

A Synopsis of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

FOR CENTURIES there was no such conflict. In the 19th century the land of Palestine was inhabited by a multicultural population – approximately 86 percent Muslim, 10 percent Christian, and 4 percent Jewish – living in peace.

Zionism

IN THE LATE 1800s a group in Europe decided to colonize this land. Known as Zionists, they represented an extremist minority of the Jewish population. Their goal was to create a Jewish homeland, and they considered locations in Africa and the Americas, before settling on Palestine.

At first, this immigration created no problems. However, as more and more Zionists immigrated to Palestine – many with the express wish of taking over the land for a Jewish state – the indigenous population became increasingly alarmed. Eventually, fighting broke out, with escalating waves of violence. Hitler's rise to power, combined with Zionist activities to sabotage efforts to place Jewish refugees in western countries, led to increased Jewish immigration to Palestine, and conflict grew.

UN Partition Plan

FINALLY, in 1947 the United Nations decided to intervene. However, rather than adhering to the principle of “self-determination of peoples,” in which the people themselves create their own state and system of government, the UN chose to revert to the medieval strategy whereby an outside power divides up other people's land.

Under considerable Zionist pressure, the UN recommended giving away 55% of Palestine to a Jewish state – despite the fact that this group represented only about 30% of the total population, and owned under 7% of the land.

1947-1949 War

WHILE IT IS WIDELY reported that the resulting war eventually included five Arab armies, less well known is the fact that throughout this war Zionist forces outnumbered all Arab and Palestinian combatants combined – often by a factor of two to three. Moreover, Arab armies did not invade Israel – virtually all battles were fought on land that was to have been the Palestinian state.

Finally, it is significant to note that Arab armies entered the conflict only after Zionist forces had committed 16 massacres, including the grisly massacre of over 100 men, women, and children at Deir Yassin. Future Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, head of one of the Jewish terrorist groups, described this as “splendid,” and stated: “As in Deir Yassin, so everywhere, we will attack and smite the enemy. God, God, Thou has chosen us for conquest.” Zionist forces committed 33 massacres altogether.

By the end of the war, Israel had conquered 78 percent of Palestine; three-quarters of a million Palestinians had been made refugees; over



Palestinian loss of land, 1947-2005.

500 towns and villages had been obliterated; and a new map was drawn up, in which every city, river and hillock received a new, Hebrew name, as all vestiges of the Palestinian culture were to be erased. For decades Israel denied the existence of this population, former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir once saying: “There is no such thing as a Palestinian.”

1967 War & USS Liberty

IN 1967, Israel conquered still more land. Following the Six Day War, in which Israeli forces launched a highly successful surprise attack on Egypt, Israel occupied the final 22% of Palestine that had eluded it in 1948 – the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Since, according to international law it is inadmissible to acquire territory by war, these are occupied territories and do not belong to Israel. It also occupied parts of Egypt (since returned) and Syria (which remain under occupation).

Also during the Six Day War, Israel attacked a US Navy ship, the *USS Liberty*, killing and injuring over 200 American servicemen. President Lyndon Johnson recalled rescue flights, saying that he did not want to “embarrass an ally.” (In 2004 a high-level commission chaired by Admiral Thomas Moorer, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, found this attack to be “an act of war against the United States,” a fact few news media have reported.)

Current Conflict

THERE ARE TWO primary issues at the core of this continuing conflict. First, there is the inevitably destabilizing effect of trying to maintain an ethnically preferential state, particularly when it is largely of foreign origin. The original population of what is now Israel was 96 percent

Muslim and Christian, yet, these refugees are prohibited from returning to their homes in the self-described Jewish state (and those within Israel are subjected to systematic discrimination).

Second, Israel's continued military occupation and confiscation of privately owned land in the West Bank, and control over Gaza, are extremely oppressive, with Palestinians having minimal control over their lives. Over 10,000 Palestinian men, women, and children are held in Israeli prisons. Few of them have had a legitimate trial; Physical abuse and torture are frequent. Palestinian borders (even internal ones) are controlled by Israeli forces. Periodically men, women, and children are strip searched; people are beaten; women in labor are prevented from reaching hospitals (at times resulting in death); food and medicine are blocked from entering Gaza, producing an escalating humanitarian crisis. Israeli forces invade almost daily, injuring, kidnapping, and sometimes killing inhabitants.

According to the Oslo peace accords of 1993, these territories were supposed to finally become a Palestinian state. However, after years of Israel continuing to confiscate land and conditions steadily worsening, the Palestinian population rebelled. (The Barak offer, widely reputed to be generous, was anything but.) This uprising, called the “Intifada” (Arabic for “shaking off”) began at the end of September 2000.

U.S. Involvement

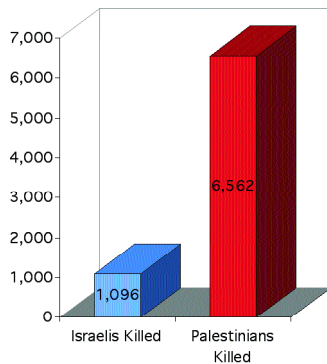
LARGELY DUE to special-interest lobbying, U.S. taxpayers give Israel an average of \$7 million per day, and since its creation have given more U.S. funds to Israel than to any other nation. As Americans learn about how Israel is using our tax dollars, many are calling for an end to this expenditure.

Toll of the Conflict

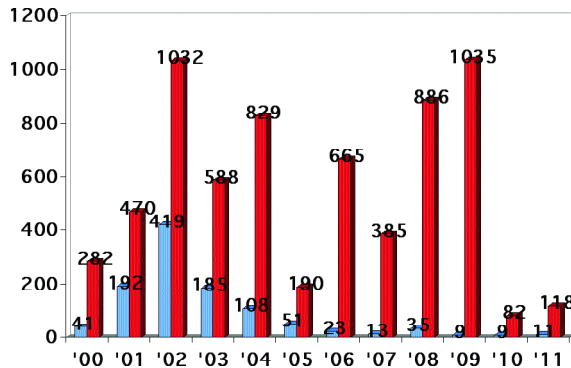
Israelis & Palestinians Killed: September 29, 2000 (beginning of most recent uprising) through December 31, 2011.

Israelis & Palestinians Killed

Everyone Killed



Everyone Killed, by year



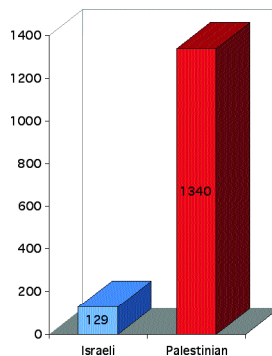
- 6,562 Palestinians have been killed by Israelis.
- 1,096 Israelis have been killed by Palestinians.

■ Palestinians Killed
■ Israelis Killed

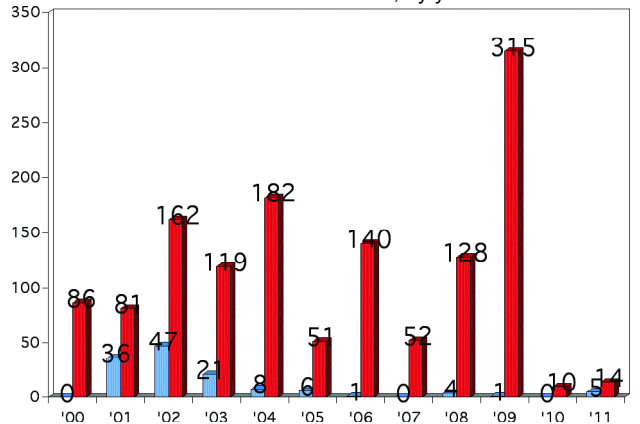
Children Killed

- 1,340 (or 20%) of the Palestinians killed by Israelis have been children.
- 129 (or 12%) of the Israelis killed by Palestinians have been children.
- Over 80 Palestinian children were killed before the first Israeli child was killed.

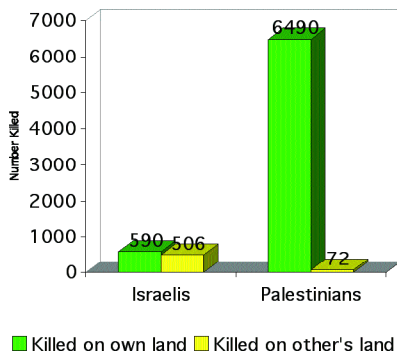
Children Killed



Children Killed, by year



Killed on Own Land vs. Killed on Other's Land



- 54% of the Israelis killed have been either soldiers or were killed in the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel.
- 99% of Palestinians were killed on Palestinian land.

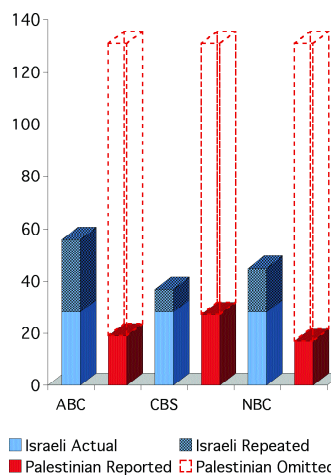
Note: The current uprising began 9/29/2000, so the data from 2000 covers only 3 months.

Death Statistics Source: The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories - B'Tselem (btselem.org). (RememberTheseChildren.org lists over 100 additional children who died in circumstances related to the conflict.)

Media Statistics Source: If Americans Knew, "Off the Charts" (IfAmericansKnew.org)

Distorted News Coverage of Children's Deaths

Reporting of Children's Deaths: Repetitions Vs. Omissions
9/29/2000 - 9/28/2001



Repeated coverage of Israeli children's deaths creates an impression of a higher number than took place, while omissions of most Palestinian children's deaths does the opposite.

Additional statistical studies of U.S. news organizations can be viewed at IfAmericansKnew.org/media