Israel Is Illegitimate

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For readers who may not be intimately familiar with English terminology, an oxymoron is a figure of speech by which contradictory terms are combined to form an expressive phrase or epithet such as cruel kindness and falsely true. (It’s derived from the Greek word oxymoros meaning pointedly foolish).

For my contribution to the De-legitimizing Israel series, I’m going to confine myself to one question and answer.

The question is: How can you de-legitimize something (in this case the Zionist state) when it is NOT legitimate?

Leaving aside the fairy story of God’s promise, (which even if true would have no bearing on the matter because the Jews who “returned” in answer to Zionism’s call had no biological connection to the ancient Hebrews), the Zionist state’s assertion of legitimacy rests on the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and the UN General Assembly’s partition plan resolution of 1947.

The only real relevance of the Balfour Declaration is in the fact that it was an expression of both the willingness of a British government to use Jews for imperial purposes and the willingness of Zionist Jews to be used. The truth is that Britain had no right whatsoever to promise Zionism a place in Palestine, territory the British do not possess. (Palestine at the time was controlled and effectively owned by Ottoman Turkey). The Balfour Declaration did allow Zionism to say that its claim to Palestine had been recognised by a major power, and then to assert that the Zionist enterprise was therefore a legitimate one. But the legitimacy Britain conveyed by implication was entirely spurious, meaning not genuine, false, a sham.

Zionism’s assertion that Israel was given its birth certificate and thus legitimacy by the UN General Assembly partition resolution of 29 November 1947 is pure propaganda nonsense.
In the first place the UN without the consent of the majority of the people of Palestine did not have the right to decide to partition Palestine or assign any part of its territory to a minority of alien immigrants in order for them to establish a state of their own.

Despite that, by the narrowest of margins, and only after a rigged vote, the UN General Assembly did pass a resolution to partition Palestine and create two states, one Arab, one Jewish, with Jerusalem not part of either. But the General Assembly resolution was only a non-binding proposal - meaning that it could have no effect, would not become binding, until and unless it was approved by the Security Council.

The truth is that the General Assembly’s partition proposal never went to the Security Council for consideration. Why not? Because the US knew that, if approved, and because of Arab and other Muslim opposition, it could only be implemented by force; and President Truman was not prepared to use force to partition Palestine.

So the partition plan was vitiated (became invalid) and the question of what the hell to do about Palestine - after Britain had made a mess of it and walked away - was taken back to the General Assembly for more discussion. The option favoured and proposed by the US was temporary UN Trusteeship. It was while the General Assembly was debating what do that Israel unilaterally declared itself to be in existence - actually in defiance of the will of the organised international community, including the Truman administration.

The truth of the time was that Israel, which came into being mainly as a consequence of Zionist terrorism and pre-planned ethnic cleansing, had no right to exist and, more to the point, could have no right to exist unless ….. Unless it was recognised and legitimized by those who were dispossessed of their land and their rights during the creation of the Zionist state. In international law only the Palestinians could give Israel the legitimacy it craved.

As it was put to me many years ago by Khalad al-Hassan, Fatah’s intellectual giant on the right, that legitimacy was “the only thing the Zionists could not take from us by force.”

The truth of history as summarised briefly above is the explanation of why, really, Zionism has always insisted that its absolute pre-condition for negotiations with more than a snowball’s chance in hell of a successful outcome (an acceptable measure of justice for the Palestinians and peace for all) is recognition of Israel’s right to exist. A right, it knows, it does not have and will never have unless the Palestinians grant it.

It can be said without fear of contradiction (except by Zionists) that what de-legitimizes Israel is the truth of history. And that is why Zionism has worked so hard, today with less success than in the past and therefore with increasing desperation, to have the truth suppressed.

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This article is part of a special Israel de-legitimization series. Other articles in the series are

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By Alan Hart

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By Richard Falk

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