or smaller. Shlaim, however, takes the overall ideology of the Revisionists a step beyond the exploits of 1948 in his book *The Iron Wall*. His

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[11] Kati Marton, *A Death in Jerusalem*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1994), xi.

[12] See Marton, *A Death in Jerusalem*; Amitzur Ilan, *Bernadotte in Palestine, 1948: A Study in Contemporary Humanitarian Knight-Errantry*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1989).

[13] Ilan Pappé, "Introduction: New historiographical orientation in the research on the Palestine Question," in *The Israel/Palestine Question: A Reader,* 2nd ed., edited by Ilan Pappé (London: Routledge, 2007), 1.

research focused on "the first fifty years of Israeli foreign policy," and goes to show how the doctrine has continued to carry weight in Israeli policy in the half-century that the state has been in existence.[14] Once again, however, tying all of this together is important for not only understanding who is in power, as Foucault enlightened, but how that power came to be. Some historians have changed the narrative of Israeli history while others have focused on Bernadotte, and still some have focused on the evolution of radical Zionism. This paper intends to bring together this historiography in an analysis that shows the importance of each area of research on the others. The creation of Israel cannot be understood without analyzing the circumstances surrounding Bernadotte's death, while that event must be placed in its larger context of Revisionist ideological evolution.

These scholarly works help to contextualize and make sense of the primary documents used in the study that connects these larger epochs in Zionist history. The writings of men like Theodor Herzl and Ze'ev Jabotinsky provide the insights into Zionist and later Revisionist ideologies, as well as the memoirs of those involved; namely Ben-Gurion, and Shamir. Memoirs, though often lacking in historical accuracy when it comes to details, can be very revealing. The premiers in particular held tightly to their beliefs for decades after direct involvement, as will be shown. For example, Shamir wrote his before becoming prime minister and while still willing to admit to strong feelings on the endeavors of his Lehi comrades during the war for Palestine. Historical accuracy is, however, just as important.

Primary sources from the time help in creating a factual record of what occurred, especially during such tumultuous times, though some require delicate examination. Though news print can be biased, Palestinian news articles tell the story as it was seen on the ground,

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[14] Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2000), xi.

while American newspapers covered the international reaction, and had the benefit of being available to the United Nations decision makers in New York. The documents created by the UN also help to create a lasting narrative of events on the ground of the world body's reaction in real time. These myriad sources provide the facts to fit within the mosaic narrative that covers the first half of the twentieth century. The best sources for Bernadotte's involvement in Israel are the books he wrote at the time. He kept a detailed account of his dealings with various diplomats of both Zionist and Arab persuasion, as well as the international community at large, almost right up until his death. This provides the narrative of how the first Israel/Palestine peace process was handled, and the immense trouble with which that legacy was created. Unfortunately, Bernadotte's narrative is devoid of any mention of Revisionist Zionism and obviously the events surrounding his own death. Events like this seemingly secondary moment in history "could be the indication of a long reality, and sometimes, marvelously, of a structure."[15] That systemic structure of evolution toward radicalism amidst the circumstances of Revisionism is studied here as it progressed toward a meeting with the UN Mediator that changed history and the future of Israel.

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[15] Fernand Braudel cited in "Le Dimanche de Bouvines, 27 Juilet, 1214," by Georges Duby, (Paris: Gallimard, 1973; p. 9), translated by Rashid Khalidi in *Brokers of Deceit: How the US has Undermined Peace in the Middle East*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 2013), xi.

CHAPTER 2: EARLY ZIONISM and REVISIONISM

The ideological legacy of Revisionist Zionist thought is the Iron Wall Doctrine, the belief

that a Jewish majority and a state could be achieved and maintained in Palestine through the will

of the Zionists and the repression of the indigenous population. To understand the Iron Wall

Doctrine, it is important to discuss the origins of Zionism itself and how it was revised into an

offshoot organization with differing goals. Political Zionism emerged to answer the "Jewish

Question" amidst the antisemitism of nineteenth century Europe. It built upon the idea that the

Jews were a nation without a home. Early Zionist thinkers like Leo Pinsker, Theodor Herzl, and

Chaim Weizmann focused Zionist ideology on finding a physical homeland for the Jews. The

movement was secular in orientation, as opposed to the religious Zionist concepts of a return to

Zion that could only be determined by God. While secular Zionists agreed on Palestine as a

natural choice during their earliest conferences, political Zionism was founded to be a movement

that sought national autonomy through the means of political bargaining with established states,

regardless of where that homeland would be.[16] Finding a homeland, however, would be an act of

practicality that literally moved European Jews to another physical space. Practical Zionism

began well before any bargaining for legitimacy.[17] This consisted of those Zionists who

physically moved out of Europe and was well underway by the latter half of the nineteenth

century, decades before the First World Zionist Congress of 1897 that determined Palestine

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[16] Louis Lipsky, "Introduction," in *The Jewish State* by Theodor Herzl (New York: Dover Publications, 1988), 9-20; after some deliberation, including immigration to Uganda as a place for the Jewish state, Palestine became a "natural" choice due to the historical and biblical ties to the land for the Jewish people.

[17] Practical Zionism was the physical emigration out of Europe that sought to end the Jewish diaspora, which began in the middle of the nineteenth century. Political Zionism was the endeavor to earn international legitimacy for a Jewish state among the rest of the states of the world. These were largely secular Zionist motivations, while some religious Zionists sought a return to Palestine for the ties to the biblical land of Israel for religious reasons.

would be the seat of the Jewish homeland.[18] European Jews had been emigrating to Palestine,

and elsewhere, for some time and these migrations, or *aliyot* (singular; *aliyah*) had resulted in a

small population of Jews in Palestine by the turn of the century.[19] These Zionists were interested

in the settlement of the land as an agrarian reconnection with the roots of their ancestors.

With Theodor Herzl and Chaim Weizmann came the World Zionist Organization (WZO)

which sought to answer the question of how Zionism should proceed. Herzl favored diplomacy

which would continue to be the popular method of Zionist actions toward attaining a Jewish state

for years to come.[20] In 1906, a conference met and established the Helsingfores Programme.

This was a delegation of Zionists from Russia that gathered in Helsinki, Finland; they were from

what Jabotinsky called "the center of world Zionism."[21] At this conference, the foundations

were laid for a practical Zionism that worked in hand with the political and diplomatic endeavors

of Herzl and the popular Zionist movement to that point. As Jabotinsky noted, "We believed that

we were making a new Zionism, a synthesis of *Hibbat* Zionism in the past and the political

dream of Herzl (as the slogans of 'practical work' and the 'conquest of positions in *Eretz Israel*'

were proclaimed at Helsingfores)."[22] Jabotinsky lamented, however, that though this conference

brought together all Russian Zionists, later youth movements of practical Zionism developed into

Revisionists and grew at odds with their Zionist brethren.

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[18] Charles Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013), 26.

[19] *Aliyah* is the Hebrew word for "ascendance," and these migrations were seen as an ascendance out of the diaspora.

[20] Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 32.

[21] Vladimir Jabotinsky and Brian Horowitz, *Vladimir Jabotinsky's Story of My Life* (Detroit: Wayne State University, 2016), 90.

[22] Ibid.; Hibbat Zionism is the term for practical work of the land that predates Zionism as popularly understood after the work of Herzl.

Meanwhile, practical emigration continued. Even as late as 1914, toward the end of the second *aliyah* between 1904 and 1914, Weizmann still maintained that Palestine was empty and ripe for the taking. In a speech to the French Zionist Federation in Paris, he claimed,

> There is a country which happens to be called Palestine, a country without a people, and, on the other hand, there exists the Jewish people, and it has no country. What else is necessary, then, than to fit the gem into the ring, to unite this people with this country?[23]

The Zionist propagandist, Israel Zangwill, coined the term, "a land without a people for a people without a land."[24] According to historian Nur Masalha, Zionist writing is full of "ample evidence to suggest that from the outset…the attitude of the majority of the Zionist groups toward the Arab population ranged from indifference and patronizing superiority, to outright denial of their national rights."[25] This surge of emigration was filled with socialists who were "nurtured in the revolutionary atmosphere then prevalent in Russian intellectual circles."[26] This was the beginning of the Labor movement in Palestine, later headed by an immigrant of the second *aliyah* and long-time leader of the Zionist Labor Party, David Ben-Gurion.[27] Jewish labor and Jewish labor alone was expected to build this new community. Native Palestinians were not included and unrest between Arabs and Jews rose. A socialist structure began to take hold in Palestine among the relatively small number of Jewish settlements at this time while the Zionist elites in Europe continued to search for political and diplomatic legitimacy. The Ottoman Empire was naturally opposed to a foreign people seeking to create a separate society within their lands. As the end of World War I drew near and an Ottoman defeat became

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[23] B. Litvinoff, editor, *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, vol. 1, Series B (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1983), paper 24, 115-116.
[24] Nur Masalha, "The Historical Roots of the Palestinian Refugee Question," in *Palestinian Refugees: The Right of Return*, edited by Naseer Aruri (London: Pluto Press, 2001), 37.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 32.
[27] David Ben-Gurion was born David Gryn in Plonsk, Poland, then under Russian Tsarist rule, 16 October 1886; see David Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs* (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1970).

imminent, however, the doors were opened to Zionist diplomatic pressure.

The British aided this endeavor with the Balfour Declaration of 1917, which indicated that the British would use "their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement" of a "national home for the Jewish people [in Palestine]."[28] Though the immigration of smaller numbers of Jews to Palestine began many years earlier, the international approval that came from the Balfour Declaration legitimized the colonizing efforts of political Zionists through diplomatic means. This was the goal of mainstream Zionism that saw the only path to a Jewish state in Palestine through international legitimacy and diplomatic efforts. But by the 1920s, there was an offshoot of Zionist ideology with different goals that found its roots in the Helsingfores Programme and Eastern European Zionist aspirations. Revisionist Zionism, as envisioned by its founder Ze'ev Jabotinsky, held an alternative view of how Zionism was to create a home in Palestine from those championed by its internationally recognized leaders.[29]

The President of the WZO Chaim Weizmann and Revisionist founder Ze'ev Jabotinsky both believed themselves to be liberal and pro-British. The WZO politically dealt with the European powers and particularly the British, who had been granted a Mandate over Palestine by the League of Nations. Weizmann, even as late as 1939, signed his letters to the British High Commissioner for Palestine "I have the honor to remain Your Excellency's obedient Servant."[30] The principle Revisionist document written by Jabotinsky outlined *his* stance on the British:

> Our attitude towards the Mandatory Government is based on two factors: we believe in the integrity and justice of the British people… but there is another factor: the

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[28] Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 93.

[29] Ze'ev Jabotinsky was born Vladimir Jabotinsky in Odessa, Russia on October 17, 1880. Like many Zionists, he changed his name from his Russian birth name to a Hebrew name, Ze'ev; see "Biography of Ze'ev Jabotinsky," Jabotinsky Institute in Israel, accessed 25 February 2015, http://jabotinsky.org/Site/home/default.asp

[30] "Dr. Weizmann's Letter of June 4, 1939," in "Contemporary Jewish Record," Vol. II, No. 4, July-August 1939, AP USA, 70.

cooperation of interest. It is not true that England is doing us a favour, without benefit to herself. Moreover, in the Mediterranean – England's corridor to the East – where both on the eastern and southern shores there exists a danger of anti-European tendencies, the Jews are building the only mainstay which is morally affiliated with Europe and forever will be part and parcel of Europe…[31]

Jabotinsky clearly saw a Jewish state requiring the assistance of the British and international cooperation and believed it to be a part of Europe, like his mainstream contemporaries, but there is some suspicion of the world power in his words. The revision of political Zionism, then, was a militaristic outlook that did not rely too much on the diplomatic method.

The difference was in the views Weizmann and Jabotinsky held on how to obtain their objectives and the vision for what the Jewish state was to become. The WZO believed in "self-restraint," or *havaglah*, and continued "systematic collaboration with…the middle-class non-Revisionist conservative right."[32] These mainline Zionists, such as the established Labor Party, were interested in collectivism and a form of Marxist socialism.[33] Their Jewish state was to be built through labor and social policies. In contrast, Jabotinsky and the Revisionists saw the new state being built on the sword and through "bourgeois urban development" with an understanding that Zionism could never survive as a minority in Palestine.[34] Diplomacy could not, in itself, provide for the establishment of the homeland, though Jabotinsky eagerly sought the assistance of established world powers. For a man like Jabotinsky, the future had to be earned the hard way.

The Revisionists have been termed "the radical right" and "extremist." In a study of this radical movement, Israeli Historian Ehud Sprinzak made a connection between radical right-

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[31] Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 2.
[32] Ibid., 1-3.
[33] Uri Ram, "The Colonization Perspective in Israeli Sociology," in *The Israel/Palestine Question: A Reader*, ed. Ilan Pappé (New York: Routledge, 2007), 64-70.
[34] Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 1-3.

wing extremism in America, first studied after the anti-communist extremism following the Second World War, and those movements in Europe.[35] American radical right-wing extremism, as in Europe, was born out of ultra-nationalism, anti-communism, anti-liberalism and socialism. This was coupled with an overwhelming new idea that the Western democracy that had become commonplace could be fixed with something new. The comparison stops there, however, and the difference between the American phenomenon and the European lay in their roots historically, as well as the range of ideology. In America, right wing extremism was largely local and saw the problem of democracy as correctable, only taking issue with some of the components of Western government. In Europe, the movement had become a sociocultural phenomenon and was based in the idea that Western democracy as a whole was flawed. In the atmosphere of the events in the early twentieth century, alternatives to democracy altogether could be possible. These included the Spanish Civil War, the rise of Hitler and Nazism, Mussolini and Italian Fascism, the fall of both the Russian and Habsburg empires in the early decades, and a growing ultra-national ideology. One other comparison between the American and European radical ideologies was the xenophobic nature shared between them. Though American extremists could be antisemitic and of course the Zionists were not, the shared anti-alien, anti-communist, and ethnically discriminating nature of the two can be compared. This is part of the sociological phenomenon that is radical right-wing political ideology and what formed the basis of later Revisionist identification of the native Palestinians.[36] The Revisionists had to contend these ideals against the more mainstream Zionists that sought control of their collective destinies in Palestine.

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[35] See Ehud Sprinzak, *The Ascendance of Israel's Radical Right*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).
[36] See Sprinzak, *Israel's Radical Right*, chapters 1-2.

The history of the early movement and its goals as opposed to mainstream Zionism help to understand the evolution out of Jabotinsky's Revisionism to what became a truly radical, even "terrorist," movement during the 1948 war.[37] In Eastern Europe at the turn of the century, antisemitism flourished. After his Western education in Italy and Switzerland, Jabotinsky remained in Eastern Europe as a Russian Journalist as he developed his Zionist beliefs amidst the violence against Jews. A poet, writer, philosopher and a "powerful speaker with a magnetic personality despite his mild professorial appearance," Jabotinsky was high-minded and in touch with the issues of the world, particularly as they pertained to the Jews.[38] The pogroms against the Jews of Eastern Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, such as the Easter pogrom of 1903 in Kishinev, Russia, strongly affected him as it did many other Eastern European Jews.[39] Polish poet Czeslaw Milosz said that "the man of the East cannot take Americans [or other Westerners] seriously," because they had not experienced the violence and transformation of their values as had Eastern Europeans.[40] Citing Milosz, Anna Applebaum wrote that "murder became ordinary during wartime…and was even regarded as legitimate if it

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[37] The use of a controversial term such as "terrorist" is derived from several modern definitions in conjunction with the connotation here, as well as use by the Revisionists themselves. The most comprehensive definition, from USC professor of international relations Steven Lamy, states: "The use of violence by non-state groups or, in some cases, states to inspire fear, by attacking civilians and/or symbolic targets, and eliminating opposition groups. This is done for purposes such as drawing widespread attention to a grievance, provoking a severe response, or wearing down an opponent's moral resolve, to effect political change;" see Steven Lamy, et al, *Introduction to Global Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 48. This is not to discount the legitimacy of some of these actions in future Israeli historical discourse and the fact that some of these "terrorists" now have streets in Jerusalem named after them, as well as having gone on to hold prominent political office.
[38] Dan Kurzman, *Ben-Gurion: Prophet of Fire*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), 177.
[39] "Biography of Ze'ev Jabotinsky," Jabotinsky Institute in Israel, accessed 25 February 2015, http://jabotinsky.org/Site/home/default.asp
[40] Czeslaw Milosz, *The Captive Mind* (New York: Vintage, 1990), 26-29.

was carried out on behalf of the resistance."[41] This was the beginning of the snowball effect that shaped the future of Revisionist Zionism.

Jabotinsky was immersed in the Zionist idea and began to make a name for himself early in the twentieth century.   He became active in Russian politics and fought for the rights of Jews as a minority in Russia. He was also elected to the sixth Zionist Congress held that same year in 1903, which was also the final appearance of Theodor Herzl. Other future mainstream Zionist leaders moved to Western Europe and then to Palestine at a much younger age and remained less affected by the waves of anti-Jewish violence that shaped Jabotinsky. David Ben-Gurion, who had emigrated to Palestine in 1906 at the age of twenty, admitted in his memoirs that "antisemitic feeling had little to do with [his] dedication [to Zionism]" and he "personally never suffered antisemitic persecution."[42] Herein lies the main reason for the early twentieth century split in Zionist secular discourse. There was a change in the "basic legitimations that had [previously grounded] collective Jewish self-understanding."[43] Identity of what it meant to be a Zionist, or even Jewish in the twentieth century, was being challenged and reshaped.

Ben-Gurion, however, straddled a fence between mainline Zionist beliefs in socialist agendas and international legitimacy and the practical and forceful acquisition of the future Jewish state. Only a couple of years after reaching Palestine, Ben-Gurion, working as a settlement laborer, helped to found a self-defense force called *Hashomer* ('The Watchmen') to protect Jews against the local Arabs.[44] These early conflicts between Arabs and Jews living in

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[41] Anna Applebaum, "The Worst of the Madness," New York Review of Books, November 11, 2010, accessed February 8, 2016, http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2010/11/11/worst-madness/
[42] David Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs*, 36.
[43] Laurence J. Silberstein, "Others Within and Others Without: Rethinking Jewish Identity and Culture," in *The Other in Jewish Thought and History: Constructions of Jewish Culture and Identity*, ed. Laurence J. Silberstein and Robert L. Cohn, (New York: NYU Press, 1994), 1.
[44] Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs*, 185.

Palestine had their roots in labor Zionist policies. Though Ben-Gurion was more closely allied to

the mainstream search for international acceptance, as a pragmatist he felt the need for direct

action in the defense of the Jewish people and for the possibility of a Jewish state in Palestine.

Jabotinsky had also already begun to split away from mainstream Zionist thought with an

Eastern European brand of defensive Zionism. He adopted a more militaristic outlook and saw a

need to involve Jews in the Allied cause of World War I to leave a Jewish mark on what he saw

as an inevitable victory and the end of the Ottoman Empire.[45] This would help secure the Jewish

claim to the land and earn favor with the Allies after the war.

     Jabotinsky eventually demanded a Jewish Legion in the British Army to fight in Palestine

and led that unit himself in 1917. For his work in this endeavor, Jabotinsky gained the favor of

the British Foreign Secretary Balfour, pushing him towards the decision to author the declaration

that legitimized Zionism.[46] Ben-Gurion, having been in Palestine for about a decade working as

a socialist journalist, also joined the Jewish Legion. The idea of the Jewish fighting force was

opposed by most mainstream Zionists who were more concerned about a Jewish failure in the

war effort in Palestine than the fact that it "might be the first real step towards realization of the

Zionist dream."[47] If the legion had failed, the Zionist leadership felt that political legitimacy

would be lost. This rift defined future Revisionist thinking: they were about action, whereas the

mainstream did "what…was expected of them rather than holding out for what they believed

in."[48] The differences were clear and two factions of Zionism were coming into focus.

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[45] Yitzhak Shamir, *Summing Up: An Autobiography* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1994), 10.
[46] David Ben-Gurion, *Israel: A Personal History* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1971), 18.
[47] Shamir, *Summing Up*, 11.
[48] Ibid.

After the war and the declaration by Balfour, the ideologies of the two Zionist groups continued to be divergent. Ben-Gurion was gaining favor in the Weizmann-led WZO while Jabotinsky was crafting his ideas for how Zionism was to deal with the Arab presence in Palestine. Zionism had declared, quite emphatically by this point, that Palestine was to be the future home of the Jewish people. However, there remained a large population of Palestinian Arabs in the region that were opposed to the Zionist agenda. The split of Revisionism from the mainstream and Jabotinsky's concepts on solving the problem of these native Palestinians started with a crucial document, "The Iron Wall."

CHAPTER 3: JABOTINSKY and the IRON WALL

The memoirs of Ben-Gurion and Yitzhak Shamir, Lehi commander and future premier of Israel, show the differences in thought, approach, and influence of the divergent Zionist ideologies. Ben-Gurion explained that the Revisionists "had little notion of the…necessity of obeying directives from a centralized source."[49] In contrast, Shamir extolled the virtues of the Revisionist founder by describing the division between Jabotinsky and the Zionist leadership.

> [Jabotinsky], for ever the target of strong feelings, he was at once hated, worshipped, feared and admired: accepted as a supreme leader by some, he was rejected by others as a dangerous extremist whose concepts and supporters, if allowed to prevail, would degrade and destroy the essence of the Zionist cause.[50]

The use of words such as "extremist," or Shamir's claims to be "fascinated by the lives of Lenin, Trotsky…and their terrorist activities," shows an early indoctrination into what is later termed radical.[51] Though Jabotinsky was a part of the early Zionist movement and chose his own Revisionist path opposed to the mainstream, later Revisionists like Shamir were influenced by his outlying school of thought and looked on him as the trailblazer. In 1923 he founded a Revisionist youth group called Betar in Poland. Years after fighting in Palestine for the British, and the year following the start of the official British Mandate over what was to be the Jewish state, he was still concerned with the militarization of European Jewry. Early twentieth century notions of ultra-nationalism and militarism were at the heart of this form of Zionist thought.

Also in 1923, Jabotinsky wrote his Revisionist Zionist manifesto, "The Iron Wall." This was the founding document of what became the "Iron Wall Doctrine." The concept of the Iron Wall is a perpetual state of war. Jabotinsky felt that there could "be no voluntary agreement

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[49] Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs*, 90.
[50] Shamir, *Summing Up*, 9.
[51] Ibid., 8.

between [the Zionists] and the Palestine Arabs."[52] The only way to complete the Zionist vision

of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, according to Jabotinsky, was to put up a figurative iron wall

between the Jewish people and the Arabs, and subsequently remove all hope the Arabs had of

ridding themselves of the Jews. It is important to point out that this did not necessarily mean a

physical separation of the two populations though, to a large extent that is what occurred. The

concept, rather, was in a cultural, economic, and military separation and dominance of the Arab

Palestinians. "It is only when there is no longer any hope of getting rid of us, because they can

make no breach in the iron wall," that there could finally be an agreement.[53] Until such time,

"what is impossible is a voluntary agreement" on land, on economics, or on rule. In the same

manifesto he stated that because a colonized people would be expected to violently rebel, there

will be an expectation of continuous conflict.[54] Though in his essay he believes that there can

eventually be peace between the Jews and the Arabs, it can only come through the structures of

this Iron Wall Doctrine. He claimed that the Jews will be more than willing to be generous in

peace settlements and acquiescence to Palestinian rights. The problem, however, lies in his

thesis. If Zionism can only exist with an iron wall and negotiations can be made only when the

Arabs have lost all hope, the return of hope is doomed to repeat that process. Thus, perpetual

war formed the centerpiece of this ideology, and surely the main extract that has carried the

Revisionists ever since.

An unending state of war is thematic to this doctrine because Jabotinsky considered it

"utterly impossible to eject the Arabs from Palestine."[55] His vision noted that "there will always

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[52] Vladimir Jabotinsky, "The Iron Wall," April 11, 1923, Jabotinsky Institute in Israel, accessed February 2015, http://jabotinsky.org/Site/home/default.asp
[53] Ibid.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.

be *two* nations in Palestine—which is good enough for me, provided the Jews become the majority."[56] Jabotinsky called upon his readers to take account of all other historical instances in which a colonizing people entered an occupied territory. Never has this worked peacefully and, in his understanding, it was unthinkable to expect the Palestinians to accept Jewish immigration to create a majority in Palestine, which was the Zionist vision, without fighting for their own self-determination. But if, as he believed and has been proven true, there will always be two populations, the prophetic Jabotinsky was expecting a constant state of quarrel. What is important is that this pertains not only to colonizers but to neighbors or peaceful coequals. He ends this segment, entitled "Voluntary Agreement Not Possible," with the point that "Every native population, civilised or not, regards its lands as its national home, of which it is the sole master, and it wants to retain that mastery always; it will refuse to admit not only new masters but, even new partners or collaborators."[57] This line embodies his ideological split from the mainstream Zionist organization. Though he did believe in international legitimacy, as it was unwise to seek domination over a native people without some consent or recognition, he understood that diplomatic and peaceful measures toward the Palestinians were not the appropriate route to take. They would not accept "new masters" nor would they accept the peaceful olive branch if it meant that immigration of a foreign people would continue to occupy their homeland.

Jabotinsky's final points in "The Iron Wall" lead into what later became an anticolonial venture in Revisionism. It is important to note, however, that it did take years and deceitful circumstances for what he wrote to evolve into something he did not see in his initial writing. But as he exclaimed that Zionism must continue on this path or quit their mission altogether, the

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[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.

latter not seen as an option for the Zionist Jews, he pointed to the British backing that had been afforded them through the Mandate and the Balfour Declaration. He said "their value to us is that outside Power has undertaken to create in the country such conditions of administration and security that if the native population should desire to hinder our work, they will find it impossible."[58] He remarked, with emphasis, "*And we are all of us, without any exception, demanding day after day that this outside Power, should carry out this task vigorously and with determination.*"[59] International, particularly British, aid in colonizing efforts were paramount to the Zionist realization of a Jewish state in Palestine according to Jabotinsky. However, it was important to him that the Jewish Zionists maintain their own self-sufficiency as it pertained to the iron wall's placement between themselves and the Arabs. He thought it imprudent to rely wholly on the British. On that subject, Jabotinsky said:

> We all demand that there should be an iron wall. Yet we keep spoiling our own case, by talking about "agreement" which means telling the Mandatory Government that the important thing is not the iron wall, but discussions. *Empty rhetoric of this kind is dangerous*. And that is why it is not only a pleasure but a duty to discredit it and to demonstrate that it is both fantastic and dishonest.[60]

He also made the point that he and his descendants "shall never do anything contrary to the principle of equal rights," a statement that can be interpreted as contradictory to the face of the doctrine as it came to exist in the future. This leads into the discussion of what the Revisionist founder wrote on the subject seven months later, an essay designed to justify his thesis titled "The Ethics of the Iron Wall."

In November 1923, Jabotinsky followed his original Revisionist essay with an ethical justification of his stance on the future of the Zionist cause in Palestine. He provided analogies

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[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.

and a certain logic that both attacked the diplomatic ideologies of the mainstream Zionists as well as painted the Zionist movement, and world Jewry in general, as "homeless" victims. He began with expanding on the ideas brought forth at the Helsingfores Programme that guaranteed the equality of citizens and self-determination for all peoples everywhere. By this logic, he stated, the Arabs could not be "an impartial judge" of the merits of that program because in this situation they were "one of the contending parties."[61] He then brought the question back to whether even "neighbors" would be welcomed by the natives of Palestine, let alone colonizers, to which he replied in the negative. "So why should a nation that is perfectly content with its isolation admit to its country even good neighbours in any considerable number? 'I want neither your honey nor your sting,' is a reasonable answer."[62] He admitted that it would be naïve to expect the Palestinians to believe Jews would be any different than previous historical episodes in which a mixing of populations occurred, which he pointed out have all been violent failures in which "a minority always suffers everywhere."[63] Attacking the mainstream base of Zionism for their naiveté on this matter, he said "it is incredible what political simpletons Jews are. They shut their eyes to one of the most elementary rules of life, that you must not 'meet halfway' those who do not want to meet you."[64] The beginning of his justification was more of an indictment of diplomatic Zionism and a clear removal of his Revisionist ideologies from what he had come to detest.

  Jabotinsky's analogies on the subject show an interesting balance between regard for

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[61] Vladimir Jabotinsky, "The Ethics of the Iron Wall," November 11, 1923, Jabotinsky Institute in Israel, accessed February 2015, http://jabotinsky.org/Site/home/default.asp
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid.; Jabotinsky's examples were "Christians in Turkey, Moslems in India, the Irish under the British, the Poles and Czechs under the Germans, now the Germans under the Poles and Czechs, and so forth, without end."
[64] Ibid.

humanity and self-interest, namely the self-interest of the Jews involved in the Zionist cause.

His treatise, in just a few lines on this balance, was quite clear on the high regard with which he

held Zionists' right to self-determination where they so choose:

> Each man who passes my window in the street has a right to live only in so far as he recognises my right to live; but if he is determined to kill me, I cannot admit that he has any right to live. And that is true also of nations. Otherwise, the world would become a jungle of wild beasts, where not only the weak, but also those who have any scrap of feeling would be exterminated.[65]

His next paragraph explained how the "world must be a place of co-operation and mutual

goodwill," and thus he used an analogy and self-serving logic to explain how the Zionists should

be granted the right to land in Palestine.[66] "There is no morality, no ethics that concedes the

right of a glutton to gorge."[67] That is how he began his explanation of how the "homeless" Jews

of the world should be given equitable right to land somewhere. If they were a people without a

home, those who have enough land to spare should. The Arabs, he contested, had populations

covering land that equaled half of Europe, from Morocco to Iraq. Using a Talmudic tale, he told

the story of two men that came along a cloth, both claiming to have found it. One is a gentleman

and wants only half, while the other is an obstinate that wants it all. In the end, a judge

determines that since only one half is contested due to the gentleman's agreement that half

belongs to the obstinate, they would split the contested half giving the gentleman only on quarter

of the cloth. This analogy, in Jabotinsky's appraisal, shows how concessions and gentlemanly

behavior in the diplomatic arena are for naught. "It is a very fine thing to be a gentleman, but it

is no reason for being an idiot…There is not much that we can concede to Arab nationalism,

without destroying Zionism. We cannot abandon the effort to achieve a Jewish majority in

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[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid.

Palestine."[68]

  As for his justification of creating in Palestine a Jewish majority by force, he explained that taking land from the natives was actually enacting justice on the order of humanitarian considerations. He traced "the root of the evil to [the fact] that we are seeking to colonise a country against the wishes of its population, in other words, by force."[69] Once again, Jabotinsky in no way hid from the fact that the Zionist mission was a forceful colonization of a native populated land, something Weizmann was reluctant to admit, or even notice. Choosing another land to inhabit was out of the question. Jabotinsky's principle rested on the fact that all places were inhabited; "There are no more uninhabited islands in the world. In every oasis there is a native population settled from times immemorial, who will not tolerate an immigrant majority or an invasion of outsiders."[70] Thus, Jabotinsky admitted the immorality of any landless people seeking a national home in a world occupied in every corner of every continent.

  Jabotinsky contended, however, that from the Jewish point of view, this morality had a "particularly interesting appearance."[71] The homeless Jews were literally scattered throughout the world, while the Arab populations enjoyed sovereignty over several nations. The inequality is what he called into question. "It is an act of simple justice to alienate part of their land from those nations who are numbered among the great landowners of the world, in order to provide a place of refuge for a homeless, wandering people."[72] As stated in his previous work and in this essay, Jabotinsky fully expected the resistance of the Arabs to this sort of logic. But his understanding, coming from a culture in diaspora removed from their home two millennia prior,

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[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid.

was that "the principle of self-determination does not mean that if someone has seized a stretch of land it must remain in his possession for all time, and that he who was forcibly ejected from his land must always remain homeless."[73] This is a particularly interesting concept when one considers what he and his successors have advocated was a return to something that used to be theirs by the expulsion of those who in successive decades they no longer allow to return. But at the time, for Jabotinsky this was justice. "Justice that is enforced does not cease to be justice."[74]

Later, in 1940, Jabotinsky wrote about the plight then plaguing the Jews of Europe in his book *The War and the Jews*.[75] In this work, he focused mainly on the quandary of those Jews remaining in diaspora, stuck in what historian Timothy Snyder has dubbed "the Bloodlands" of Eastern Europe: Ukraine, Poland, the Baltic states and Western Russia, which during the Second World War were the lands fought over between Stalin and Hitler and for centuries held the world's largest population of Jews.[76] However, he also discussed the growing conflict between the Zionists and the native Palestinians, and he had much to say on the subject. He remained true to his convictions about the rights of the Arabs that he mentioned in "The Iron Wall" and that it would come after the Jewish state was established. He argued that the idea of a Jewish majority oppressing the Arabs was a "fallacy."[77] He claimed, referring to the Palestinians, that it was not a "tragedy to constitute a minority" unless as a minority everywhere, as the Jews were in diaspora.[78] What Jabotinsky forgot, however, was that his doctrine expected resistance which would have to be put down by force. Is that not the definition of oppression?

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[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Vladimir Jabotinsky, *The War and the Jews*, (New York: The Dial Press, 1942).

[76] See Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2010).

[77] Jabotinsky, *The War and the Jews*, 211.

[78] Ibid., 213.

In "The Iron Wall" Jabotinsky clearly stated that Zionists were "Jewish colonist[s]" and that the Arabs were oppressed.[79] The movement to Palestine with the support of the British Empire was a colonizing action and Zionist "colonials" represented Western interference.[80] After World War I, the British claimed a Mandate over the territory of historic Palestine through the League of Nations, a control they would hold onto until the founding of Israel in 1948. Jabotinsky's concepts regarding how he viewed Zionists as "colonials" resembles the later work of Albert Memmi, who put labels and definitions to a more complicated imperial and anticolonial struggle than as previously defined. Through these definitions, the British were the overriding colonizers and the Palestinians were the colonized. While the Zionists were the physical colonials on the ground with British assistance, they were in the position to both subjugate the colonized and later feel disenfranchised by the colonizer. Put simply, the British were the colonizing force, the Arabs were colonized, and the Zionists were somewhere in between. In "The Iron Wall," Jabotinsky understood the concept of violence within an anticolonialist context when considering the reactions of Arabs in Palestine. He wrote that "every native population in the world resists colonists as long as it has… hope of being able to rid itself of the danger of being colonized."[81] Once again, this is the basis for perpetual war.

Jabotinsky's early epiphany on violence saw it as an inevitable part of an anticolonial struggle. "Decolonization is always a violent phenomenon…the replacing of a certain 'species' of men by another 'species' of men," referring to how the Palestinians would be expected to

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[79] Jabotinsky, "The Iron Wall."
[80] Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, (New York: The Orion Press, 1965).
[81] Jabotinsky, "The Iron Wall."

react to the Zionists' forcible colonization.[82] It is these ideas that have led some of their contemporaries and later historians to describe the Revisionists as radical or even fascist.[83] That was a struggle, however, that became a part of Jabotinsky's legacy and not necessarily of his actions as he did not live long enough to see the final evolution of what Revisionist Zionism was to become.[84] In Shamir's words, "Jabotinsky was never extreme or dogmatic" and "understood the Arab claim to the country, but believed that it was less valid than that of the Jewish people."[85] Some former socialist Revisionists, however, were more aligned with fascist notions in the 1920s and created complications within the Revisionist organization that caused the later splits of radical military groups. Those groups outgrew their colonizing roots and British dependency as they adopted a more anticolonial attitude. The anticolonial aspects of later Revisionism were in contrast to Jabotinsky's ideals, largely because they were able to flower at a time when Zionism was well established within Palestine.

The beginning of the anticolonial movement started as a fledgling response to the British change in orientation that departed from their prior wholesale support for the Jews in Palestine. The Arab riots of 1929 resulted in a series of reports by the British on the causes of the situation and the potential remedies within the Mandate. The Shaw Report of March 1930 "identified Zionist immigration and land practices as the reasons for the 1929 riots."[86] The report further

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[82] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth: The Handbook for the Black Revolution That is Changing the Shape of the World*, translated by Constance Farrington, (New York: Grove Press, 1963), 35.

[83] Michel Foucault explained that fascism had become a "floating signifier, whose function [was] essentially that of denunciation," regarding its "non-analysis" through historical study; See Michel Foucault, "Power and Strategies," in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, edited by Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 139.

[84] Jabotinsky died in 1940 and remained committed to British cooperation and opposed to the radical offshoots of Lehi and the Irgun.

[85] Shamir, *Summing Up*, 12.

[86] Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 127.

declared that a "landless and discontented class is being created," referring to the Palestinians who were being left out of the growing Jewish economic structure, and it concluded that the only remedy to this unrest was the limitation of land purchases or transfer to people who were not Arab, namely the Jews.[87] This was clearly a redirection of British policy from that of the Balfour Declaration over a decade prior. The new policy clearly limited the ability of Jews to create their own state. In October of the same year, the Passfield White Paper of 1930 criticized Jewish immigration and land seizures. It also called for consideration of all unemployed persons in the region, particularly the Arabs as it pertained to labor, arguing that concessions should be made by the Jewish leaders in that regard.[88] This was another affront to the Labor Zionists. Those of the second *aliyah* did not want to hire Arab labor and saw the creation of a socialist proletariat on the back of a Jewish only workforce. The British government had done an about face in its support of the Jews in Palestine and the Revisionists began to increasingly adopt an anticolonial hardline. Jabotinsky still held out hope for cooperation with the British and wanted to give them a "last chance since the real blame lay with the errors of the official Zionist leadership."[89]

This first crisis between British support and Jabotinsky's Revisionism was exacerbated by the new maximalist wing of the organization led by a former labor socialist turned Revisionist, Abba Achimeir. Achimeir, an admirer of Benito Mussolini, leaned more toward a fascist orientation for the Revisionist group and began the radicalization of Revisionist Zionism.[90] He had even sought an alliance with Italy since fascism had become attractive by their ability to uproot "distasteful social theories such as communism in the West."[91] However,

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[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid., 128.
[89] Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 13.
[90] Ibid., 4.
[91] Ibid., 14.

Jabotinsky openly rejected the idea of fascism and clung to his liberal beliefs. In February of 1931, the Passfield White Paper had been repudiated by a letter from British Prime Minister Ramsey MacDonald to Weizmann. This was a positive event for the Zionist cause as Jewish immigration was allowed to continue unabated and their numbers in Palestine swelled well in to the 1930s.[92] In spite of that good news, however, Jabotinsky's Revisionism continued to split. The reversal allowed the Jewish population to more than double, to approximately 370,000, over the next several years but Jabotinsky held on to a classical colonialist vision that involved practical British support. Jabotinsky even looked for outside assistance in a way to put pressure on the British but the radical elements of Revisionism had already given up that hope. According to Achimeir, activism through a liberation movement in Palestine became more valuable.

The split within Revisionism was increased when Jabotinsky was forced to lead the Revisionists in political alignment after officially seceding from the main Zionist organization. At the seventeenth Zionist Congress in 1931, he put to vote a resolution that would call for the declaration of a Jewish state as Zionism's primary goal. That resolution, surprisingly, did not pass and the Revisionists seceded from the "band of spiritual bastards" that Jabotinsky "despised coldly and greatly."[93] Jabotinsky still believed, however, in the "integrity of the world, in the power of justice," while the maximalists in Palestine grew weary and more radical.[94] His hold on the movement he had founded was slipping through his fingers by the early 1930s.

In October 1931, Achimeir and his Betar youth, along with other radical leaders in Palestine like Uri Zvi Greenberg, created the League of Sicarii in order to formulate a direct

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[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid., 15.
[94] Ibid.

action against the British. At their first meeting they discussed the possibility of recruitment and

taking up arms against the British in Palestine. Though they failed in this early endeavor, in a

practical sense, the League did lay the groundwork for what would become the basis for

maximalist radical shifts in Revisionist thinking. The Irgun had already split from the Haganah,

the progenitors of the IDF, in 1931 and became the military wing of the Revisionist movement in

Palestine. Militancy was becoming the norm. Jabotinsky by this point was fundamentally more

conservative relative to these radical elements that had grown within his organization. However,

he felt the need to maintain control by ruling in favor of the League of Sicarii. He even wrote

controversial articles that agreed with their radical beliefs, lest he lose authority over them. He

wrote that it was time for "the youth to learn to shoot" and "without militarism there would be no

hope for Zionism."[95] At the same time he finally officially accused the British of wrongdoing

and referred to them as a "gang of foreigners" attempting to assume permanent power over

Palestine in a breach of their promise in the Balfour Declaration.[96] These, however, were only

words. But Achimeir was the real flint that ignited the spark of violent action in the group. He

had lauded political assassination as early as the 1920s. Jabotinsky refrained from supporting

ideas such as these where he could but it seemed, even to him, that his grasp of Revisionist

leadership was continuing to loosen. He wanted a balanced approach that shared Achimeir's

pragmatic tactics without sharing his radical ideology. He felt that Zionism needed action and

militarism but could not exist as an underground and illegal movement. "Sometimes diplomacy

should be used, at other times adventurism; occasionally the spirit of peace, and on other

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[95] Ibid., 16.
[96] Ibid., 16-17.

occasions – the spirit of war."[97] The early 1930s were a torrent of dissolution and failed attempts to cling to a collective ideology for the Revisionist organization.

Jabotinsky's balanced approach led to an unlikely friendship that developed out of surprising agreements and negotiations. In October 1934, he and Labor leader and staunch critic of Revisionism Ben-Gurion held a series of secret meetings in London to discuss agreements that would bring the two factions together. They met almost daily and during their first clandestine rendezvous they were initially surprised in that they could agree on more than expected, including, to some extent, a view for the future of Zionism and Jewish labor. Over the course of these meetings, the two improbable allies "created a relationship of complete trust and confidence."[98] Earlier in the decade, Ben-Gurion had encountered Jabotinsky's public speaking prowess and his visionary appeal at the 1930 World Congress of Labor *Eretz Yisrael*, the labor unions' version of the Zionist conferences.[99] He saw Jabotinsky as "one-dimensional and fascistic," knowing that this was a man to fear in the power struggle for the soul of Zionism.[100] All the while, there was a level of respect and envy involved on the Labor leader's part, and it was reciprocated by the Revisionist orator. Jabotinsky even said that he would join the Labor Party, if it would change its name from Mapai to Mabai. The issue to him was in the full Hebrew name, Party of Builders of the Land of Israel, "for he did not support any ideological or class organization, only a general body."[101] Jabotinsky and Ben-Gurion discussed many things, leading to a set of agreements that both were very proud of, if only tentatively as Ben-Gurion felt

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[97] Ibid., 19.
[98] Michael Bar-Zohar, *Ben-Gurion*, (New York: Delacorte Press, 1979), 72.
[99] Kurzman, *Ben-Gurion*, 176.
[100] Ibid., 177.
[101] Bar-Zohar, *Ben-Gurion*, 72.

they may be "too good to be true."[102] In fact, he was right. The agreements, which included

forbidding "all acts of terror or violence in any shape or form," were vehemently rejected by

both parties. The mainstream Zionists, for their part, wanted to maintain a distance from the

Revisionists, who they called fascists. Future Israeli Foreign Minister Moshe Shertok, who had

just taken over control of the Jewish Agency's political department, cabled Ben-Gurion

explaining the outrage concerning the agreements. He said that the "movement has been

wounded and danger is very great…No reconciliation with fascist Zionism."[103] Though Ben-

Gurion's credibility was tested by this move, he remained in a powerful position within Zionism.

The same could not be said for Jabotinsky, who could feel his position of authority in the

Revisionist movement slipping.

As the 1930s wore on, Revisionist leaders continued to hold conferences and worked

largely outside of Palestine. Jabotinsky maintained work with other leaders and foreign

governments, as well as the mainline Zionist organizations in Paris, London, and Vienna. One

important meeting was the founding of the New Zionist Organization (NZO) in September 1935

in Vienna, Austria. Jabotinsky presented his new vision for eradicating the diaspora with a plan

that would immigrate over a million and a half Jews over the course of ten years. His plan was

comprised of three stages: a Jewish state, an exodus from the diaspora, and the creation of a

national culture to affect the entire world.[104] However, the old Zionist of action that had created

the Jewish fighting legion in the First World War had become mere words and his radical

contemporaries who were ideologically, and by this point ironically, forged out of his brand of

Zionism became impatient. He had lost control of them. They had become intolerant of his

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[102] Kurzman, *Ben-Gurion,* 192.
[103] Ibid., 193.
[104] Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 27.

propensity to seek compromises. The physical spark they needed came in 1936 and the path

taken by some would change the Revisionist organization forever.

CHAPTER 4: BORN OF FIRE

From 1936 to 1939 an Arab revolt rocked Palestine, the consequences of which changed the Revisionist movement's understanding of its own nationalism and self-identity. Palestine had become a questionable asset to the British since the Arab resistance had crystallized into a three year uprising that was suppressed only at great cost. Moreover, the Jews had continued their mass migration. The increase in hostilities called for an increase in Revisionist action, even "partisan and terrorist activity."[105] Jabotinsky's leadership was failing and his adherence to the mainstream Zionist doctrine of self-restraint became a divisive issue. He was confronted by Achimeir at the Betar conference in Poland in 1936. Achimeir believed social democratic principles would not win the Jewish state. Jabotinsky had reverted to his original views and the beliefs of the WZO, that international acceptance and intervention in the Arab revolt were the only way to remain legitimate. He was towing a line between his beliefs and the necessity to stay faithful to the rule of law and the power of the international community.

In contrast, the Revisionists were emboldened by the conflagration. Achimeir and some of his contemporaries in the Irgun felt that violence in retaliation against Arab violence was the answer and the only way to remain strong. Jabotinsky had some doubts about self-restraint, but that only led him to look beyond the British to the Italians. He believed that the British might surrender to Arab demands.[106] This interest in Italian assistance interestingly did not bring him and Achimeir closer, even though the former had been enamored with the Mussolini regime. The difference in ideology had become too broad. The rift got wider until, on 23 April 1937, the Revisionist organization snapped. The Irgun, up to this point an illegal but reliable ally of the Haganah, broke into two factions. The commander of the Irgun, Avraham Tehomi, like

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[105] Ibid., 30.
[106] Ibid., 31.

Jabotinsky, believed in self-restraint and joined a faction of the Irgun to the Haganah forces.

Under the leadership of a few of Achimeir's radical disciples, including one of note, Avraham

Stern, the remaining 1,500 in the Irgun's ranks remained independent and advocated violence

against the Arabs. They built this new, wholly Revisionist Irgun on three core tenets. "The fate

of the Jewish nation will be decided by Jewish armed force on the soil of the homeland, the

[Irgun] views as an ally any Jew supporting this aim, and the [Irgun] views as an ally any non-

Jew who recognizes the right of the Jewish people to the independence of its homeland."[107]

Anticolonial roots were beginning to take hold as the ideology of Irgun factions split the

Revisionists. This faction was connected to the militant NZO and Betar and the doctrine of self-

restraint was beginning to be completely rejected. Even Jabotinsky directed that if there was a

visible "tendency to attack Jews, do not exercise self-restraint!"[108] The Revisionists now had a

military wing that stood largely on its own in Palestine. Though this version of the Revisionist

Irgun was organizationally a failure due to miscommunication and financial distresses, the seed

of a violent radicalism had been planted. It had solidified the doctrine that physical force, not

political or diplomatic will, would determine the future of the Jewish state and later militant

groups would use that as their ideological base. Jabotinsky still believed in political ends to

compliment military means, and thus found himself on the outskirts of leadership before long.

International backing was no longer sought and Jabotinsky, though the model for Revisionism,

had become irrelevant. Though the British Empire by this time had become the number one

enemy of the Revisionists, they soon made matters much worse.

The Palestine Royal (Peel) Commission Report in 1937 recommended that partitioning

the land with only twenty percent allotted to the *Yishuv*, the Jewish community in Palestine, as

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[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid., 32.

well as ceasing Jewish immigration, was the only path to peace.[109] This was the first official

mention of partitioning the land and it became the basis for future policy positions in Palestine.

A virtual consensus was held publicly by Zionist leadership condemning these outcomes.

Revisionists in particular were angered at the prospect and clung to the original maximalist goal

of obtaining all of Palestine, or *Eretz Yisrael*. That anger was compounded two years later by a

British policy statement, known as the 1939 White Paper, which officially implemented a

version of the suggested policies outlined in the Peel Commission Report. This White Paper

restricted Jewish immigration to a maximum of one-third the population of Palestine and

regulated the Zionist acquisition of land "unless the Arabs of Palestine acquiesce to it."[110] The

Zionists, particularly the Revisionists that had made it to Palestine, were angered by this

encroachment on what they considered their birth right.

Jabotinsky's response was severe and at the same time oddly pleading. In his book *The

War and the Jews* he claimed that he had serious problems with Britain because of the White

Paper. He argued that the "Jews have been deeply hurt and injured by the White Paper of May

1939…," and continued by saying that the Arabs knew it was not necessarily a victory, merely a

"stepping-stone for tomorrow's renewed offensive."[111] In this chapter of his book, titled "The

Ineffectual Bribe," he argued that the function of the White Paper was as a bribe to the Arabs

after three years of revolt. The Arab and Zionist violence had brought that very crucial subject

of a Jewish majority to the forefront. He felt that the Arabs becoming a minority did not

constitute a negative, but a Jewish majority was paramount in the Zionist vision. He needed to

reconcile how this would happen, or what would happen if it were not to come to pass.

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[109] Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 155-159.
[110] Ibid., 159.
[111] Jabotinsky, *The War and the Jews*, 181.

However, even in 1940, apparently he saw statelessness for the Jewish people as a possible option, a "non-exodus solution."[112] In a proposal he called "national-personal autonomy," he argued that an alternative to a Jewish state in Palestine might be that "all Jews who so desire will be registered in Dispersion as members of their own national community, will have their own schools, use their own language in public life, and feel equal to anyone else."[113] This is a remarkable shift from what Jabotinsky had championed for decades. The fact that he could even think about advocating a continuation of the diaspora was a sign that his Zionist vision was fading. He was also clearly encumbered by the realities in Europe at the time, with war between the Allies and the Axis, as well as the nations of Europe against the Jews.

He did, however, still have solutions to the Palestine population problem that he saw as completely logical. Jabotinsky felt that Palestine was plenty accommodating for many different peoples, including vast numbers of Jewish immigrants, in opposition to the findings of the British White Paper. "The transformation of Palestine can be effected to the full without dislodging the Palestinian Arabs. All current affirmations to the contrary are utterly incorrect."[114] He went on to explain that the population density of France, Germany, and other European countries could fit millions, while in 1940 there were only approximately 1.5 million in Palestine, which included Jews, Arabs, Transjordanians.[115] He felt there to be "margin enough left for Palestine to absorb the better part of East-Central Europe's ghetto… without approaching even the moderate density of France… Unless the Arabs choose to go away of their own accord, there is no need for them to emigrate."[116] Proposals like this were at the core of Revisionist

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[112] Ibid., 113-115.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid., 211.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid.

discourse and Iron Wall Doctrine. The end of the Arab Revolt and the issue of the British policy

in 1939 brought the group that Jabotinsky once controlled beyond the point of no return.

By the end of the decade, and the introduction of British policy that flew in the face of

the accepted Revisionist vision for Palestine and a Jewish majority, the anticolonial sentiments of

the fringe groups and paramilitaries had reached a fever pitch. The Irgun split once again. One

of the more gifted intellectuals and ideologically driven Revisionists, Avraham Stern, created a

new and more radical paramilitary wing that would target British interests in a more direct

way.[117] This new group, Lehi, had been synthesized out of an ideological evolution from

Jabotinsky's Revisionist Zionism to an anticolonial one bent on political violence.

Avraham Stern, originally from Poland though he immigrated to Palestine by 1925 at

seventeen, was one of the radical disciples of Abba Achimeir, though he rejected Achimeir's

fascist orientation. However, like Achimeir and the other hardline radicals in the early 1930s,

Stern saw a sort of biblical calling to the fight for the Jewish state. The Jews had been

subjugated throughout history, but heroic actions like the Jewish revolt at Bar-Kochba against

the Romans gave a biblical focal point for the rallying cry of the radical Zionists. "Israel was

defeated, but not shamed: Judaea was subjugated, but not profaned."[118] There was an optimistic

side to martyrdom and violent struggle that was widely admired in Jewish circles. These

romantic notions envisaged by Stern, coupled with a further radicalization, led him to break from

the Irgun for the first time in 1937. Stern gained influence among the most radical elements of

the Irgun as many saw Jabotinsky pandering to the British and to the Western democracies.

Jabotinsky's leadership had been in question since well before the Arab revolt and, even in spite

of Achimeir's growing influence, many of Stern's followers saw Stern as "the first of the

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[117] Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 7-8.
[118] Ibid., 24-25.

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Hebrew Freedom Fighters in the homeland."[119] Stern had even gone as far as to attempt to make

a deal, in vain, with the Axis powers during World War II against their common enemy, the

British.[120] The anticolonial element of Revisionism, personified by Lehi, or the Stern Gang as

the British called them, had come to the forefront.

The British eventually caught up with Stern and he was killed in 1942 in a raid on a Tel

Aviv apartment in which he was hiding. Stern and his group had been on a violent spree that

included the killing of several Jewish constables, including the Deputy Superintendent of Tel

Aviv police, and an attack on a member of the Palestine Labor Council.[121] His actions had been

more and more radical, and these attacks on fellow Zionists show the complexities of the

relationships among the many Jewish groups in Palestine. His death led the press to believe that

this had "put an end to the activities of the band."[122] That left future Prime Minister of Israel

Yitzhak Shamir to lead the gang with its fully developed anticolonial ideology.[123] Shamir

escaped Mazra Prison in Acre, an old crusader fort, just months after the death of Stern to take

this leadership position. Shamir, also a convert from the Irgun who had immigrated to Palestine

from Eastern Europe, had taken the name "Michael" as an underground alias when he joined

Lehi as a tribute to the "heroes of the Irish revolution."[124] Shamir had read about Michael

Collins, the director of intelligence for the IRA during the Irish revolution, when he was a boy

along with the works of the Communist leaders of the early twentieth century. Shamir, formerly

Yitzhak Yezernitsky, grew up in what is now Belarus in a secular Jewish family under Russian

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[119] Ibid., 101.
[120] Shlaim, *The Iron Wall*, 24.
[121] "Contemporary Jewish Record: Review of Events and Digest of Opinion," Vol. V, No. 2, April 1942, New York, NY, 195.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Marton, *A Death in Jerusalem*, 57-58.
[124] Shamir, *Summing Up*, 8.

rule, much like his mentor Jabotinsky. His indoctrination into Revisionist Zionism came early as

he joined Jabotinsky's Betar youth movement in 1929 at the age of fourteen, sparked by the Arab

riots that occurred that year. In a political speech in high school in Russia, he explained to

classmates that "he who wants a country has to fight for it."[125] More cerebral and ideologically

driven than simply militaristic, by 1942 he was an ideal candidate to play a leading role in

Revisionist Zionism.

By the time Shamir had become leader of Lehi, little of his beliefs had changed. He was

a staunch Jabotinsky supporter and he later recalled, "as for myself, nothing I have learned since

I was a young man in Poland has altered, or in any way lessened or diluted, my belief in the

logic, the justice and, yes, the grandeur of the objectives, as Jabotinsky articulated them, of

Zionist activism."[126] However, by 1940, the year Jabotinsky passed away, the Revisionist

founder had become largely irrelevant as a leader of the radical movement. Shamir had really

become the disciple of Stern, a man that claimed the enemy to the Jews was not necessarily the

Arabs or even Hitler, but the British. This echoed the disdain he felt for the White Paper of

1939. He continued the work of Lehi for the next several years and into the fight for Israeli

Independence. Building on the work of Stern, Shamir used tactics that differed from Lehi's

militant Zionist contemporaries. The Irgun's approach was using large scale attacks to send a

message, such as the bombing of the British military command post at the King David Hotel on

22 July 1946.[127] Lehi sought more specific targets that it deemed threatening, including the

assassination of the British Middle East official Lord Moyne for his perceived anti-Zionist

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[125] Marton, *A Death in Jerusalem,* 40.
[126] Shamir, *Summing Up*, 12.
[127] Benny Morris, *1948: The First Arab-Israeli War*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 35.

rhetoric and of course, the fact that he was British.[128]

Though they differed on the means of reaching certain ends, Lehi mirrored Irgun in their desire for sending a message while ensuring their choice of targets would also affect change, evidenced by their first victim. Lord Moyne, Sir Walter Edward Guinness, was the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Deputy Minister of State in the Middle East, and Minister Resident in the Middle East for the British Empire during the early 1940s.[129] His speeches were seen by Lehi as having antisemitic tones and support for the Arabs in Palestine. Stern and Shamir saw him as a "personification of British power" and his position in the British colonial government had indeed given him control over policies in Palestine.[130] This made him a natural target for Lehi, which had "less to do with [his actions and speeches] than with his status."[131] In reality, however, Moyne had been in favor of partition with the recognition of a Jewish state and much of his perceived antisemitism had been taken out of context. Regardless, the British power broker was seen as a threat and needed to be removed.

Stern had planned Moyne's assassination and, after his death at the hands of the British, Shamir carried it out. On 6 November 1944, two Lehi gunmen waited outside of Moyne's Cairo home as he returned from his office and shot him three times in the chest while he was still sitting in his car.[132] Shamir answered in his autobiography the question, "did Lehi really believe that it could throw the British out of the country in the face of Haganah hostility and British determination to suppress and, if possible, uproot it? Yes, we believed this and I think we also

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[128] Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 124.
[129] Bernard Wallerstein, "The Assassination of Lord Moyne," *Transactions & Miscellanies (Jewish Historical Society of England)*, Vol. 27, (1978-1980), pp. 72-83, accessed April 17, 2015, http://www. Jstor.org/stable/29778898, 72.
[130] Shamir, *Summing Up*, 52.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Wallerstein, "The Assassination of Lord Moyne," 72.

succeeded."[133] According to Shamir, "it was Lehi that first served notice on the British and made good its warnings that nothing would be permitted to stand in the way of the achievement of Jewish independence in the Land of Israel, nothing and no one."[134] He described this new tactic of political assassination as "part of [Stern's] total concept of how we should fight, not just the British in Palestine but the British Empire as such: to try to put out of action the people who made policy and moved the pieces on the Palestine board."[135] By 1948, circumstances led this tactic of Lehi to target a new threat, the UN Mediator Count Bernadotte.

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[133] Shamir, *Summing Up*, 51.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Ibid.

CHAPTER 5: PARTITION and CIVIL WAR

In November 1947, the United Nations approved a Partition Plan that would remove the British Mandate and administer a separation of Palestine into "independent Arab and Jewish states."[136] This partition had specific guidelines that defined borders and the administration of the land with the help of the UN. The Zionist leadership was in favor of partition due to its inherent legitimation of the Jewish state in the region. International legal precedents would allow a Jewish state to take root in Palestine and the issues of immigration and population control brought up in the 1939 White Paper could be addressed at a later date. It is also clear, particularly given the actions of the next several months and the words of Ben-Gurion, that the Zionist leadership intended expansion beyond the partition borders from the beginning. The idea for the Zionists to create a state without defined boundaries in their declaration of independence was crucial since Israel could expand its borders beyond the 1947 partition lines through force of arms. Ben-Gurion argued that if "our strength proves sufficient" the Zionists could conquer a larger territory than provided through UN partition.[137] The Palestinians on the ground did not accept partition in any way. The legitimation of the Jewish state that made the Jews accept partition caused the Palestinians to revolt once again.

The Arab-Israeli conflict immediately catapulted into a civil war. The first stage of the 1948 war is best viewed as a civil war between the Zionists and Arabs because the Mandatory power, the British, stayed out of the fight. Still, the end of the Mandate was approaching and British personnel were already moving out of the region. The first conflicts involved small-scale

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[136] United Nations, General Assembly, Resolution 181: Partition of Palestine, A/RES/181(II) (27 November, 1947), available from undocs.org/A/RES/181(II).
[137] Mordechai, Naor, "Big Wednesday," *Haaretz*, 1 May, 2006, translated from Hebrew in Benny Morris, *1948: The First Arab-Israeli War*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 177.

fighting along with terrorist and counterterrorist activities. Sporadic clashes of a guerilla nature seemed to work to the Palestinians' advantage in the hill country, on cross-territorial roads and in settlements and the fighting began with Arab initiative. At this time, the Haganah was on the "strategic defensive."[138] This status quo lasted until mid-March, when a different dynamic began to take hold.[139] Throughout the civil war, the British military was reluctant to intervene. At times, however, the British did engage in fighting regardless of their military's guidelines explicitly requiring that all combat actions be defensive in nature.[140] Some of their actions were in the aid of Arab forces against the Jews, which typically prompted retaliatory attacks from the more radical elements of the Zionist forces, Irgun and Lehi.[141] Such retaliations included a Lehi response following a British roundup of Haganah soldiers said to have been "butchered" on 28 February, 1948.[142] Their response was to blow up a train carrying British troops, which killed twenty-eight while wounding several dozen others.[143] All of the fighting during the early part of the civil war through April had allowed the Arabs to make extraordinary advances. At the same time, the Yishuv was being crippled by supply shortages, including food.

The Yishuv not only experienced these military and supply setbacks, but suffered from the increasing caution of the international community. It was becoming clear that the Zionist cause was waning leading into the second stage of the civil war.[144] Some questioning of the Partition Plan by the international community, including the United States, began to concern the

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[138] Morris, *1948*, 77; the Haganah was the unofficial paramilitary of the Zionists in Palestine that worked with the British in some cases in anti-terrorism and against Arab revolt.
[139] Ibid., 77-78.
[140] Ibid., 79.
[141] Ibid.
[142] Ibid., 81.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid., 113.

Zionists.[145] This wavering of faith troubled the Zionists since partition had been their international legitimation up to this point and the Zionist leadership saw it as the key to the official creation of the Jewish state. The Zionist leadership began putting pressure on the United States through lobbying to ensure that partition be maintained.

An article in the *Palestine Post* on 19 April by Sumner Welles, former U.S. Under-Secretary of State, titled "War in Trusteeship," explained that a disastrous situation was emerging in which international abandonment of the UN Partition Plan would have grave consequences. By this time, American diplomatic leaders were considering a plan of international trusteeship over the soon to be abandoned British Mandate in Palestine. In Welles' article, he made gloomy predictions about the U.S. withdrawal of support from partition, which could lead to a possible heating up of Cold War activities with the Soviets and the demise of the United Nations itself. This article, written by an American official, made it clear that the time to become involved in military assistance in Palestine had come and gone and that the good faith in the U.S. was swiftly retreating. The fighting had already begun in Palestine and the United Nations had only projected rhetoric and plans with little or no action. The United States' moral leadership throughout the world was called into question as Welles predicted that the Soviets would send troops if the U.S. were to do the same, which would "touch on the powder keg," as Welles quoted from Secretary of State George Marshall.[146] This inherently gave the readership in Palestine a negative view of the U.S. and the United Nations before the mediation process had

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[145] Ibid., 113-115.
[146] Sumner Welles, "War in Trusteeship," Originally in *The New York Herald Tribune*, published in *The Palestine Post*, April 19, 1948, Historical Jewish Press, accessed 25 February 2015, www.jpress.org.il.

even begun. Though trust in the mediation of Bernadotte was not doomed from the outset the

population, as well as the Revisionists, were skeptical of international involvement.[147]

A four-page article echoed Mr. Welles' thoughts in the *Palestine Post* on 26 April titled

"U.N. Failure Caused Jewish Offensive." The article offered insight into the Zionist feeling on

the ground as the Jewish offensive intensified. The article lacked an authorial by-line, but it was

clearly written by someone who was in the region and who very much had an opinion. The

article was in response to an editorial called "The Jews Act" printed in the *New York Herald

Tribune* a month earlier, "soon after the [U.S.] withdrawal from Partition" which discussed the

failure of the UN and the natural reaction of the Jews to act on their own.[148] The writer used

words like "bankruptcy" to describe the American Palestine policy that "effectively tied the

hands of the United Nations," and caused the Jews to "take things into their own hands."[149] The

author also pointed out that it was at that time the decision was made to form a provisional

government at the end of the British Mandate, a mandate that failed to keep the peace. If the UN

reversed its stance on Partition, it "would try to do what Britain has been unable to do: rule over

and keep peace in strife-torn Palestine."[150] The main point of this article rested on two opinions

of the writer, claiming both are true; the Jewish action is a "desperate measure," and that "it was

the only possible course remaining."[151] It was seen as a desperate measure by the writer, because

though the Haganah is "undoubtedly well-organized," it would be defending itself "as an island

in an Arab sea."[152] This article shows the sentiment of the Jewish people in Palestine. This was

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[147] Ibid.

[148] "U.N. Failure Caused Jewish Offensive." *The Palestine Post*, April 26, 1948. Historical Jewish Press, accessed 25 February 2015, www.jpress.org.il.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Ibid.

[151] Ibid.

[152] Ibid.

a feeling of being surrounded by the neighboring Arab countries and greatly outnumbered, mixed with a little hubris, and the expectation of a possible Arab unification. The opinion that violence was the only course remaining for the Jews stemmed from the feeling that the UN Palestine Commission had not taken any action. If the General Assembly, as expected, rejected partition and "plumped for trusteeship," the UN would be stuck in the same lot the British had been, with the outcome expected to be unsuccessful. The writer also stated that the time for military action, or policing, by the UN had come and gone. It was the writer's opinion that this may have been an option at one time, but that "time has run short."[153]   The UN would have to deal with both armed forces of Jews and Arabs and "impose a solution unwelcome to both sides."[154] "The Partition boundaries make no economic or military sense, and could only be maintained by agreement between Jew and Arab, or enforced by a strong army of the United Nations."[155] It is the writer's opinion that neither of those outcomes was possible.

Though the UN and the United States were just beginning to think that partition could not be implemented peacefully, the concept of violence as a political tool was too well ingrained in the new Revisionist's design. Recalling Jabotinsky, the colonized were expected to rebel and the "Iron Wall" needed to be established and maintained to achieve victory or the Zionist cause would be lost. "Zionist colonization must either stop, or else proceed regardless of the native population."[156] As far as the Revisionists were concerned, there never was a peaceful option in their strategy of taking control of Eretz Yisrael. Through the middle of March, the acceptance of the Partition Plan had largely kept the Haganah at bay while the Arab Palestinians were the major aggressors. The Yishuv had hoped "the disturbances would blow over and, in deference to

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[153] Ibid.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Ibid.
[156] Jabotinsky, "The Iron Wall."

[British] sensibilities," and their own lack of military might, they kept on the defensive.[157] By

the end of March, however, the time came to go on the offensive. The organization of the militia

and the arrival of Czech armament shipments gave the Haganah the necessary tools to turn the

tide of the battle.

Despite their anticolonial disposition directed at international intruders, the Revisionist

paramilitaries fought against the Arabs as well as the British. Alongside the Haganah they

expelled thousands of Arabs controversially in what would later be dubbed by the Palestinians,

"*al-nakba*," the disaster.[158] The expulsions began with the destruction of Arab towns that

overlooked Jewish settlements or threatened lines of communication.[159] These expulsions were

part of a larger scheme called Plan Dalet (Plan D) that sought to remove Palestinians completely

and clear the way for the Jewish state. [160] The main objective was to secure all of the areas that

the Yishuv were to populate under the Partition Plan, as well as the roads between those regions.

The possible intention to expand beyond the partition boundaries is also evidenced in the

implementation of Plan D. The plan was extended to areas of Jewish settlement outside of the

partition boundaries, such as the West Bank and the Western Galilee. The lasting effect of Plan

D was the physical replacement of Arabs in the land with Jews, slowly encroaching on the

sought after Jewish majority and the proverbial iron wall. After the Arabs had been killed or

fled, incoming Jews could move into vacated homes and even entire villages. Those villages

deemed too primitive or unwanted were simply destroyed to prevent Arab return entirely or to

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[157] Morris, *1948*, 117.

[158] *Al nakba* translates as "the disaster" or "the catastrophe." This term is still used to the present day and commemorated every year on the anniversary of the Deir Yassin tragedy, April 9.

[159] "Guidelines for Planning Regional Battles for the Month of February," 26 January 1948, IDFA 959/49//202, as quoted in Morris, *1948*, 119.

[160] Ilan Pappé, "The Challenge of the Tantura Case," in *The Israel/Palestine Question: A Reader*, edited by Ilan Pappé (New York: Routledge, 2007), 116-128.

reshape the land in the Zionist image.[161] This concept of the spoils of war changing the identity

of a land, as it pertained to architecture, is important in understanding the figurative iron wall

that was erected between the two cultures. Historian Robert Bevan explained this "Destruction

of Memory" as crucial in almost every conflict in history, with the gained territory from victory

being reshaped for the purposes of the victor and cultural hegemony.[162]

There was never a "smoking gun" directive from Zionist leadership to implement Plan D,

however. The Haganah documentation from this period of the war contains no reference to the

plan though it was ostensibly carried out in the field by Zionist commanders, whether they were

aware of it or not.[163] The implementation of Plan D included efforts by the Haganah, Irgun, and

Lehi. Ideologically, this plan was in conflict with the expressed views of Jabotinsky, who had

stated previously that the native population could not be completely removed. Once again, he

believed that "there will always be two nations in Palestine," which was acceptable as long as

"the Jews become the majority," a crucial endgame that was the basis for the iron wall to be

effective.[164] By this point, however, the transformed Revisionist party had taken on a completely

new attitude toward the expansion of the Yishuv.

During the civil war that lasted until the declaration of Israeli Independence in May, the

Irgun and Lehi committed the worst atrocities of the conflict in the name of Plan D. On April 9,

a joint attack by the Irgun and Lehi routed the inhabitants of Deir Yassin, an Arab suburb of

Jerusalem. Deir Yassin had entered into a nonaggression pact with the Haganah by this point

and the villagers had enjoyed relative peace. When the Irgun and Lehi attacked, up to 300

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[161] Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 198.
[162] Robert Bevan, *The Destruction of Memory: Architecture at War* (London: Reaktion Books, 2006).
[163] Morris, *1948*, 119.
[164] Ibid.

Arabs, including men, women, and children, were allegedly "mutilated…and stuffed down wells."[165] Propaganda by the Irgun and Haganah used the incident to warn Arabs that future attacks of a similar nature would occur if the Palestinians did not flee. Though many Palestinian refugees fled, Deir Yassin was not the end. The massacre at Deir Yassin is but one of many such events both before and after though it is largely popularized as the defining event of *al-nakba* and the beginning of the Palestinian refugee crisis.[166]

After the attack at Deir Yassin, Lehi's propaganda shifted blame to the Haganah for a large proportion of those killed, saying that 170 of the 240 reported at the time were killed in an unrelated Haganah skirmish.[167] To further extend the divide between the Revisionists and Zionist leadership, the Jewish Agency, which was head of the Zionist provisional government before Israeli independence, accepted the motion of Ben-Gurion to condemn the Deir Yassin massacre.[168] This was essentially a condemnation of the illegal acts of the paramilitaries, and a disavowal of them as a whole. He even sent an apology telegram to King Abdullah of Transjordan. The Jewish cause lost some sympathy abroad. The "terrorist acts of the Stern Gang in Palestine have alienated some sympathy for those who failed to realize that this is a tiny minority in a people struggling mightily to maintain discipline under conditions of desperate

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[165] Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 197.
[166] For years there has been controversy over the number of Arabs killed at Deir Yassin and other towns, and the degree to which they resisted. Some Israeli historians contend that the Arabs were retaliating while others maintain that the attack was unprovoked and the slaughter was against unarmed civilians. The debate between Israeli historians is developed by Efraim Karsh as he disputes the works of "New Historians" that have taken a widely different, and controversially anti-Zionist approach to the historical record of the conflict. The New Historians include Benny Morris, Avi Shlaim, and Ilan Pappé; see Efraim Karsh, *Fabricating Israeli History: The 'New Historians'* (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1997)
[167] Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 208.
[168] Ibid., 207-208.

provocation."[169] Zionist leadership in the Provisional Government needed to distance itself, at

least publically, from those elements of the Revisionists that were in reality effectively working

towards the same end.

[169] Marquis Childs, "Washington Calling: Stormy Israel," *Washington Post*, May 18, 1948.
ProQuest (152024885).

CHAPTER 6: WAR and BERNADOTTE

Statements like those made by Ben-Gurion denouncing Revisionist violence, and thus assuaging the anger of the Arabs after Deir Yassin, disillusioned the Revisionist right to the acts of the government. Lehi commander Nathan Friedman-Yellin later said that there were those who "suffered atrophy of the feeling for the Fatherland."[170] The damage of the brutal attacks at Deir Yassin and elsewhere was done, however, and the collective Zionist military forces were now on the offensive. By the middle of May the Palestinian fighting cause had all but been extinguished.[171] The change in the tide of the civil war had finally led to the decision by the surrounding Arab nations to take action and, following the declaration of Israeli independence on 14 May, 1948, they invaded. According to an interview with King Abdullah of Transjordan on 11 May, "the possibility of averting war is in the hands of the Zionists."[172] He believed that the Arab invasion was for the good of the whole of Palestine and that they were "coming to Palestine to enforce peace against the Zionist terror bands. War is not being declared. Relieving Palestine from the grip of the Zionists is not war against the Jews."[173]

On 13 May, 1948, at his home in Stockholm, the head of the Swedish Red Cross, Count Bernadotte, received a telephone call. He later recalled that he "laughed when [he] told [his] colleagues" about the call. He had been offered a possible appointment as the "United Nations Mediator in the ugly-looking conflict between Jews and Arabs."[174] After he deliberated with his wife and posed some stipulations to the Secretary General of the UN Trygve Lie, he accepted

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[170] "Verbal Clashes Between Yellin and Prosecutor." *The Palestine Post*, December 20, 1948. Historical Jewish Press, accessed 25 February 2015, www.jpress.org.il.

[171] Morris, *1948*, 179.

[172] Alma De Luce, "T.-J. Ruler Explains why Jews are Stronger." *The Palestine Post*, May 11, 1948. Historical Jewish Press, accessed 25 February 2015, www.jpress.org.il.

[173] De Luce, "T.-J. Ruler."

[174] Folke Bernadotte, *To Jerusalem* (London: Hodder and Stoughton), 1.

this post and began planning his mission. One of his stipulations was that the Big Five of the

Security Council—the United States, Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and China—agree on

him as a candidate. On the following night of 14 May, members of the Zionist leadership met in

Tel Aviv and voted unanimously to declare the independence of Israel without defined borders.

Recognition by the United States came from President Harry S. Truman within minutes. The

U.S. "[recognized] the provisional government as the de facto authority of the new [State of

Israel]."[175] Shortly after, the Soviets followed suit and by morning Israel was officially

recognized by the dominant powers. On 19 May, Bernadotte received word from the Security

Council that as Mediator, he was to seek peace and assist in the security and welfare of the

Palestinian people. The terms as outlined in the Security Council resolution of 14 May that

appointed a United Nations Mediator were "to use his good offices with the local and community

authorities in Palestine to:

> (i) Arrange for the operation of common services necessary to the safety and well-being
> of the population of Palestine;
> (ii) Assure the protection of the Holy Places, religious buildings and sites in Palestine;
> (iii) Promote a peaceful adjustment of the future situation of Palestine."[176]

Mediation would also include work with the UN Truce Commission, though it was subsequently

left to Bernadotte to work with a "fairly free hand" toward proposals for future lasting peace in

the region.[177]

Since Israel was by this point officially recognized by the dominant world powers and no

longer under the dominion of the British Empire and the Arab nations attacked, the conflict

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[175] Harry Truman, "Draft of Recognition of Israel," May 14, 1948, Truman Library Online,
accessed November 12, 2013, http://www.trumanlibrary.org/exhibit_documents/israel30_01.gif
[176] UN General Assembly, *Resolutions Adopted by the General Assembly at its Hundred and
Thirty-Fifth Plenary Meeting Held on 14 May 1948*, (A/554) 14 May 1948.
[177] Bernadotte, *To Jerusalem*, 3.

became a conventional war between states mediated by the United Nations.[178] The war that took

place during the summer months of 1948 was Bernadotte's chance to garner support and bring

peace to the region. This was a period of great confusion; there was more than one truce,

violations of ceasefires, and long term proposals that left all sides wanting. Count Bernadotte's

appointment as the Mediator in this conflict began only a few days after the invasion with his

committed acceptance of the task at hand. With only three days to prepare for his journey,

Bernadotte left for Paris on 25 May to meet with his staff. This included Trygve Lie's personal

representative and Bernadotte's chief advisor, the man who would eventually lead the peace

effort, American Professor Dr. Ralph Bunche. At a press conference in Paris, Bernadotte

expressed his belief that there was "only a one percent chance of success."[179] He continued:

> You probably think I am a big fool for taking on this job with such a slight chance for
> success, but I regard the Palestine problem as a spark capable of setting off a mightier
> conflagration, and that being so I feel it my duty to take that chance, small though it may
> be. If I fail, well, I am enough of a man to take on a job, even though it might be
> foredoomed to almost certain failure.[180]

Bernadotte actually bemoaned the press attention that the Palestine issue was receiving since he

believed he could be far more effective if given the chance to work with relative serenity and

away from the public eye.[181] In Paris, there was no shortage of advisors clamoring to bring the

Mediator up to speed during his two day visit. Bernadotte received advice from his new chief

advisor as well as a surplus of briefings from various parties involved. The British Chargé

d'Affaires Ashley Clarke presented the British point of view with regards to peace as well as the

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[178] Morris, *1948,* 180-183; Note: The Arab nations consisted of Syria, Lebanon, Transjordan,
Egypt, and Iraq as well as elements from Yemen, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia. The event of the
Arab states' invasion excluded the native Palestinians already fighting within the territory.
[179] "Bernadotte to Go to Palestine Soon: Accepts Task as U.N. Mediator -- Sees Only 1% Chance
of Success, Feels End Worth It," New York Times, May 22, 1948, ProQuest (108205835).
[180] Ibid.
[181] Ibid.

British military personnel within the ranks of the Arab League. The British position, as outlined

by Clarke, leaves little to the imagination in how the Zionists could see them as an enemy. "He

emphasized that the British Government was not prepared for the time being to take any steps

against the Arabs. In fact, he added, [they] were still continuing to supply arms to the Arabs, and

the British officers who had joined the Arab forces as instructors were also taking an active part

in the war."[182] He also met with the Vice President of The Jewish Agency, Dr. Nahum

Goldman, who gave the Israeli Provisional Government's viewpoint and declared that further

dealings would be with only the Provisional Government with no outside interference from the

Jewish Agency or other Zionist groups. After these brief introductions as to what he would face,

Bernadotte left Paris for Cairo on the first leg of his mission.[183] Since Bernadotte felt so strongly

about this mission and the chances of failure, he felt he needed to meet with the people that could

aid him in his attempts in securing peace and provide him with the knowledge he required to

succeed. The Swedish Representative to the UN advised him to take a trip to Lake Success, New

York, then the UN Headquarters, to be briefed on the question of Palestine. Bernadotte's briefing

instead began in Cairo as he deemed it "quite wrong that anyone who had been appointed

Mediator in a conflict in the Near East…should make it his first business to go west to acquire

information."[184]

　　　From Paris to Cairo, by way of Rome and Athens, the Mediator made it his intention to

sit down with what was seen as the most moderate Arab leadership in the region. Bernadotte had

many visitations during his stay in Cairo between 28 and 30 May. First was Sir Hugh Dow, the

British representative in Jerusalem who was well versed in the partitioning of populations as he

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[182] Bernadotte, *To Jerusalem*, 6-7.
[183] Ibid., 6-12.
[184] Ibid., 4.

had served in the British Civil Service in India years before. Sir Hugh admittedly saw this as a different situation, however, given the presence of outside intervention, namely the Arab invasion and United Nations involvement. Bernadotte then met with several of the top Arab leaders in Cairo including the Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Mohammed Khachaba Pasha, Prime Minister Nokrashi Pasha, and the Secretary-General of the Arab League, Azzam Pasha.[185] Bernadotte sought an audience with Arab leadership at the outset of his trip because "it was the Arabs…who were adopting the offensive, and it was…with them that [he] ought to seek contact first in any question of a truce or cease-fire."[186] Bernadotte's decision offended the Zionists, though in "a region where symbols often outweigh reality, the wrong signal sent by his first stop eluded [him]."[187]

During these talks, Egypt offered to accept a truce in the event that Jewish immigration to Palestine ceased. The prime minister accepted that Jews were already there and that they could not and should not be expelled. However, he could not abide a Jewish state created by terrorism and force of arms, and hoped that the Mediator did not "consider himself bound by the terms of the partition decision taken by the General Assembly last 29th November."[188] This sentiment was shared by Azzam Pasha. Both made some suggestions to the Mediator including a unitary state with some Jewish autonomy. Azzam Pasha even suggested the possibility of a sort of "Vatican State" that could be a mouthpiece for Jewish interests abroad with ambassadors in various countries.[189] The Mediator's meeting with Azzam Pasha, a man he later praised as interesting, had then dealt with a possible truce. Azzam Pasha felt that the Jews "had been

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[185] Note: The Arab League included Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Transjordan, and the Yemen.
[186] Bernadotte, *To Jerusalem*, 6.
[187] Marton, *A Death in Jerusalem*, 123.
[188] Bernadotte, *To Jerusalem,* 25.
[189] Ibid., 18.

preparing for war for the past ten years."[190] The Arab ability to acquire weapons was meager compared to the new state of Israel. Arabs had "no friends amongst the influential states." He felt that Arabs might lose ground if a truce were to be instituted.[191] The Mediator attempted to put his mind at ease. His mission was to supervise the truce and one of the conditions was to maintain battle lines with no military gain or importation of war material, as well as the curtailing of Jewish immigration.

While in Cairo, terms of a truce were sent by both the British and Soviets to the UN and then officially drafted as a UN Resolution on 29 May.[192] Since he was not involved in these truce proposals, he saw this as an initiative which was detrimental to his mission, one with an incredibly short timetable. Bernadotte thought it imperative to get a clearer understanding of the situation swiftly. The Mediator needed to meet with the leadership of the belligerent forces. His mission was to compel them to accept the truce proposal of 29 May that would create a ceasefire and allow him to work on a long term peace proposal. He had to act quickly and sit with all parties involved. It was imperative to convince them to accept the truce agreements before they could reject them. An Arab or a Jewish official rejection would be impossible to overcome in the future. With the possibility of a controversial truce approaching, he left Cairo for Tel Aviv on 31 May and met with Foreign Minister Shertok and Prime Minister Ben-Gurion, who was also the acting defense minister at the time. The official Israeli position was clarified in detail for the mediator. The Israeli PM expressed his disappointment at the fact that the Israeli government had by this point accepted two truce proposals while the Arabs had not been

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[190] Ibid., 34.
[191] Ibid., 34.
[192] The official truce proposal was made 29 May, 1948, UN Security Council Resolution 50 (S/801). Though preceded by two other proposals, this is the one Bernadotte worked with all parties to agree upon as the official UN Mediator.

sanctioned in any way for their rejections.[193] Bernadotte made every effort to ease the concern

of Ben-Gurion, but at this point his acceptance of truce was not explicit. The prime minister

shared the sentiment relayed to Bernadotte by the Arab leadership that the other side would gain

an advantage if any truce were to be implemented.[194] Bernadotte then left for Amman, the

capital of Transjordan, on the 1 June to speak with Arab leadership there. This included the

British General Glubb Pasha the Commander-in-Chief of the Arab Legion as well as Foreign

Minister Fawzi El Molki Pasha of Transjordan. These meetings were followed by a short talk

with King Abdullah. The Mediator once again explained his position and the coming truce. This

included his feeling that a specific date and time needed to be made explicit for the beginning of

the cessation of fighting. It was also his intention to make it clear to the Security Council that

he, the Mediator, should be the one to set such a timeline. Bernadotte's impression was that the

foreign minister was in favor of a truce at that point and his conversation with King Abdullah

went equally as well.[195] A representative of the American Consul-General for Jerusalem then

spoke to Bernadotte on the situation in that most contested city. Jerusalem, he explained, was in

utter confusion. The discipline of the Arab forces was commendable but the Israelis were

continuing attacks on areas agreed upon as off limits. He was uncertain even of whom their

commanding officers were.[196]

　　　　After all of Bernadotte's meetings on the situation in Palestine, he flew back to Cairo to

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[193] Bernadotte, *To Jerusalem*, 38-39; Several other official and unofficial truce attempts had been
made prior to British withdrawal.

[194] Bernadotte, *To Jerusalem*, 38-39.

[195] Ibid., 42.

[196] Ibid., 43-44; the confusion of the Israeli soldiers was echoed by Ben-Gurion in his biography;
see Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs*, 90; Having only worked with the British under the Mandate before
this, the Haganah were finally transformed into an official state military, though still not fully
organized. One of the first moves of the new government after independence was to create the
Israel Defense Force, IDF; see Morris, *1948*, 268.

await the Security Council's word on the acceptance of the truce proposal as well as his

suggestion that he determine the beginning of cessation of hostilities. At first, the acceptance of

the truce came with conditions by both Israeli and Arab leaders. In Bernadotte's opinion, "this

did not therefore constitute any acceptance of the truce terms."[197] Adding to the confusion in

Jerusalem, word of a preliminary acceptance of the truce had reached the Israeli forces with

orders to cease fighting. The Arab forces had received no such word and thus continued their

attacks, which inflamed the situation.[198] Finally, the Security Council reported to Bernadotte of

the unconditional acceptance of the truce by both sides.[199] The Security Council's

communication also included an agreement that Bernadotte be the one to determine the

beginning of the truce, together with the suggestion that it be as soon as possible so as to avoid

further complications.[200] The truce began on 11 June 1948 and marked the beginning of the

Mediator's official mission in Palestine. The terms of the truce were "general in their language,"

but were intended to "bring about a cessation of hostilities… without prejudice."[201] Included in

the truce was a prohibition of "fighting personnel… introduced into… the Arab States or…

Palestine" as well as a prohibition on troop movement and shipments of "war materials" from

"one interested country to another."[202] The rest of the truce outlined the discretion of the

Mediator in the matter of what constituted a violation of the truce.

In the final report by Bernadotte in September, he explained the truce observation's

organizational shortcomings during the ceasefire that lasted from 11 June to 9 July. This

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[197] Bernadotte, *To Jerusalem,* 45.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid., 46-47.
[200] Ibid.
[201] United Nations, Security Council, *Report dated 16 September 1948 by the United Nations Mediator on the observation of the Truce in Palestine During the Period from 11 June to 9 July 1948*, S/1025 (5 October, 1948), available from undocs.org/S/1025.
[202] Ibid., 3.

particularly included the lack of manpower at his disposal.[203] Until two days before the truce

began it was uncertain even if a truce was to occur. There were several nations at war, including

the native Arab Palestinians, and varying battle lines to supervise and leaders to be kept

informed. Despite having American, French, Belgian, and other nations' officers at his disposal,

there simply was not enough help. The entire organization of observation had been created from

scratch and communication became one of the first issues faced by the collaborating nations'

observers. At the outset of the truce, the exact battle lines in the contested city of Jerusalem were

a serious issue. Arab and Israeli forces faced off "across lines that were so close in places that

they almost touched" and "in some places, opposing forces held opposite sides of the same

street."[204] This made the observation of the truce in Jerusalem particularly hard to maintain.

 The Mediator also pointed out in his report that there were several "major problems" and

"violations reported to the Security Council."[205] During the period of the truce, there were

collectively over two hundred reported breaches of the ceasefire. These included instances of

"sniping," and military engagement.[206] Another major problem during the observation of the

truce was the inclusion of irregulars. They "considered themselves as not bound by the ceasefire

or truce."[207] The Arab Liberation Army was one example of irregular fighters, but the biggest

violators among irregulars were "on the Jewish side [and] consisted… of the [Irgun] and the

Stern Group."[208] Lehi's forces in Jerusalem were later accounted at around 400 "which included

reinforcements from Tel Aviv."[209] Lehi's actions, like the massacres at Deir Yassin and Tantura,

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[203] Ibid., 4.
[204] Ibid., 12.
[205] Ibid., 11.
[206] Ibid., 14.
[207] Ibid., 16.
[208] Ibid.
[209] "Verbal Clashes Between Yellin and Prosecutor."

had begun dictating terms to the Haganah, according to a military prosecutor who cross examined Friedman-Yellin after the murder of Bernadotte. He asked "by what right did 150 or even 200 men set conditions to a force of 5,000 or 6,000 of the Haganah." To that the Lehi commander replied, "by the right of past experience, conscience, and acts of bravery."[210] Though Arab governments took no responsibility for the actions of Arab irregulars, the Israeli government claimed responsibility for every Jewish fighter within the regions occupied by its military.[211]

That responsibility was taken when the Revisionist paramilitary group Irgun was dismantled shortly after an event commonly referred to as the "Altalena Incident." Early in June, the Israeli government had come to an agreement with the Irgun which assimilated that group into the IDF, though the Irgun in Jerusalem remained independent. At this point Jerusalem was officially outside of the Israeli state and thus out of their jurisdiction. On 19-20 June, during the first truce, a kind of rebellion occurred when an Irgun ship from France, the Altalena, arrived off the coast of Israel. The ship was carrying immigrants, soldiers and weapons and the Irgun demanded its contents for their own IDF units.[212] The government deemed the arrival of the ship a "blatant breach of national law, of the agreement with the [Irgun] and of the government's international commitments."[213] The Irgun attempted to take the ship by force and engaged in firefights with the IDF to secure the passengers and weapons. On 21 June, after the IDF had won the battle, the ship sailed for Tel Aviv and government forces fired artillery at the Altalena. The ship sank right in the harbor. The IDF also stormed the Irgun headquarters in Tel Aviv and it

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[210] Ibid.
[211] UNSC, *Mediator on the observation of the Truce in Palestine*, (S/1025), 16.
[212] Morris, *1948*, 271; Note: recall that the original split in the Irgun in 1937 merged the more passive units into the IDF, though they remained together as Irgun units within the military.
[213] Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 225.

was officially disbanded everywhere except Jerusalem.[214]

This affair is a symbolic manifestation of the split between the internationally recognized Zionist Provisional Government and the Revisionists that had become militarized up to this point. The Irgun leader Menachem Begin even claimed after the incident that "he could in a moment have killed the Prime Minister, had he wished to do so."[215] The relationship between the Irgun and Lehi at this point took on another dimension as well. Leading up to the Altalena incident, Irgun and Lehi leaders had already been growing closer due to Lehi's "appreciation of the [Irgun's] ideological pragmatism."[216] The two groups now saw Ben-Gurion's actions in the Altalena incident as yet another example of his pandering to the Western bloc and the United Nations, a concept abhorrent to their shared ideological preferences. Lehi in particular drew a connection between the Altalena incident and the Bernadotte mission. "Both demonstrated the extent to which the Hebrew people were on the verge of renewed subservience to foreign rule."[217] What the UN Mediator did next seemingly proved Lehi correct.

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[214] Morris, *1948,* 271-272.
[215] Menachem Begin's address of 22 June; cited in Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 225.
[216] Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 225.
[217] Ibid., 226.

CHAPTER 7: THE BERNADOTTE PLAN

On 28 June, Bernadotte presented to the Security Council and the other parties involved

his first proposal for a long term peace agreement, known as "The Bernadotte Plan." He had

"intentionally made [his] proposals very vague in the hope that it might be easier in that way to

induce the parties to continue negotiations on the basis of the draft."[218] He at first acknowledged

his mission in this regard and outlined the "calmer atmosphere, more favourable to the task of

mediation" that was made possible by the truce.[219] Talks with representatives of both sides

during this period gave Bernadotte the information he was looking for, according to this report,

which included the issues with which the opposing parties were most concerned. According to

his report they related to "partition, the establishment of a Jewish State, and Jewish

immigration."[220] Bernadotte saw it as his mission to offer suggestions that might be countered to

continue discussions, rather than to enforce decisions made on his behalf. His suggestions

outlined an economic union in Palestine consisting of two members, one Arab and one Jewish,

with a central council and boundaries to be outlined by the two members in further

negotiations.[221] Immigration was "within the competence of each member" with flexibility on

future establishment of immigration policies determined by the council.[222] Religious rights and

holy places were also to be guaranteed by the union as well as the right of return for all

Palestinians displaced due to the ongoing conflict. The Bernadotte Plan finished with an annex

that covered territorial matters. These territorial suggestions specifically outlined regions to be

allotted to the Jewish community and those to be part of Arab territory. The most troubling

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[218] Folke Bernadotte, *Instead of Arms*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1949), 199.
[219] UNSC, *Text of Suggestions Presented by the United Nations Mediator on Palestine to the Two Parties on 28 June, 1948*, S/863 (8 July 1948).
[220] Ibid.
[221] Ibid.
[222] Ibid.

territorial assignments for Zionists were the inclusion of Jerusalem in Arab territory, as well as

the cities of Lydda and Haifa which were to be established as a free airport and free water port,

respectively.[223] The suggestions made by the Mediator reflected changes from the Partition Plan

that would have made Palestine an Arab majority nation with the bulk of the geographical

territory.

Bernadotte received word that neither side wanted "to consider [his] proposals as a basis

for continued discussions," though they were hopeful he would continue his efforts.[224] The end

of the truce on 9 July was imminent, and the Mediator continued his efforts by attempting to

prolong the truce already in place and to completely demilitarize Jerusalem.[225] He contacted the

Security Council via cablegram on 5 July to appeal for a prolongation of the truce. He felt it was

time that "the parties to the truce must answer the question whether, in the absence of agreement

on the procedure and substance of mediation, they will again resort to armed conflict."[226] He

believed that the decision to continue hostilities would be "viewed by the world with the utmost

gravity."[227] He called on the United Nations to "urgently appeal to the interested parties" to

prolong the truce for a period of time to be determined in consultation with him.[228] His

proposals to prolong the truce were tentatively "accepted by the Jews but not by the Arabs," a

generalization of these groups that in itself was problematic considering the divisions within

both.[229]

On the matter of the truce, the mainstream Zionist Labor Party in charge of the

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[223] Ibid.
[224] Bernadotte, *Instead of Arms*, 199.
[225] UN Security Council Cablegram to the Secretary-General concerning the prolongation of the truce in Palestine, (S/865), 6 July, 1948.
[226] Ibid.
[227] Ibid.
[228] Ibid.
[229] Bernadotte, *Instead of Arms,* 199.

government did not speak for the Revisionists who were incensed by the proposed plan. The

Revisionists believed that the Bernadotte Plan proved that the Mediator was an enemy to their

vision of a complete Jewish territory. They also believed that the Zionist leadership was too

reliant on the "Anglo-Saxon bloc" and was pandering to the Western nations. These radical

Revisionists leaned politically more toward an alliance with the Soviets with whom they had

shared political interests in the region. Lehi believed that true independence would never exist

until they "freed themselves from the yolk of the West and aligned with the East."[230] They fell

right into the Cold War context of the time within a true East vs. West political atmosphere.

USSR Representative to the United Nations Andrei Gromyko unsurprisingly also took issue with

Bernadotte's suggestions.

In the 331st meeting of the Security Council on 7 July, the Soviet representative accused

Bernadotte of taking power into his own hands and ignoring the Partition Plan of November

1947.[231] He also claimed that the UN had not granted any power to the Mediator to reconsider

the previous decisions of the General Assembly, a statement that was certainly untrue. His point

was to accuse the Mediator of collusion with other interested parties, referring to "those hiding

behind his back, who are putting forward various kinds of unacceptable schemes" and "fanning

the flames."[232] While the Soviets saw Bernadotte as colluding with the West, to the Revisionists

he had become the very face of Western imperialism. Not surprisingly, it was the Arab

representatives on the Security Council that came to the Mediator's defense. They believed that

his proposals benefitted the Arabs on the issue of territory. But despite the arguments of the

United Nations representatives half-way around the world, the fact on the ground was that the

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[230] Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 230.
[231] United Nations Security Council, *Three Hundred and Thirty-First Meeting: Continuation of the discussion on the Palestine Question*, S/331 (7 July, 1948).
[232] Ibid.

truce was only two days away from ending and there was no extension in place.

The end of the first truce was fraught with "tension and nervousness" as breaches of the ceasefire became more frequent.[233] The truce personnel, upon learning that the truce was not to be renewed by the end of the ceasefire, were evacuated to Haifa and they actually left Palestine by plane on 8 July. Toward the end of the truce, Bernadotte's estimation was that no one was willing to reignite the war. He mentioned in his autobiography a secret meeting with King Abdullah that confirms that, at least on the Arab side, it was believed that "neither party was inclined to start the war anew." Without a prolongation of the truce, however, Egyptian forces attacked a day before the truce expired and the IDF began their offensive on all battlefronts in a calculated response.[234] The truce observers had acted gallantly according to Bernadotte's report to the Security Council. A few had even been killed or wounded.[235] Their sacrifices had not been in vain. Despite several complaints and violations of the truce it was considered a success. "Much bloodshed and destruction [had] been avoided and many lives spared."[236] Bernadotte's assessment of that effort was that "no substantial military advantage was gained by either side" and "on the whole, the truce worked well."[237] Effective as it was, the truce expired on 9 July and fighting resumed.

As hostilities officially reignited, the newly empowered and "belligerent" Israeli force began to reconquer much of the territory lost to the initial pan-Arab invasion.[238] Ben-Gurion thought it imperative to continue the fight to show Jewish strength and not allow the Arabs to feel that they had been bailed out by the UN. He exclaimed at a cabinet meeting 11 July, "the

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[233] UNSC, *Mediator on the observation of the Truce in Palestine*, (S/1025), 23.
[234] Morris, *1948*, 273.
[235] UNSC, *Mediator on the observation of the Truce in Palestine*, (S/1025), 24..
[236] Ibid., 25.
[237] Ibid., 25.
[238] Morris, *1948,* 273-296.

war must end with such a bombing of Damascus, Beirut, and Cairo, that they will no longer have a desire to fight us, and will make peace with us."[239] Ben-Gurion felt that an end to the war through diplomatic means would give the Arabs the impression that Israel was weak. At the beginning of renewed hostilities, Jerusalem was still contested but the IDF had made extraordinary strides in bolstering its military capabilities. This was in large part due to the commando forces of Lehi, who had successfully completed a movement around Jerusalem and had "effected an amicable conjunction of forces" between themselves and the IDF.[240] Their new offensive strategy was to secure all of Palestine. Lehi had hardened its position by this point and wanted to expel all of the Arabs, not just a majority. They had become self-confident in light of their victories and their control of territory. Their situation was "not at all as it was in 1938… [they possessed] strength and [were] able to create facts."[241] Israel referred to the fighting immediately following the truce as "the Ten Days." It lasted to 18 July and was filled with many short but bloody skirmishes.[242] The Security Council was forced to act swiftly. It was once again the responsibility of the Mediator and the Security Council to negotiate a new truce and a long term peace agreement before the Israelis could completely dominate the war. During "the Ten Days," Israeli advances forced the UN on 15 July to propose a new truce to begin in no more than three days.[243]

The continuation of fighting after the first truce and the refusal by both belligerent parties to prolong the ceasefire caused the United Nations to rethink its position in the conflict. The proposal for a second truce on 15 July was an example of the Security Council finally showing

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[239] Ibid., 273.
[240] Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 228.
[241] Ibid., 229.
[242] Morris, *1948*, 273-296.
[243] Ibid.

some willingness to use the powers granted in the UN Charter. They determined that the

continuation of hostilities represented a "threat to the peace" as defined in Article 39 of that

Charter.[244] According to Article 39, the Security Council retains the right to "determine the

existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and… decide what

measures shall be taken in accordance with Articles 41 and 42, to maintain or restore

international peace and security."[245] The following three articles of the Charter allowed for the

determination of action if this breach of the peace was agreed upon. Pursuant to Article 40, this

recommendation for a ceasefire represented a "call upon the parties to comply with…

provisional measures."[246] Article 41, however, allowed the United Nations to apply certain non-

military sanctions and the "complete or partial interruption of economic relations…and other

means of communication and the severance of diplomatic relations."[247] For the first time, the

United Nations considered flexing its power as outlined in their charter.

As the truce proposal suggested, if in the event the belligerent parties were undeterred by

these sanctions, Article 42 stated that the Security Council could call on its members to intervene

directly "by air, sea or land forces."[248] This was the first time that the United Nations had

stepped out of the mediation role in the conflict and threatened forceful intervention. In fact, the

resolution for a second truce actually called upon "all governments and authorities concerned" to

cooperate with the Mediator under the auspices of the original truce agreement of 29 May as if it

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[244] UN Security Council Resolution 54, (S/RES/54), 15 July, 1948.
[245] Charter of the United Nations: Chapter VII: *Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression*, Article 39.
[246] Charter of the United Nations: Chapter VII: *Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression*, Article 40.
[247] Charter of the United Nations: Chapter VII: *Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression*, Article 41.
[248] Charter of the United Nations: Chapter VII: *Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression*, Article 42.

had never ended.[249] The main difference in this truce was the situation in the city of Jerusalem.

The Security Council now demanded a ceasefire in the city no later than twenty four hours from

the adoption of the resolution and protection of the holy places.[250] The remainder of the truce

was to take effect no later than three days after the adoption of the resolution and last

indefinitely, and it did in fact begin three days later and into the fall.

The belligerents may have, for once, felt the power of the United Nations and its member

states. As Ben-Gurion said that Israel was not prepared to allow UN intervention to secure the

Jewish state through a ceasefire, he surely saw a military intervention as even more dangerous.

Lehi saw it as a "purely imperialist device" which "could only lead to economic as well as

military disaster."[251] To Lehi, Israel was no longer a struggling polity looking for international

legitimation. They were a fierce fighting force with military superiority on the verge of total

victory and a Jewish majority in Palestine. Israel Eldad of Lehi took a maximalist position when

he said that "the path of Hebrew liberation will be that of liberation throughout the world: the

path of blood. A conquered land is holier than one bought for money."[252] Despite the confident

opposition of the Revisionist paramilitary, however, the second truce took effect on 18 July and

lasted until the middle of October. The UN threat was serious and the Zionist leadership

acquiesced. The Arabs too accepted the truce conditions. Their beleaguered forces were more

concerned with retaining the territories gained before the first truce and not lost since. This truce

opened a new door for Bernadotte to work on his second proposal for a long term peace.

The second truce, however, began without anybody to enforce it and a frustrated

Bernadotte attempted to return to at least the moderate organization he had previously enjoyed

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[249] UNSC 54, (S/RES/54).
[250] Ibid.
[251] Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 229.
[252] Ibid.

during the first truce. At the end of the first truce all of his observers and security police had left

the country with the expectation of renewed fighting. With only one officer by his side and a

minimal staff, Bernadotte petitioned the Security Council to send help. Indeed he was frustrated

by the "armchair politicians, be they never so highly qualified," that made "theoretical decisions

of the very greatest importance without first finding out whether it is possible to carry them out

in practice."[253] He did eventually receive new observers from various nations and they were

"immediately dispatched to their various posts."[254] Bernadotte's mission continued, therefore,

and he met with various leaders over the duration of the truce. On 24 July, he flew to Beirut to

meet with members of the Arab League, including a "tired and disillusioned" Azzam Pasha.[255]

Bernadotte explained the Arabs' options at this critical juncture. On one hand, they could have

resumed the war in an effort to prevent the Jewish state from existing alongside them, in fact

their original goal. The risks that accompanied resuming hostilities, however, were clear and

included the detriment of international opinion and the development of an increasingly

dangerous situation regarding a stronger Israeli fighting force.   On the other hand, they could

have allowed the new truce to "drag on for months and years," though Bernadotte felt this too

would only hurt the Arabs.[256] His third suggested option, what he felt to be the best decision,

was to "recognize an independent Jewish state as soon as possible."[257] They had to make a

decision immediately. Bernadotte thought that Azzam Pasha "realizes deep down that the Arab

world cannot any longer hope for a Palestine in which there will not be an independent Jewish

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[253] Bernadotte, *To Jerusalem*, 182.
[254] Ibid., 183.
[255] Ibid.
[256] Ibid., 184.
[257] Ibid.

State."[258] This observation, written at the end of the summer and reflecting on the meeting of 24 July, illustrates perfectly how embedded the state of Israel had become in the region, politically and more importantly with physical presence, through the efforts of its forces including the Revisionist paramilitaries.

Bernadotte continued on to Tel Aviv to speak with the Provisional Jewish government in the new state of Israel. He had been told by an unnamed source that the government's "arrogance had increased during the ten days' fighting."[259] He attributed this to their victories and to the fact that the Arab Legion had pulled out of Lydda and Ramleh due to the Israeli importation of arms and fighting personnel connected, in part, to the Altalena incident. This arrogance was seen in "high-flown language" of the Israeli press. There were even bold statements that the government would be able to negotiate with the Arabs directly, without need of a foreign mediator.[260] Bernadotte rejected this concept outright. If for no other reason, aside from finding peace or keeping the UN involved in the conflict in a direct way, the Mediator had become very passionate about one particular issue with which his next tour of the region was intended to discuss. He needed to make sure that the issue of the Palestinian refugees, which had developed into a crisis, could be solved at the earliest possible time. He believed that only he could make this happen.

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[258] Ibid., 186.
[259] Ibid., 188.
[260] Ibid., 189.

CHAPTER 8: "ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES"

Harkening back to the original Iron Wall Doctrine, Zionists understood that the Palestinians were not willingly going to give up their homes for a Jewish homeland. Jabotinsky knew this as he wrote a section in "The Iron Wall" entitled "Arabs Not Fools."[261] He wrote that the Zionists "may tell them whatever we like about the innocence of our aims, watering them down and sweetening them with honeyed words to make them palatable, but they know what we want, as well as we know what they do not want."[262] This again was the basis of perpetual war. However, the concept that the Arabs could not be expelled was one that not only his successors would abandon, but the Labor leadership as well. His idea was to create the iron wall within the new Jewish state, should it ever exist, while naively maintaining some humanitarian equality for Palestinian Arabs. But by 1948, that concept was not only passé, it had been rejected outright. The mainstream Zionist leadership had adopted not only the idea of 'transfer,' a soft way of saying Palestinian expulsion, but a forcible removal of all Arabs from the lands of a future Jewish state. A leadership that included Ben-Gurion, Weizmann and Shertok, "anticipated the 'clearing of the land' in 1948."[263] Ben-Gurion echoed Jabotinsky's belief that the Palestinians would not go willingly. In a letter to his son as early as October 1937, he said, "we must expel Arabs and take their places…and, if we have to use force…to guarantee our own right to settle in those places—then we have force at our disposal."[264] What the leadership and the Revisionists did not take into account, however, was Jabotinsky's original understanding that the removal of the Arabs was simply impossible. Thus began a new dimension in 1948 of the unending war between Arabs and Jews.

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[261] Jabotinsky, "The Iron Wall."
[262] Ibid.
[263] Masalha, "The Historical Roots of the Palestinian Refugee Question," 38.
[264] Ibid.

The 'transfer' of Arabs out of Jewish lands began with the fighting in December 1947. It reached a boiling point just before the conventional war broke out and really began with Plan Dalet and the Deir Yassin incident on 9 April 1948. Even Jews were intimidated into leaving their homes in the early fighting, though it was the Arabs who experienced the more mass exodus throughout the conflict. According to a Palestinian teacher in Jerusalem, the "Jews launched a heavy attack" described as being "unlike anything heard in previous wars."[265] He continued, "no wonder this situation has made residents consider moving to another neighbourhood or town."[266] This was described in a 30 March entry of his diary, just before the attack on Deir Yassin, just outside of the holy city. In the months that followed, this sentiment was experienced all over historic Palestine, from Galilee to the Negev. Many Palestinians' villages were destroyed. They were "mortared, shelled and, occasionally, bombed from the air," but due to expenses, some units of the Haganah, later the IDF, destroyed Arab homes through looting or intentional destruction with the use of hand tools and bulldozers, even explosives placed by hand.[267] As historian Benny Morris has noted, this destruction of dwellings, individual homes or even whole villages, could be traced to the retaliatory practices of the Haganah and the British during the Arab uprising in the late 1930s. "Destroying the house of a terrorist or his accomplice was regarded as just punishment and as a deterrent."[268] This is a practice that has continued to the present day.

Ben-Gurion had taken notice of the destruction in Jerusalem as early as February 1948 and prophetically expressed his feelings to a Labor Party meeting. He hoped,

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[265] Benny Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947-1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 51.
[266] Ibid.
[267] Ibid., 156.
[268] Ibid.

What had happened in Jerusalem…could well happen in great parts of the country—if we [the Yishuv] hold on…And if we hold on, it is very possible that in the coming six or eight or ten months of the war there will take place great changes…and not all of them to our detriment. Certainly there will be great changes in the composition of the population of the country.[269]

As predicted, the resurgence of hostilities during the "Ten Days" after the first truce had ended increased the exodus of refugees, mostly to the north-eastern and far southern edges of Palestine. Grudgingly, Ben-Gurion had actually issued a directive to leave the Arab civilians caught in the fighting alone, and to leave their villages and dwellings intact. This politically motivated directive issued out of concerns over Ben-Gurion's power would ultimately be entangled with contradictions that continued Arab expulsion during the inter-truce period.[270] At this time he had been occupied as both Prime Minister and Defense Minister. Though reasons for the continued expulsion varied, it continued almost unabated and helped aid in the Zionist war effort. A report from Palmach, an Israeli special-forces unit that formerly worked with the Haganah, described the perceived advantages of the refugee exodus from Lydda and Ramleh. Besides removing a future threat, it had "clogged the routes of advance of the [Arab] Legion" as well as hampering the Arab states economically with "another 45,000 souls…Moreover, the phenomenon of the flight of tens of thousands will no doubt [create] demoralization in every Arab area [the refugees] reach…This victory will yet have great effect on other sectors."[271] The Palestinians were fleeing in droves and what material possessions left behind were gladly exculpated of Arab ownership and either destroyed or placed in the hands of Zionists.

Destruction of Arab property likely began with the retaliatory nature of the Haganah during the Arab Revolt, which created a culture of destruction. Although in the context of this

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[269] Ibid., 52
[270] Ibid., 198.
[271] Ibid., 211.

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war, these actions were also tactically sound and an effective method of extracting the spoils of war for the Jewish state. During the revolt, "destroying the house of a terrorist or his accomplice was regarded as just punishment and as a deterrent."[272] During the war, however, about 350 villages were "depopulated" and the majority of these were left "either completely or partly in ruins and uninhabitable."[273] Those that were not completely annihilated were taken by the new Jewish settlers, thus ensuring that the population map would remain changed and that there would be no return of the Palestinians that fled. This was important for not only logistical reasons, but also for a solidification of hegemonic identity. Robert Bevan, in his work describing the destruction of memory and the critical nature of manufacturing cultural hegemony in post-conflict zones, explained that the victor of such conflicts intends to rewrite the historical narrative of physical space. "This is the *active* and often systematic destruction of particular building types or architectural traditions…where the erasure of the memories, history and identity attached to architecture and place—enforced forgetting—is the goal itself. These buildings are attacked not because they are in the path of a military objective: to their destroyers they *are* the objective."[274] Once the land was physically altered and reconstituted as Zionist territory, there was nowhere for the Palestinians to return and no contested nature of those former villages. The displaced Arabs themselves became a primary concern of the UN Mediator who had begun seeing a crisis developing that needed to be addressed. The Jewish leadership, however, were unsure even if they were willing to continue discussions with the peacemaker in light of their recent successes.

On 26 July, after the second truce had begun, Bernadotte met again with Israeli Foreign

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[272] Ibid., 156.
[273] Ibid., 155.
[274] Bevan, *The Destruction of Memory,* 8.

Minister Shertok in Tel Aviv. He opened discussions "by asking for a definite statement as to whether the Jewish government wished to continue cooperation with [him] or not."[275] Bernadotte's own account of this period became more and more frustrated and strained. The situation was wearing on him and the arrogance of the Israelis was a definite annoyance. Shertok suggested a mediated round table meeting between the Jewish and Arab leadership. He thought it possible that their discussions could continue without the Mediator's involvement. Bernadotte's account contained no response to this suggestion, but he was clearly irritated at the proposal. He instead shifted to what he wanted to discuss the most, the issue of the Palestinian refugees.

It is important to note here that Bernadotte had dealt only with the Labor movement, which was in charge of Israel and helmed by Ben-Gurion. The Mediator had no direct dealings with the Revisionists, who were outside of the law, with the exception of those Irgun elements that had been absorbed by the IDF after the Altalena incident. The Labor movement, the internationally recognized leadership of the Jewish state, believed in operating within the law and insuring international legitimacy by a proper conduct of war. Plan Dalet aside, at least on paper the IDF did exactly that. The Revisionists, however, were able to operate outside of the law to implement the dispersal of the Palestinians. Ben-Gurion and his colleagues could denounce their actions and save political face. With the advent of war, the Iron Wall was being erected swiftly by both sides of the Zionist coin at the expense of the Arabs while global legitimacy was preserved. What to do after the war, however, was of great concern to the Mediator while he dealt with the leadership of the new state.

In the meeting between the UN Mediator and the Israeli Foreign Minister, Bernadotte

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[275] Bernadotte, *To Jerusalem*, 189.

questioned Shertok on the eligibility of return for the displaced Palestinians to their homes in

Palestine, a concept later referred to as repatriation or 'the right of return.' Shertok replied in the

negative. "The Jewish Government could under present conditions in no circumstances permit

the return of Arabs who had fled or been driven from their homes during the war."[276] Bernadotte

saw this statement as a clear indication that the Israeli government had no intentions of returning

to the conditions provided for it under the Partition Plan of November 1947. The return of Arabs

would relegate the Jews to a perpetual minority population. Bernadotte was shocked at the idea

that the Jews could politicize this situation and ignore "the humanitarian side of the matter."[277]

He was clearly unaware of the real situation, that the Palestinians were not simply being removed

or killed. Their homes, villages, shops and farmland were either being destroyed or confiscated

by new Jewish settlers, making any wholesale return of Palestinians much more complicated.

The Zionist settlement of former Arab land is a concept that continued to change the map, thus

making the partition of Palestine as proposed in November 1947 largely impossible.

The Israeli denial of the right of return crystallized into an unwavering steadfastness

during the months that followed their initial decision. The Israelis were acutely aware of the

changing, and by the end of the summer concretely altered, realities on the ground in Palestine.

They had everything to gain from the dispersion of Palestinian Arabs, whether they had left

willfully or otherwise, thus adding credence to the argument that the IDF and the Revisionist

paramilitaries were intentionally killing or removing them by force. Top Israeli officials in 1949

argued against repatriation by explaining these realities as they existed, and in fact had since the

summer before. They wrote that "during the war and the Arab exodus, the basis of their

economic life crumbled away. Moveable property…has disappeared…Thousands of town and

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[276] Ibid., 190.
[277] Ibid.

village dwellings have been destroyed in the course of the fighting or in order to deny their use to enemy forces…And of those which remain habitable, most are serving as temporary homes for [Jewish] immigrants."[278] Not only did the Palestinians have little of which to return, but if there was something, it had been confiscated by the new Israeli immigrants. The situation as envisioned by the Partition Plan of November 1947, though in no way perfect even then, had been literally uprooted.

Aside from a refusal to plan for a repatriation of the displaced Arab population, Israel also thought that the whole of Jerusalem should be within the Jewish state, which was a substantial modification of the Partition Plan as well as of Bernadotte's peace proposal. Interestingly, Bernadotte took comfort in knowing that he was not the only one willing to be flexible in his approach to the Partition Plan as he made suggestions for a prolonged peace.[279] Self-serving as it was, he was glad that even the Israeli leadership did not share the sentiment of the Soviet representatives to the UN who had berated his diversion from the agreed upon territorial assignments. However, this was still a deflection from what consumed Bernadotte for the remainder of the summer; the Palestinian refugee problem.

Bernadotte next travelled to Amman to meet with King Abdullah and the Transjordanian prime minister. He also conducted a preliminary examination of the refugee problem while there. His discussion with the Arab leadership was more productive than that with Shertok as they were willing to accept the present situation and claimed to be simply in a search for peace. They understood more than Azzam Pasha that there could no longer be a Palestinian state or a favorable outcome from the war for the Arabs without the presence of an independent Jewish state. Though supportive of the Palestinian refugees to a degree, the King and PM, like all other

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[278] Morris, *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem,* 254-255.
[279] Bernadotte, *To Jerusalem*, 190.

Arab nations at this point, were more concerned with the conflict. Bernadotte was still mainly concerned with the humanitarian situation that was developing.

In the same report submitted on behalf of the Mediator in September detailing the violations of the ceasefires, Bernadotte concluded with a discussion of the facet of this conflict that affected him most deeply. The Palestinian refugee problem, by the end of the summer, had reached terrible proportions. Bernadotte had discovered that it was "vaster and more baffling than [he] had imagined."[280] While crafting his progress report at this time, he claimed that the number of refugees was around three hundred thousand. Some historical records, however, have placed those numbers over four hundred thousand even by mid-summer.[281] In contrast, Bernadotte mentions that only seven thousand "Jewish women and children from… areas occupied by the Arabs sought refuge within Jewish-controlled territory."[282] These numbers of displaced Arabs, as well as the need to prevent the outbreak of epidemics and disturbances among the refugees, was seen as a humanitarian concern of the utmost importance to Bernadotte. He had almost lost sight of the violent struggles involved in the war and the irregular fighting forces which were a more immediate threat.

In fact, his original typewritten Progress Report of the United Nations Mediator on Palestine reflected this attitude. Completed the day before his death on 16 September, he at some point used a pen to scratch out the title of Part Three, "Humanitarian Work," and replaced

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[280] Ibid., 196.
[281] United Nations Security Council, *Report dated 16 September 1948 by the United Nations Mediator on the observation of the Truce in Palestine During the Period from 11 June to 9 July 1948*, S/1025 (5 October, 1948); see also Morris, *1948*, 309.
[282] United Nations Security Council, *Progress Report of the United Nations Mediator on Palestine Submitted to the Secretary-General for Transmission to the Members of the United Nations,* A/648 *(16 September, 1948).*

it with "Assistance to Refugees" to make more specific the problem as he saw it.[283] Bernadotte's

progress report had several pages in which he discussed the Palestinian refugee problem as it

existed at the time. In his estimation, "as a result of the conflict in Palestine, almost the whole of

the Arab population fled or was expelled from the area under Jewish occupation."[284] Some

responsibility lay with the United Nations, according to his report. Palestinians were not citizens

of the neighboring Arab states, often outnumbering "the local residents approximately 2:1," and

since they were under the British Mandate for Palestine they were within a "territory for whose

future the United Nations had assumed responsibility."[285] This observation was directed mainly

toward the immediate needs of the refugees, which included food and medicine but also "activity

to occupy the attention of the refugees."[286] Bernadotte was so concerned that he even took care

to address their mental well-being in his section on "immediate needs." As far as repatriation for

these displaced people, Bernadotte showed his misunderstanding of an already dire reality by

suggesting that refugees be allowed to return. "Even though in many localities their homes had

been destroyed… it was obvious that a solution for their difficulties could be more readily found

there than elsewhere."[287] Though he was half right, in that the Arab states were ill-equipped for

the massive influx of refugees, the land that the Palestinians had left was no longer waiting for

them.

In a report that covered so much of the war and the realities of what the conflict had been

during the summer of 1948, Bernadotte paid special attention, in fact ending his report with, the

Palestinian refugee crisis. Coupled with his personal account written that summer, it is clear that

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[283] Ibid. (original draft version, United Nations Archives and Records Management)
[284] Ibid.
[285] Ibid.
[286] Ibid.
[287] Ibid.

this was swiftly becoming his top priority, perhaps even more important than peace. He knew

that something had to be done. Unfortunately, this report would be the last one he ever wrote as

he travelled on a fateful tour of Jerusalem the next day that claimed his life.

CHAPTER 9: ASSASSINATION

For all of Bernadotte's commendable concern for the problems that befell the Palestinian refugees and the humanitarian cause as he saw it, namely repatriation or compensation for a displaced population suffering in exile, his peace proposal had already set in motion an enemy which would not be stopped. Israel Eldad, the ideological leader of Lehi, believed that "if the world listens to Bernadotte and pressures our weakling government into making compromises we will have lost our state. We can't let this happen."[288] He met in the Tel Aviv apartment of Lehi commander Nathan Friedman-Yellin along with the de facto leader Shamir. Together they represented the three leaders of the group the British called the Stern Gang and that in previous meetings had planned the assassinations of Lord Moyne and Sir Harold MacMichael, though the British High Commissioner for Palestine escaped injured. Political assassinations were nothing new to Lehi and the three had now set their sights on the offensive UN Mediator and the international meddling that he represented. "Over wine and fruit the three decided to kill the Mediator and have a phantom organization called the 'Fatherland Front' publicly claim responsibility for the crime."[289] After their deliberation on the matter, they communicated their wishes immediately to Yehoshua Zetler who was Lehi commander in Jerusalem. Zetler was to carry out the plot along with his intelligence officer, Stanley Goldfoot, and his deputy, Yehoshua Cohen. Cohen was an ardent Zionist who was "reputed for his courage and ingenuity" and "did not hate, or need to hate, his enemies in order to 'execute' them in cold blood and in good conscience."[290] Goldfoot, as a journalist, had access to the information about Bernadotte's habits

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[288] Kurzman, *Ben-Gurion*, 300; A life-long journalist and historian of the Israel/Palestine conflict, Dan Kurzman interviewed the leaders of Lehi that plotted the assassination of Bernadotte to put an end to his plans and to send a message to the international community.
[289] Ibid.
[290] Ibid.

and schedule that would aid in the details of the assassination mission. Leading up to the day of

their operation, leaflets had been distributed warning Bernadotte to leave Palestine as well as

issuing threats on his life because of his proposals. There is no evidence, however, that

Bernadotte was ever aware of these specific warnings in the days that led up to his death. As the

details of his murder would show, he was not in the least concerned for his safety during his trip

to Jerusalem in September of 1948.

The account of the Mediator's assassination and the events that immediately preceded

and followed were detailed in a thorough memorandum sent to the United Nations by the

Permanent Representative of Sweden, Sven Grafström, on 24 March 1950. The memorandum

was thorough as it explained both the Mediator's mission and the details of the irregular forces

on the ground at the time. The memorandum is largely an indictment of the Israeli investigators'

handling of the crime scene and attempts to actually apprehend the culprits. The memorandum

linked the Revisionist assassins with a possible plot by the government that has never been

substantiated, though the outcome was beneficial for Zionism as a whole.

According to the memorandum, Count Bernadotte's itinerary for that fateful weekend

included a round trip through the region, though it did not contain any details on what he wished

to accomplish in each place he was to visit. After finishing work on his final proposal on

Thursday, 16 September, he boarded his iconic white plane provided him by the United Nations

and left his headquarters on Rhodes. He went to Beirut that morning accompanied by Lieutenant

Jan de Geer, chief of his personal staff, Dr. Rudolf Ullmark, his physician, Ms. Barbro Wessel,

his secretary and his valet, Kull.[291] The purpose of the trip to Beirut was to pick up two more

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[291] UNSC, Communication, (S/1474), 27 March 1950, 9.

passengers, UN Truce Commission Chief of Staff General Aage Lundström and his aide-de-camp, Colonel Miles Flach.[292]

The convoy reached Damascus that same day by midafternoon and spent the rest of the day and night awaiting a flight to Jerusalem. At 10:30 am Friday, 17 September, Bernadotte and his party landed at Qalandiya airfield in the Arab sector north of Jerusalem, ignoring a warning that their aircraft would be fired on. The tension in the area was palpable, but no credible threat was included with this communication. There they met with several United Nations observers. Most notable among them was French Colonel André Sérot, the chief UN observer in Jerusalem. Bernadotte, Lundström, and several other observers left the airfield by car for Ramallah in order to see the commander of the Arab Legion, Brigadier General Norman Lash. The rest of the party went south to Jerusalem to await their return and to journey together across the front lines. Entrance into Jerusalem, which would take the convoy through the front lines, had been protested by Lundström, however to no avail. Bernadotte wished to take the same risks as every other observer under his command and "no one had the right to stop him passing through the lines wherever he wished."[293] This was a sentiment shared by Bernadotte several times over the course of the dangerous journey ahead.[294] Lundström in fact suggested an armed escort for their trip back to Jerusalem but was met with the same rejection by Bernadotte who felt it "his right as Mediator to go wherever he wanted in Palestine unarmed and without protection."[295]

Lundström ignored this order and secured an armed escort to meet them further up the road to Jerusalem while the convoy continued on to meet the rest of their party at the American School in Jerusalem. They crossed the front lines to the Jewish side at 12:30 that afternoon and

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[292] Ibid.
[293] Ibid., 10.
[294] Ibid.
[295] Ibid.

met with American Colonel Frank Begley of the United Nations and an Israeli liaison officer,

Captain Moshe Hillman. There was no further Israeli escort from that point. Bunche later

condemned the Israeli Provisional Government for this lack of protection for the Mediator.

Jerusalem was a chaotic place at the time both for the residents and the fighting forces. A *New*

York Times correspondent cabled a message to his offices in New York describing the situation

in the city two days after Bernadotte's tour:

> The people here have developed what is called the 'Jerusalem crouch.' When crossing
> danger zones they stoop to make themselves smaller targets for sharpshooters with
> telescopic sights. Many homes are pockmarked by machine gun bullets, sandbags take
> the place of smashed windows. The standard ration of water is half a pail a day. Food is
> expensive and diets drab. There is no fresh meat available and things like vegetables and
> fresh milk are hard to come by.[296]

This description gives a small window into the horrors of the war-torn city that the convoy was

expected to drive through without an armed guard. Regardless of Bernadotte's lack of concern

and sense of diplomatic right, General Lundström was correct in assuming it was the

responsibility of the Israeli military and government to provide protection in this war zone.

Bernadotte's wish was to visit Government House, which was situated in a neutral zone

in the south of the city. He wanted to examine it as a future headquarters for the remainder of his

mission. After lunch at the YMCA building, the convoy departed south for Government House

at 3 p.m. Two cars were used to accommodate the observers joining Bernadotte, a De Soto and a

Chrysler both with the United Nations flag and a white flag. The flags were important since the

cars were without an escort and all of the passengers were unarmed and passing through

dangerous territory. The route taken was out of the way and filled with small detours due to the

military situation in the city at the time and, it is important to note, was the only route available

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[296] "Palestine Tragedy," editorial in the *New York Times*, September 19, 1948. ProQuest
(108286882).

to get between these two points. Goldfoot relayed this information to his Lehi co-conspirators as

he heard it and the schedule over the amplifier at the government press office.[297] In the Swedish

Representative's memorandum, he makes mention many times of the fact that Bernadotte's

arrival and destinations were easily known to those who wished to have that information. The

fact that his route was the only realistic one suggests that the return journey from Government

House to their staging point at the YMCA in the north could be plotted and timed by the would

be assailants. The ten minute journey to Government House was uneventful other than a stop at

an Israeli military checkpoint.[298]

The inspection of the quarters at Government House, guided by Dr. Fasel of the Red

Cross, went smoothly. The convoy then left. After a short detour to visit a nearby school, the

party began their journey back to the YMCA. Dr. Fasel drove his own car and the now three

vehicle convoy consisted of five observers in the front car, Dr. Fasel in the second, and five in

the third car, including Count Bernadotte and Col. Sérot. Sérot had made a last minute seat

change before the trip back to Jewish-held Jerusalem. He switched with Capt. Hillman, who was

in between Bernadotte and Lundström in the back of the third car, so that he could speak with

Bernadotte. He explained that his wife was Jewish and had survived Dachau. She owed her

survival to Bernadotte and wanted to thank him. This ill-timed display of gratitude cost him his

life.

The convoy then proceeded back along the route they had taken to Government House

and, passing through the aforementioned checkpoint once more, they came along a small police

roadblock, which soon let them pass. While passing through the El Qatamon quarter of

Jerusalem, the convoy reached a hill where they were stopped by a jeep that blocked the road

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[297] Kurzman, *Ben-Gurion*, 301.
[298] UNSC, Communication, (S/1474), 27 March 1950, 12-13.

where there were buildings on both sides. The jeep contained a driver and three armed men, all

Jewish and wearing Israeli military uniforms: Zetler, Cohen, and Goldfoot. Upon stopping the

convoy, two of the armed men exited the jeep and proceeded along the right hand side of the first

car while the third walked along the left side of the convoy towards the last car in which

Bernadotte was sitting. After Capt. Hillman pleaded with the men in Hebrew to allow the

convoy to pass, all three men opened fire. The two men in the front shot out the tires of the first

car while the third plunged his weapon into the open rear window of the third and opened fire. A

number of bullets struck both Bernadotte and Sérot. The three men quickly fled, two in the jeep

and one on foot, leaving behind the barrel and magazine of his Schmeisser machinegun. Sérot

and Bernadotte were killed instantly. In a post mortem examination in Haifa it was determined

that Bernadotte had been struck six times in the left arm, chest and upper part of his stomach and

Sérot eighteen times in his right arm, head and chest.[299]

After taking a quick toll of what had happened, an event that had lasted only a few

seconds, the drivers sped off to the Old Hadassah Hospital only a few minutes' drive away where

it was confirmed that both of the men in the backseat had been killed. On the scene, after the

vehicles had left, several witnesses were questioned by the Israeli police, who were only a couple

of hundred meters away at the time. A Jewish soldier nearby had run to the scene, retrieving the

machinegun parts that had been dropped by the assassin. This began the preliminary stage of an

Israeli investigation that came under much scrutiny in the years that followed. The handling of

the crime scene was disorganized. It was not cordoned off for some time. The machinegun parts

were passed between several agencies and were thus heavily contaminated evidence. The

witnesses were never questioned fully and a line-up of suspects was never provided for the

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[299] Ibid., 14-17.

identification of the assassins by the ten other officials in the convoy. The lack of a line-up came

under particular scrutiny as the weeks following the murder were marked by a round-up of Lehi

members, "partly in order to find those responsible for the murder and partly in order to wipe out

the Stern Gang."[300] On the evening of the murder, a communication reached UN observers

containing a declaration by *Hazit Hamoledeth* (the Fatherland Front) that they had committed the

crime. Leaflets in Hebrew were also distributed around Jerusalem that same evening, stating:

> On the 17th of September 1948 we have executed Count Bernadotte.
> Count Bernadotte served as an open agent of the British enemy. His task was to
> implement the British plans for the surrender of our country to a foreign rule and the
> exposure of the Yishuv. He did not hesitate to suggest the handing-over of Jerusalem to
> Abdullah. Bernadotte acted without interruption towards the weakening of our military
> efforts and was responsible for the blood-shed.
> This will be the end of all the enemies and their agents.
> This will be the end of all the enemies of Jewish freedom in the Homeland.
> There will be no foreign rule in the Homeland. There shall be no longer foreign
> Commissioners in Jerusalem.
>   Hazit Hamoledeth, 17th September, 1948[301]

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[300] Ibid., 19.
[301] Ibid., 54.

CHAPTER 10: ISRAEL AFTER BERNADOTTE

The assassination of Count Folke Bernadotte and its aftermath created ripples in Israel that were felt for decades. With the UN Mediator out of the way, the Revisionists transformed once again, and the Palestinian refugee crisis lost its biggest advocate. The discussion continued, Israeli politics whipped into a flurry, and the war ended, thus cementing the Jewish state, and the continuum of conflict with the Palestinians and surrounding Arab states. The processes that led from Jabotinsky to Bernadotte ended the Mediator's life and began a trend that persisted during the formative period of Israel's existence.

On the account of swift investigations by the Israeli military, Ben-Gurion declared a state of emergency in Jerusalem and quickly determined that the Fatherland Front was a branch of Lehi. However, there was no evidence that the front ever existed. During the first week after the assassination, 184 Lehi members in Jerusalem and 82 in the rest of the country were detained.[302] The suspects were sent to "detention camps" and large caches of arms were seized all across the country, particularly in Jerusalem.[303] Ben-Gurion called "'on the nation to rise as one man against the enemy within its midst' and to 'give active and unhesitating assistance to the army and police in apprehending the assassins and their accomplices and expunging the stain of terrorism from the soil' of Israel."[304] During the period of the British Mandate, Israelis had been reluctant to aid in the apprehension of terrorist groups because they were united against a common enemy, the British. According to journalist Julian Louise Meltzer of the *New York Times* in 1948, "Zionists had political grievances against the British Government and felt that terrorism would be best eradicated by removing its cause rather than by employing

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[302] Ibid., 19.

[303] "Arms Seized in Jerusalem." *The Palestine Post*, September 20, 1948. Historical Jewish Press, accessed 25 February 2015, www.jpress.org.il.

[304] "The U.N. Must Act." *The New York Times*, September 19, 1948. ProQuest (108285624).

palliatives."[305] By this point of the conflict, however, terrorism was becoming a black eye on the

legitimacy of the state and the people that wanted to see the fighting come to an end. Ben-

Gurion's call for public assistance in the apprehension of the assassins showed the seriousness

with which the Jewish state admonished terrorist acts near the end of the year. The use of the

word terrorist is itself revealing. These groups were Jewish brothers-in-arms working toward the

same goal, but were now involved in violent acts that the government was unable to publicly

support. "The worst enemies of Israel are those within its borders…no Arab armies could have

done so much harm in so short a time."[306]

After the death of Bernadotte, the Provisional Government passed the "Emergency

Regulations for the Prevention of Terrorism" Ordinance that defined terrorism and the

punishments that accompanied such a verdict. A terrorist organization, according to the

ordinance, was defined as "a body of persons which in its operations makes use of acts of

violence which are liable to cause the death of a person or to injure them, or threats of such acts

of violence," making no mention of the political nature of such acts.[307] Having been drafted in

September, just days after the Mediator's assassination, this was clearly in response to and

directed at the actions of Lehi, though it would define for years the policy of Israel toward the

1948 Palestinians. The ordinance also mandated that any person accused of this crime would be

tried before military tribunal. Friedman-Yellin and another Lehi commander, Matityahu

Shmuelevitz, were captured along with others of their Lehi brethren shortly after in Haifa. The

two commanders were formally charged by the Military Prosecutor under the Emergency

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[305] Julian Louise Meltzer, "Israelis Are Attempting to Root Out Terrorists," *The New York Times*, September 26, 1948. ProQuest (108294805).
[306] "The U.N. Must Act."
[307] UN Security Council, "Cablegram…from Ralph Bunche to the Secretary-General Transmitting a Summary of Emergency Regulations for the Prevention of Terrorism Issued by the Defence Minister of the Provisional Government of Israel," (S/1008), 22 September, 1948.

Regulations (Prevention of Terrorism) ordinance "with being leaders of an illegal terrorist organization" and Friedman-Yellin "was also charged with possessing an arms store allegedly discovered in his house."[308] Even two school girls were detained and tried posting Lehi posters that incited violence against the Mediator. However, their testimonies, among others, claimed that Lehi in Israel was a legal political organization and the acts of those in Jerusalem, a territory not officially under Israeli control, were not under their command jurisdiction.[309]

In fact, most of the detained Lehi commanders and soldiers claimed that the group had become legitimate upon Israeli independence on 14 May, at least within Israeli jurisdictional boundaries. In Friedman-Yellin's testimony to a military court he pointed out that he was a civilian and that he was being targeted. He felt that the decision of guilt for him and other Lehi members was predetermined.[310] He also declared that there was no connection between Lehi and the Fatherland Front and clung to the guise that the Front was the ones responsible, though he knew full well that they had never existed in the first place.[311] He claimed that "it was clear that the arrests were not for interrogation but to break up the party."[312] The search for the assassins, however, never produced any viable suspects and not a single member of Lehi was convicted for the murders of either Bernadotte or Sérot.

The outcomes sought by Lehi were clear and ultimately came to fruition. Bernadotte's plan for Palestine and the assistance to refugees was abandoned after his assassination. Israel

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[308] "Charged." *The Palestine Post*, October 15, 1948. Historical Jewish Press, accessed 25 February 2015, www.jpress.org.il.
[309] "Claim L.H.Y. is Legal: Two Girls Face Military Court." *The Palestine Post*, November 9, 1948. Historical Jewish Press, accessed 25 February 2015, www.jpress.org.il.
[310] "Friedman Yellin Lectures Military Court for Six Hours." *The Palestine Post*, December 15, 1948. Historical Jewish Press, accessed 25 February 2015, www.jpress.org.il.
[311] "Friedman-Yellin Denies Charges: Claims L.H.Y. Has No Connection with F.F." *The Palestine Post*, December 16, 1948. Historical Jewish Press, accessed 25 February 2015, www.jpress.org.il.
[312] "Friedman Yellin Lectures Military Court."

won control over the bulk of historic Palestine and the refugee crisis remained unsolved. Though

the Palestinian refugee problem has continued to be discussed ever since, there would be no such

voice for the displaced Arabs as Bernadotte's. After Dr. Bunche took over mediation duties, a

continuing war was interspersed with cease-fires. However, he was eventually able to complete

the mediation process and armistices were signed between Israel and the individual Arab nations

throughout the early part of 1949. Following Bernadotte's work, his efforts earned him a Nobel

Peace Prize in 1950.

In a *New York Times* article on 26 September, 1948 an unknown Lehi soldier made it

clear how the Mediator was viewed by his group:

> The Homeland Front sees Israel's principal enemy in imperialism. Bernadotte was killed
> primarily because the Homeland Front regarded him primarily as an agent of
> imperialism. He came to be seen as Anglo-American attempts to whittle down Israel's
> sovereignty and just territorial claims.[313]

Even Ben-Gurion saw Bernadotte as a hindrance to the creation of Israel when asked to recall his

actions during the 1948 war. Henri Vigier, a Special Adviser who played a key role in the

mediation process, later recalled a talk between Bunche and Ben-Gurion in which the premier

said that "neither the Great Powers nor the U.N. had helped Israel when she was attacked by the

Arab States in 1948."[314] When Bunche reminded him of Bernadotte's involvement, Ben-Gurion

"did not seem to have any recollection of the role played by Count Bernadotte at the time. He

expressed regret at [his] death, then said emphatically that he had done them harm."[315] It is

worth noting a discovery by Israeli historian Michael Bar-Zohar seventeen years after the events

of 1948. He found in Ben-Gurion's journal, dated 19 September 1948, the three names of the

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[313] Meltzer, "Israelis Are Attempting to Root Out Terrorists."
[314] Confidential Communications from Henri Vigier, Special Adviser to Chief of Staff of the
United Nations Truce Supervision Organization, 28 May, 1959, (Original, United Nations
Archives and Records Management)
[315] Henri Vigier, 28 May, 1959.

men responsible for assassinating Bernadotte.[316] Only two days after he was killed, Ben-Gurion

knew the names of those suspected of killing the Mediator. Ben-Gurion claimed that he did not

know at first that these men were in fact those responsible. But upon calling in one of the three

assailants with whom the PM had "grown friendly" over the years, but who was not named for

his protection, Ben-Gurion said "he confessed."[317]

Had Bernadotte lived one more week, he would have met the UN in Paris to lay out his

new plan for peace, the same plan that concluded with an in depth survey of the refugee crisis,

and the plan later submitted by Dr. Bunche in his name. The new plan was essentially a revision

of the first "Bernadotte Plan." In fact, American and British delegates attempted that week to

rush it through the UN General Assembly, both of which very much in favor of his conclusions.

U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall lauded Bernadotte for his efforts and for his fair

approach to negotiations.[318] These efforts, however, faltered in face of opposition from the

Soviet bloc states that felt that Bernadotte took liberties and was a puppet of the Western

democracies. The plan fell to third on the committee's agenda.[319] A rumor surfaced in a

newspaper article that Bernadotte was set to call on UN military action pursuant to Article 42 of

its charter, though the final report submitted by Bunche does not explicitly mention that

request.[320] Bernadotte had definitely left that option open, however. He conceded that he did

"not consider it to be within [his] province to recommend to the Members of the United Nations

a proposed course of action on the Palestine question" and that it was the responsibility of its

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[316] Bar-Zohar, *Ben-Gurion*, 180.

[317] Ibid., 181.

[318] Harvey Joseph Fields, "Pawn of Empires: A Study of United States-Middle East Policy, 1945-1953," PhD. Diss.. Rutgers the State University of New Jersey, 1975. ProQuest (302778634), 409.

[319] Ibid.

[320] Raymond Daniell, "Palestine Poses Grave Problem for Big Powers," *The New York Times*, September 19, 1948. ProQuest (108287201).

members to work "through the appropriate organs."[321] He felt that military force for any

involved party was not the answer to peace in Palestine but did at length argue that force by the

Arabs or Jews should not be tolerated and that the UN needed to be more involved in the

situation.

Were Bernadotte the representative of one nation, there would be retaliation, militarily or

economically; but "what, then, will the nations do about the cold-blooded murder of a man who,

in theory at least, represented them all?"[322] That was a question that confronted the international

community. If military action were to be taken by the international body, who would be willing

to provide that sort of force? The United States and Soviet Union were the first to recognize the

Israeli state and were steeped in Cold War posturing that could not afford an armed escalation of

any kind. Also, the U.S. was in an election year and could not afford engaging in armed conflict

just three years out of the Second World War, particularly in a Jewish state since there was such

a large Jewish-American constituency. In response to objections from some of his advisors,

Truman said, "I'm sorry gentlemen, but I have to answer to hundreds of thousands who are

anxious for the success of Zionism; I do not have hundreds of thousands of Arabs among my

constituents."[323] Fifty eight nations were represented by the Mediator and their only response

after his death was to demand an investigation and replace him. That is a clear sign of their

inability, or lack of desire, to act in what was their first real test of effectiveness.[324] Ralph

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[321] UNSC, *Progress Report of the United Nations Mediator*, 16 September 1948 (A/648).
[322] Daniell, "Palestine Poses Grave Problem for Big Powers."
[323] Harry S. Truman quoted in Rashid Khalidi, *Resurrecting Empire: Western Footprints and America's Perilous Path in the Middle East* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004), 121.
[324] The UN's unwillingness to act could stem from the recent Jewish tragedy of the Holocaust, causing international sympathy to override sound judgement. The Cold War context and Truman's election cycle may have also been powerful factors that contributed to the international community's unwillingness to get involved militarily with a Jewish state in the Middle East,

Bunche, in succeeding Bernadotte, did not carry the voice that the first Mediator held in the UN and largely let his predecessor's priorities fade away with him.

Bunche inherited a position as Mediator of a conflict that was already under an indefinite truce and experienced an easier transition as he had already been acting as Bernadotte's assistant during the war. His goals were, comparatively, limited and though there continued to be violations of the truce on both sides, his main priority was a lasting peace between Israel and the Arab states. In November the UN drafted a resolution calling for an armistice between the states involved in the conflict. It was thus Bunche's job to seek out their representatives and negotiate such a peace. In this, Bunche was effective. By the middle of the next year, Israel had agreed to armistices with the countries of Lebanon, Syria, Transjordan, and Egypt, with the fighting forces of Iraq and Saudi Arabia falling under the agreements of those countries. In his report of 26 July 1949, Bunche could announce that "the fighting in Palestine has ended."[325] Before that end was reached however, the Acting Mediator showed where his efforts lacked in respect to his predecessor.[326]

It became clear that a priority of Bernadotte's was the Palestinian refugee problem, an issue he studied greatly while under fire and facilitating two truces between the warring parties. Bernadotte, within weeks had introduced a truce in Palestine. Though that ceasefire could not be

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perhaps leaving them more interested in what this could mean for future positive political implications.

[325] UN Security Council "Report on the Present Status of the Armistice Negotiations and the Truce in Palestine," (S/1357), 26 July 1949.

[326] It is important to note in the next section that, while Bunche was successful in reaching armistice, his lack of attention to that which Bernadotte had become so passionate further argues the importance of the late Mediator. It could be said that Bernadotte would have been unable to reach solution for the Palestinian refugees and Bunche was successful where Bernadotte had not been. However, by illustrating Bunche's skewed priorities, Bernadotte's legacy is lost and the issue went unresolved. This is paramount in understanding one of the key points of how this research argues that the Revisionist transformation that led to assassination was vital to the creation of Israel in the form it took.

extended due to objections by both sides pertaining to advantages gained, he was able to institute

another, indefinite, truce which outlasted even his own life. On top of those efforts, he was able

to see the growing problem of refugees and humanitarian issues surrounding the conflict.

Bunche, on the other hand, in his report on the armistices the next year, never once mentioned

the refugee crisis which continued to grow. In fact, there is no official document from the

Acting Mediator that referenced the displaced Palestinians. A major violation of the truce under

his supervision, during October 1948, was an Israeli advance in both Galilee and the Negev, the

two areas to which the refugees had fled. There was even a report by Bunche on the Israeli

occupation of Lebanese villages in the frontier and within Lebanon proper, as well as organized

looting by the IDF of these homes and farmlands. The situation was getting worse and Bunche's

answer was less than expected.

In December, the UN drafted a resolution that established the Palestine Conciliation

Commission, a body that would "assume… the functions given to the United Nations Mediator

on Palestine."[327] In the midst of mediating negotiations between Israel and Egypt, Bunche saw

this as a welcome sign of relief. Rather than heading that body that would absorb, in so far as it

felt necessary, his meditation duties, Bunche chose to step aside. In a cable to the UN in

January, he called attention to the resolution establishing the Conciliation Commission,

essentially requesting to terminate his duties. He admittedly could not "predict… whether

similar negotiations [to those of Egypt] involving other Arab States will take place in the near

future."[328] Instead of continuing the peace process, Bunche was trying to be relieved. By the

time the armistices were signed in July 1949, he ended his report on those negotiations and the

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[327] UN General Assembly, "Report of the First Committee," (A/776), 7 December 1948.
[328] UN Security Council, "Cablegram Dated 17 January 1949 from the Acting Mediator to the Secretary-General Transmitting a Communication to the President of the Security Council Concerning the Palestine Conciliation Commission," (S/1215), 18 January, 1949.

truces that accompanied the war, with another plea to let the commission take over his duties. He called attention once again to that resolution and requested the "termination or the transfer to the [commission] of such functions as now remain to the position of Mediator under Security Council resolution."[329] With the war over, "there is no longer any useful function to be performed by the Mediator."[330] For his efforts, Bunche was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1950.

By the end of 1948, the adoption of the Palestine Conciliation Commission should have negated the ineffectiveness of the Acting Mediator to work toward a refugee settlement, instead Israeli power dominated and the status quo remained in place. The resolution that established the commission also set forth rules that the UN was expected to uphold regarding the refugees. It stated clearly the UN's outline for the right of return. The General Assembly, in UN Resolution 194, resolved:

> …that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbours should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.[331]

This resolution, thanks to Bernadotte and in spite of Bunche's lack of concern with the problem, should have been the basis for solving the Palestinian refugee problem in a timely fashion, even against the reality of destroyed or occupied homes and villages. Once again, however, the UN would show just how ineffective it could be as it would resist acting aggressively to enforce its own resolutions. Instead, the state of Israel began its political process in the fall and winter of

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[329] UNSC "Report on the Present Status…," (S/1357), 26 July, 1949.
[330] Ibid.
[331] UNGA, "Report of the First Committee," (A/776), 7 December 1948.

1948 and 1949 unencumbered by the plight of the Palestinians. The new national narrative

would build from this point on into a new era of statehood, awaiting yet another transformation.

CHAPTER 11: THE JEWISH STATE

Following the actions of the UN Mediator in the summer of 1948, the war continued for a while but open hostilities eventually ceased. The war had created a new reality that left displaced Palestinians stuck in the middle, solidified animosity between Jews and Arabs in the region, and began the formation of a national narrative in Israel. The Iron Wall Doctrine was firmly in place. Politics were paramount in the formation of the state, but they were also important to what it meant to be Israeli. The events that occurred over the next three decades shaped that identity and the Israeli identification of the Palestinians. First under Labor leadership, Israel helped construct the basis of what is now understood as the Israel/Palestine conflict. The memory of Zionist violence either disappeared or became canonized as heroic and legendary. At the same time, the identity of the Arabs in the eyes of Israelis was defined through a history of violence. Historian Tarak Barkawi pointed out that "In and through war, people on both sides come to intensified awareness of one another, reconstruct images of self and other, initiate and react to each other's moves. To be at war is to be interconnected with the enemy."[332] Joanna Bourke offers a further insight into collective memory that echoes what Israeli historian Eran Kaplan said about the concept of history being written by the victors in Israel. She said that:

> Too often, memory is portrayed as simply an elite production, imposing a dominant view on the populace. While not disputing the fact that the state is certainly at the heart of memory-making, it remains important to identify what and which part of the state is imposing their script on which others.[333]

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[332] Tarak Barkawi, *Globalization and War* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2006), xiii.

[333] Joanna Bourke, "New Military History," in *Palgrave Advances in Modern Military History*, edited by Matthew Hughes and William J. Philpott (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 275.

The Labor party, or Mapai, was able to disband the Revisionist paramilitaries, thus establishing

the Labor movement's influence over the creation of memory in Israel. At the same time the

actions of the underground gained legendary status and were also legitimized. Street names in

Israel to this day still honor those once deemed to have been terrorists. That process actually

began before the war was even over.

In the fall of 1948, Nathan Friedman-Yellin and others went on trial in Israel for their war

crimes, which only provided them with a political platform. Friedman-Yellin was ultimately

exonerated and even elected into the Knesset, the Israeli parliament.[334] Around the time of

Bernadotte's assassination and the disbanding of Lehi, a general amnesty was issued by the

Provisional Government that cleared all persons on trial or in prison of similar crimes. After

Lehi was disbanded, many of its fighters in Jerusalem were absorbed by the IDF, with the

exception of some who, like Shamir, went underground once again. After becoming aware of

discrimination within the IDF against former Lehi members, Shamir set up a clandestine meeting

with a high ranking Israeli official who turned out to be the Deputy Minister of Defense, Shaul

Avigur. With a promise he would not be arrested, he met with Avigur and pleaded the case of

the former members of Lehi:

> Lehi is through with its former role…We may perhaps go into politics. The degree of
> illegality must be annulled and Lehi members must be released from jail. If not, we shall
> never feel completely safe and the underground will never totally die.[335]

Avigur wanted the names of Bernadotte's assassins in trade for any such amnesty. He promised

that they would not be arrested. He promised that he just wanted the names for filing purposes,

so the state would know. Shamir responded with a simple, "No." A few days later, the

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[334] Heller, *The Stern Gang*, 265.
[335] Shamir, *Summing Up*, 75-76.

government acquiesced to his demands anyway.[336] The general amnesty was signed by Ben-

Gurion and all Lehi and Irgun members at the time incarcerated were released.

Many of the Revisionists now turned to politics and went on to hold high office, even as

prime minister, as was the case with Shamir and the Irgun leader, Menachem Begin, but it was

the Labor party that ran the nation for the next three decades. Immediately following the war,

Ben-Gurion's Israel found itself a Zionist island floating in a sea of hostile states and of

questionable legitimacy. The Arab states remained hostile and the international community had

not yet accepted fully the idea of the state built on war. What became Israel's national borders

had changed from the agreed upon Partition Plan, strayed from Bernadotte's proposals and, as

Jabotinsky would have it, were created through military action. As pointed out earlier, this was

also the view of the new prime minister. Ben-Gurion, for all of his political and ideological

differences with the Revisionist founder, was a man of action that, at least militarily when it

came to the Palestinians, was more than sympathetic to the Iron Wall Doctrine. The Declaration

of Independence signed in May 1948 called for a constitution to be constructed that would, like

the American government, be the ruling document of the land. However, like the British, the

fledgling government decided not to draft a constitution, most likely at the behest of Ben-Gurion

himself.[337] That decision placated the various rights hoped for by the complex Jewish groups in

Israel, avoiding enumerated state mandates that could advantage one group over another. It also

maintained what the original declaration for the state had subtly left open for the future; a nation

without defined boundaries, one that could be expanded. The Basic Laws that followed, a form

of legislation that circumvented the need for a constitution and left power in the ruling party's

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[336] Ibid.
[337] Smith, 221.

hands, gave Ben-Gurion the freedom to operate almost without impunity to expand the boundaries of the 1948 state.

Under the Labor Party's leadership the main threat to the Jewish state was the surrounding hostile Arabs. Governments like Egypt and Syria, Jordan and Lebanon became the focus of the Labor prime ministers. They saw those Arab militaries as the real threat to their existence. At the same time, they needed to build a state that would define Israeli life and politics aside from their foreign policy concerns, effectively separating policies toward those Palestinians still living within Israel and the foreign Arab governments. Historian Gershon Shafir described the Labor dominance of this period as "a Eurocentric colonial project that excluded most Mizrachim, Palestinian Arabs, and women from its benefits, and presented its successors with the pressing task of decolonization."[338] By that he meant that the Labor leadership had always been concerned most with the colonization process of Israel, originally built on the back of Jewish labor, and then an established class order that harkened back to the class struggles of Eastern Europe. The Mizrachim were a lower class than those of European origin, or Ashkenazim. The Palestinian Arabs, or the Israeli Arabs remaining within the borders of the new state known as the "1948 Arabs," were the lowest, proletariat class in the region.

During the first two decades of Labor dominance in Israel, the Palestinian population had been reduced dramatically because of the war and they were thus not an internal threat, but were considerably restricted in their Israeli citizenship. Their "rights were largely suspended in practice," as they were administered by military rule and denied what would be considered ubiquitous rights of any regular citizen of a Western democracy.[339] In fact, according to Shafir,

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[338] Gershon Shafir, *Being Israeli: The Dynamics of Multiple Citizenship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 1.
[339] Ibid., 111-112.

the great problem of the early Labor Zionists that sought to define the new state was the dichotomy of being a truly Jewish state while representing the virtues of Western democratic principles. The military administration "imposed severe restrictions on [the 1948 Palestinians'] freedom of movement and economic opportunities, and placed them under surveillance and military law."[340] This largely controlled the laboring population of the country and the land that was worked in the face of large Mizrachi immigration during the 1950s. The Palestinians of Israel were contained as third class citizens, and the frontier was kept in check by military presence and administration. Frontier colonialism was still the virtue of true Labor Zionists, but until 1967 and the war that expanded Israel's borders the leadership of Israel became content to cease frontier expansion and set up security borders while seeking diplomacy with the neighboring Arab states.[341]

In 1967, Israel defeated several Arab armies in a Six Day War that expanded their territory beyond the original Partition Plan and the 1948 armistice boundaries. This absorbed a massive amount of stateless Palestinians and introduced entirely new problems to how the state would deal with the frontiers. After independence and leading up to the 1967 conflict, a national priority of Israel had been Jewish settlement of frontier land and the expropriation of land owned by the Arabs of these regions.[342] After the war, settlement activity erupted, even at times against the policy of the Israeli government, and the boundaries that were once recognized as the demarcation between Israel and the West Bank and Gaza had become blurred. Palestinians outside of the original 1949 armistice boundaries were never granted citizenship in the "Occupied Territories," but their labor had become a part of the state economy after that point.

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[340] Ibid.
[341] Ibid., 161-162.
[342] Ibid., 160.

All the while, the kibbutzim, settlers that pushed the boundaries of the original state, brought the

relationship between these people to a boiling point. For a decade the fire was reignited and

along with the several years long War of Attrition and the Yom Kippur War of 1973, the Labor

government had begun to lose hold of the situation. Placating the radical elements of settlers by

establishing kibbutz near largely populated Palestinian areas in the Occupied Territories led to

the creation of religious settler groups like Gush Emunim in 1974.

Settler movements during this period redrew the map of Israel and maintained a

maximalist view of *Eretz Yisrael*, much in the way that the more radical elements of the

Revisionists had done years before. Other groups also joined the principles of Gush Emunim's

settlement projects in the Occupied Territories because "it followed the traditional course of

settlement, which carried with it an inherent aura of legitimacy, in a society where pioneering

had been a core element of nationalism and a major source of prestige and influence."[343] The old

Zionist colonialism had merged with the new Israelis. The identity of what it was to be Israeli,

or Zionist, was being stretched by the new generations that had largely only lived under Israeli

rule by the mid-1970s, having no experience of the British Mandate or close social encounters

with Palestinian neighbors. These new settlers, however, did not carry with them the virtues of

manual labor that defined the older, original settlers. Their vision did not include a shovel or a

pick-axe, but rather something that "conformed to the emerging new middle-class life style."[344]

By 1977, an entirely new generation of Israelis had grown up as natives in the Jewish

state with a completely altered Israeli identity from their predecessors, and another entire

demographic of Mizrachi immigrants had entered the citizenry. The leadership was ripe for a

change. The new Israel looked to an old face heading a new political party that would change

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[343] Ibid., 169.
[344] Ibid., 170.

their fortunes and alter the state further. In the face of settlement expansion that included a growing middle-class Ashkenazi population, the Mizrachim were further relegated to lower class status. Ever seen as less than the bourgeois European-style, middle-class Israelis, the Mizrachi population was relegated in these settlements to labor work and lowered, almost, to the status of the Arabs. The answer for that was the old Irgun leader of the independence war, still in politics, Menachem Begin. Having tried and failed to bring his Herut party to prominence, the party transformed slightly and the head of the new Likud Party succeeded in earning the job of prime minister in June 1977. Begin before this had been a political opposition leader, with his Herut party challenging Mapai in the Knesset at every turn, but his political career actually began during the fateful war for independence.

Begin began his political grandstanding as early as November 1948 at a dinner in New York while seeking American Jewish support for his party. At this dinner he denounced the British and the Bernadotte plan, but predicted a peaceful future for Israel. He claimed that "his people… will contribute to its full share toward the progress of all mankind and toward the emergence of a new world, a world free from want, free from oppression, free from fear."[345] This call for goodwill included a "peace and brotherhood" that would "prevail among Arabs and Jews alike," and he would in fact participate as prime minister in the 1979 Camp David Accords. However, according to some historians like Rashid Khalidi, these later peace talks were simply window dressing. Begin remained a firm believer in the Iron Wall Doctrine all of his life.[346]

This contradiction in the stance of Begin, whom would become the founder of the Likud by 1977, the right wing National Liberal Movement, did not go unnoticed by some prominent

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[345] "Former Irgun Leader Sees Palestine Unity With Brotherhood Among Jews and Arabs." *The New York Times*, November 30, 1948. ProQuest (108236499).
[346] Rashid Khalidi, *Brokers of Deceit: How the US Has Undermined Peace in the Middle East*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 2013), 1-28.

members of the international Jewish community. In a letter to the *New York Times* on 4

December 1948, a group of Jews attempted to show the world just with whom they were dealing.

Begin ran for office with his new party, *Tnuat Haherut*, shortened as Herut or the "Freedom

Party," which was blatantly called fascist in this publication. The letter, signed by Albert

Einstein, Hannah Arendt, and around two dozen other prominent Jews, stated that:

> Among the most disturbing political phenomena of our time is the emergence in the
> newly created state of Israel of the "Freedom Party," apolitical party closely akin in its
> organization, methods, political philosophy and social appeal to the Nazi and Fascist
> parties. It was formed out of the membership and following of the former Irgun Zvai
> Leumi, a terrorist, right-wing, chauvinist organization in Palestine.[347]

The letter was in response to a visit to the United States while campaigning for Israeli office with

American Zionist organizations. The letter continued by undermining his supporters by saying

that it was "inconceivable that those who oppose fascism throughout the world, if correctly

informed as to Mr. Begin's political record and perspectives, could add their names and support

to the movement he represents."[348] This letter was clearly a call to enlighten the world as to

Begin's past with the Irgun and what that group represented.

Einstein, Arendt, and the others who signed that letter opened a dialogue with this article

that may have kept Begin from earning his first political office in 1948, as well as providing a

vision of what would eventually come from his political control in Israel. The letter continued

by describing in astounding detail the events of the Deir Yassin massacre to inform the American

Zionist supporters of the true pedigree of the "Freedom Party" and of what they were really

capable. In prophetic fashion, the article introduced the terrorist chronicle with a truly

denouncing statement:

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[347] "New Palestine Party: Visit of Menachem Begin and Aims of Political Movement
Discussed," New York Times, December 4, 1948, ProQuest (108368346).
[348] Ibid.

> Today they speak of freedom, democracy and anti-imperialism, whereas until recently they openly preached the doctrine of the Fascist state. It is in its actions that the terrorist party betrays its real character: from its past actions we can judge what it may be expected to do in the future.[349]

It took roughly thirty years to come to fruition, but the authors of this letter would be proven correct. The Iron Wall Doctrine so firmly ingrained in the Revisionist right could not be swept away with political double speak and rhetoric about freedom. That doctrine had unfortunately been seeping into the ranks of the Labor leaders as well and the construction of the Israeli national narrative was cementing for years, as was proved in the period following the war and leading up to the Likud takeover in 1977. The damage was done and Jabotinsky's legacy, however altered, as well as the effect of Bernadotte's involvement, would live on.

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[349] Ibid.

CHAPTER 12: THE IRON WALL LEGACY

The Iron Wall Doctrine that lives to the present was galvanized by the Likud party's rise to power in 1977 and was championed by the leadership of Israel, specifically through three Revisionist prime ministers over the next several decades. Beginning with Menachem Begin, the issue of the Palestinian people would become a point of contention and a political tool for insincere rhetorical peace initiatives that never came to fruition. Yitzhak Shamir carried that mantle in the 1980s, always an ardent believer in the principles that Jabotinsky inspired into the Revisionist movement. In the new millennium, Benjamin Netanyahu has continued and even exacerbated this conflict through not only his actions but his political rhetoric. Almost a century later, the tenets of Jabotinsky's Iron Wall have consistently been a part of Israeli leaders' doctrine of dealing with the native Arab population of the region.

On 17 May 1977, Menachem Begin and the Likud party came to power in Israel. He was the first Revisionist Zionist prime minister. Immediately, he began a trend that would define the major leaders of the right to the present day. That formula involved blustering calls for peace with the neighboring Arab states that would keep the international community focused on one hand while the other continues the subjugation of the Palestinian people. In this way, the Likud has kept fairly consistent with the Labor party's foreign policy, but with quite different ends in mind. Begin utilized the Mizrachim's lower class status as a way to make big promises that would elevate them, specifically above the Israeli Arabs, and their votes ushered in an era of Revisionist political control that aimed at the solidification of the Jewish state for Jews only. That Jewish state, in the post-Six Day War era, has been meant to include all of Judea and Samaria, more commonly known as the West Bank, as well as the Golan Heights. The takeover of the Likud has been described as "the victory of irrational, primordial, anti-democratic

nationalism over the modern, universalist, democratic ethos of the [Labor party]."[350] Begin's

successors, Yitzhak Shamir and Benjamin Netanyahu specifically, have carried the Iron Wall

Doctrine to the end of one century and into another. The hidden hand of the Likud would

continue the settlement doctrine that the Labor had all but abandoned by the late 1970s, invade

Lebanon to destroy the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), and aim policies toward a

maximalist definition of the land of Israel ever since.

One Begin biographer, Eric Silver, described his muse as "a complex, but not mysterious,

man."[351] He continued, "a paradox but not a puzzle: an unrepentant terrorist who won the Nobel

Peace Prize, then launched another war…, Polish gentlemen and Levantine cult hero. A man of

honor with whom it was wise to read the small print."[352] This was the man that, after years of

acquiescence to Labor control of Israel, sprang forth as the man that would lead the Zionist right

to prominence and thus shape Israel's future, geographically and politically. Silver also

explained that his "overriding priority was to secure the whole of the ancient homeland west of

the Jordan for the Jewish people."[353] This is where Menachem Begin's changing of the status

quo becomes important.

Within his first term in office, Begin became a key figure in what would earn him

international fame as well as a Nobel Prize for Peace. He and Egyptian president Anwar al-

Sadat corresponded and met, along with advisors and US diplomats mediated by President

Jimmy Carter, to construct the Camp David Accords in the fall of 1978. These accords were

intended to not only be a peace between the two nations, but a settlement of the situation that the

Palestinian people had endured for thirty years. After some correspondence, Sadat wrote Begin,

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[350] Shafir, *Being Israeli*, 27.
[351] Eric Silver, *Begin: The Haunted Prophet* (New York: Random House, 1984), 254.
[352] Ibid.
[353] Ibid.

lamenting that some "remain captives to concepts like that of David and Goliath instead of being inspired by the brotherhood of Ismail and Isaac," using biblical references to look toward peace rather than assertions of bravado.[354] Begin responded, "The Biblical reference you cite concerning the kinship and brotherhood between our peoples is very moving. I share its sentiment. May I say, however, that the comparison between David and Goliath does not apply in our time."[355] Rhetoric was everything, but Begin was correct. The Likud's comparisons, of Israel as David surrounded by hostile Arab nations, has not been realistic since before the independence of the state. Sadat's concern expressed to Begin was the issue of the Palestinians themselves, the more comparable David figure. He told Begin that "Coexistence with your Arab neighbors starts with coexistence with the Palestinian people."[356] This may have been overstating the facts as they existed. The neighboring Arab states have consistently used the plight of the Palestinians, especially the refugees, as a political tool to who they themselves have been reluctant to provide aid. What Sadat said next, however, proved to be true a decade later, in the Intifada from 1987 to 1993. He predicted:

> If the Palestinians are left with the impression that the self-government plan, and not the administrative autonomy as you call it, is a sham, they will remain embittered and the voice of reason will be drowned among them. As you well know, peoples never abandon their cause in the face of neglect or force. You might recall your predecessor Ben-Gurion once said: 'forgive…but never forget.' This admonition applies to the Palestinians too.[357]

Sadat appealed to Begin's own past as a freedom fighter that shrugged off the perceived oppression of the British Mandate so many years earlier. The contradiction of Begin's, as well as his Revisionist successors', understanding of Palestinian resistance is important to note here.

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[354] Harry Hurwitz and Yisrael, Medad, editors, *Peace in the Making: The Menachem Begin-Anwar El-Sadat Personal Correspondence* (Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House, 2011), 94-95.
[355] Ibid., 101.
[356] Ibid., 97.
[357] Ibid.

The demonization of the Palestinian people as terrorists has been a part of the Revisionist leaders' rhetoric since the Likud took power and has blatantly ignored the truths about those same Revisionists' heritage. Noted scholar Rashid Khalidi points out this irony in his book *Brokers of Deceit.* The use of the word "terrorism," according to Khalidi, "makes no distinction between violence directed against innocent civilians…and resistance against the armed forces of an illegal occupation, which is allowed" under international law.[358] The ambiguity of that distinction, or lack thereof, can be understandable in the context of fighting against the British. There is no ambiguity when one remembers the actions at Deir Yassin. Begin and Shamir share the title of terrorist in no uncertain terms for their actions in 1948.

Moving beyond the ambiguity of terrorism, the doctrine that these men clung to through their actions and rhetoric in the political arena has left far less to question. Indeed the Likud party platform in 1977 stated:

> The right of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel is eternal and indisputable and is linked with the right to security and peace. Therefore, Judea and Samaria will not be handed over to any foreign administration. Between the sea and the Jordan River there will be only Israeli sovereignty. Relinquishing parts of the [West Bank] undermines our right to the country, unavoidably leads to the establishment of a "Palestinian state," jeopardizes the security of the Jewish population, endangers the security of the State of Israel and frustrates any prospect of peace.[359]

This is the opposite of the sentiment that Sadat expressed in his letter to Begin a year later. The Revisionists have consistently spoken of concessions to the Palestinians as detrimental to Israel's security, when those concessions could very well have been their best tool toward building peace. As the Camp David Accords, and subsequent peace attempts such as the Madrid Conference and Oslo Accords in the early 1990s, have shown, rhetorical peace on the part of

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[358] Khalidi, *Brokers of Deceit,* 11.
[359] Ibid., 1.

Israel resists concessions, and once agreed upon, is still never fully implemented. The iron wall must always be in place, and the perpetual war will continue on with Israeli dominance.

One of the reasons that peace between Israel and the Palestinians, at least those living in the West Bank and Gaza, is so hampered is because of the continuance of settler colonialism that expanded with the control of the Revisionists. Begin, having served as prime minister from 1977 to 1983, oversaw the largest expansion of Zionist settlements. In May 1977, he "promised 'many more Eilon Morehs,'" referring to one such settlement.[360] At the time, there were twenty-three. By the time he left office, the West Bank included over one hundred settlements. The population of Jews living in the Occupied Territories increased from 3,000 to 40,000 in approximately that same span of only six years.[361] This new expansion made it impossible, and in fact continues to do so, to delineate where Israel ends and the Palestinian territories or future state may exist. Many of these settlements particularly early on were inhabited by force, by settlers who believed the whole of historic Palestine to be their birth right. One such group was Gush Emunim.

Grown out of the Revisionist movement and harboring no regard for the native Arabs of the land, Gush Emunim, or Bloc of the Faithful, pushed Israeli boundaries far into the West Bank, establishing settlements closer to Arab villages than ever before. The group was founded in 1974, by Israelis who, as Shamir referred to them, "believed, [as he did], that Judea and Samaria are an integral part of the Land of Israel, neither 'captured' in 1967 nor 'returnable' to anyone."[362] This has been the established belief of the Revisionist maximalists all along. There has never been a right of the Palestinians to the land as long as the Zionist cause has a chance to

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[360] Silver, *Begin*, 254.
[361] Ibid.
[362] Shamir, *Summing Up*, 150.

see their ends come to fruition. These groups, and even the Israeli leadership, have often used

biblical justifications for such actions. Historian Michael Prior, in his essay "The Right to Expel:

The Bible and Ethnic Cleansing," exerts that biblical justifications are not uncommon in the

history of imperialism or colonialism. Referring to Joseph Conrad, he says "'the conquest of the

earth is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much,' colonizers invariably seek out some

ideological principle to justify their actions, and when these involve dubious deeds of

exploitation, the search is all the more intense."[363] He continued that "for Ben-Gurion, the Bible

is the 'Jews' sacrosanct title-deed to Palestine…with a genealogy of 3,500 years.'"[364] That

concept has also been used by the Revisionists, and they have continued the tradition of wielding

the Holy Scripture when most convenient. This all to expand the power of the Israeli state, the

Jewish state that turns an apathetic eye away from their Arab neighbors, their former fellow

residents, and the population that remains within their borders.

In 1983, after a spell of ill health and a growing distaste for the politics that had once run

his life, Menachem Begin made a decision that passed the torch of leadership to the next

Revisionist and fellow 1948 terrorist, Yitzhak Shamir. Begin called on Defense Minister Ariel

Sharon and at that time Foreign Minister Shamir to Jerusalem for a meeting. These two were

Herut colleagues and friends of Begin that became the first to know that he was planning on

retirement within his term. There occurred a meeting to discuss what would happen next for the

future of the Likud and Shamir was announced as the heir apparent. Shamir took office as prime

minister for a party that he referred to as feeling "fatherless" after Begin's resignation.[365]

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[363] Michael Prior, "The Right to Expel: The Bible and Ethnic Cleansing," in *Palestinian Refugees: The Right of Return*, edited by Naseer Aruri (London: Pluto Press, 2001), 9.
[364] Ibid.
[365] Shamir, *Summing Up*, 144.

Shamir acted as prime minister for two terms, separated by a brief term of Labor dominance, during the 1980s while overseeing the expansion of settlements in the West Bank and Gaza and the first Palestinian Intifada. In fact, there was a significant increase after Shamir's ascendance to office that eclipsed what Begin's administration had cultivated. Not including two years when Shimon Peres was prime minister between Shamir's terms in office, he oversaw the expansion of the settler population in the West Bank to over 110,000 by 1993. To put that in perspective, the Jewish population in the West Bank in 1972 was 800, Begin saw that number increase to over 40,000, and Shamir allowed it to more than double. This is not to say that the prime minister of Israel is solely responsible for settlement expansion, but the policies and rhetoric of these men have made it quite clear that they were not only encouraged but given the necessary means to flourish. This massive influx of Zionist Jews into the Occupied Territories was clearly not without its complications, however. The resulting Intifada in the late 1980s showed how much the Palestinians were willing to resist Israeli occupation and subjugation, while at the same time the settlers themselves were less than peaceful. In a particular piece of irony, the violent actions of settlers, of which there is a long history that there is not enough time here to discuss, were denounced outright by Shamir. This was not for their behavior per se. His statement on the matter of settler violence shows how ingrained the concept of being an old freedom fighter remained with him. He said, in regard to the media drawing a comparison to his previous Lehi exploits:

> I found the suggestion as grotesque as it was insulting to the memory of an underground that had fought so nobly to establish the Jewish state. Now that state existed. It was almost inconceivable and very painful to me that, after thirty-six years of independence, there could be Jews in our midst who dared to deny its authority and refused to acknowledge the fundamental principle that the Government, and only the Government, was responsible for Israel's security – and that of its citizens.[366]

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[366] Ibid., 151-152.

Shamir's response is indicative of his apparent contradictory view of his own actions from those

who sought to carry out the Zionist maximalist agenda on the ground, for two reasons. First, he

did not see their actions as being in service of the Israeli state, which was ultimately the Zionist

cause, as it had always been envisioned by him and the Revisionists. Secondly, there is an irony

in the fact that he had come to see the government as solely responsible for the security of the

Zionist dream, while his earlier actions were in direct contradiction to the Provisional

Government's public policy. Shamir kept up the tradition of Iron Wall Revisionism in every

aspect.

After Shamir, the 1990s and 2000s saw a short resurgence in Labor Party dominance

until the last Revisionist prime minister took the office from 1996 to 1999 and then again from

2009 until the present, and currently holds the title as the longest serving premier, surpassing

David Ben-Gurion. Benjamin Netanyahu was born shortly after the war for independence and

served in the IDF after the Six Day War in 1967. From that time on, he has been an ardent

patriot and Revisionist follower. His views concerning the Palestinian refugee problem and the

expansion of settlements into the West Bank has been in line with those of his predecessors. In

1993, he wrote a book entitled *A Place Among the Nations*, in which he discussed Israel's place

in the world as well as the Palestinian conflict. He referred to the PLO as a war mongering

organization that sought only to destroy Israel. He feared a war launched from the West Bank if

the Palestinians were given autonomy and the repatriation of displaced peoples within Israel

were congruent with the destruction of the Jewish state.

> But the land war launched from a future West Bank state is not the only poisoned arrow
> being prepared for the PLO's quiver. The PLO has also maintained at the top of its list of
> demands…the 'right of return…' Teaching this futile dream to the generations of

children who are trapped in the refugee camps is one of the cruelest and most cynical of schemes.[367]

Of special note is the language he used. 'Poisoned arrow' vilifies the PLO while making altruistic statements that attempt to sound like he is concerned with the plight of the refugees, while at the same time refusing to accept the right of return. In fact he believed that it was Israel, and not the Arab states, that had provided the most for the refugees. His reference to the "Trinity," West Bank statehood, self-determination, and the right of return, is what he believed to be the PLO's conspiracy to destroy Israel. Any one of these occurring would be enough, he said, to "amputate" Israel.[368] If that was not enough, the right of return would suffocate them, thus finishing them off. These were the apocalyptic views perpetuating the David versus Goliath analogy that Revisionists have used in public discourse. True or not, his views are transparent. In spending countless shekels to aid the refugee crisis, Netanyahu said that "if the refugees have apartment buildings in which to live, this means that they are no longer homeless, no longer refugees, and no longer the embittered people the PLO prefers them to be."[369] Again, he sounds altruistic, and he did have a point about the Arab neighboring states and the PLO in that they benefitted from a continued refugee crisis in their political rhetoric against Israel. But this does not excuse the actions of the Revisionist Zionist cause that has deepened the rift that keeps the problem unfixable.

Even an aide to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, quoted by Netanyahu, shows the Arab states' refusal of refugee assistance to be true. He explained that "the problem requiring solution is not the immigration of the world's Jews to Palestine, but how to return refugees to

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[367] Benjamin Netanyahu, *A Place Among the Nations: Israel and the World* (New York: Bantam Books, 1993), 226.
[368] Ibid., 229-230.
[369] Ibid., 226-227.

Palestine…The Arab states will not be willing to settle the [refugees]…Every refugee…must be allowed to return to Palestine."[370] Netanyahu pointed out how "Arabs often ask Westerners, how can it be that an Arab born in Jaffa cannot return there, while a Jew from Odessa who has never before set foot in Israel is welcomed with open arms?"[371] The Revisionist in him allows him only to see this question as a problem to solving the crisis, shifting blame to the Arab states for the continuance of the plight of refugees. The question itself is a valid one. Thanks to the actions of the Zionist military forces, aided greatly by the Revisionist paramilitaries, the Labor Party's solidification of the Jewish state, and the expansion of Iron Wall policies of the Revisionist leadership, the refugee crisis continues; surrounding Arab states may be complicit, but they are not the cause.

Apparent in the way Netanyahu views the right of return is the Revisionist dogma of Zionist maximalism. He viewed, and according to contemporary rhetoric continues to, the right of return as "intended to mimic, counteract, and annul the Jewish dream of return by means of a false symmetry. The Jews have returned, and now the Palestinian Arabs must return." This mimesis, as he puts it, compares the Jews who were "expelled in roughly equal numbers from the Arab states [in 1948]" while the Arabs that left Palestine "left voluntarily." Not only is this not accurate, as has been shown, neither is his statement that their voluntary exodus was caused by the "Arab leaders to 'clear the way' for the Arab armies." He went on to say that taking in the Palestinian refugees on top of those Jews of 1948 would be "preposterously unjust," considering a "reversing" of population exchanges impossible and absent from previous historical population exchange events.[372] His impossibly fascist ideology is evidence of the formation of Revisionist

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[370] Ibid., 228.
[371] Ibid.
[372] Ibid.

Zionist identity in the years that crystallized a Jewish population as the sole owners of the Jewish state and into the Revisionist dominated contemporary.

Finally, in a world in which the attacks of September 11 have brought Islamic terrorism to the forefront of fears in the West, Netanyahu has used that fear to keep his rhetoric of security focused on Israel as David in the Middle East. As tensions once again rise in the ongoing Palestine conflict, the Revisionist Iron Wall Doctrine is as potent as ever, with settlements expanding into the West Bank regardless of international opinion or law. From Jabotinsky's prophetic insight into the resistance of the Palestinian Arabs came the resistance of the Jews against British imperialism. Once that conflict was won, the concept has continued to ring true in that the Palestinians have resisted in two Intifadas and by this writing what appears to be a third, always following peace talks that leave resolutions for agreement in the realm of rhetorical gestures. This is the Iron Wall. This is perpetual war. Count Bernadotte fought for a solution to the refugee crisis in its infancy. With his championing of humanitarian values buried well in the past, Revisionist policies have continued the legacy of the Iron Wall Doctrine.

CHAPTER 13: CONCLUSION

This research is an analysis of how Zionism, an agreeably positive concept at its original core, became radical, violent, and contradictorily subjugating of a people innocent to the thousands of years long Jewish plight. From an idea to a political movement, from a treatise of self-determination to a virulent call to action, Zionism evolved into a political doctrine that at first played a part in creating a problem, and then continued to perpetuate the cycle from a position of power. How that power came to be and how that doctrine came to rule, through an examination of not only the structures, but of the agents that shaped the historical structures now commonplace, is important to understanding modern realities. This study argues that the figurative Iron Wall presented by the Revisionist founder evolved into a political doctrine that, owed largely to the assassination of the UN Mediator, has persisted in suppressing the Palestinian people in a perpetual state of war.

The people responsible for the assassination of the UN Mediator fought for the freedom of their country. Their fight was based on ideologies outside of the recognized Zionist leadership, though their actions worked hand in hand with the more mainstream Zionist policies to create the state of Israel. Their disdain for foreign intervention and the proposals of Bernadotte fueled their actions. Nathan Friedman-Yellin argued that "all fighters for justice are morally innocent."[373] According to him, Bernadotte was considered "to blame for the starvation and shelling of Jerusalem, and he regretted the death of every child in Jerusalem more than he regretted Bernadotte's death."[374] The long history of Revisionist Zionism, especially its adoption of a violent anticolonial orientation, led to the assassination that disrupted international

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[373] "End After Polls: Friedman-Yellin Concludes Speech," *The Palestine Post*, January 24, 1949. Historical Jewish Press, accessed 25 February 2015, www.jpress.org.il.

[374] "Yellin Cross-Examined on Bernadotte Murder," *The Palestine Post*, December 21, 1948. Historical Jewish Press, accessed 25 February 2015, www.jpress.org.il.

intervention. From colonizers to freedom fighters, the radical Zionists' transformation through

history by 1948 into nationalist terrorists was perhaps inevitable given the situations they

encountered. That evolution was built on a continuity of action.

In his autobiography, Yitzhak Shamir explained that the legacy built by Jabotinsky was

absolutely crucial in their endeavors:

> Though he never achieved leadership of the official Zionist establishment, knowing only
> the dubious joys of heading a perpetual minority, and although he died in 1940, before
> the birth of Israel, his contributions to it and his impact upon it are, in my view, no less
> than fundamental to its existence.[375]

Not everyone felt the same way about the Revisionist founder. David Ben-Gurion, for example,

did not put as much stock into Jabotinsky's role in the formation of the state. When Jabotinsky

passed away 4 August 1940, a work stoppage was ordered and the sixth of that month was

declared a day of public mourning. His son, imprisoned for illegal immigration activities, was

released. Black flags were donned on the streets of Jewish communities all over Palestine.[376]

Zionists, of all political orientations, knew who and what they had lost. His last will and

testament, however, remained unanswered by the Zionist that would become the first Prime

Minister of Israel.

Jabotinsky's final wish was to have his body buried in the Jewish state, should one come

to exist, but only on the stipulation that it be commanded by the established government. This is

a request that Ben-Gurion refused to honor throughout his three terms as premier of that state.

According to a biographer, Michael Bar-Zohar, Ben-Gurion "offered varying pretexts for his

opposition" to this request but in a letter written in 1956, almost ten years after the formation of

the state, "he explained that there were two Jews worthy of being re-interred in Israel: Dr. Herzl

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[375] Shamir, *Summing Up*, 9.
[376] "Contemporary Jewish Record: Review of Events and Digest of Opinion," Vol. III, No. 5, September-October 1940. New York, NY, 544.

and Baron Edmond de Rothschild."[377] The former had written the Zionist manifesto, *Der Judenstaat* (The Jewish State), setting out the Zionist cause at the end of the nineteenth century while the latter's financial contributions in the 1920s and 1930s assisted greatly in the settlement of Palestine. With the exception of these two revered Zionists, Ben-Gurion felt that Israel "needs living Jews, and not the bones of the dead."[378] It was not until the next Prime Minister, Levi Eshkol, that Jabotinsky would find his final resting place atop Mount Herzl in Jerusalem. His memory, regardless of his location, remained in Israel before and after.

The Revisionists' freedom fighter mentality is also apparent in the many names given to the independence war itself. Though the Arab world refers to it as the 1948 War or *al-nakba* by the Palestinians, the Jews of the war refer to it as the War of Independence, the War of Liberation, and the War of Establishment.[379] Shamir recalled that he often thought of how future generations of Jews would judge their actions. He thought extensively on "the turn Jewish history had taken, the meaning of the crises through which we were living, … and how we and our struggle would appear, if at all, to the Jews of the next millennia." He wondered if "issues and occurrences of such importance to us be reduced, in decades to come, to a line or two in history books or, at best, form a paragraph in the total story of the Jews of the twentieth century?"[380] The story of the Jews that fought for independence in 1948 has most certainly not been reduced to a historical footnote and their actions have carried on. Wars are not static moments in history. The long processes that developed to create this very unique set of circumstances and led to an act of aggression that benefitted a radical ideology will continue to live in the history of the Israeli people.

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[377] Bar-Zohar, *Ben-Gurion*, 75.
[378] Ibid.
[379] Morris, *1948*, 77.
[380] Shamir, *Summing Up*, 56.

The legacy of Revisionist Zionism left after the war is manifested in the strife of the

Palestinian refugees that continue to live without a home and the Iron Wall Doctrine that

perpetuates that crisis. As the early Zionists yearned for the "land without a people for a people

without a land," they displaced populations that are now a nation without a land of their own.

Though the argument for and against the displacing of the Palestinians can be vilifying on both

ends, the fact that it happened is less and less contested. The processes to rectify the situation,

however, have reached stymied opposition from the Revisionist leaders steeped in the Iron Wall

Doctrine. As professor Edward Said put it:

> The issue in the by now notorious peace process finally has come down to one issue,
> which has been at the core of Palestinian depredations since 1948: the fate of the refugees
> who were displaced in 1948, again in 1967 and again in 1982 by naked Israeli ethnic
> cleansing. Any other description of those acts by the Israeli army is a travesty of the truth
> no matter how many protestations are heard from the unyielding Zionist right-wing
> (assuming that the left is more likely to accept the truth).[381]

As can be seen, the language can become quite hostile when discussing such a sensitive subject,

even for a world renowned scholar writing in a professional scholarly work. But the facts

support this sort of language. Even Moshe Dayan, former Minister of Foreign Affairs as well as

Defense for Israel, said that "there is not one place built in this country that did not have a former

Arab population."[382] He could not even blame anyone for being ignorant to the original name of

their hometown, for those names were no longer in the textbooks, erased from history, when he

spoke on this to the Israeli publication Ha'aretz in 1969.

The war of words and practical Revisionist policy continues to the present, while

relatively recent scholarship, since the 1980s, has begun to attempt an understanding of the

process that led to the state of Israel and the Palestinian refugee problem. This study is important

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[381] Edward Said, "Introduction: The Right of Return At Last," in *Palestinian Refugees: The Right of Return*, edited by Naseer Aruri (London: Pluto Press, 2001), 1.
[382] Ibid.

in not only understanding a fascinating period of historical study, but in understanding the past of a present international concern. From students of the Middle East to policy makers in foreign affairs, from intrigued scholars to those in position to affect change in the world, new understandings must be reached to contextualize an ongoing epoch.

This journey has been taken to understand how Zionism, from the turn of the twentieth century, allowed a breakaway that came in the form of Revisionism and how that turned into the modern state of Israel. Examined are the birth of the Revisionist movement and Ze'ev Jabotinsky's importance to it and its future, the radical evolution of Zionist causes in the face of imperialism, the culmination of that evolution to political violence and the death of Folke Bernadotte, and how that opened the door to allow a political doctrine of subjugation to flourish up to the twenty first century. These processes compounded upon one another, and working backwards through history, it is clear that both Jabotinsky and Count Bernadotte were crucial to the current Iron Wall.

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